

Strathclyde
Students'
Union



2020 Autumn Elections Pack

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Elections & COVID-19

In light of the current pandemic and the restrictions imposed by the Government, we will have to run elections a little differently this year! These elections will be taking place entirely online. This means that candidates will not be allowed to campaign face-to-face, which includes putting up posters and flyers.

We're here to support you through these elections as much as we can. If you have any comments, questions, or concerns, please feel free to get in touch with us at strathunion.dem@strath.ac.uk

Who can stand?

Any attending Strathclyde Student (Ordinary Member – see Constitution for more details – <https://www.strathunion.com/about/constitution/>) can run for any of these positions. You don't have to have held any previous position – the only qualification is that you are a current Strathclyde student.

Which positions are available?

- Postgraduate Students' Representative
- BAME Rep
- Halls Rep
- Interfaith Rep
- Mature Students' Rep
- Part Time Students' Rep
- Women's Rep
- NUS Scotland Conference Delegate x9
- NUS UK Conference Delegate x7

If you have any questions about the roles or are unsure about standing in the elections, get in touch with our Democracy Team at strathunion.dem@strath.ac.uk or sign up to one of our [Zoom drop-in sessions](#).

Elections Timetable

Tuesday 6th October	12.00	Nominations open
Tuesday 3rd November	12.00	Nominations close and campaigning begins
Tuesday 3rd November	16.00	Candidates' briefing
Monday 9th November	16.00	Online Hustings (Non-Exec Roles only)
Tuesday 10th November	09.00	Voting Open
Thursday 12th November	16:00	Voting Closes – all expenses must be submitted
Thursday 12th November	18:00	Results Announcement Online

Nominations

You can submit your nomination online at <https://www.strathunion.com/elections/>

Candidates will also need to include your manifesto as part of the nomination form and before the nominations deadline. This is limited to a maximum of 250 words and any manifestos submitted after the nominations list is finalised will not be accepted.

You may also include a slogan to appear on the candidates list. This is limited to 12 words.

All nominations need to be submitted by 12noon on Tuesday 3rd November. The online nominations form will close at this time and no late forms can be accepted.

Photos

All candidates have the option to submit a photo of yourself along with their nomination form. This should be of decent quality, clearly show your face and be in a .jpg format. This will appear on the Strath Union website, so make sure you are happy with it.

Publicity and Candidate Allowances

As these elections will take place solely online, there will be no allowances for any spending for candidates this year. This means that you cannot spend any money on your campaigns, including promotional materials. Any candidates who is found to have spent money on their campaign will be in breach of the rules.

Campaigning

One of the most important parts of campaigning is making sure that you're not on your own. You will benefit from a group of friends and supporters to help you run your campaign.

You can organise this in any way you want to, but most candidates will nominate a 'Campaign Manager' to organise the volunteers on your behalf.

Here's a list of tips which may help you run a successful campaign:

- Gather a team of Campaign Volunteers (nominate a Campaign Manager to help you)
- Distribute tasks according to strengths and interests of your volunteers
- Be pro-active, not reactive
- Have a plan and stick to it
- Engage with students depending on their interests or situations
- Make your campaign relevant to students
- Remember what you want to achieve and be positive about change

Social Media

This can be an effective and powerful tool to support your campaign. You are encouraged to be active online using of social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter or Instagram to promote yourself.

Please remember that the same rules and policies apply online and all social media content should conform to the [Strath Union Equal Opportunities Policy](#).

Election Rules 2020

Strath Union is committed to running fair and free elections. All candidates should note:

1. Failure to comply with the Election Rules may lead to sanctions or disqualification.
2. Campaigning is defined as any means of public declaration or publicising of a candidacy during the Election period.
3. No public-facing campaigning is permitted until nominations close on Tuesday 3rd November at 12noon. Online campaigning may then commence.
4. Candidates may only stand for one officer role in the election. This does not include the NUS delegate positions.
5. Candidates will be held responsible for the actions of their campaign teams. It is up to candidates to ensure their campaign teams are aware of and follow the rules.
6. In line with the restrictions proposed by the Scottish Government, candidates will not be allowed to campaign physically. This includes speaking to students face to face or displaying any campaign materials on the John Anderson Campus.
7. Candidates will not be permitted to use any facilities in Strath Union for campaigning purposes.
8. Candidates and their supporters must not harass, bully, intimidate, bribe or blackmail students in the pursuit of votes.
9. Campaigners are prohibited from providing a smart device to students in order for them to vote and may not vote on another student's behalf.
10. Sabbatical officers and Strath Union student staff can only campaign if they have taken approved leave in advance to do so.
11. Strath Union staff who are not students are not permitted to be involved in campaigning.
12. Lecture shout outs are not permitted, including online lectures.
13. Candidates are not permitted to spend any money, on promotion for their Election campaign.
14. Candidates may set up one website and one account on each social media platform to use for campaigning purposes. The website must be taken down at the close of the Elections.
15. Unsolicited e-mails, including any e-mail lists of which you are a member of including Clubs, Societies, Groups and Class lists, may not be used.
16. Candidates should only do what others have had the opportunity to do. This means that any 'sponsorship' or 'favours' that have a value but do not involve candidate expenditure must be available to all candidates in the election.
17. Candidates are precluded from using club, society or group spaces on the John Anderson campus in a way that is not available to all other candidates.
18. Candidates are responsible for their own health and safety and should not undertake any activities which endanger the safety of others. This includes any safety guidance from the Scottish Government.
19. At all times during the Election, Candidates and members of their Campaign Teams are subject to and expected to act in accordance with Strath Union's [Code of Conduct](#) and with the University's [Dignity and Respect Policy](#).

The Legal Bit

The elections are run under the rules and regulations of Strath Union's Constitution (accessible at <https://www.strathunion.com/about/constitution/>) as agreed by University Court. Nothing in this document can in any way supersede the Constitution.

How Can I Make a Complaint?

Any student who wishes to complain about an issue relating to the Elections (including the conduct of Candidates) must do so via e-mail to strathunion.dem@strath.ac.uk. You must stipulate which rule you believe has been breached and include evidence relating to your complaint.

Complaints will be handled confidentially where possible. However, effective investigation may not be possible without sharing details of the complaint, including the complainant's identity, with other relevant individuals.

Complaints made anonymously or without sufficient supporting evidence may not be considered.

To be considered as an Election Complaint, a complaint must be submitted **within 24 hours of the alleged incident having occurred**, or come to light, **and no later than one hour before voting closes** in the relevant election period.

Complaints received after this time may be considered under Strath Union's normal Complaints Procedure but will have no bearing on the outcome of the election.

Handling of Election Complaints

On receipt of a valid Election Complaint, the Deputy Returning Officer (or their nominee) will undertake an investigation, as appropriate.

The Deputy Returning Officer will consider the complaint and any evidence presented and reach a decision on how to proceed in accordance with the Schedules.

Review of Election Complaints

Any complaint about the Deputy Returning Officer shall be addressed by the Returning Officer as will any appeals.

Where a complainant remains dissatisfied with the response they have received, they may request a review of the handling of the complaint by the Returning Officer. Any such request must be made in writing **within 6 hours of issue** of the original response to the complaint.

The Returning Officer may confirm, vary, or overturn the original decision of the Deputy Returning Officer. The Returning Officer's decision shall be final.

Polling

The voting period is between 10.00 on Tuesday 10th November and 16.00 on Thursday 12th November 2020. All voting is done online through the Strath Union website.

Our elections use the Transferable Voting System to elect the least unpopular candidates.

The Alternative Transferable Voting system (ATV) is used to elect a single candidate for a position (e.g. President) The Single Transferable Voting system (STV) is used to elect multiple candidates for a position (e.g. 2 Student Trustees).

With the Transferable Voting system, each voter is asked to rank the candidates in order of personal preference. For example, a completed ballot slip might look like this:

Candidate A	1
Candidate B	4
Candidate C	
Candidate D	2
Re-Open Nominations (RON)	3

At the close of voting, all the completed ballot forms are counted and allocated to each candidate according to the first preference indicated.

The Returning Officer for the election then declares the total number of valid votes, and the required quota. The quota is simply the minimum number of votes a candidate must gain in order to be sure of election. For single posts, the quota is a simple majority; the successful candidate must gain at least 50% of the total number of valid votes, plus one.

When more than two candidates are running for the same position, it is unlikely that a single candidate will achieve this quota. In this case, at the end of the first round of counting, the candidate with the least amount of votes is eliminated, and each of their votes is re-allocated to the next expressed preference on that ballot slip.

If, at the end of this second round of counting, the required quota has still not been achieved by any of the remaining candidates, then the process is repeated. The candidate with the least number of total votes is eliminated, and their votes are redistributed to the next indicated preference.

This process of elimination and redistribution is repeated until a candidate either achieves the required quota of 50% of the valid number of votes plus one, or until the final round, where only two candidates remain. In this case, the candidate with the highest number of total votes will be elected.

What is RON?

RON refers to Re-Open Nominations and is an option in each election. If RON receives the most votes in any given election, then none of the candidates for that position are elected and nominations are re-opened. At this point anyone may choose to lodge their nomination and previous candidates are free to stand again.

Announcing Results

Results will be announced online at 18.00 on Thursday 12th November 2020 online. The results announcement may be postponed on the instruction of the Returning Officer or Deputy Returning Officer. Results will be uploaded to the Strath Union website following the announcements.