

ST ANDREWS STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION ELECTIONS RULES 2026

Updated February 2026



**STUDENTS'
ASSOCIATION
ELECTIONS**

**YOUR
UNION**
UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS

Introduction:

The following rules apply to the Students' Union Elections and will be interpreted and enforced by the Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer. The rules are approved by the University of St Andrews Students' Association Trustee Board in line with the Elections Law. The Deputy Returning Officer is responsible for the good conduct and administration of elections and has the power to govern and interpret all matters relating to elections in accordance with the rules.

Rulings of the Deputy Returning Officer are subject to appeal to the Returning Officer. Any decision made by the Returning Officer is final.

Where rules or regulations refer to 'candidate(s)' this includes any member participating in election activity on behalf of a candidate.

Candidates are responsible for all actions related to their election activity including the actions of their campaign team.

These rules are designed to ensure the delivery of a free and fair election. Failure to comply with the Election Rules may lead to sanctions being imposed or disqualification of candidate(s). Ignorance of any rules will not be accepted as an acceptable excuse for rule breaks.

GENERAL

NOMINATIONS

1. All nominations must be submitted online through the University of St Andrews Election system (<https://elections.st-andrews.ac.uk/election/>) before the specified deadline. No nominations will be accepted outside of this time frame unless owing to extenuating circumstances, at the discretion of the Deputy Returning Officer.
2. Candidates may nominate themselves under the name they are registered with the University or by an alternative name by which they are commonly known. Such an alternative name must be clearly specified on the nomination form and will be accepted at the discretion of the Deputy Returning Officer.

CONDUCT

Campaigning is understood as any activity by a candidate or an individual on their team which is aimed at persuading someone to vote one way or another. All decisions regarding the interpretation of an activity as campaigning are made by the Elections Team and ultimately, the Returning Officer. Candidates can also be held responsible for rule violations committed by a member of their campaign team or any other person on the candidate's behalf.

1. Campaigning begins when designated by the Deputy Returning Officer.
2. Candidates should show respect and not cause nuisance to the Elections Team, other candidates and their campaign teams, the University community, nor to the local community. Examples of causing nuisance might include, but are not limited to:
 - Posting publicity where you don't have permission (this is also called [fly posting](#))
 - Going door to door in halls
 - Marking or damaging other people's property
 - Campaigning in libraries, or study areas
 - Campaigning in other venues without prior permission (e.g. lecture theatres)

- Moving or tearing down others' campaigning materials

Candidates can criticise other candidates' policies but can't make personal attacks against a candidate's character or person.

3. Campaigning is only permitted in spaces where candidates have permission to campaign. Permission must be sought from the person responsible for the space. Campaigning is not permitted within student accommodation, with the exception of any publicly accessible spaces.
4. Candidates are not permitted to engage in collaboratively campaigning under a single banner/ joint campaign in our elections. Whilst candidates may agree on policies, their campaigning should only discuss the policy and not the fact it is a joint policy with anyone in particular.

Specifically, **candidates may not**: Refer to other candidates who share their policies in publicity; Host campaigning events showcasing multiple candidates (eg. Pub Meetup with candidates X + Y) unless approved by the Elections Committee in advance. (Candidate meet-ups may be approved if ALL candidates for a position are in attendance and have equal access to campaign, e.g. a "meet the candidates" event)

Candidates may: Share policies, and share similar wording of those policies.

5. Any breach of election rules may also be referred to the Students' Association or University disciplinary processes if deemed necessary by the Deputy Returning Officer.
6. Corrupt practices within the election will not be tolerated and may lead to sanctions or disqualification from the election as determined by the Deputy Returning Officer. Corrupt practices are defined as:
 - a. Giving money, alcohol or any gift to a voter to secure votes.
 - b. Use of or threatening to make use of any intimidation or force, violence, or restraint toward anyone in relation to the election, either by a candidate or someone acting on the candidate's behalf.
 - c. Falsification of any document or information that is a requirement of the election procedures.
 - d. Any other serious misconduct or behaviour that undermines the

conduct of the elections as determined by the Deputy Returning Officer, including, but not limited to, discriminatory behaviours and online harassment.

7. No candidate can handle any voter's personal device. Candidates cannot ask any voter to prove that they have voted and are not permitted to view how any individual votes.
8. Candidates may be subject to action from the Deputy Returning Officer in addition to any action by individuals or organisations outside of the Students' Association.
9. Candidates may not use any University or Students' Association data lists/sets for the purposes of elections. All official Students' Association resource cannot be used to further individual campaigns.

10. No candidate can be endorsed by the Students' Association, any Society, any Sports Club, or any Association Network. Candidates may receive endorsements from individual students, however, no reference may be made to any Association network, society, representative title or role.

An individual student with a role title other than those specified above may choose to make reference to that title when making an endorsement.

Endorsements can only be made during the defined campaigning period.

11. Printed posters must contain the dates of voting. Posters for AU President must also contain the Saints Sport logo.
12. All printed materials (with the exception of usable items such as stickers) must contain the dates of voting.
13. Students' Association staff are not allowed to participate in any campaigns or show any preference to any candidate(s) in their role as a member of Students' Association staff. This includes Executive Officer social media accounts.
14. University staff are not allowed to participate in any campaigns or show any preference to any candidate(s) in their role as a member of university staff.
15. Candidates are expected to run campaigns maintaining respect for both other candidates and the process. After the close of voting, all candidates

are required to perform a clean-up of campuses ensuring all election materials are removed. Candidates may only remove their own materials prior to this point.

FINANCIAL PROCEDURES

1. Anything used in a campaign must be accessible to all candidates regardless of financial ability. For example, candidates may not use personal favours to reduce the cost associated with any campaign activity; market value cost must be associated with all campaign activity.
2. All campaign expenses incurred by a candidate must be recorded on a Candidates' Expenses Form and must be emailed to saelect@st-andrews.ac.uk by the relevant deadline along with corresponding receipts. Candidates must submit a Candidates' Expenses Form regardless of whether they have spent anything on campaign materials; a blank return will be accepted as an indication of no spend.
3. Full-time Executive Officer Candidates may only spend a total of £75 in their election campaign which, pending audit of the expenses form, will be reimbursed. Candidates may not spend additional money on their campaign in addition to this allowance. Where receipts cannot be produced it will be given a market value by the Deputy Returning Officer.
4. All other candidates may only spend a total of £25 in their election campaign which, pending audit of the expenses form, will be reimbursed. Candidates may not spend additional money on their campaign in addition to this allowance. Pre-owned materials will not be reimbursed but will count towards the spending limit. Where receipts cannot be produced, it will be given a market value by the Deputy Returning Officer.
5. Candidates cannot combine their budget in order to reduce the cost of campaign materials. Each candidate must purchase their own publicity materials.
6. Results will be provisional until all deliberations on candidate expenses have been completed.
7. If a candidate is unable to fund their campaign, please contact the Elections Team at saelect@st-andrews.ac.uk.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1. All members are entitled to lodge a complaint should they feel any of the rules have been breached.
2. All complaints must be lodged through the [elections complaint form](#) and refer to which rule has been breached. No other form of complaint will be considered.
3. Complaints regarding conduct within the election must be received prior to the close of voting. Any complaints regarding the count must be submitted prior to the results being announced.
4. Complaints will be considered by the Deputy Returning Officer as soon as practically possible.
5. The Deputy Returning Officer may also act without receipt of a complaint if they deem it necessary.
6. Decisions of the Deputy Returning Officer may be appealed. Appeals should be submitted to the Returning Officer by email (saelect@) and must be submitted within 24 hours of the original decision.
7. Any ruling of the Returning Officer will be final, and candidate(s) have no further right of appeal.

CANDIDATE RULE COMPLIANCE

All candidates and campaign teams are **required** to read and be familiar with the current Election Rules.

