



The University of Surrey
Students' Union

SurreyDecides

www.ussu.co.uk/surreydecides

Elections 2015

NOMINATION INFORMATION

www.ussu.co.uk/surreydecides

Welcome to the Surrey Decides nomination pack 2015:

This nomination guide is aimed at anyone considering running for election in Surrey Decides 2015. This pack will explain more about the process of running for election and contains important information for candidates.

What is 'Surrey Decides'?

'Surrey Decides' is the Students' Union's annual election process. The Students' Union is led by a team of elected officers. Some officer roles are full time paid positions; some are part time voluntary roles. The Students' Union has 5 full time officers, and a team of part time volunteer officers who make up the Union's Executive team. The Executive team works together to lead the Union and represent students throughout the year.

Who can get involved in the election?

Every student automatically becomes a member of the Students' Union at University registration. Being a member of the Union entitles you to vote in the election, support the nomination of another student, and run for election yourself.

If you are studying on a postgraduate taught or research programme, you can still get involved in the election process. Some masters' students have not graduated by the time officers take up their roles (in July 2015). Please contact the Students' Union if these circumstances apply to you.

When does the election take place?

The timetable for the election is below. If you are considering running for a position, these are the dates you will need in your diary:

Date and time	Event
Monday 9 February 2015	Nominations open – election period begins.
Wednesday 18 February 2015 12 noon	Nominations close
Wednesday 18 February 2015 6pm LTM	Candidates' briefing/information session
Thursday 19 February 2015 6pm TB19	Candidates' campaign workshop training session
Friday 20 February 2015 5pm	Manifesto deadline
Saturday 21 st Feb 12am	Campaigning period begins
Sunday 1 March	Question Time night 1
Monday 2 March	Question Time night 2
Tuesday 3 March	Question Time night 3
12am on Thursday 5 March until 7pm on Friday 6 March	Voting will be online
12 noon Friday 6 March	Budget forms to be returned to Union.
Friday 6 March 7pm	Election period ends – campus must be clear
Friday 6 March 8.30pm	Results announced

What are the available roles?

This year is unique – the Students’ Union is electing brand new officer roles for the first time. The following roles will be elected during Surrey Decides this year. You can find information on all the roles available in more detail at www.ussu.co.uk/surreydecides to help you decide which position to stand for.

Role	Basic definition	Additional information
Union President	Full time officer role, leading the officer team. The figurehead of the Students’ Union.	Member of Union Executive. Chair of the Union’s Board of Trustees. Member of University Council.
Union Chairperson	Part time officer role, chairing the Union Executive committee.	Chair of the Union Executive. The head student representative and member of the Board of Trustees.
VP Voice	Full time officer role, leading the Voice Zone Committee and empowering others to make change.	Union Trustee. Member of the Union Executive.
VP Support	Full time officer role, leading the Support Zone Committee and promoting good health and wellbeing among students.	Union Trustee. Member of the Union Executive.
Vp Activity	Full time officer role, leading the Activity Zone Committee and ensuring students make the most of their time at Surrey.	Union Trustee. Member of the Union Executive.
VP Community	Full time officer role, leading the Community Zone Committee and bringing students together to make a difference.	Union Trustee. Member of the Union Executive.
Team Surrey Chair	Part time officer role, representing members of Team Surrey clubs. Member of the Activity Zone Committee.	Member of the Union Executive.
Societies Exec Chair	Part time officer role, representing members of Union Societies. Member of the Activity Zone Committee.	Member of the Union Executive.
Voice Zone Committee Member (5 positions available)	Part time officer roles, working with the VP Voice and empowering others to make change.	The two students with the most votes in this election will become members of the Union Executive.
Support Zone Committee Member (5 positions available)	Part time officer roles, working with the VP Support to promote good health and wellbeing among students.	The two students with the most votes in this election will become members of the Union Executive.

Activity Zone Committee Member (3 positions available)	Part time officer roles, working with the VP Activity, Team Surrey and Societies Exec Chair to help students make the most of their time at Surrey.	
Community Zone Committee (5 positions available).	Part time officer roles, working with the VP Community and bringing students together to make a difference.	The two students with the most votes in this election will become members of the Union Executive.
Editor in Chief	Part time officer role, leading on the Union's student media output.	Non-voting member of Union Executive.
RAG Chair	Part time officer role, leading the Union's Raising and Giving fundraising activities.	Non-voting member of Union Executive.
NUS Delegate (four roles available)	Attending the NUS conference in Liverpool during April 2015 and representing all students at Surrey.	You can run for NUS delegate alongside another Union role.

If you are elected into a full time officer role (known as a 'sabbatical officer') you will be working full time at the Students' Union, for a full time salary. As this is full time, you will be taking a year out ([a sabbatical](#)) from your course or directly after graduation. **You cannot do this as a placement.**

If you are elected into a part time role, you will be continuing with your studies and fulfilling your role at the Union as a volunteer.

You must be a registered student at Surrey when you submit your nomination for election.

What is a Zone Committee and how does it work?

In 2015-16, the Union will be led through 4 'Zone Committees' that will each feed into the Students' Union's Executive Committee.

Zone Committees will each be made up of the Vice President (full time officer) for that zone, and 5 part time officer roles. Of these part time officer roles, **the top two winners in each election will also be members of the Union Executive Committee.** This is slightly different for the Activity Zone – read more below.

The Zone Committees will meet regularly to discuss issues within that zone, and to make decisions and pass policy. Each zone committee will have at least one member of staff, to assist and take care of the operational work that the committee needs. Each zone committee will also have a budget controlled by the zone.

Together, the zones are designed to cover all of student life, however some issues transcend one particular zone and for this reason the Union Executive will be the senior body for student representation. The Exec will have the ability to 'lift' issues from the zones, and each zone will be able to promote and issue for decision to the Exec committee.

Voice Zone:

Are you passionate about the issues that have an impact on your student life? Do you want to empower students to make positive change?

This is the zone for students who have something to say, listening to members and speaking up on their behalf. This is the zone that looks after the student opinion on the issues that have an impact on your student life.

The Voice Zone will lobby the University to create the changes students want to see at Surrey. This zone will also respond to national student issues, such as tuition fees and government funding, and will be responsible for feeding the Union's executive with student views and opinions of these matters. This zone will keep democracy at the heart of the Students' Union.

Activity Zone:

Student life isn't just about getting a degree. Do you believe that student activities are at the heart of student life? Do you want to make sure that all students can participate? Then the Activity Zone may be for you.

This is the zone for students doing things, taking part in activities, playing sport, society activity and enabling students to spend time doing what they enjoy.

The activity zone operates in the areas outlined in the VP role as well as allowing students who have a passion for developing new student activities, increasing participation, keeping active and extra-curricular development to make a change.

The top two places in the Activity Zone are reserved places, one for the Team Surrey Chair, and one for the Chair of the Societies Executive, who then become members of Union Exec. This will require electing these two positions at the same time as the rest of the zone, and therefore they will become stand-alone elections (i.e students will need to stand for these positions, rather than for the role of Zone Committee Member).

Support Zone:

University life isn't always plain sailing. Do you want to make sure students have all the support they need to be successful at Surrey? Do you want students to help and support each other through University life? Then this could be the zone for you.

This zone is all about helping students, as well as enabling students to help each other. The support zone is there to look out for students during the times when things go wrong and make sure there are resources in place to help.

Community Zone:

The student community takes many forms, and students are part of several diverse communities while they are studying at Surrey – from the community of flatmates in their first year, to the community of neighbours when they move into private rented accommodation, to the community they form when they join a new club or society. The Students' Union plays a central role in bringing communities of students together, and supporting them as they develop. The community zone is here to bring students together, to socialise and meet others.

Other essential part time roles:

We will also be electing our RAG Chair – the student who will lead our 'Raising and Giving' committee for the 2014/15 year, and our Editor in Chief, who oversees our student media.

You perform these roles part time as a volunteer, whilst you are a student. For this reason you should not stand for one of these roles if you are a final year student, unless you intend to progress to a postgraduate course and remain a student.

*Union Chairperson takes the place of the student trustee on the Union Trustee board, you **cannot** be paid by the Students' Union when you take this role, therefore if you are currently employed by the Students' Union (e.g. as bar staff) you will not be able to take this role **and** carry on in your job.

**Editor In Chief has an allowance of £3,500 per annum. This is not a salary; this is an allowance so the student filling this role does not take on a part time job outside of their studies and has the time available to dedicate to the role.

Alongside the election of our internal roles for next year, we will also be electing NUS delegates for this year's NUS national conference.

NUS Delegate

The University of Surrey Students' Union affiliates to the National Union of Students, and every year we can send 4 delegates, plus the Union President, to the NUS Conference*, to represent the interests and views of Surrey students at a national level. The conference discusses 5 topics related to the student experiences: Further Education policy, Higher Education policy, Society and Citizenship policy, Welfare policy, and Union Development policy. It is the chance for student unions around the country to shape national policy and hold to account the NUS national officers. Elections for these roles also happen at the conference and the above delegates will be voting members.

Students who win the role of NUS delegate will be attending the conference this April. **Students can run for another Students' Union role in the election, and also run for NUS delegate.** Attending the NUS conference as a representative of all Surrey students is an excellent way to experience student democracy, giving you experience to take on a Students' Union officer role.

NUS 'Fair Representation on NUS Conference' Policy:

'Fair Representation on NUS Conference delegations' is a policy that was passed at National Conference 2014, changing NUS' rules on the make-up of delegations to National Conference. The motion means that all delegations will have to have at least 50% self-defining women on them (rounded down).

The Students' Union sends 5 delegates to conference of which the President is an automatic delegate. Since the current President is male this means that the count will be run first with self-defining women candidates only, to fill the required quota of 5 women being elected. The count will then be run again excluding the winning women candidates, and including all other candidates, to make up the remaining 2 places on the delegation.

*The National Conference takes place on Tuesday 21 to Thursday 23 April 2015, in Liverpool. The Students' Union will cover the cost of your attendance.

Campaigning for an election is a unique experience, and will give you valuable skills that you will need in later life. Think of an election campaign like a job interview where there are 14,000 members on the interview panel.

Becoming a member of the Union's officer team is a big commitment, and a full time sabbatical officer even more so not just in terms of time, but physically and emotionally as well. Please be aware of this when standing. There are a number of legal obligations (for the full time roles) on your part if you do get elected, and they are listed later, so make sure you read through the whole nomination pack.

Nominations must be completed by 12 noon on Wednesday 18th February.

If you are standing for a full time (paid) officer role, you will need 15 unique nominators on your form. If you are standing for a part time role, you will need 10 unique nominators. Every person that you name as a nominator can only support one nomination in the entire election.

Avoid leaving this until the last minute in case of technical problems and remember your proposers can only propose one candidate and must be a full member of the Student Union.

Campaign Finance

You must not exceed the budget limit of **£80**, (of which you will get £40 back providing you produce appropriate receipts).

You will have to complete an expenses form at the end of the campaign to show what you have spent the money on and submit it before the votes are counted, or you will be at risk of being removed from the election. If in the opinion of the returning officer, it appears that you have spent more than £80 on your election campaign you may be excluded from the election. **The limit is what is spent in total on your campaign, not necessarily by you.**

Club or Society support

You may be officially supported by a club or society, this will enable you to declare this on any election material you write, and of course hopefully rely on the votes of that club or society. Each candidate will be required to fill out a form of club or society support which will be available from the Union website that is required to be signed by the club or society committee signatories. These forms should be returned to the Union reception.

Posters, banners & campus publicity

As a candidate, you are fully responsible for all the material you produce for your campaign, and where it goes.

Posters **are permitted** in this campaign. A poster is defined as

- Larger than A6 or smaller than A1
- Anything fixed to vertical surface in a public or communal area

Banners are permitted and are defined as

- Larger than A1
- Produced on material other than paper

Rules on campaigning:

- Campaigning is not allowed within the University Library Building. This includes the ground floor (Surrey Shop level).
- Candidates must remove all campaign publicity before the votes are counted – any publicity that remains at the start of the count risks that candidate being removed from the election and/or facing a University disciplinary
- Do not hang banners or place posters in areas that are dangerous or difficult to reach
- Blue-tac is not allowed on painted surfaces.
- Stickers are not allowed
- Do not litter the campus – leaving flyers/manifestos on desks and tables counts as littering.
- Do not contravene Union policy in your campaign (the Union has policies on equality and a no-platform policy in place)

This may seem like your options are limited, however in previous years there have been some very ingenious solutions to these restrictions.

Your term of office and training information: TBC

Election Complaints

Anyone can complain about an aspect of an election campaign, and there are a range of sanctions the returning officer may take including recommending expulsion from the contest. The process of complaints will be explained at the candidate briefing.

Your Manifesto

“A manifesto is a public declaration of principles and intentions”

Your manifesto is the most important part of your nomination, it is a list of what you intend to achieve, or the principles by which you stand. When people vote for you, they are voting for what you say you will do. If you are successful in your election, then you will be elected on your manifesto – so if you say you want to paint the Union blue, you cannot then paint the Union red if you are elected.

Try and keep any specific aims and objectives to a concise list, a list of three pledges is both reasonable and realistic. Don't leave your manifesto to the last minute as an afterthought; you will be held to it for your year in office.

Manifesto Format

You can put whatever you like in your manifesto; the format we need it in is **A4 Landscape and in PDF format**. Most software will allow documents to be saved as PDF – this reserves your choice of formatting and design features.

Your manifesto will be reprinted in the election special edition of The Stag, and made available on the Union website. It is also recommended that you take copies with you when you campaign. It can be comprised of just words, or include a picture of yourself – please make sure it is not too colourful so it looks legible when reproduced in black and white. Your manifesto should also include a short paragraph introducing you from one of your proposers, and list who your proposers are (although this is entirely up to you).

Your Manifesto should ...

Have three or four specific pledges

Be A4 Landscape

Tell the reader a bit about yourself

Only contain the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

Your Manifesto should NOT ...

Be too colourful or complicated

Contain 'woolly' or unspecific pledges

Cause offense

Talk about others rather than yourself

Campaigning

The most exciting part of the election is the campaigning itself. You are trying to convince as many Union members as possible to put their faith in you. The best way to do this is not by putting up lots of posters, but by speaking to people face to face.

Campaigning Suggestions

- Come along to the campaigning workshop on Thursday 19th February at 6pm (room details tbc) and pick up tips on having a successful campaign.
- Get out and meet as many people as possible
- Do not forget that the vote is STV (single transferable vote), so you are asking for voters to mark 1 in your box, you can also campaign for voters second preference
- Use YouTube, Facebook, Twitter
- Do not use University auto lists on e-mail.
- Knock on doors
- Be positive
- Don't forget Manor Park, Hazel Farm, Bellerby Court, etc

Voting System

The Union uses a Single Transferable Voting system (STV), where voters can name their 1st, 2nd and 3rd choice, and so on. Take a moment to understand the voting system, as this is not a simple 'the most votes win' election; it has been seen in many elections that the candidate with the most 1's does not actually win, as other candidates have picked up second, third and fourth preferences, and overtaken them in the count.

Being a Trustee (sabbatical & Union Chair only)

If elected you will become one of the trustees of the Students' Union; and although this sounds like a great thing to have on your CV, it is also a legally binding arrangement that makes you personally liable for the conduct of the Union while you are in office. You will also become a company director (unless for any reason you are barred from being a director) – again, although this might sound great, there are more obligations that you perform your duties competently as a company director and you are still a trustee. For more information on being the trustee of a charity see the following information from the charity commission <http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/publications/cc3.asp>

Guidance for company directors– (from BERR)

- 1) Act in the company's best interests, taking everything you think relevant into account
- 2) Obey the company's constitution and decisions taken under it
- 3) Be honest, and remember that the company's property belongs to it and not to you or to its shareholders
- 4) Be diligent, careful and well informed about the company's affairs. If you have any special skills or experience, use them
- 5) Make sure the company keeps records of your decisions
- 6) Remember that you remain responsible for the work you give to others.
- 7) Avoid situations where your interests conflict with those of the company. When in doubt disclose potential conflicts quickly
- 8) Seek external advice where necessary, particularly if the company is in financial difficulty.

A view from the Vice Chancellor:

"If you would like to have a say in the running of the Students' Union and influence how the University is managed, then becoming a Sabbatical Officer is the ideal way to make a real difference. It is also a very enjoyable and satisfying role, which allows you to proactively shape the policies and activities at Surrey and gain real leadership experience to help develop your career. I know from personal experience from my own student days, how rewarding this can be and also how important it is to ensure good representation of the student community. I encourage you to stand as a candidate in the sabbatical elections and help shape the future of the Union and the University."
(Professor Sir Christopher Snowden).

Any questions?

If you have any further questions before you submit your nomination, please contact the Student Voice Manager and Deputy Returning Officer, Kath Phillips, on Katherine.phillips@surrey.ac.uk