

Elections Guidance

Welcome to the SU elections! Whether you're new to the process or a seasoned campaigner, this guide is here to help you navigate the journey ahead. It's packed with all the information you need to run an effective, accessible, and fun campaign.

Key Principles of the Election

The elections are designed to be fair, inclusive and transparent. Here's what you need to know:

- All students have the right to vote freely, without pressure from anyone.
- Every candidate has the same chance to campaign and share their message.
- If any issues arise, there's a clear and fair process for resolving them.

The election is supervised by the **Returning Officer (RO), Peter Robertson**, who has been approved by the Board of Trustees. Peter Robertson is the Charity Director of National Union of Students, and is an independent and impartial individual charged with ensuring the elections are delivered in a free and fair manner.

The RO may delegate responsibilities to a **Deputy Returning Officer (DRO)**, a member of SU staff approved by the Board of Trustees. But ultimately, the RO has the final say on the interpretation of the election bye-law, rules, processes and guidelines.

Timeline

Stage	Date	Time
Formal RSU Officer Notice of Elections published	Monday 16 December 2024	16:00
RSU Election nominations open	Friday 17 January 2025	11:00
RSU Election nominations close	Wednesday 12 February 2025	11:00
Completion of RSU Officer candidate eligibility checks and announcement	Friday 14 February 2025	16:00
Candidate briefing session	Monday 17 February 2025	16:00
Campaigning official start	Tuesday 18 February 2025	11:00
Sabbatical Officer Candidate hustings	Monday 24 February 2025	16:00
RSU Election voting opens	Tuesday 25 February 2025	11:00
RSU Election voting closes	Thursday 27 February 2025	11:00
Vote Count	Friday 28 February 2025	14:00
RSU Election results announcement	Friday 28 February 2025	16:00

Running for Election

Nominations

Nominations open at 11am on Friday 17 January 2025 and close at 11am on Wednesday 12 February 2025.

If you wish to stand for a role the first step is putting yourself up for nomination. This is a really simple process and involves you logging into our elections website and completing the

nomination form. As part of this you'll need to select which role you would like to stand for (note that you can only stand for one position).

To process your nomination, we'll need some basic information including your name, a passport style photo of yourself (so students can recognise you), and a manifesto explaining your priorities (more on that later).

Once the nomination period closes there will be a period of time when campaigning is not permitted – this allows us to verify every candidate is eligible to stand. We recommend that you use this period to review the different guides and resources we make available during this time.

All registered full-time and part-time students that have not opted out of SU membership, and Sabbatical Officer Trustees at the University of Roehampton at the close of nomination are eligible to stand in the elections.

If you intend to stand for a full-time role, you will be required to undergo further checks with regards to your eligibility to be a trustee, your immigration status, and your ability to start your sabbatical year on the 1st of July. You must attend a pre-term meeting with the SU before we can confirm your eligibility.

Get to Know the Role

Ahead of submitting your nomination you can book a pre-term meeting with either the SU or your respective College which can set you up for success. During the meeting you'll develop an understanding of the nature of the role, any prerequisites, and expectations.

- **Meeting with the RSU Chief Executive Officer (or nominee):** If you're running for a Sabbatical Officer Trustee position, you should have a one-on-one meeting with the RSU Chief Executive Officer. This meeting is **mandatory for international students**. Email elections@roehampton.ac.uk to book this meeting. You can read the RSU Pre-Term Agreement here [here](#).
- **Meeting with Head of College (or nominee):** If you're running for a College President or Deputy President position, you should have a one-on-one meeting with your respective Head of College. Email the Head of College directly to book this meeting.

Manifestos

Manifestos must be uploaded by 11 am on Wednesday 12 February 2025.

A manifesto is your chance to tell the electorate about your policies, ideas, and convince them you're the right person for the job. Written versions of your manifesto will be displayed on the Students' Union website. You can use the [RSU Members Manifesto](#) to help you understand the issues Roehampton students face. You can find help to write your manifesto in the [RSU Manifesto Guide](#). You can find both documents on the Candidate Hub.

Any manifestos submitted after the deadline will not be published. A candidate without a manifesto is not a great look so make sure to meet the deadline.

Please note, your campaign material must not comment on the performance of unelected RSU staff members or their department if they are the sole member of the department. Permanent staff are accountable to their line managers.

Manifestos must be uploaded by 11am on Wednesday 12 February 2025 to [RSU Elections](#). There is a 500-word limit for all manifestos. Don't forget to include your candidate social media account in your manifesto so students can connect with you and read more about your ideas and campaign.

Hustings

During the course of the elections, candidate debates (called hustings or question time) may be organised. These provide candidates with the opportunity to speak about their campaigns and their policies.

Candidate Briefing

All candidates must attend a briefing where we'll go over these election rules and guidelines and give you an opportunity to clarify any questions you have. The briefing will be at 16:00 on Monday 17 February 2025 and candidates should register to attend [here](#).

Can't attend? If you can't make it, you will need to notify the Deputy Returning Officer (DRO) in advance via elections@roehampton.ac.uk.

Campaigning

Campaigning begins at 11 am on Tuesday 18 February 2025.

No campaigning is permitted before this time.

To win an election you need to run a successful campaign that convinces the student body you are up to the task. Here's some key information about campaigning:

- **Campaign with integrity:** Keep it positive and respectful by focusing on promoting your ideas for change.
- **Constructive discussions:** Engage in discussions and debates about ideas and opinions in a respectful and constructive manner. Candidates must not make any false statements about other candidate's personal conduct, manifesto, or conduct, whether in person, in writing, by illustration, or online. If you encounter an issue, you need to speak to the elections team or submit a complaint.
- **Campaigning individually:** You must campaign as an individual. You are not allowed to team up with other candidates (often called running as a slate), promote their campaigns, appear together, or share any physical or virtual resources.
- **Engaging with societies and sports clubs:** Societies and sports clubs are encouraged to give you opportunities to engage with their members. They can endorse you, but they should also offer the same opportunity to all candidates.
- **Your responsibility:** You are responsible for your campaign team's actions. Make sure they understand the rules and act accordingly or you could face sanctions for something they have done.

Spreading Your Message

Campaigning is allowed both in-person and online, but there are some restricted spaces where campaigning isn't allowed. You must not campaign in Elm Grove or the Library – other spaces

may be added to this by the DRO during the course of the elections. If this happens all candidates will be notified.

It's important that you always ask for permission from the owner of a space before posting posters or campaign materials in physical spaces (e.g. noticeboards) as well as online spaces (e.g. society, club or course/module social media pages or groups, websites, or online forums etc). You must not use any University distribution list available through Outlook.

Campaigning Tips

Remember that campaigning is only allowed during the campaigning period which begins at 11am on Tuesday 18 February 2025.

Ahead of this you can tell your friends you are running but you must not launch any of your campaign content until the above time.

Here's our tips for campaigning:

- **Be creative but stay professional:** Design posters and digital content that are eye-catching and respectful. You want to stand out among a sea of other candidates.
- **No logos or mascots:** You can mention the RSU, University of Roehampton, and the Colleges in your campaign materials, but you must not use their logos or mascots (except the official RSU Elections marque that we will provide you). Stick to your own branding. You and your team are encouraged to use #roelects and the voting QR code, provided by RSU, in your campaign materials.
- **Include website address:** Make sure your election sites and social media pages should contain a link to the election's website roehamptonstudent.com/elections.
- **Use of AI tools:** Candidates may use AI tools (e.g. for design or content creation) to support their campaign, provided the materials created adhere to election rules, including originality, respectfulness, and compliance with other campaigning guidelines.
- **Sustainable practices:** Digital campaigns can help reduce environmental impact. If you do print materials, make them eco-friendly where possible. Things to consider are the type of paper being used, is the ink sustainable, and how you might minimise waste throughout your campaign.
- **Removing campaign materials:** When you're putting up posters or signs, please use materials that won't damage surfaces like walls or paint. Remember, it's your responsibility to remove all campaign materials after the election period.
- **Talk to people:** Explain the policies behind your manifesto and why you're the right person for the job. They'll need to know who you are and what role you're running for but keep your interactions short but engaging.
- **Create realistic policies:** It's important that your policies are grounded in reality and can actually be achieved. So, while offering all students free access to the gym might sound great, it's highly unlikely that it would be possible. Think about issues that you can improve and that will likely connect with other students. That way they'll take you seriously and know you have their back.

Campaign Budgets

Candidates running for full-time officer roles may spend up to £20 including VAT on whatever is needed to deliver your campaign. For part-time officer roles you may spend up to £10 including VAT.

You must ensure that you have VAT receipts for all of your expenses. You must declare all of your spending by 11am on Thursday 27 February 2025 by filling out our [expenses form](#) – you can upload your receipts directly to the form by taking photos of them and adding them as attachments.

The Students' Union does not provide any printed materials to candidates so please ensure you account for you printing costs in your budget.

Candidates will be reimbursed 100% of their spending (up to the above limit) where receipts have been provided and budget forms approved.

The Voting System

Voting opens at 11am on Tuesday 25 February 2025 and closes at 11am on Thursday 27 February 2025.

We use the Alternative Vote (AV) for one position, and Single Transferable Vote (STV) with Quota for multiple positions. This enables students to list their preferences for a position using numbers, with 1 for their first choice, 2 for their second choice and so on. This means that should your first choice not get elected; your vote will be transferred to your next preference. This makes it possible that a student that doesn't win the first round of voting may still be elected if they have wider support from across the student body.

All votes will be placed through our online voting system which is accessible from the majority of modern web browsers and is mobile friendly. Do not ask others to vote using your or your campaign team's devices. Also, campaign teams and candidates shouldn't touch other people's devices while campaigning.

Re-open Nominations (RON)

Every position has the option of re-open nominations, otherwise known as RON. This exists to give the electorate the chance to say that they believe no candidate is suitable for the position.

Close of Voting

After the close of voting at 11am on Thursday 27 February, there is a short window for complaints to be submitted to the Deputy Returning Officer. These need to be received by 1pm on Thursday 27 February with no complaints after this deadline accepted. All cases will be resolved before the results for the elections are released.

The results for the RSU Election 2025 will be announced at Results Night on Friday 28 February 2025, location details will be confirmed by email. All candidates and their campaign teams are invited to attend, celebrate the end of the elections and hear the results.

The official results will be posted online on 6pm on Friday 28 February.

Complaints

If you have any concerns about the election, we encourage candidates to approach the Election Team by emailing elections@roehampton.ac.uk to discuss these, however, should you wish to make a complaint, it will follow the below process:

1. Any complaints must be submitted using the online [RSU Elections Complaints Form](#)
2. Only completed RSU Elections Complaints Forms will be considered by the RO or DRO.
3. Complaints should be submitted within 24 hours of the incident in question or at the earliest possible moment.
4. Complaints cannot be anonymous and the ruling by the RO or DRO regarding the complaint may be communicated to all candidates within the election.
5. Following an investigation, the RO or DRO may make a ruling included, but not limited to, the following sanctions. Depending on the severity of the breach, any or all of these steps may be by-passed when making a ruling:
 - i. Warning
 - ii. Suspension of campaigning
 - iii. Indefinite suspension of campaign pending disqualification
 - iv. Following advice from the DRO, the RO may decide to disqualify a candidate, order a re-run.
6. All complaints must be received by the deadline stated in the Elections timelines.
7. Complaints regarding the conduct of elections officials must be submitted to elections@roehampton.ac.uk

When it comes to complaints, ensure you include as much detail as possible (dates, times, and locations) alongside any evidence (e.g. contact details of witnesses, photos or screenshots).

During the election period, all complaints must be submitted by 1pm on Thursday 27 February 2025. If your complaint is in regard to the administration of the vote count, you must submit this vote within one hour of the count starting.

If you don't agree with a decision, you can appeal to the **Returning Officer (RO)** within two hours of the decision or by voting closure, whichever is later, by using the [RSU Elections Appeals Form](#).

Additional Support

If you ever feel unsure or need some help along the way, don't hesitate to reach out:

- **Workshops:** Join the election training sessions.
- **Materials:** There are a number of guides and materials available on the candidate hub that you can use to develop your campaign as well as developing your skills.
- **Guidance:** Get advice from the Elections Team if you have questions or need clarification on the rules.

You can contact the Elections Team at elections@roehampton.ac.uk.

By following these election guidelines, you'll run a campaign that's effective, accessible, and fun, and in line with the election values of the Students' Union. Best of luck, and feel free to reach out if you have any questions!