

This guide will help to explain the Students' Union elections, the role of a student officer, and how as a member of staff you could encourage your students to get involved.

summary

The University of Surrey Students' Union elections will be taking place shortly. We will be looking to elect 15 student officers to a mixture of full and part time roles.

Nominations open: Friday 25th January

Nominations close: Monday 11th February

Voting begins: Thursday 21st February at 00.01

Voting ends: Friday 22nd February at 19.00

how you can help:

Before nominations close on Feb 11th

1. **Encourage** your students to consider standing for a position, it is acceptable for you to approach individual students that you think would have an aptitude for a role
2. **Inform** your students about how they can benefit from the experience of standing in an election, maybe share your own experience if you were involved as a student yourself

After Nominations close

3. **Support** students in your class who are running, or those who approach you looking for help.
4. **Be fair** to all the candidates. If you give one candidate time to speak in a lecture, you don't have to make sure all the other candidates are there – but you should allow others to do the same if they ask.

full time sabbatical positions

These are paid roles taken on by students full time, during a break from their studies, or after graduation. As a sabbatical officer, students have the opportunity to become a company director, charitable trustee, project manager, student trainer and problem solver – ideal skills to be taking with them as they enter the competitive graduate work-place, and make decisions about their future.

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

student positions

These volunteer roles are taken on by students alongside their studies. Being an officer gives students the opportunity to represent their peers on issues that matter to them, building skills such as team working, confidence, public speaking, chairing and negotiating. Each student officer is asked to attend an executive meeting once a week.

- **Union Chairperson**
- **International Officer**
- **Postgraduate Development Officer**
- **Community Officer**
- **Communications Officer**
- **Events and Trading Officer**
- **Ethics and Environment Officer**
- **Equality and Diversity Officer**
- **RAG (Raising and Giving) Chair**
- **Editor in Chief (Stag Media)**

about us

The Students' Union is the centre of student life on campus. The University of Surrey Students' Union is a not-for-profit charity led by students, for students. We are the sole representative body for University of Surrey students. The University of Surrey Union has existed since the University of Surrey was founded in 1966. In 2011 we became a charitable company, owned by all the students who are our members and regulated by the charity commission.

our members

All 15,000 students at the University are members of the Union and they automatically become a member, free of charge, when they start studying here.

what do we do?

Our purpose is the advancement of education of Students at the University of Surrey by:

- Promoting the interests and welfare of Students at The University of Surrey during their course of study and representing, supporting and advising Students;
- Being the recognised representative channel between Students and The University of Surrey and any other external bodies; and
- Providing social, cultural, sporting and recreational activities and forums for discussions and debate for the personal development of its Students.
- Our vision is to be a leading Students' Union that has a positive impact on every University of Surrey student.
- We campaign on campus-based, local and national issues; provide academic representation; facilitate clubs and societies; organise entertainment; offer development opportunities; and provide support to students if things get tough.

democracy

The Students' Union is run by a Board of Trustees which includes student officers and external trustees. The trustee board leads on the Union strategy and finances. Our full time sabbatical team also form our student Executive Board alongside eight part-time, voluntary Executive Officers – all of whom are students at the University and stay in post for a full twelve months. The Executive Board provides the student voice for the Union, and meets once a week to discuss Union issues and make decisions.

Only current registered students may take part in any of the decision making processes in the Union; that includes voting in elections, sitting on committees, and asking questions in general meetings. The Union is also staffed by a dedicated team of permanent employees covering membership services and commercial.

your guide to the students union elections

Every year the Students' Union holds elections for its full time sabbatical officers and student officers. In previous years, these elections have taken place in February (full time officers) and in May (student officers). However, this year the Students' Union will be electing all positions at the same time, in one online election taking place in February. Voting is conducted online so that all registered students are able to take part. The Union uses the STV (single transferable vote) system in all of its elections, allowing students to rank candidates in order of preference.

how you can help

Candidates running in the election may ask you for the opportunity to speak briefly in your lecture. Students may also ask for noticeboard space. We welcome all staff to get involved and show an interest, but we ask that you don't favour one candidate over another and offer the same amount of your time to any candidate who asks. If you were involved yourself in democracy at your Students' Union, whether you were a full time officer, part time officer or an academic rep, please share your experiences with your students.

things you may notice

For several years, the Students' Union has banned the use of posters during election campaigns, and now that voting is conducted online, much of the campaigning happens on social networking sites. However, we encourage candidates to be out on campus as much as possible and therefore you may notice students with their campaign teams on campus and that the campus has a special atmosphere during campaign week. For a full copy of the election rules, please visit the Students' Union website.

the election timetable in full

- Nominations open: Friday 25th January
- Nominations close: Monday 11th February
- Candidate briefing and training:
- Manifestos due: Thursday 14th February
- Campaign week: February 18th – February 23rd
- Voting opens: Thursday 21st February at 00.01
- Voting closes: Friday 22nd February at 19.00

useful links and contact details:

- **Voting** - Each student will receive an e-mail from 'Student Union Announcements' with their own unique voting link that they can click on to vote.
- Website - www.ussu.co.uk
- Facebook - www.facebook.com/surreyunion
- Twitter - #surreydecides
- Email - ussu.information@surrey.ac.uk

