

ST ANDREWS STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION ELECTIONS RULES 2023

Updated 1 March 2023



**STUDENTS'
ASSOCIATION
ELECTIONS**

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

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IMPORTANT DATES

- **Nominations:** 22 February to 7 March
- **Candidate Meeting:** 7 March 20:00
- **Campaigning Begins:** 8 March 00:01
- **Voting:** 14 March 00:01 to 15 March 18:00

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

You can email the Elections Team at saelect@st-andrews.ac.uk and engage with us on Twitter via @standrewsunion and on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/saelectofficial>. #saelect is the designated elections hashtag. The official Instagram for elections will be @st-andrewsunion.

The Students' Association Elections are governed by the Association Laws. In the case of a discrepancy between anything in this document and the Laws, the Laws will be followed. The relevant chapter of the Laws can be found at:

<https://www.yourunion.net/pageassets/representation/elections/rules/Elections-Laws-Updated-Jan-2022.pdf>

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The rules and regulations for the Students' Associations elections are intended to provide our members with guidance on how to stand as a candidate and get involved in elections. These rules are developed under the following basic principles:

- Elections should be open to all our members on an equal basis.
- Elections should be fair. No candidate should gain or attempt to gain a significant advantage unfairly (through their own actions or those of others).
- Information available to voters should be full, transparent, and accurate.
- Voting should be free from interference.
- Election activity and campaigning should be conducted with respect towards other students, staff, and the local community and should not cause a nuisance to any of these groups.
- Campaigning should also show respect to other candidates and their campaign teams.

- Election activity and campaigning should be conducted in line with the Association's Constitution and Laws, other relevant University or Association policies, and the law.

The Elections Team will make use of these principles in the way that they conduct the election and interpret the rules that follow.

The Elections Team reserves the right to make changes to the rules but will ensure that all candidates are informed of any alterations by email. Changes to rules will come into effect immediately, unless otherwise stated.

SECTION 1. NOMINATIONS

1.1 Eligibility

Anyone can run in the elections, as long as they:

- Are a matriculated student at the University of St Andrews. This means you have completed the necessary requirements to register with the University for modules or supervised research. (Current sabbatical officers of the Students' Association or Athletic Union also meet this condition.)
- Are an ordinary member of the Students' Association. This means you're a matriculated student and have not told the Association you don't want to be a member (we call this 'opting out').
- Are of good standing with the Association, the Athletic Union (AU) and the University. This means you have no debts to any of those bodies and no disciplinary measures currently in force from them (e.g., bans from the Union building).
- (For SRC positions and SAB Student Trustee positions) you are entering a further year of study in academic year 2022-23.
- (For Postgraduate Academic Convenor, Postgraduate Development Officer, and Postgraduate Society President **only**) you are a postgraduate student (whether taught or research).
- (For School Presidents **only**) are entering into an Honours year of study within the relevant School as a Single Honours or Joint Honours student.
- (For Language Convenors **only**) are entering into an Honours year of study within the relevant Department in the School of Modern Languages as a Single Honours or Joint Honours student.
- (For Faculty Presidents **only**) are entering into an Honours year of study enrolled in one of the relevant constituent Faculties.
- (For AU President **only**) have been a committee member for at least one year of an AU-affiliated club or have served as an officer of the Athletic Union for at least one year.

1.2 True Candidacy

The Elections Team reserve the right to reject any candidacy that is or appears to be made by a person other than the candidate, or that is or appears to be intended to mislead voters (e.g. impersonating another candidate).

1.3 Voter Information

Nominations must include the following to be shown on the voting portal.

- Statement (up to 250 words) explaining why people should vote for you.
- Photograph of your likeness. This is optional, but you can't submit a photo of someone or something else instead – only yourself.
- University email address (not displayed to voters)
- Some optional additional information (including name and email address of your campaign manager and your phone number) that may be required as part of the Elections Team's voter information services. This information will be made clear to you via email at the close of nominations.

SECTION 2. ELECTED POSITIONS

We have updated the list of all positions elected in the Students' Association Elections 2023. You can find them online on www.yourunion.net/elections.

2.1 Sabbaticals

Note that you may not stand for ANY other position if you stand to be a sabbatical officer. You may not stand for a sabbatical position if you have already served two years in ANY sabbatical position.

2.2 SRC Positions

You may stand for only ONE of these positions. However, you may also choose to stand to be a Student Trustee in addition to standing for one of these positions.

You cannot stand for any of these positions if you have already held that position for two years. You must also be continuing (or expecting to continue) your studies in academic year 2023-24.

2.3 Students' Association Board (SAB) Student Trustees

There are two posts. You may stand for this post and also to be a School President, or for an SRC position, but not to be a Sabbatical Officer.

2.4 School Presidents and Language Conveners

You may stand for only one of these roles, but you can stand for one of these roles and also to be a Student Trustee. You must be an honours-level, undergraduate student during the 2023-24 academic year. (This means you must be studying at honours-level or will be proceeding to honours-level study in semester one of 2023-24).

SECTION 3: EVENTS

3.1 CANDIDATES' MEETING

All candidates are expected to attend the mandatory Candidates' Meeting, which takes place on Tuesday 7 March 2023 at 20:00 (in person, and on Teams). ALL candidates must attend this meeting. If you cannot attend, you must notify the staff Elections Committee as early as possible (email saelect@). If you do not attend, and have not made independent arrangements with the Elections Committee *prior to the candidate meeting*, you may face penalties at the discretion of the Election Committee.

3.2 TOWN HALL EVENTS

All SRC, Student Trustee, and Sabbatical Candidates must attend the relevant Town Hall Event, schedule to be announced. Candidates must arrive half an hour before their scheduled time, and are encouraged to attend to listen to the other officers' statements.

The Town Hall Events will be hosted in the Union Building (exact locations to be announced). For those who cannot attend in-person, alternative arrangements can be made on an individual basis. Please email saelect@ prior to the event if you are unable to attend the Hustings in person. If you do not attend and have not made independent arrangements with the Elections Committee *prior to the SRC Hustings*, you may face penalties at the discretion of the Election Committee.

3.3 PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE

All Association President and Athletic Union President Candidates must attend the Presidential Debate, scheduled for Monday 13 March 2022 (time to be announced). Candidates must arrive half an hour before the event start time. The Presidential Debate will be hosted in the Stage of the Union Building. For those who cannot attend in-person, alternative arrangements can be made on an individual basis. Please email saelect@ prior to the event if you are unable to attend the Debate in person.

If you do not attend and have not made independent arrangements with the Elections Committee *prior to the Presidential Debate*, you may face penalties at the discretion of the Election Committee.

SECTION 4. BUDGET

Important notice: If you cannot afford the budget to run a campaign, the Elections Team will help with the costs. Candidates in this position are encouraged to contact the Elections Team for a confidential discussion about their eligibility. Evidence of financial hardship will be required.

4.1. Allocation

All purchases related to publicity material need to be recorded and counted towards each candidate's budget. Sabbatical candidates may spend no more than £100. All other candidates may spend no more than £50.

Budgets may not be combined between campaigns or pooled among candidates.

4.2. Authorisation

The authority to allow any purchase against the campaign budget lies with the Elections Team, ultimately with the Returning Officer.

Candidates must provide a receipt to the Election Team for reimbursement and authorisation. Candidates will be penalised for unauthorised spending.

4.3. Reimbursement, Sabbatical Candidates

All sabbatical candidates are eligible to receive up to 100% reimbursement of the amount spent for eligible expenditures. Any sabbatical candidate who attends all required events (or provides prior notice with a good reason for absence) may be reimbursed their full authorised campaign expenditure, regardless of votes won.

4.4. Reimbursement, All Other Candidates

All other candidates may have 50% of their authorized expenditure reimbursed, if they have attended all required events or given prior notice with a good reason for absence. Reimbursement is available regardless of votes won.

4.5. Reimbursement, Time Limit

Budgets will be repaid for up to one calendar month after the election results are announced. Budgets (even those with no expenditures) must be submitted no later than one week following the close of voting.

SECTION 5. CAMPAIGNING

5.1 Definition

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 will also be held responsible for rule violations committed by a member of their campaign team.

5.2 Time Period

Campaigning starts at on 8 March 2023 at 00:01 and ends when polls close at 18:00 on 15 March 2023. Campaigning outside of this time period is not allowed and may result in a penalty applied to the candidate at the discretion of the Elections Team. While campaigning isn't allowed outside of this period, you may start to privately prepare your campaign policies and materials and assemble a campaign team of a reasonable size in advance.

5.3. Campaign Team, Eligibility

Only ordinary members of the Students' Association are allowed to campaign. (All matriculated students are automatically ordinary members unless they have opted out.) Staff at the University of St Andrews and Union staff are not allowed to campaign. Students who also work for the University or the Union can campaign only when off duty. Non-students (including alumni) may give perspective or information to a candidate, but must not campaign on the candidate's behalf.

5.4 UNFAIR ADVANTAGES

Candidates may only campaign using methods and resources which are reasonably accessible to all candidates. No candidate should gain an unfair advantage through personal connections. This would include but not be limited to discounts on campaign costs, privileged access to facilities or services, access to commercially or personally confidential information (such as price data or mailing lists), or media coverage.

5.5 ENDORSEMENTS

No candidate can be endorsed by the Students' Association, any Society, any Sports Club, or any Association subcommittee.

Candidates may receive endorsements from individual students, however, no reference may be made to any Association subcommittee title or role.¹ An individual student with a role title other than those specified above may choose to make reference to that title when making an endorsement².

Endorsements can only be made during the defined campaigning period.

5.6 GOOD CONDUCT

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
- Going door to door in halls
- Marking or damaging other people's property
- Campaigning in libraries, lecture theatres or study areas, or anywhere else you don't have permission

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

5.8 ALCOHOL AND OTHER GIVEAWAYS

No candidate may supply discounted or free alcohol as a way of promoting their campaign. Candidates may give away other items (baked goods, etc.) to voters as part of campaign activity provided this is approved by the Elections Team in advance. Giving away cash, vouchers, or items valued by the Elections Team at more than £1 in total to any individual voter is not allowed, nor is any giveaway involving elements of chance (raffles, draws, etc.)

Candidates may not sell or resell items as a part of campaigning.

5.9 JOINT CAMPAIGNING

¹ For example "I am endorsed by Jane Doe" is acceptable, but "I am endorsed by Jane Doe, Activities Officer" is **not**.

² For example, "I am endorsed by John Doe, Vice-President of the Circus Club" is acceptable.

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

SECTION 6: PUBLICITY

6.1 Authorised Publicity

All publicity is subject to review by the Elections Committee. Unauthorised publicity will be subject to penalty. Any publicity for which receipts are not available, or for which the elections committee find the provided receipt unacceptable for any reason, may be charged against the candidate's budget at an amount determined by the Elections Team.

No publicity should contain anything offensive, discriminatory, or otherwise of ill-repute, as defined by the Elections Team and Returning Officer.

6.2 Posters

Each printed poster must contain the dates of voting and an encouragement to recycle. Posters for AU President candidates must also contain the Saints Sport logo.

6.3 Banners

Banners must be properly secured when put up, and no candidate may use any hanging weights (e.g., water bottles) as they pose a safety risk. The Elections Team reserves the right to ask candidates to move or take down any banners.

6.4 Flyers, Leaflets and other printed materials

All printed materials (with the exception of useable items such as stickers) must contain the dates of voting and an encouragement to recycle.

SECTION 7: RULE BREAKING

We aim for a positive and creative approach to campaigning and encourage candidates to focus on winning voters over to their cause. However, we recognise that sometimes, the actions of candidates or their teams can cause concern. If you want to make a complaint, please see section 8 (Complaints and Discipline) on the following link:

<https://www.yourunion.net/pageassets/representation/elections/rules/Elections-Laws-Updated-Jan-2022.pdf>

SECTION 8. VOTING & RESULTS

8.1. Voting Method

Voting will be conducted online. Each matriculated student shall have a single transferable vote for every election with the exception of the following races:

- Arts/Divinity Faculty President, Science/Medicine Faculty President: Only matriculated undergraduate students in the respective faculties shall have a single transferable vote in the race for the respective Faculty President.
- Postgraduate Academic Convenor, Postgraduate Development Officer, Postgraduate Activities Officer: Only matriculated postgraduate students shall have a single transferable vote in the race for these postgraduate positions.
- School Presidents: Only matriculated students taking credits in the respective School/Department shall have a single transferable vote in the race for the respective School President.
- Language Convenors: Only matriculated students taking credits in the respective programme shall have a single transferable vote in the race for the respective Language Convenor.

8.2. Results Verification

Results are subject to verification by the Returning Officer and a nominee of the University Court that the election was free and fair. Candidates may challenge the results if they believe they were unfair by submitting an appeal according to the process detailed in sections 7.6 and 7.7.