



FULL-TIME OFFICER ELECTIONS CANDIDATE HANDBOOK

2025



ELECTIONS



STUDENTS'
UNION
BOURNEMOUTH UNIVERSITY

Introduction

Thank you for showing an interest in becoming a Full-Time Officer and running in our elections!

The Students' Union at Bournemouth University (SUBU) is a student-led democratic organisation, which means that BU students and our elected officers help to shape the direction of our work and are involved in decision-making at all levels.

Elections are an exciting time for the Students' Union. Over the next few weeks, you will get the chance to run a campaign, develop new skills and put yourself forward to represent your fellow students here at Bournemouth University.

This handbook outlines what you will need to do to stand in the elections, the roles available and information about running a campaign, as well as the election rules, key contacts and dates.

If you have any questions about the elections, please contact the Elections team at subudemocracy@bournemouth.ac.uk.



Key dates

- **Applications Open** – Monday 20 January, 10am.
- **Applications Close** – Friday 14 February, 12pm (midday).
- **Candidate Briefing One** – Monday 17 February, 5–7pm.
- **Candidates Announced** – Monday 17 February, 7pm.
- **Pledges, Materials and Video Deadline** – Wednesday 5 March, 12pm (midday).
- **Craftivism Session** – Thursday 6 March, 12–2pm.
- **Candidate Briefing Two** – Monday 10 March, 5–7pm.
- **Craftivism Session** – Tuesday 11 March, 12–2pm.
- **Start of Campaigning and Pledges Posted** – Wednesday 12 March, 10am.
- **Candidate Q&A** – Friday 14 March, 3–6pm.
- **Voting Opens** – Monday 17 March, 10am.
- **Voting Closes** – Thursday 20 March, 2pm.
- **Expenses Deadline** – Friday 21 March, 10am.
- **Count** – Friday 21 March, 12pm.
- **Results** – Friday 21 March, 6pm.

Positions available

During this election, we elect four Full-Time Officers – these are full-time paid positions requiring you to have either finished your studies by the start date of the role (14th July 2025), or be willing to pause your studies for your term in office.

The Full-Time Officers guide the work of the Students' Union in specific areas of the student experience and in response to student feedback on important issues. The exact duties of each role depend on the needs of the students you are elected to represent, your pledges, and the developing work of the Students' Union.

Typical duties will consist of shaping campaigns, attending high-level meetings, supporting events and projects, and working on SUBU policy. For further details about the specific duties of each role, please see below. They can also be found at www.subu.org.uk/elections.

- [SU President](#)
- [Vice-President Education](#)
- [Vice-President Student Opportunities](#)
- [Vice President Welfare & Community](#)

Eligibility

You must be a current student at Bournemouth University to apply for one of these roles, and continue to be a student up to the start of this role in July 2025. Additionally, you must be an opted-in member of the Students' Union.

International students can be a Full-Time Officer and you can get a visa extension while you are in office. You can find out more on the [UKCISA website](#).

Please contact subudemocracy@bournemouth.ac.uk if you are unsure if you are opted in or wish to opt in to the Students' Union.



How it all works

1. Apply

To stand in the elections, you must apply for the role you want. You can apply online at www.subu.org.uk/elections.

To apply you will need:

- Your name as you would like it to appear on the form and ballot
- Your BU student number
- Your BU student email address
- A photo
- Your pledge – which describes what you want to do to develop the Union's goals if you're elected (maximum 300 words)

For your application to be confirmed, you will need to submit your application via our website by Friday 14 February at 12pm (midday).

Once you have submitted your application, you will be emailed by a member of the team. If you do not receive an email or if you experience any difficulties applying, please contact us on subudemocracy@bournemouth.ac.uk.

2. Attend the Candidate Briefings

There are two candidate briefings for you to attend during this process. They will give you essential information about election rules, give you access to our insights to assist you in writing your pledges, and provide you with tips on running a successful campaign. Both briefings will be in person. The dates of these are at the top of this document under 'key dates'; these will also be sent to you once you've submitted your application.

Candidate briefings are compulsory. If you are unable to attend the briefings, you must let us know.

3. Prep your campaign

Once you've attended both briefings, you can use the information you received to plan and prepare your campaign. Think about how you can make yourself stand out and what would make students vote for you.

Make sure you read the campaigning tips below. The FAQ covers the rules you and anyone supporting your campaign must follow during this period, so please read it carefully!

4. Start campaigning

At the relevant date and time, you will then be able to start campaigning and letting students know why you're the best person for the job! Remember: the main way students know about the SUBU elections is through the candidates, so it's important you help spread the word.



Campaigning

What does it take to run a successful campaign?

Campaigns come in all shapes and sizes, so get creative and come up with a campaign that shows who you are and what you want to achieve if you are elected.

The following elements will make it easier for you to run a successful campaign:

- A clear statement and/or pledge that outlines your ideas
- A good photo so students can recognise you if they meet you on campus
- A plan for how you will reach students and convince them to vote to you
- A good support team (e.g. friends, housemates or coursemates) that can help you with your campaign, or help you get through it!

Prepping your campaign:

What is a pledge?

Your pledge is a 300-word statement where you describe your commitments to developing SUBU's goals (more information will be provided at Candidate briefings) – these are what you'll aim to fulfil if you are elected.

A pledge is how candidates sell themselves to students. It sets your aims and priorities – it will become your promise to students and you will be held accountable to it, so make sure it is realistic and achievable.

You'll also be asked to provide a 50-word condensed pledge. Think 'elevator pitch' style.

You don't have to submit your pledge when you submit your application, but it must be submitted by the pledge deadline.

How do you make a pledge?

When you create your pledge, you can consider the following things:

- Think about why you are running in the elections. Take some time to think about why you want to run, what you would like to do to develop SUBU's goals and help improve the student experience here at BU, and how you plan to convey your message. Contact your friends and run your ideas by them.
- Think about who you are representing. Students have different experiences during their time at university. Think about what issues are currently important to students here at BU by reading SUBU's current goals below and looking at what policy is already being worked on by your current Officers [here](#).
- Think about your key pledges. We recommend having no more than three or four pledges that are important for the students you want to represent. This is because you have a remit within your role already and only have a year in office - you'd be surprised how quickly that goes. Think quality over quantity!
- Original and creative ideas will set you apart from other candidates. Make sure you research your ideas to check they are not already being implemented.

SUBU's goals

At SUBU, we want every student to believe we supercharge their life at BU and beyond. To achieve this, we have identified four key areas to focus on, which came from student feedback.

- **Ending student loneliness** – every student to have a strong and supportive friendship and social network
 - Think community, engagement and belonging
- **Activate experience for life and work** – every student to be aware and have access to experiences that build their independence, employability and confidence
 - Think employability, personal growth and resilience
- **Attracting talent** – increase in students choosing BU. All students to be members of the Students' Union
 - Think student life, voice and impact
- **Empower with compassionate support** – students to be equipped with the right tools to navigate challenges. No student is lost looking for help
 - Think holistic support (cost of living, wellbeing, personal)

How can you make your campaign more engaging?

Being elected is not all about knowing the most people or printing the most posters. You can succeed by campaigning in creative ways and speaking to as many students as possible. A key element to a successful campaign is the publicity – how you tell students about your ideas and persuade them to vote.

- **Campaign theme:** Campaign themes come in all shapes and sizes. Themes have been linked to names or a character that will appeal to students. Students' Union campaign themes have included Harry Potter, funny puns on people's names or a focus on key policies and ideas.
- **Campaign slogan:** Many candidates choose a catchy, memorable phrase across their campaign to attract students, give a feel of their campaign and set them apart from other candidates. Make your slogan short, snappy and original.
- **Translate your message:** We are an international, diverse and neurodiverse campus, so why not translate your message so it reaches students more effectively!
- **Record a video:** We recommend recording the two videos we are willing to share on your behalf. This is one 90-second video, and a shorter 30-second video. These two videos will be shared across SUBU social media, helping students to engage with your pledge.

During campaigning:

Can you campaign as a group with other people?

No. Candidates cannot run or campaign as a group with other people. This is often called or referred to as a slate.

This is explicitly prohibited in SUBU elections, and anyone found to be running in a slate will be subject to punitive action. Your campaign is your own, and whilst you can campaign parallel to another candidate, you must focus only your own campaign when speaking to students and not discuss or campaign on behalf of other candidates.

How can you reach students?

How you reach students and how you want to campaign is totally up to you. There is no right or wrong way to campaign or reach students.

You could campaign in person by putting posters up in the designated areas and roaming campus to speak to students about your pledge and why they should vote for you. If doing this method, read below about where you can put campaign materials and take note that on Talbot Campus, you are not allowed to campaign in the library or in halls (unless in your own flat).

You can also use social media to engage with students. This can be done through your existing profiles or new ones created specifically to campaign from. If you can campaign on social media, be sure to tag @sububournemouth and @subudemocracy so we can see your content.

It is important to consider what method of campaigning will reach the most students you wish to target; some may be on Instagram or TikTok, whilst others may only be on campus, so there may be strength in doing a blended campaign approach.

When you campaign online, it's important to remember that the elections rules still apply. Be nice to other candidates and remember that things you post online will be seen by a diverse group of students (not just your close friends). If you see a post or comment on social media that doesn't follow the election rules, you should immediately take a screenshot or save the post in another way. To make a formal complaint about a post on social media, you must provide evidence. You'll need a screenshot or another form of evidence to submit alongside your complaint. See the section about complaints for further information on how to make a complaint.

In addition to social media posts, you could also do a lecture shout-out. Remember to ask the lecturer in advance, so they know you would like to use a couple of minutes of the lecture to promote your campaign.

Due to the vast number of social media platforms, it is not for the Deputy Returning Officer or election staff to monitor candidates' use of social media. Candidates and their supporters are reminded that offensive or intimidating behaviour, or language, whilst participating Students' Union activities (e.g. elections) may be considered misconduct or gross misconduct and will be dealt with under the rules and regulations that govern the election.

Can you display your campaigning materials on campus?

Candidates can display campaigning materials in several places across both campuses.

On Talbot, The Student Centre is the best place to put up any posters or materials, as this is a well-populated student location. It is the only location on campus where we can guarantee your materials will stay up and not be taken down by BU staff.

You are also permitted to put materials up on notice boards across campus, but putting anything up in other buildings beyond that may put your materials at risk of being taken down or lost. To summarise, you can put materials up on campus, but there is a risk of it being taken down if it's not in The Student Centre.

There are also campaigning exclusion zones which include the library, halls (aside from your own flat) and voting booths. These are areas where no campaigning of any kind can take place, including having campaign materials present.

At Lansdowne, aside from the noticeboard and Students' Union offices on the third floor of the Bournemouth Gateway Building, you will be unable to place any campaign materials. We will supply a location to place posters outside the entrance of the Bournemouth Gateway Building and this will be where all campaign materials must go; we will also provide a way to laminate a limited number of materials to protect against adverse weather.

All campaign materials must only be secured using white tack. The use of blue tack, glue, Sellotape or any other method is prohibited and will be considered a breach of election regulations.

Funding for your campaign:

Is there a budget for campaigning?

During the campaign, each candidate can spend up to £40 on campaign materials. You cannot spend any more than this amount.

You must declare your election expenses to us by 10am on Friday 21 March.

How do you get reimbursed for your campaigning expenses?

You must keep all your receipts and keep a log of all your expenditure on the Expenses tracker available at www.subu.org.uk/elections . This must be submitted via the expenses submission form by 10am on Friday 21 March.

If you have not spent any of your allocated budget, please submit a blank form with your details on it. On the Expenses tracker, you will also be required to include the details of the bank account that you would like to be reimbursed to.

Items used in campaigning that a candidate or supporter already own will be valued at a standard value and must be included in your expenditure. All campaign materials must be available to other candidates at the same price, so we cannot accommodate "mates rates".

Once you have submitted your expenses and these have been reviewed by a member of the team, you will be contacted to review and accept the payment requisition form, and the bank details you wish to be paid to. This will then be sent to the SUBU Finance team. Please note that it can take up to two weeks for any funds to be reimbursed.

Support during your campaign:

How do you build a support team?

Having a good support team can be a huge help.

Firstly, they can help you reach more students. The more people are spreading the message about your campaign, the bigger reach you're likely to have.

Secondly, a good support team can also provide emotional support and encouragement. If you're feeling tired or busy, a friendly smile or some encouraging words can be a huge help!

Good people to ask to be part of your support team are:

- Housemates
- Friends from your course
- Friends from your student group, club or society

Remember that you'll act as the leader of your support team, so it's a good idea to:

- Ask your support team to familiarise themselves with your pledge
- Make it clear what you expect from them to avoid misunderstandings (but remember that they may also have other commitments)
- Go through the election rules together, so your supporters don't break the rules. If they do break any rules, the consequences will likely reflect onto you, as it is your campaign
- Say thank you and show them that you appreciate the support

What other support is available to candidates?

The Students' Union wants the election process to be a fun and engaging experience, where you feel supported and informed. In addition to the guidance and information provided in this document, we also deliver two Candidate Briefings that you must attend. These briefings will give you an opportunity to meet the SUBU team, meet other candidates, ask questions and learn more about the elections process. We also offer opportunities to craft your campaign materials, and workshops on how to campaign successfully.

The elections are overseen and supported by staff within the Students' Union. At any time before, during or after the elections process, feel free to get in touch about your campaign and reach out for support. Staff are also the first point of call should you have a problem or need to raise a complaint. You can contact a member of staff at subdemocracy@bournemouth.ac.uk.

The election is overseen by the Deputy Returning Officer, who makes sure the election is run fairly and will deal with any disputes and anyone who breaks election rules. The Deputy Returning Officer is Kayleigh Heckford, and she can be reached at subdemocracy@bournemouth.ac.uk



General FAQs about the SUBU Elections

Can clubs, societies and other student groups endorse candidates?

Yes. Clubs, societies or other student groups are allowed to support candidates. **But please note** by endorsing a candidate, they are effectively saying to their members (or people with an interest in the club, society or group), that this candidate has their best interests at heart. This might be because they care about issues affecting the club, society or group, share the values of the club, society or group, or have shown a commitment to support them. Talking to as many of the candidates as possible would be advised to see who might represent the club, society or group best.



How will Nerve Media cover the election?

Our Nerve Media outlets may provide some coverage of the elections; this may include filming of candidate events, capturing photographs of your campaign activity, and capturing images and video footage of voting week. It is the decision of the individual candidate if they want to appear in any student media. You will be informed in advance if Nerve Media will be covering any events run by SUBU.

Can you use your nickname instead of your full name?

When you nominate yourself, you can set a display name that will appear on the ballot paper. This could include using a nickname. This name will appear on the ballot and the Students' Union website. You could use a nickname for campaigning purposes or because it is the name that students know you by. We recommend that your election material include your name, as it will appear on the ballot paper.

How does voting work?

The Students' Union uses a voting system call Single Transferable Vote (STV). This allows voters to rank candidates in order of preference rather than just selecting one person. Voters are able select candidates in whichever order they prefer (1,2,3, etc) and it builds the number of votes that person receives. Voters can express as many or as few preferences as they prefer, but cannot mark more than one candidate with the same number. This system allows voters to still have a say and feel comfortable should their first-choice option not be elected.

To win, candidates must have a total number of votes higher than 50% of all votes cast for that role. This can either be achieved through first preference votes or through a redistribution of votes, as less voted candidates are slowly excluded and their votes redistributed until a quoracy of votes is met.

In all SUBU elections, there will be a RON (Re-Open Nominations) candidate, which voters can select if they do not wish to vote for any of the candidates. By choosing this option, the voter will indicate their desire for the election process to restart.

What should you do if you want to make a complaint?

Complaints must be submitted in writing, using the Complaints form. The Complaints form can be found at www.subu.org.uk/represented/dandc/regulationsandcomplaints.

Grounds for complaint are that one or more of the election rules have been broken, or that one or more Students' Union or University policies or regulations have been breached by a candidate, supporter or election official during the election.

The complaint must make clear which rule or rules have been broken, by whom and when, and must be supported by evidence.

Evidence might be, but is not restricted to, the following: documents, photographs, video clips, screenshots, emails or written statements from staff or students.

What is the deadline for submitting a complaint?

Written complaints should be made **as soon as possible** after the event which you wish to complain about has occurred. Delaying a complaint makes it harder to investigate and, if upheld, apply any appropriate penalty.

Delayed complaints may also cause delay or postponement of the count for the position concerned.

Complaints which are delayed may result in no action being taken against the candidate concerned (e.g. if the complaint is upheld and would have resulted in a candidate being suspended from campaigning, this cannot be applied after polling has closed).

Complaints about campaigning must be submitted no later than one hour before the result count.

Is there anything else you should know?

Running a successful campaign can take a lot of time and effort, so remember to look after yourself:

- Don't be put off if a student is disinterested or rude to you; the majority will be interested in hearing about your campaign
- Take some time out and grab a drink or some food to re-focus
- Don't overwork yourself or your team
- Try to take care of as much life admin as possible before the voting week. E.g. cook yourself some meals in advance or ask a friend to help you with some specific tasks
- It might also be worth planning your work, studies and commitments around the voting week, so you have a lot of free time to chat to students
- Ask your friends and course mates for help and advice – it can be fun and exciting to help someone else with their campaign, so do not be afraid to ask!
- Plan something nice to do at the end of voting week. Even if you are not elected, you would have achieved a lot!

If you decide that you no longer want to run as a candidate, please contact us on subdemocracy@bournemouth.ac.uk to withdraw your application.

The SUBU team are here to help, so don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions or concerns. The easiest way to reach us is by emailing us on subdemocracy@bournemouth.ac.uk.



If you have any questions, feel free pop in and see the team on the first floor of The Student Centre.
Or, you can contact the team via email.

✉ subudemocracy@bournemouth.ac.uk

🌐 subu.org.uk/Elections

Follow us!

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The Student Centre, Talbot Campus, Fern Barrow, Poole, BH12 5BB