Running a Rectorial campaign is great both for Student Democracy and your CV. However, it can also be a difficult and stressful experience. Here’s some tips for making it less so:

1. Pick the right candidate- By this, we don’t necessarily mean “someone famous” or even “someone with a St Andrews connection.” We mean instead, someone who reflects the values and ethos you want to bring to St Andrews. Not only will this make it easier to build a compelling narrative around your candidate, but it’ll make it easier to convince candidates to run if you can show that St Andrews is a place that could be improved by putting their values into action.
2. Do your research when putting together a manifesto- Make sure everything you include within your manifesto falls within the role of the Rector (check the role of Rector page, or email Rector@ if you need clarification.) Also, speak to as many people as possible about what they perceive as problems in St Andrews, and look at how your manifesto could help solve them.
3. Once you have your manifesto, workshop it with as many people as possible. Ask for their feedback both in the ideas included, and the way they’re expressed (the last thing you want if for people to think you’re promising something you aren’t). Also, getting feedback on your manifesto is a great way to get people interested in your campaign, if you want to recruit people. Speaking of….
4. Think carefully about your campaign team. Make sure that your campaign team isn’t solely drawn from one society, social group, or demographic. Have a think about who your Rectorial candidate could appeal to or inspire.
5. Be creative in how you campaign- With social distancing and dual delivery, most campaigning is going to have to be done over social media. That means it’s going to be more of a challenge to engage the attention of students- think about how you can distil your message down to it’s essentials and use graphics, pictures and media to get it across.
6. Familiarise yourself with the election rules: A lot of campaign teams fall foul of Rectorial Election rules by accident- however, ignorance is no excuse, and there could be disciplinary consequences for anyone that breaks them. Make sure that you, and your campaign team, don’t make this mistake.
7. Remember that those who don’t traditionally vote make up the vast majority of the potential electorate, and could swing the result in any election. You should go out of your way to appeal to these voters- don’t just tell them it’s important to vote, find out why they aren’t voting, and see what you can do about it!