



The University of Surrey
Students' Union



**SURREY
X DECIDES**

**Elections 2013
NOMINATION INFORMATION**

www.ussu.co.uk/yourvoice

Elections 2013

Thanks for taking the first step in getting more involved in your Union by reading this nomination pack. This year the elections will be taking place throughout February, and we would like as many as possible to get involved, either as candidates or supporting candidates.

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. Campaigning can also be a stressful experience, you are in essence entering in a popularity contest, and you must be prepared for the fact that some people are not going to find you popular; you will also find out who your friends really are ...

Becoming a member of the Union Executive 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 4pm on Monday 11th February. **Don't leave this until the last minute in case of technical problems and remember your proposers can only sign propose one candidate and must be a full member of the Student Union.**

"If you enjoy having your say in the running of the Students' Union and in influencing how the University is run, 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 help enthusiastically 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."

Prof Sir Christopher Snowden, Vice-Chancellor

This guide is divided into two sections, the first is the absolute essentials (the tl;dr version) the second is the more detailed info. As a minimum, ensure you have read and understood part 1

Part 1 THE ESSENTIALS – You MUST read this bit.

The Election Timetable & Deadlines

It is your responsibility to know the election timetable and stick to the deadlines. You should attach the Election Calendar to your own e-mail account so you can see it live. Instructions on how to do this are here

<http://www.ussu.co.uk/yourvoice/Pages/Election-Calendar.aspx>

The calendar is as follows (however this may be subject to change)

11 th February 4pm	Nominations Close
11 th February 6pm	Candidates Briefing LTE
12 th February 6pm	Campaign Workshop LTF
15 th February 12:30pm	VC's lunch (Sabbatical & Union Chair candidates)
17 th February 7pm	Question Time Episode 1
18 th February 7pm	Question Time Episode 2
19 th February 7pm	Question Time Episode 3
21 st February 12am -	
22 nd February 7pm	Voting Period
22 nd February 4pm	Budget Submission deadline
22 nd February 5pm	Campaign publicity removal deadline

Which position?

This might sound obvious, but stand for the position you are interested in, not for the position you think you might win. Also make sure you are standing “for the right reasons” i.e. that you are wanting to do it, rather than needing something to do next year.

Campaign Finance

You can spend **up to £80** on your election campaign, 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. 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

Posters **are not 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

The best way to avoid the ban on posters is by not making any posters, this way you will not fall foul of the rules.

When advertising your campaign on the Stag Hill campus, you need to be aware of the following don'ts

- Don't put anything on the 'public facing side' of campus. This is the area from the Stag statue round the perimeter road past the Piazza and lake – stay within the internal section of campus
- Don't do anything that is permanent or semi-permanent (e.g. stickers), you have to have removed your campaign publicity before the votes are counted
- Don't use blue tack on painted surfaces
- Chalk on walls & pavements gets messy and annoying

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

Positions

The following **full time, sabbatical positions** are available

- President
- Vice-President Welfare
- Vice-President Education
- Vice-President Societies & Individual Development
- Vice-President Sports and Recreation

Each position attracts an annual salary (in 2013 it will be a minimum of £18,300). It is recommended that you take accommodation on campus and as such will be eligible to apply for a room. As this is full time, you will be taking a year out ([a sabbatical](#)) from your course or from entering your chosen career after graduation. **You cannot do this as a placement**

The following **student, volunteer positions** are available

- Union Chairperson* (also a trustee)
- Events & Trading Officer
- Communications Officer
- Ethics & Environmental Officer
- Community Officer
- Equality & Diversity officer
- Postgraduate Officer
- International Development Officer
- Editor-In-Chief **
- RAG Chair

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.

Your term of office

Handover & training begins Monday 17th June for one week. There is then a further one to one week from the sabbatical officers from Monday 15th July, and you formally take office from 5pm on Friday 19th July.

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

“Rules are not necessarily sacred, principles are.”

FDR

Part 2 – Further Information, and recommended reading

Manifesto

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

So says Wikipedia. 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**. It can be in the following formats, DOC, DOCX, PPT, PPTX, CDR, PDF, INDD.

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 around 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)

Please ask if you would like advice on the layout of your manifesto.

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

“Do not run a campaign that would embarrass your mother”

Robert C. Byrd
US Senate

The most exhausting, yet exhilarating 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

- Get out and meet as many people as possible
- Do not forget that the vote is STV, 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, it will irritate everyone
- Knock on doors
- Be positive
- Don't forget Manor Park, Hazel Farm, Bellerby Court, etc

For more advice on campaigning please see the Union mini guide on Campaigning or come to the campaign workshop on February 12th.

Voting System

Take a moment to understand the voting system, 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, etc. For more information see the Union mini guide on Voting.

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, and ignorance is not a defence. In the unlikely event of the Students' Union becoming financially insolvent, the trustees may become personally liable for the debt. You will also become a company director (unless for any reason you are barred from being a director) – again, although this might sound cool, especially that you are no longer liable for all the losses – 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

Placement Students

You may not use your year as a sabbatical officer as a placement year. The term 'sabbatical' in itself means to take time out, and you must be free of academic commitments in your year of office.

What is like in the job?

President

What it's like to be President?

The President of the Student's Union has perhaps the broadest remit of all the Union Executive officers. Whilst the other positions have quite clear goals and areas of representation, the President's role is a mixture of every aspect of student life. This is perhaps understandable; given the role of President is that of the first point of contact for any and all student concern at Surrey.

As such, this gives both wide responsibility and incredible opportunity to make a real difference within the role. The President is the line manager for all the Union officers, and has a key role to play in helping all the elected officers thrive within their role. You could be working with the VP Education to review proposed changes to academic regulations one moment, reporting the Union's performance to the University Council, to helping the International Officer gauge student opinion and effects of changes to the UK visa rules. This, all whilst meeting regularly with the University's senior management team on key issues, and overseeing the finances and operations of the Union's commercial outlets, Rubix, Chancellors and the Living Room/Young's Kitchen.

The President also maintains the relationship the Union has with the highest levels of the University, as well as the NUS and other external bodies. You meet regularly with the Vice-Chancellor, speak often with the NUS President and link up with other Unions. You lead the political direction of the Students' Union (based on student feedback, of course, though). You are the representative of all Surrey students in the eyes of all outside of the University, and play a key ceremonial role in the tradition of the university (the Vice-Chancellor and the President of the Union are the only two people who attend every single graduation ceremony!).

Much is made of a so-called Union clique; and that 'only those who are already involved get elected'. This couldn't be further from the truth. Yes those already involved often know more about the Union, but it doesn't necessarily make them the best candidates. When I first ran for a Union position, other than through sports and Rubix, I'd had minimal involvement with the Union; I wasn't bar staff, wasn't an academic rep, I wasn't part of the 'inner circle'; and I'd certainly never even contemplated putting myself out there to ask for votes! With enthusiasm, a good campaign and ideas of how you'd want to make Surrey a better place, anyone can be part of the next team of officers to take the Union forward.

It really is your Union; I wholeheartedly encourage you to throw yourself into this opportunity. Win or lose, it's a fantastic experience and who knows what kind of doors it could open to you!

VP Education

2 Years: No two days have been the same

Being the VP Education for the last 2 years has been a fantastic experience, that has challenged me but has offered opportunities to develop in ways I could not have imagined.

There is responsibility involved, being the academic representative for 15,000 people doesn't come without its expectations, but anyone who approaches this role with a good amount of passion and determination to achieve will be well suited to thrive.

You receive support however from a fantastic team, not only from the Student Union staff, the other sabbatical officers but also from many staff working in the University who have the students' best interests at heart. Over the year you will get the chance to develop a team of your own, you will work closely with a team of 400 elected academic reps as well as having a closer team of 4 Faculty Reps.

Should you be elected on a day-to-day basis you will attend various meetings as the sole student representative, sounds daunting? However if you go into these meetings confident that you have the strong views of students with you, it becomes an easy task. You will work on projects and campaigns over the year, this year I have looked closely at the role of the personal tutor and have informed the University of the shortcomings in the level of pastoral care being offered in many cases to students by their departments, something that with our support we will be able to change and in the long run benefit so many students who experience difficulties while at University.

You may be feeling right now that you don't have the skills or the confidence to be a good VP Education, but through my own experiences I've found it to be about passion first, then development later. You will build the skills through carrying out the role. You will meet students you've never met on a daily basis, learn from your fellow students through learning about their experiences, you will present your ideas to students and learn from their criticism; all of these activities will help you to develop, but the key thing is that working to improve the education opportunities of other students will be central to everything you will do.

Give it a thought and give it a go, you won't regret it.

Vp Welfare

Imagine a role that gives you the opportunity to be creative, use leadership skills, and see positive measurable results... that's what being VP Welfare has enabled me to do.

The role involves anything non-academic -so this week I may have a meeting with the campus police officer about a security campaign, and next week I might be filming a drink awareness video with Stag TV, the week after I may have a meeting about the best ways the Union and University can work together to deliver pastoral care to students and last week I might have been sitting on a student disciplinary panel deciding whether a student is well/healthy enough to continue with their degree, or whether they should be banned from Rubix for punching someone in the face!

I have attended meetings with the IT team about the availability of wi-fi in accommodation, and worked with the Centre for Wellbeing about mental health and wellbeing, whilst later on in the day I may be popping up in a random place on/off-campus (with the other Sabbaticals) explaining what the Students' Union does.

One of the ways the role has allowed me to be **creative** is through organising and implementing a Union led mental health campaign and figuring out different ways to publicise it; I've used **leadership** skills when co-ordinating the campus campaigners; **positive measurable results** have been seen through surveys- we now know that there has been 20% increase in mental health knowledge (amongst students) since the Mind Maintenance (mental health) campaign.

The role has also given me the opportunity improve my media skills (I've been interviewed by the radio stations BBC Surrey, Eagle and GU2, as well as featuring in Surrey Advertiser, Surrey Times newspaper and The Stag and I've had regular opportunities to talk on Stag TV.

My biggest achievement to date, has been successfully receiving almost £1,500 in grants from external funders who have supported some of the welfare campaigns.

VP Societies

As a student, I was heavily involved in the Students' Union: an Academic Rep, Freshers' Angel, mini-bus driver, Women's Captain for Ultimate Frisbee, a member of Surf & Wake, President and Musical Director of Gospel Choir... The thing is, I didn't really know! All the extra stuff that comes with studying at Surrey – that's often the work of the Students' Union! Now, as VP Societies & ID, I get to be a part of facilitating these opportunities for others. Not only that, but I'm in a position of representation for the student body to the University and local community. As a Creative Music Technology graduate, I've grown in ways I never imagined I could, and discovered gifts and passions I'd not yet had the opportunity to discover: IT skills like video editing, creative writing, being diplomatic and even remaining engaged in intensive meetings – honing in my focus and concentration skills! If you're up for a challenge, love people and want to give something back, I fully recommend running for a Sabbatical position. You, yes you could be the next VP.

VP Sports

One thing I've learnt from this year is that you can make the role how you want it to be, yes there is the meetings you have to attend and general admin; not forgetting replying asap to students emails! But in terms of every day and projects these are up to you. You have to be passionate about sport and your opinions – stick by your decisions, think carefully when writing your manifesto, this is what you will be working on for the whole year, and if you write completely unrealistic goals you will finish the year on a bit of a low. But ultimately if an issue gets raised whilst in the job which has some student backing behind it, you may have to put your manifesto to the side for a moment. You were elected to represent students, so matter how important your desire to start a 'football in space' club, other issues may become more important. This happened this year with the KWAF campaign to Keep Wednesday Afternoons Free. Despite this not being in my manifesto, this became an apparent problem for students and so as their representative I adopted this as a priority.

You also need to have the ability to 'swap hats' so to speak, to represent different parts of the job, I am either a Vice President of the Union – making important decisions which don't directly affect sport to steer the Union. Or the role of Sports & Recreation, representing student sport and working on my manifesto projects or finally as a Trustee of a charity, carefully considering financial positions and approving important documents. One thing that is vital is not to forget your 'own individual hat' and to socialise outside of the campus and the Union!

In the role of Sports & Recreation you work closely with Surrey Sports Park, so make sure you're happy to embrace that and get to know everyone – those at the Union and SSP!

Remember you don't have to do anything the same as your predecessor, just because it's happened before doesn't mean it has to be done this year – obviously if it's been a success you might have to answer to a bunch of students of why it isn't happening! But ultimately every decision you make, think –'will this benefit students?' After all it is them you have to answer to.

Union Chair

So I am the Union Chair. This means I chair a number of committees or meetings (Union Exec, Democracy Committee, Annual Members Meeting and Student Forum) and sit on a number of others (Board of Trustees, Finance Committee, Annual Fund Disbursement Committee, Court of the University). As if that doesn't sound exciting enough I can also sit on Union and University disciplinary panels and get involved with projects such as referenda, election processes and 'Celebrate Surrey', for example. In fact my biggest achievement this year was the co-ordination of a debate on whether we should stay in the NUS and a referendum to that effect. The resultant vote was the biggest turnout in any referendum Surrey has seen. Side-projects can also be undertaken, and this February's "Grill a Sabb" (sabbatical-officer-accountability-forum) was one innovation, which will hopefully prove to be a good evening and can continue in the years to come. Furthermore I have just produced a governance review which, while probably not bedtime reading for many, suggests some quite dramatic changes to the way the Union is run. Being Union Chair is a great experience with great responsibility, but make sure you're good at keeping a schedule and checking emails very regularly if you choose this position for 2013-14! Good luck.

Any questions?

If you have any further questions before you submit your nomination, please contact the Returning Officer, Alan Sutherland in the Student Union a.sutherland@surrey.ac.uk or phone 01483 689983 (ext 9983 on campus). The deputy returning officers are Jamie Fletcher and Alex Tolley a.tolley@surrey.ac.uk