

Strathclyde
Students'
Union



2021 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!

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

Which positions are available?

Executive Officers (full-time paid sabbatical roles)

- President
- Vice President Community
- Vice President Education
- Vice President Inclusion
- Vice President Sport
- Vice President Welfare

Non-Executive Officers (voluntary roles receiving an honorarium)

- BAME Rep*
- Democracy Convenor
- Disabled Students' Rep
- Faculty Rep Business Undergraduate
- Faculty Rep Business Postgraduate Research
- Faculty Rep Business Postgraduate Taught
- Faculty Rep Engineering Undergraduate
- Faculty Rep Engineering Postgraduate Research
- Faculty Rep Engineering Postgraduate Taught
- Faculty Rep Humanities and Social Sciences Undergraduate
- Faculty Rep Humanities and Social Sciences Postgraduate Research
- Faculty Rep Humanities and Social Sciences Postgraduate Taught
- Faculty Rep Science Undergraduate
- Faculty Rep Science Postgraduate Research
- Faculty Rep Science Postgraduate Taught
- Halls Rep
- Interfaith Rep
- International Students' Rep
- LGBT+ Rep
- Mature Students' Rep
- Part Time Students' Rep
- Women's Rep

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](#).

*Strath Union recognises the limitations and problems of using catchall umbrella terms such as 'Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME)' and we recognise that there are distinct and unique identities and challenges facing different communities referred to as 'BAME'.

Elections Timetable

Tuesday 26th January	12:00	Nominations open
Tuesday 16th February	12:00	Nominations close and online campaigning begins
Tuesday 2nd March	12:00	Voting opens
Friday 5th March	12:00	Voting closes (and deadline for submitting expenses)
Friday 5th March	17:00	Results announcement

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 must be submitted by 12noon on Tuesday 16th February. 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

Although the elections are online, each candidate is given a budget allowance that can be used on items to promote your campaign. For example, this could be a branded t-shirt or banner to use in promo videos, paying for social media promotions or outsourcing some design work.

It's up to you how to use your budget, however, receipts must be provided in order to receive reimbursement of funds from Strath Union and all items purchased must be for campaign purposes.

If you have any questions, particularly on what you plan to buy, please contact

strathunion.dem@strath.ac.uk

Please be aware social media platforms have their own rules and restrictions around promoted posts and candidates are responsible for ensuring posts follow these rules.

Candidates will receive the following allowances, in each case whichever is lower:

- Executive Roles (President and Vice Presidents): £50 or an equal share of £1,000
- Non-Exec roles (Reps and Convenors): £30 or an equal share of £2,000

Allowances will be provided on a 'spend and claim' basis whereby candidates must provide receipts and complete an expenses form in order to be refunded for expenses.

If required, you can obtain a £25 advance from Strath Union; further amounts will only be released on production of receipts for the previous amount. Please contact strathunion.dem@strath.ac.uk to request this.

This is the only budget that you are allowed to use for Elections purposes. Candidates may not add any of your own funds for election campaigning. There are also lots of free resources available online such as video and image editing software.

All expenses must be submitted by email to strathunion.dem@strath.ac.uk by close of polls at 12 noon on Friday 5th of March 2021.

Free Content Creation and Management

- Canva https://www.canva.com/en_gb/
- Desygner <https://desygner.com/>
- Biteable <https://biteable.com/>
- Wondershare Filmora <https://filmora.wondershare.com/>
- YouCut [Android download](#) (google) [iOS download](#) (apple)
- Soundbible <https://soundbible.com/royalty-free-sounds-1.html>
- Hootsuite (for managing social media activity) <https://www.hootsuite.com/plans/free-signup>

Free Online Courses

- Create a Social Media Marketing Campaign – 4hours
<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/create-a-social-media-marketing-campaign>
- Create a Professional Online Presence – 4hours
<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/create-a-professional-online-presence>
- How to Create Great Online Content – 4hours
<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/how-to-create-great-online-content>

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 2021

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 16th February at 12noon. Online campaigning may then commence.
4. Candidates may only stand for one officer role in the election.
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. Candidates must comply with current Scottish Government restrictions regarding Covid-19 (viewable at <https://www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/>) and failure to do so may result in disqualification.
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. Online lecture shout outs are not permitted.
13. The allocated campaign budget is the only money to be spent on campaign activities. Candidates are not permitted to spend any other funds, including their own money, on materials for the Election campaign. Accurate electronic copies of receipts (photos or scans) must be provided for all items before close of polling and any personal purchases not used for campaigning will not be reimbursed (evidence of use may be requested).
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 Strath Union, The University of Strathclyde and 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 and the Union's Board of Trustees. 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 17.00 on Friday 5th of March. The results announcement may be postponed on the instruction of the Returning Officer or Deputy Returning Officer and results will be uploaded to the Strath Union website following the announcements.