**Elections 2013: the rules**

**Important dates & Info**

*Nominations open:*  Monday 25th February 9.00am

*Nominations close:* Friday 1st March 17:00 (AU Presidency 12 noon)

*Candidates meeting:*  Friday 1st March 17:30

*Polling:* Thursday 7th March 06:00 – Friday 8th March 18:00

**Contacting the Elections Team:** *saelect@st-andrews.ac.uk*

The Elections Office will be open **Monday - Friday, 10am - 4pm, (TBC) from 25th February.**

*You can follow us on Twitter at @saelect where we will keep you up to date on all things elections.*

***General Information***

1. This rules booklet is designed as an overview of how to stand in a Students' Association elections campaign. Interpretation of any rule will be at the discretion of the Elections Committee. The principles that underlie all of these rules are:

* the elections should be **open to all students on an equal basis**;
* information for voters should be **full, open and accurate**; and
* campaigning should **not cause nuisance** to voters or to members of the University or town communities.

***Nominations***

2. Anyone can run for any position, as long as:

* youʼre a matriculated St Andrews student and are not currently banned from the Union Building;
* you donʼt have any outstanding personal debts to the Association.

Exceptions

* AU President - you must have been a committee member of one of the AU’s constituent clubs, and be in good standing with the AU and the University.
* School Presidents – next year (2013/14) you must be entering at least third year in Honours and you must be a student in the relevant school. Joint Honours students can stand for election in either school, but not both.
* Senate Reps – you must be a member of the relevant faculty
* Postgraduate President – You must be a postgraduate student

3. Choose the position you think suits you best and run for that one. Unfortunately you canʼt run for more than one position in the Studentsʼ Association. The Senate Representatives are University posts, which means you can run for one of those positions and also for a Studentsʼ Association position if you want to.

4. Find two students and ask them to **propose and second** you for the position. Any students will do so long as they meet the criteria above – currently matriculated and not banned. School Presidents do not need to be proposed and seconded.

5. To make sure the elections are seen to be fair, nobody from the Elections Committee can propose, second, actively support or campaign against a candidate from the time the elections are announced until every last vote has been counted.

6. To make sure voters have all the information they need to make an informed choice on election day, please provide us, with the following:

* A **photo** of yourself.
* **100 words** explaining why people should vote for you (**250 words** for sabbatical candidates).
* A list of any connections you may have to any **societies or groups**. If you are a member of a group who require a certain degree of discretion (eg Nightline) or have a personal reason for not wanting something to be disclosed publically just let us know.
* Usernames on message boards/blogs/forums etc. We won’t usually release these publicly if you don’t want us to.

7. The Nominations Process for all positions is online at

**www.yourunion.net/elections from Monday 25th February**. For the AU President position, note that you must also contact the AU to establish you are eligible: accordingly, nominations for **AU President** close a little earlier, at **12 noon** on the 1st rather than 5pm.

8. By signing/putting your name to the electronic nominations form, you are saying that you and your campaign team agree to stick to the Election Rules: so remember to make sure that everyone in your campaign team has read and understood them.

9. Itʼs **compulsory** that you come along to the candidates meeting at 6pm on Friday 1st March in Venue 1. If you really canʼt make it, let us know right away.

10.You can withdraw your nomination at any time during the election period, right up until the polls open. Should you wish to withdraw, Email saelect@ as soon as possible.

***Hecklings/Sabbatical Debates***

11.Hecklings are important, because they give voters the chance to compare candidates and you the chance to prove yourself. Non-sabbatical candidates will be asked to present a 2 minute speech, followed by 3 minutes of questions. Sabbatical candidates will be asked to present a 4 minute speech, followed by 6 minutes of questions.

12.The chairperson of the hecklings is responsible for encouraging lively and good- humored debate, though they can rule out irrelevant questions and ask someone in the audience to leave if necessary.

13.The hecklings will be for **all candidates** and will be conducted on **Monday 4th/Tuesday 5th March**. Your heckling time will be communicated to you once nominations are closed. Please keep these evenings as free as you can. If you cannot make your time, you must let us know as soon as possible so that we can make alternative arrangements.

14.The Sabbatical Debate will take place on **Wednesday 6th March**. All Sabbatical Candidates (including AU President) must attend this. This will consist of a separate debate for each position, with candidates being given 2 minutes for an opening speech, followed by questions from the floor to be answered by all candidates, concluding with a 1 minute closing speech.

15.Please note: the AU Hecklings will run separately to the above and will follow a different procedure. All AU candidates will be informed of the alternative arrangements during the nomination process.
Similarly, School President hecklings will be arranged by the former School President of each school, unless they are rerunning, in which case they will be arranged by another suitable person as decided by the Elections Committee. Candidates will be informed of the alternative arrangements.

***Budget***

16. Everything you spend needs to be recorded and deducted from your budget: **£100 for candidates standing for sabbatical positions, £35 for everyone else.** Make sure you keep every receipt! Expenditure without proof of receipt will not be reimbursed or authorised. The Elections Team will keep a record of your budget in the Elections Office. Whenever you spend any money, you need to come into the Elections Office and have a member of the Elections Team sign it off so we can keep track of how much you’ve spent so far.

17.Weʼll repay half of your budget if you win more than a certain percentage of the total valid vote for your position on first preference votes. If there are 4 or fewer candidates this will be 25%, if it’s 5, 20%, if it’s 6, 16.6%, 7, 14.2% and so on. . Budgets will be repaid for up to one month after the election results are announced.

18.If you **canʼt afford the budget** to run a campaign, we can help with the costs. Let us know as soon as you can. We will need some evidence of financial hardship, but this will be handled in complete confidence.

***Campaigning***

19.The campaigning period starts as soon as the candidates meeting on **Friday 1st March** finishes and ends when the polls close on **Friday 8th March**. No active campaigning should take place before the end of the candidates meeting (although of course you can start to prepare your campaign in advance if you want).

20.Only **Ordinary, Life & Honorary Members of the Association** are allowed to campaign for you. All matriculated St Andrews students are automatically Ordinary Members.

21. Your **campaign team** is defined as anyone who actively campaigns on your behalf. As a candidate, you are responsible for making sure that everyone campaigning for you is fully aware of the rules If you have a **campaign manager**, that person is deemed to be taking on all the same responsibilities for running a fair campaign as the candidate

22.Members of University or Union staff are not allowed to help you in your campaigns – they have to remain **neutral**, so please do not put them in any awkward positions by asking to do lecture shouts or write on black/whiteboards or actively support you in any way. Students who also work for the University or the Union can campaign for you, but must take care not to do so while working.

23. No candidate should use personal or work contacts to gain an unfair financial advantage over other candidates (for example, free or discounted printing, use of a venue not open to other candidates, etc.)

24. Candidates cannot use any position of responsibility (for example society positions) to actively advertise their campaign. However, you are of course allowed to continue with your normal activities so long as you do not actively campaign (e.g. you re still allowed to write your column in the Saint, or appear on STAR radio, or chair a debate so long as you don’t talk about running in the elections)

25. No affiliated societies or sub­‐committees may officially endorse any candidate.

26.While campaigning be responsible and remember that you are representing not only yourself, but the Association, the University and the students of St Andrews. Try to avoid conflict with your competitors and with the town. Avoid unsociably loud music or other disturbances, pestering people and being abusive to other candidates and their campaign team as much as you can.

27.We encourage you to show your knowledge and ideas about the position you are standing for – using constructive criticism of your opponentsʼ techniques is a great way to campaign, but **we will not tolerate any personal attacks** on other candidates.

28.Blackmail, bribery and harassment are against the rules. Do not do it.

29. **Halls of residence** are peoples’ homes, and we don’t want to intrude or annoy students in their own homes. Candidates are not permitted to disturb residents at dinner or request that they are allowed to address the dining hall **Hall hecklings** will be organised by the election committee for sabbatical candidates only – please don’t get in touch with Residence Managers or wardens individually, we will let you know when the hecklings are. Candidates are allowed to display publicity (e.g. flyers, posters etc.) in halls of residence, but are not allowed to flyer individual rooms or flats.

30. You should not campaign **in lectures, seminars, or lab classes**. You should not ask to speak before or after lectures, or use the lecture theatre as a vehicle for campaigning – this just annoys people, and interrupts teaching time.

31. Candidates are not allowed to campaign actively in the **library** (including flyering desks, or handing out publicity material in the building itself). Candidates can hand in one poster to the library staff for display in the library foyer.  Posters can be hung on the old railings on the south east corner of the Library building (café corner) but not on the railings opposite the main entrance.  Any posters put up by students must be removed at the end of the campaign.

32. Although candidates may campaign outside the library, you are reminded that students and staff are working in the library and buildings around it, so noise should be kept to a minimum. No music should be played outside the Library during the campaign. Please keep to the gravel and don't block entrance to the building.

33. Candidates are permitted to campaign within the **union**, however they should not cause any disturbance or nuisance to paying customers. No active campaigning will be allowed inside the union building on voting day, as it’s a polling station. Candidates should submit one poster to the Elections Team, which will be displayed in the union building. Candidates are not permitted to put up any other posters inside the union building.

34.As always remember not to break the law or to do anything that would bring you or the union into disrepute whilst you are campaigning. Stay safe and donʼt put yourself or others in danger.

35.If you are in doubt with any aspect of your campaign, please first refer to the

Campaign Rules. If you are still without an appropriate answer please check with a member of the Elections Team for guidance.

***Publicity/Electronic Publicity***

36.Without publicity, itʼs unlikely that your campaign will properly get off the ground. We want you to be as creative and innovative as possible. The most common methods of publicity are **paper-based** (posters, stickers, banners) and **electronic** (Facebook, campaign websites), but you are not limited to these – check with a member of the Elections Team if you are unsure about any ideas you may have. We encourage all candidates to be as creative and as inventive as possible.

37. You must produce a **receipt** for all the publicity you use. You won’t be allowed to use it unless you do. Publicity will be deducted from your **budget**, normally at the price on the receipt – although the Elections Team reserve the right to charge a different price in exceptional circumstances.

38. Things you use to create publicity you do not need to declare separately as part of your budget – for example pens, paper, glue, scissors, glitter, string, Sellotape, paint and face paint do not need to be declared separately in your elections budget. ‘Recycled’ content that you acquire for free, such as cardboard boxes, may not be charged either – but this is at the discretion of the Elections team. You may need to show them what you’re using and tell them where you got it. If you are unsure whether or not you need to declare an item just ask a member of the Elections Team

39. We suggest you get your publicity **checked** with a member of the Elections Team before you print it. Any publicity you’ve printed that we don’t allow won’t be charged against your budget – but it will cost you money and you can’t use it.

40. No publicity should contain anything **offensive** (the Elections Team will be the judge of what is ‘offensive’).

41. Your budget can only be used to publicise your own campaign – you can’t refer to other candidates on your publicity.

42. You are not permitted to use any Students’ Association or Athletic Union resources to help your campaign.

43. All printed publicity has to be **validated** by the Elections Team. Un-validated publicity will be destroyed, and may lead to sanctions against the candidate. Posters must be no larger than A3 for sabbatical candidates, and a maximum of A4 for all other candidates. Every poster and flyer you print must contain the date of the election, and an encouragement to recycle. Posters and flyers for the AU President position must also contain the Saints sport logo.

44. If you want to use **stickers**, the best thing to do is buy your own stickers or labels and print directly on to them (the cost will then be deducted from your budget). You can put anything you like on your stickers, and we can do this for you at the union.

45. If you want to make a **banner** you can. Remember, like any other piece of publicity you need to get banners checked out by the Elections Team before you put them up. Make sure that your banner is **properly secured** when you put it up, and don’t use any hanging weights on it as these could fall on the public below and cause injury. The Elections Team reserves the right to ask candidates to move or take down any banners.

46. You can use any form of **online campaigning** to promote yourself (such as Facebook, twitter, blogs) so long as you do so within the elections rules and guidelines. If you want to create a free website then you may do so. However, if you pay for a professional website to be created then this will be deducted from your budget

47. You cannot create a ‘group’ on **Facebook** (current Facebook rules mean that you can add people to groups without them choosing to be a part of them), but you are permitted to create a ‘page’, ‘profile’ or ‘event’, and invite people to it. You should also add ‘saelect’ on Facebook, and invite them to any pages or events that you create to do with your campaign. You can privately message people who have elected to join your Facebook profile or page, but we would warn against spamming (this tends to backfire and annoy people).

48. You can use **paid ads** on sites like Facebook or Spotify, but you have to declare this as part of your budget.

49. You may not use any society, School, or any other mailing list to **harvest email addresses**, phone numbers, or any other data for campaign purposes. You may not use pre­‐existing social media groups or websites to promote your campaign.

50. You are not permitted to **mark or deface any public property** (i.e. pavements, walls), whether with chalk or anything else. Whenever you put up posters, banners or any other type of publicity somewhere – whether it be someone’s home, a business, a phone box, noticeboard, lamp-post, whatever - you must have **explicit permission** to do so from the relevant person or body.

51. You are not permitted to use **cars** or any other vehicles to promote your campaign – we feel this gives students with cars an unfair advantage

52. All costs of production or purchase of any edible goods (like cakes or sweets) will be deducted from your budget. No candidate is permitted to give out free or discounted alcohol as a way of promoting their campaign.

***Rule Breaking***

53.Weʼd rather not have to use any of the rules in this section against a candidate, but itʼs important to have them just in case. The elections team should be informed of any alleged rules being broken within 48hrs. Bear in mind that impartial “witnesses” will help your case significantly. Weʼll let you know at the end of that day of our decision.

54.If someone other than the candidate or their campaign manager has broken a rule, the candidate or campaign manager must have taken every reasonable step to prevent it and should attempt to rectify and compensate for rule breakages. You should let us know straight away if you become aware of this occurring.

55.You have the right to **appeal** any decision made by the Election Team by putting your case in writing to the chair of the Student Association Board, Kevin Dunion. Any AU Election appeals must be made to the Vice Principal for External Affairs, Mr Stephen Magee. Appeals must be on the basis of:

a. bias or prejudice

b. information not known at the time

c. procedural irregularity

56.The **final deadline** for complaints about rule breaking is two working days after the election result has been announced – ie, **5pm Tuesday 12th March**.

57.The Elections Team reserves the right to make changes to the rules but will make sure that you are told about any alterations by email. New rules will come into effect **immediately**.

58.The consequences of a breaching of the rules, depending on the severity of the case, include but are not limited to, **written warnings, fines, vote deductions and disqualification.**

59.The decision of the Elections Team is final, pending any appeals lodged.

***Voting***

60.Voting is by the Single Transferable Vote system and will be conducted online using the voter’s student ID.

61.Polling stations will be available on Friday 8thMarch as detailed above. Elections clerks will be on hand to provide advice and assistance to voters as required.

***Results***

62.Results will be subject to **verification** by a nominee of the Association Board and University Court that the process was fair. Candidates may challenge the results if they believe there was some unfairness: see above.

63.**Results** will be announced on the evening of Friday 8th March. Details will follow.

*Good luck!*

The Elections Committee, Feb 2013

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