

University of South Wales Students' Union

Election Regulations 2025/26 Academic Year



Undeb Myfyrwyr
Prifysgol De Cymru
University of South Wales
Students' Union

Returning Officer (RO): Peter Robertson National Union of Students Charity (NUS)

Deputy Returning Officer (DRO): Keatan Rees Democracy and Campaigns Coordinator

These regulations are implemented for use in any election administered in the 2025/26 Academic Year

Your Union, Your Voice – Making Elections fair, transparent and accessible for everyone

The University of South Wales Students' Union is a democratic membership-led organisation which is legally separate and autonomous to the University of South Wales. This means that the priorities, focus and activity of the Students' Union is decided by students – who are all members of the Students' Union automatically.

As part of how the Union is run, the major officers' holders of the Union are elected every year by students through cross-campus secret ballot. This is your time as a student to make your voice heard in the Union. You decide who will lead on the priorities of the Union and represent your interests. Even if you are choosing just to vote, the more students who make their voice heard the stronger the Students' Union is in terms of credibility to represent your interests to the University.

We work to ensure every year that our elections are conducted in a fair and free manner. In continuation of this, we have overhauled our election regulations and processes to ensure that the elections are as fair, transparent, and accessible to all students at USW.

Key Dates and Contacts

Key Dates

Nominations Open	Monday 26 th January 2026 09:00
Nominations Close	Friday 27 th February 2026 13:00
Candidate Briefing	Saturday 28 th February 2026 12:00
Campaigning Starts	Saturday 28 th February 2026 18:00
Campaigning Ends	At close of voting period
Voting Opens	Monday 9 th March 2026 09:00
Voting Closes	Friday 13 th March 2026 17:00
Results Released	Monday 16 th March 2026 13:00

Key Contacts

Returning Officer (RO)	NUS – Elections@nus.org.uk
Deputy Returning Officer (DRO)	Keatan.Rees@southwales.ac.uk
Head of Engagement	Ellis.Thomas@southwales.ac.uk

1. Election Core Principles

Our core principles are established to set out the expectations and standards of how the elections are operated. It is required that all candidates and individuals involved in the election process adhere to the following principles at all times.

These are:

- 1.1. Freedom of Choice: Students must be free to vote without coercion, undue influence, or pressure.
- 1.2. Respect and Integrity: Treat others respectfully; avoid harassment, defamation, or intimidation.
- 1.3. Fairness: Campaigning must be accessible to all candidates equally.
- 1.4. Transparency: Campaigns must be open, honest, and accountable.
- 1.5. Compliance: All activity must comply with Union and University policies, and the law.

In addition to these principles, it is expected that all individuals act in compliance with all Union and University policies and procedures including the Union's governing documents, code of conduct and health and safety policies.

2. Eligibility to Stand in Election

If you are a student interested in standing for a role in the SU election, it is important to ensure you are eligible and confirmed to be standing in the elections.

2.1. Who Can Stand

- 2.1.1. Candidates must be currently registered students at the University of South Wales.
- 2.1.2. Candidates must not be subject to disciplinary action from the University or the Union.
- 2.1.3. Candidates must not have been removed from an elected representative position in the Students' Union in the last 12 months.
- 2.1.4. **For Sabbatical Officers** – Must be eligible to undertake the [role of Trustee](#)¹ and [Companies Director](#)²
- 2.1.5. **For Sabbatical Officers** – Must either be finished with their studies before 1st July or take an interruption of studies if they are mid-course.
- 2.1.6. **For Part-time Officer Roles** – Must be an enrolled student between the period of 1st July 2026 and the 30th of June 2027 whilst undertaking the role.
- 2.1.7. Candidates can only stand for one role per election.
- 2.1.8. Current Officers who wish to stand for an additional term must ensure they read and abide by the Returning Candidate Guidance.

2.2. How to Stand

For all Roles:

- 2.2.1. Complete the Nomination Form
- 2.2.2. Submission of Candidate Profile Form
- 2.2.3. Complete the campaign team form.

For Sabbatical Roles Only:

- 2.2.4. Complete the Trustee Declaration Form
- 2.2.5. Provide Proof of Identity and Rights to Work
- 2.2.6. All forms must be completed and returned either digitally or physically to the Students' Union by the close of the nomination period.

¹ Eligibility requirements to be a trustee can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/become-charity-trustee>

² Eligibility requirements to be a Company's Director can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/limited-company-formation/appoint-directors-and-company-secretaries>

2.3 Eligibility and Candidate Briefing

All candidates **must** attend candidate briefing as part of their eligibility to stand for a role. If you are unable to attend, you must arrange an alternate briefing session with the Students' Union in time specified. Failure to do this without an accepted reason will result in you being disqualified.

3. Election Campaigning Rules

Once you have been confirmed as a candidate and attended candidate briefing, you are eligible to campaign for your role in line with the following rules. In addition to you as a candidate, any student who is campaigning for formally or informally must also abide by these rules.

3.1. General Conduct

- 3.1.1. Campaigners must act respectfully and responsibly to all students and other candidates at all times.
- 3.1.2. Campaigning **must not** begin before attendance at candidate briefing.
- 3.1.3. Campaigning must be done on campus or within designated learning areas for students not attending campus.
- 3.1.4. Campaigning must not take place in the library or other prohibited areas.
- 3.1.5. Candidates are permitted to put campaign materials up in the Students' Union with the exception of Union office space.
- 3.1.6. Campaigners must not make comment on other candidates, student groups or make any comments which are offensive, discriminatory, or false.

- 3.1.7. Candidates and campaigners speaking to courses must first receive written (electronic) permission from the Session leader and must only provide information on the elections, what their priorities are and their skills as a candidate.
- 3.1.8. SU and University resources may not be used unless explicitly permitted.
- 3.1.9. Candidates must not use branding or logos of the SU or University in campaign materials.
- 3.1.10. Re-running officers and student staff must not campaign during working hours or use their roles to gain advantage.
- 3.1.11. All campaign materials must be removed fourteen working days from the end of the election period.
- 3.1.12. Candidates are responsible for their campaign team's actions and words.

3.2. Accessibility & Fairness

- 3.2.1. Campaign activities must be replicable by all candidates.
- 3.2.2. Campaigners must not use access to mailing lists, private groups, or personal networks that others cannot access.
- 3.2.3. Campaigners must not interfere with, remove or deface another candidate's materials.
- 3.2.4. Endorsements by student groups are permitted providing that it does not discredit, slander or negatively impact other candidates or students.
- 3.2.5. Endorsements by current or previous elected Union Officers or University Staff is strictly prohibited.

3.3. Campaigning Expenditure

As part of campaigning, you may wish to spend personal funds to purchase materials such as posters, t-shirts, and banners.

- 3.3.1. All candidates must not exceed spending of £50.00 on campaign materials.
- 3.3.2. All candidates must keep receipt of all purchases and complete the campaign expense form no later than 1 hour after the close of the voting period.
- 3.3.3. Any materials used but not purchased (such as previously owned items) must be valued at market rate or at a price determined by the DRO.
- 3.3.4. Candidates must not pool together their budget for promotion or the purchase of campaigning materials.
- 3.3.5. Items available to all (e.g., old T-shirts, cardboard, free student-accessible software) may be used without cost.
- 3.3.6. Spending is not permitted to purchase endorsements or to bribe voters with money or gifts.

4. Voting Rules

Voting is the primary way in which students engage with the election. We use our electronic voting system provided via MSL, meaning that students can vote with their student id and login.

Voting will be conducted via in person ballot stations across each campus during the election period. Voting online is only reserved for distanced learners only. Students studying on campus must vote via a ballot station. Students studying on campus, but unable to vote at an in-person ballot station for whatever reason may email sustudentvoice@southwales.ac.uk to be added to the online voting system.

- 4.1. Candidates and campaigners must not campaign or publish campaigning material within **five** metres of a ballot station.
- 4.2. Union Staff (including student staff) may not openly support any candidate and must remain neutral during working hours.
- 4.3. Bribery or intimidation of voters is prohibited.
- 4.4. Candidates or campaigners must not touch other students' mobile devices during the election period.

5. Complaints and Appeals

We want to ensure that the election runs fairly and freely for all candidates and students. However, at times breaches may occur or incidents may arise which will require the Students' Union to take necessary action.

5.1. Complaints

- 5.1.1. Complaints must be submitted in writing to the Deputy Returning Officer (hereafter known as DRO) within 24 hours of an incident or until an hour after the voting period has closed.
- 5.1.2. Complaints must be factual and provide evidence of any breaches of these rules.
- 5.1.3. Breaches must be linked to a specific rule or to a core principle.

The DRO will rule on whether there has been a breach of election regulations and where appropriate, issue proportionate sanctions to those found in breach.

Sanctions may include one of the following (but is not limited to):

- Verbal or written warning over conduct and adherence to the election rules
- Final written warning
- Suspension of campaigning for a determined time
- Removal of campaign material, whether digital or physical
- Exclusion from events and or areas for campaigning
- Disqualification

The DRO is responsible for providing appropriate sanctions in line with the relevant breach.

The DRO will write within 24 hours of the complaint being received of whether it is upheld and what sanction is applied to both the reporting complainant and the candidate who is alleged to have committed the breach.

5.2. Appealing the decision of the DRO

- 5.2.1. In an instance where either party of a complaint is unsatisfied by the outcome of the DRO, they may appeal the decision to the Returning Officer (hereafter known as RO).
- 5.2.2. Any appeal must be submitted in writing to the DRO within 24 hours of an incident or until an hour after the voting period has closed. Whichever comes first.
- 5.2.3. Appeals must be based on one of the following reasons for appeal:
 - Misapplication of rules
 - Disproportionate sanction in relation to the breach
- 5.2.4. Any appeals which do not fall under the above reasons will not be considered.
- 5.2.5. The RO will rule on the appeal and subsequent sanctions or removal of such sanctions as appropriate and inform the complainant and candidate of the decision in writing no later than 24 hours after receipt of appeal.
- 5.2.6. The RO's ruling is final and cannot be appealed or dealt with through the Union's complaint procedure.
- 5.2.7. The DRO and RO may delay counting or withhold the results of any particular election whilst a complaint or appeal is being resolved.
- 5.2.8. Where an RO determines that any breach is sufficiently serious to affect the legitimacy of the result of that particular election, the RO may call for the election to be nullified and the election re-run.