

Student Officer Elections 2025: Top Tips & Guidelines

This document covers guidance to candidates in our Student Officer Elections – we have provided our top tips to ensure candidates are participating in a free and fair election and to help candidates stick to our golden rule. This is not an exhaustive list of everything our golden rule implicates but includes FAQs and examples of incidents that have happened previously. If you have any questions about something not covered, please get in touch.

Golden Rule: Candidates are expected to conduct themselves in a way which is fair and reasonable and engage in a positive campaigning experience. This means:

- Only do things that another student at the University of Liverpool reasonably could do
- Treat all students and staff with respect

When can I start campaigning?

You are welcome to start campaigning whenever you like but we would recommend that you do not let this get in the way of your studies. Remember that students will not be able to take action and cast their vote until vote week.

Can I spend money on campaigning?

The Guild believes that candidates do not need to spend their own money on campaigning, as we will provide resources for candidates to access. However, if candidates wish to do so, they are able to use their own money to fund campaigning, up to a **limit of £30**.

Candidates should keep their receipts for any purchases, which we may request to see.

What if my Campaign Team breaks a rule?

Candidates are responsible for the actions of their Campaign Team.

You should share guidelines with your Campaign Team, and make sure they are a positive impact on your campaign.

Ensure your team are aware of how complaints can affect a candidate's campaign.

Where can I put posters and banners?

Posters & banners should be placed in reasonable locations, using removable fixings that won't damage surfaces, with permission where possible. We are aware of some locations where they will be removed so advise you to avoid these locations to make the most of your materials. If your posters are removed in the Guild building (they will be removed if sticky tape is used or if placed on Fire Doors), we will pass these to Guild Reception for you to collect but cannot guarantee this will be the case.

Locations to avoid include:

- Bus stops (the Council may remove these, or view them as fly posting)
- University Libraries excluding dedicated candidate notice boards (staff often remove these)
- Trees (damaging to the environment)

Flyers are a precious campaigning tool and should be a reminder for a prospective voter of a meaningful conversation. We recommend you do not leave piles of them lying around, as it is unlikely this will convert a student into a voter, and they may be thrown away.

Can candidates do lecture shout-outs?

- You may do lecture shout-outs, both in online and in-person lectures
- You should ask the lecturer or tutor's permission beforehand to make sure they are happy with this
- You should ask for 5 minutes at the beginning or end of a lecture, so as not to interrupt teaching

What if someone is struggling to vote?

Voters must cast their own votes. Be aware when students are voting on tablets/laptops - do not interfere, or be perceived to be interfering, with another student's vote.

You can send voters to staffed Guild Voting Stations. You must keep at least 1 metre away from these stations, as they are a neutral space for students to consider all options in the election.

Do not canvass in the libraries, only outside of them, as these are a quiet study spaces for students. You will be able to affix a campaign poster to a dedicated board at both the libraries' entrances during vote week if you wish, just ask at Library Reception.

Can I leaflet in University of Liverpool Halls?

The Halls Team do not permit leafletting in halls, including putting leaflets under doors. This is because they are a slip hazard, and a fire safety + security concern. However, you can supply

halls with promo material, and they will be distributed for you. Please talk to the relevant Halls Reception to organise this distribution.

Are there rules around what I can and can't do on social media?

Candidates can use paid social media advertising but should be aware that the rules regarding paid ads relating to democracy are strict on platforms such as Facebook and Instagram, and posts with "vote" messaging are usually not approved.

Candidates must use paid ads in accordance with the rules of the social media platform and do so at their own risk. Candidates must not spend more than £20 on paid advertisements over the election period. This amount would be included in the overall amount a candidate can spend, as outlined in the previous point.

We may ask a candidate to provide us with an activity log as a record of the information they have posted online as part of their campaign. An activity log should include:

- Screenshots of posts that include timestamps, captions and any images used
- Screenshots of stories posted to any platform that are only published for a limited time period. This should also include timestamps of those posts.
- Copies of any videos that are posted online on any platform
- Comment history for each post

What if I'm student staff and a candidate, or a student staff member wants to be on my Campaign Team?

The Guild's student staff members are eligible, and permitted, to vote in the elections and all other democratic procedures. Student staff members may also run in the elections and join campaign teams if you so wish. We encourage you to get involved as any other student would, especially by exercising your right to vote.

As student staff throughout the duration of the elections, whether you wish to run in the election or join a campaign team, you must adhere to the following guidance whilst doing so:

- You must not use Guild resources to campaign
- You must not campaign whilst on shift
- You must not campaign whilst wearing Guild work uniform
- You must not print posters, or other materials for use in campaigning from Guild staff printers
- You may post on social media about candidate campaigns, however, must not post whilst on shift
- You must not use Guild staff-only facilities, areas or resources to campaign
- You must not use Guild work-related group chats to discuss Guild election candidates, voting, or to canvass voters
- If you have any concerns or queries, please email democracy@liverpool.ac.uk

Are there rules for re-running Student Officers?

There are specific rules for Student Officers who are re-running in the elections.

Current Officers have a platform and may have recognition within the student body, they may also have contacts across the campus and access to Guild resources as a normal part of their job. This can be perceived as an unfair advantage; therefore, measures are taken in the lead up to the election period to minimise this.

We remind re-running Officers of the Golden Rule here, to only do what another student could reasonably do. This means they cannot use their job to promote their election campaign. The Guild takes the following measures to ensure fairness, please note this list is not exhaustive:

- The Guild social media channels will not share Officer social accounts from when nominations close, and website and other updates will not be fronted by re-running Officer's names or images. Where a current Officer is not re-running, but has chosen to endorse a candidate, the same rules would apply.
 - Student Officers must rename any social media handles from "President X" to "Vote for X" or "X for President" etc. The Guild will remove Officer social media handles from the Guild website, email footers and any other similar areas.
 - Guild career staff must remain neutral and not express any views in the elections. Guild staff may not advise or support Officers in the election and you must not ask them to do so.
 - Student staff must remain neutral whilst on shift and cannot openly support any candidates whilst working for the Guild (though they can vote).

Student Officers must not do the following:

- Campaign during paid work hours – they must book annual leave to campaign
- Use lists or resources that they only have access to due to their role – this includes social media groups which you have been added to as part of your job e.g. Halls, society lists, anything on the back end of the Guild website, campaign groups etc.
- Use Guild offices to store campaign items – all candidates are permitted to use the Guild lockers
- Use any work equipment or items belonging to the Guild in their campaigning (a Guild provided work laptop being the exception). Examples may include, but are not limited to: banners, stationery, printer, photocopier, props etc.
- University staff or departments may know Officers through their job, but they must not promote them in any way. Officers may ask in the same way as any other candidates for the opportunity to do lecture shout-outs.