

Society Endorsements Guidance for Student Officer Elections

Guild Student Officer Elections are taking place this Semester and we know that societies may want to show their support for one or more candidates, by endorsing them as a society. Society Endorsements are the process by which a Guild-registered society chooses to show their support for one or more election candidates.

From our Elections Exit Survey data, we have found that Society Endorsements do not have a significant impact on voting behaviours and the election result. However, endorsements can be a good way for candidates to engage with students and help to create healthy debate. This means that having a society endorse a candidate is not necessary for winning the election. However, endorsements can be a good way for candidates to engage with students, by meeting with individuals in societies to put their message across.

If you are a society wishing to endorse a candidate, you are welcome to get involved. However, you must follow the guidance outlined below and get in touch if you have any questions.

If you are a candidate, you can see below the process a society must follow to endorse a candidate. It's your responsibility to ensure that any society that is endorsing you has made the decision in line with the Guild's Society Endorsement Guidelines Guidance for 2025.

Step One – Organise a Meeting:

If a society wishes to endorse a candidate(s), they must hold a meeting of their members. This can be face-to-face, online or hybrid.

In this meeting, societies may invite candidates to the meeting to address their members. Societies can choose whether they invite all candidates or no candidates:

- If they opt to invite candidates, they must ensure **all candidates** have a fair opportunity to take part e.g. they must email all candidates at the same time with an invitation to attend, within a fair and reasonable time frame. Not all candidates may choose to participate, but they must be given the opportunity to do so. A fair & reasonable timeline is recommended as 72 hours between contacting candidates to the meeting taking place, however 48 hours is also suitable if required.
- The Guild can pass candidate email addresses onto Society Committees, on request, so societies can invite them to your endorsement meeting. Please contact democracy@liverpool.ac.uk to request these email addresses.
- Alternatively, societies may choose to invite **no candidates** to the meeting. The society could instead present candidate manifestos in order to give their members the information instead. If societies do this, all candidate manifestos must be shared, these can be found on the Guild website once candidates are announced.
- If a society member is a candidate, and plans to attend the meeting, the society must invite all other candidates to attend as well.

If a candidate is a member of a society committee, that candidate must not have any involvement in the decision to endorse or the process of endorsement.

Step Two – Invite Society Members:

- All society members who are **full members of the Guild** must be invited via email, to be sent via the back end of the Guild website. (*Full Membership definition: <https://www.liverpoolguild.org/about/how-we-re-run/membership>*). For example, society members who are non-students or students at other Universities in the city are not full members and so cannot vote.
- Society Presidents and Secretaries, who are administrators of their page on the Guild website, can send an email out to only full members through the back end of the Guild website. **When sending a new message, the President or Secretary must click** “Add Recipients” and then must choose “Endorsements” from the lists.
- A reminder of how to send messages out through the website [can be found here](#).
- The meeting details and the voting link (explained below) must be included in the email.
- If the Society Committee do not have admin rights to the back end of the Guild website, they should get in touch with the Societies Team via saadmin@liverpool.ac.uk

Step Three - Society Members Cast Votes:

- Adequate notice must be given of the meeting, to enable as many society members who are full members of the Guild to attend as possible. Adequate notice is recommended as 72 hours between contacting candidates to the meeting taking place, however 48 hours is also suitable if required.
- The voting itself must be open for a fair and clearly specified amount of time.
- Voting must take place online, following the meeting, in order to allow all society members to have their say, even if they were unable to attend. The voting form must be circulated via an all-member email.
- The voting form (which must be created by individual societies) must be sent via the back end of the Guild website to every society member who is a full member of the Guild (as outlined above) – this grants all society members the equal opportunity to vote.
- The vote must be secret, and the ballot used must include all candidates in the election, not just candidates who may have attended the meeting.
- Candidates mustn't be involved in the administration of the society voting in any way, including having access to the society email account while the vote is taking place; however, they are eligible to vote themselves if they are a member of the society.
- The vote must be cast anonymously. Voters' names must be gathered to ensure they haven't voted more than once.

Step Four – Inform People:

- Inform the Guild of which candidate(s) they are endorsing by emailing democracy@liverpool.ac.uk
- Inform the candidate(s) you have endorsed
- Inform society members of your endorsement.

Until the above procedure for selecting a candidate(s) to endorse has taken place, the society cannot endorse any candidate. If a society promotes a candidate having not followed the process above, this may be considered as a breach of election rules and could have an impact on the candidate's standing in the election.

If you have any questions surrounding Society Endorsements, the guidance outlined above or Guild Officer Elections more widely, please do email democracy@liverpool.ac.uk