

## Surrey Decides

### Candidates' guide to the election rules 2021

The following rules must be read and understood by all candidates.

Please email [surreydecides@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:surreydecides@surrey.ac.uk) to confirm that you have read and understood these rules.

As a candidate, you are expected to follow the rules of the election. Not doing so will result in action being taken against you by the independent Returning officer. Rule breaks will risk your position in the election. Making vexatious complaints about other candidates can also result in action being taken against you. Focusing positively on your own campaign is the best way to win the election.

During the election the Students' Union will communicate with you via email on [surreydecides@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:surreydecides@surrey.ac.uk). The Union's website also has a page of frequently asked election questions, which you may find it useful to read before sending your email. A link to the FAQ page will be sent round to all candidates. It's advisable to check your student email every day.

The Students' Union's Byelaws have a section (part 3) which describes the rules of all elections, and which should be read alongside these specific rules for Surrey Decides 2021.

#### Key dates for the election:

Nominations open - 19<sup>th</sup> April

Nominations close - 28<sup>th</sup> April

Manifesto and candidate information deadline - 5<sup>th</sup> May 12:00

Start of campaigning – 5<sup>th</sup> May 12:00

Question Time - 9/10/11<sup>th</sup> May evenings

Voting opens – 11<sup>th</sup> May after Question Time

Voting closes – 15<sup>th</sup> May 7pm

Results – 15<sup>th</sup> May from 8pm.

Manifesto and candidate information submission: Deadline Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> May 12:00.

Candidates are asked to submit information about them and their campaign using this form : [click here](#)

Please use the form (link above) to upload your manifesto as a portrait PDF, 1080px x 1920px (Instagram story dimensions) and your ballot photo as a .jpg or .png file, along with your ballot name (the name you want to appear on the ballot).

Any information or file which is not submitted in the correct format by the deadline (midday on Wednesday the 5<sup>th</sup> of May) will not be included in any Students' Union materials, only the candidate's name and the position they are running for will be displayed. Providing information, including a manifesto, is optional but recommended.

Canva is a free tool available for you to create designs in the correct dimensions. For information on how to create a design in canva, visit [this link](#) for help.

Due to the covid pandemic, the Students' Union will be enhancing the information that appears about candidates on our website. We will make the information you provide available on our website. The Students' Union will also produce an electronic manifesto guide, containing all the manifestos for this election, which will be published across the Student Union's communication channels.

### Election budget

Candidates' campaign costs cannot exceed £70 for a full-time Officer, £45 for the role of Union Chair, and £35 for all other part-time Officer roles. This includes the total value of any materials you may have received for free. The full amount can be claimed back from the Students' Union.

Candidates must supply receipts in order to prove their spending and claim campaign expenses. Please ensure that you have scanned or photographed all your receipts for electronic submission.

Budget forms and receipts must be emailed to [surreydecides@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:surreydecides@surrey.ac.uk) by 7pm on Friday the 14<sup>th</sup> of May. Candidates who are late risk being removed from the election count. Forms must be returned even if nothing was spent on the campaign. Supplying fraudulent financial information is a serious offence that could result in your disqualification from the election.

### Campaigning and Organising

This year due to the ongoing Covid pandemic, and because a significant proportion of students cannot return for face to face teaching during the election period, campaigning will be online only.

Campaigning refers to actively soliciting votes from students. Campaigning for votes may begin online from midday on Wednesday the 5<sup>th</sup> of May. Campaigning for votes is not allowed before this point. The campaign period is stated on the election timetable.

Prior to the campaigning period, potential candidates may organise in the form of conducting research, gathering information, or assembling a team. In doing so, you should only focus on developing your campaign and/or team; directly advertising manifesto points or your intention to stand in the election may be interpreted as early campaigning. Groups of potential candidates may jointly discuss possible manifesto points or campaign approaches before the campaigning period begins, provided that this is for the purposes of campaign development and not soliciting votes.

Any action that could be interpreted as early campaigning for votes will be investigated by the Returning Officer and action may be taken against you. If it is unclear whether preparation activity will be considered as early campaigning, please contact [surreydecides@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:surreydecides@surrey.ac.uk).

We recommend that all candidates create specific campaigning pages on social media and share these pages with us via [surreydecides@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:surreydecides@surrey.ac.uk) so that they can be shared as part of the Student Union's enhanced support for election candidates. We are unable to share your personal social media pages.

As campaigning cannot take place in person, candidates cannot put up posters or banners on campus.

All candidates have the option to email [surreydecides@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:surreydecides@surrey.ac.uk) a landscape version of your campaign poster in size 1920 \* 1080 png or jpg format which will then be displayed on the digital screens on campus. The deadline for submitting this poster is the 5<sup>th</sup> of May at 12:00.

If you become ill or need to self-isolate during the election campaigning period:

During this exceptional year, it has been agreed that candidates in this position should be allowed to select one student alternate to represent them and their campaign while they are unable to participate fully. Candidates should contact [surreydecides@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:surreydecides@surrey.ac.uk) if they become ill or must self-isolate during the campaigning period, to inform the elections team and receive further instructions.

Please also report your self-isolation to the University via the [University form](#).

Any breaches of these campaign rules will be taken very seriously by the Returning Officer, as per part 3 of the Student Union Byelaws.

### Question Time

Question Time will be a live streamed event, following covid secure guidance, hosted from the marquee on the PATS field.

Attendance at Question Time (online or in person) is advisable but not compulsory.

Candidates running for zone officer positions will be invited to appear remotely. Candidates running for all other positions will have the option to appear in person.

Candidates who wish to be present but cannot appear in real time will be offered the opportunity to submit a video to be shown during the event.

There will be a Question Time briefing during the live candidate Q and A on the 4<sup>th</sup> of May.

### Voting

It is against the election rules to cast a vote with another person's log in details. Every student has the right to vote secretly. Any evidence of candidates interfering with another student's vote will be taken very seriously by the Returning Officer and may result in disqualification from the election.

### After the election

Once the election period is finished you will be asked to give feedback based on your experience of being a candidate. This is valuable for us to be able to improve the experience of the elections in the future.

If you are successful you will begin your time in office on Monday the 12<sup>th</sup> of July.

The Students' Union provides training for all newly elected officers and it is very important that if you are standing as a candidate, you attend the training provided.

### Any questions?

Once you have read and understood these rules, please complete this form to indicate that you have done so. If you have any further questions please contact us at the Surrey Decides email – [surreydecides@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:surreydecides@surrey.ac.uk)