



Introduction to Campaigning & Written Statements

Autumn Elections 2023

Your Voice
Only Louder

Objectives of Session

- **Brief introduction to the Guild**
- **How to plan an effective election campaign**
- **In-person campaigning + activities**
- **Online campaigning + activities**
- **Other helpful guidance**
- **Candidate support available before, during and after the election**



What is the Guild?

The Guild is an independent charity, here to support the social and academic experience of UoB students, and ensure that you get the very best experience!

Asides student elections, we offer a variety of services and opportunities to students, including:

- [Decision-making \(democracy\)](#)
- [Student Rep System](#)
- [Campaigns](#)
- [Guild Advice](#)
- [Societies, Student Groups & Associations](#)
- [Joe's Bar](#)
- [Nightclubbing events \(e.g. Fab\)](#)
- [Student Mentors](#)
- [Community Wardens Scheme](#)
- [Student-Staff Jobs](#)
- [Employability Support](#)

...and lots more volunteering opportunities!

[You can find out more info about the Guild of Students here](http://www.guildofstudents.com) (URL: www.guildofstudents.com)



Elections & Decision-Making at the Guild

- Every UoB student can take part in Guild elections and decision-making (democracy)
- Every UoB student can also represent other UoB students nationally, on Guild committees, and on University committees
- Officer Elections is the second election period of 3 election periods at the Guild
- Even if you aren't elected for a position in Officer Elections, you will still develop a great foundation of skills, experience and knowledge, which can prepare you for lots of other opportunities in the Guild (e.g. Autumn Elections, contributing to the All Student Meeting, campaigns), University (volunteering and job opportunities), and elsewhere (your career)



How to Plan an Effective Election Campaign



Help! I've Never Campaigned Before! 😞

Don't worry!

Lots of students think that they need to know lots of people and “be popular” to deliver an effective election campaign, and be elected for a position

This isn't necessarily true though – you can still win an election even if you are new to elections and/or new to UoB!

There are lots of tools, methods and tactics that you can use to raise awareness of your campaign, raise awareness of who you are and why you are the best candidate for a role, and deliver an effective, powerful campaign – even if you have never campaigned before!

You can build awareness of your campaign through networking and talking with others, using common interests and shared values (reaching out to the RIGHT networks is also important!)



Where Do I Start #1?

As part of your application, you will have submitted a written statement (manifesto) and candidate photo

Firstly, well done on submitting these!

You can now use your written statement to plan your campaign!

Your written statement and candidate photo is one of the basic campaign tactics that you can use for your campaign – and it can really help to plan other campaign tactics!

...also – you can publish an extended written statement on social media



Planning Your Campaign #1

- There are lots of campaign tactics you can use - in summary, these involve reaching out to students and encouraging them to vote for you and support your campaign
- You can reach out to students via two main ways - physically (in-person) and/or virtually (online)
- Whichever methods you use, it will be extremely beneficial for your campaign - it will show students that you are serious and care about the role
- You can choose whichever methods are more accessible and comfortable for you
- It is also ideal that you are consistent with the methods that you choose (given that they are working for you!)
- You could put together a campaign plan to plan how you will reach out to students



Planning Your Campaign #3

- When campaigning for your election, you should reach out to and talk to students, and talk to them about your campaign and written statement aims
- It is ideal to reach out to students who may potentially have similar interests (e.g. if you have climate change and divestment on your written statement, you might want to reach out to students who are part of relevant societies e.g. Amnesty International, UoB Sustainability) or study relevant courses (e.g. MSc Environmental Science)
- You may want to encourage students who have similar interests to be part of your campaign team
- One way of reaching out to large groups of students is via societies, associations, volunteering groups etc – [you can search for student-led groups and their contact details on the Guild website here](#)

Note: Student Groups cannot endorse you, but individual students who are part of student groups can endorse you!



Planning Your Campaign #3

- Reaching out to a diverse range of students, particularly students that you don't usually interact with, is also important – as there may be students who will agree with you, even if you think they will disagree
- There are also lots of student groups who feel that candidates don't talk to them during elections – these include: International students, PG students, Med students, LGBTQ+ students, ethnic minority students, disabled students, care leavers, parent students, student carers, mature students, commuter students and trans students



Planning Your Campaign #5

Different Ways of Reaching Out to Students

Online

- Written statement & candidate photo
- Campaign poster
- Text posts, Memes, videos (with closed captions), campaign photos, GIFs etc

You can post the above on social media!

In-Person

- Talk to student groups, societies, associations etc (please note student group endorsements are NOT allowed)
- Talking to students around campus
- Putting up physical campaign materials (e.g. posters, banners)

You don't have to do all of these, just do what you are comfortable with!



Planning Your Campaign #1

It may be helpful to set **SMART** goals for your campaign – this will help you plan your time, both during your campaign, and if you are successful:

- **S**pecific
- **M**easurable
- **A**chievable
- **R**ealistic
- **T**ime-Bound

[Further guidance on smart goals can be found here](#)



Activity

Reflect on written statement (manifesto)

What were your main ideas and/or policies?

Do you have any thoughts at the moment on how you might reach out to students?

5 minutes



Introduction to In-Person Campaigning



In-Person Campaigning

Campaigning in-person involves speaking to students in-person, and having a physical campaign presence (e.g. putting publicity material such as posters and banners up).



General Guidance #1

For any physical publicity/campaign materials (e.g. leaflets, banners etc):

- Avoid fences or exterior surfaces. Using rope on lampposts, trees and walls is okay. Don't remove plastic tree tags.
- Don't create blind spots.
- Don't mark the ground.
- Estates will remove any material that looks untidy.

Remove anything you put up ASAP after the close of voting. Failure to do so may result in a fine from the University.



General Guidance #2

For printed materials (e.g. leaflets, posters):

- Make it really clear *what your name is and what you are applying for*
- Limit the amount of text but think about what key messages you want people to take away at a glance.
- Include dates and how to vote
- Avoid language that is insulting or offensive.
- Ensure that photos don't depict drunkenness or consuming alcohol.



Where Might You Talk To Students #1?

- The Guild of Students
- Library
- Uni Centre
- Vale Path
- Muirhead Tower
- Mason Lounge
- Med School
- Sports Centre / pitches
- University Station
- Any entrances onto Campus
- Learning Centre
- Path from Vale to campus
- Car Parks
- Westmere

You can also refer to the UoB Campus Map



Where Might You Talk To Students #2?

Door knocking in Selly Oak & Campaigning in Halls

Candidates often do these as part of their campaigns for Officer Elections

Please do consider any safety guidelines though (e.g. taking somebody else with you), and ensure that you obtain permission from the relevant accommodation staff if you are campaigning in Halls

You can find out more about the accommodation at UoB here:

- [Student Accommodation - University of Birmingham](#)
- [Studios and Studio Apartments - University of Birmingham](#)

You can find more about the location of UoB accommodation and the Vale Village on the UoB campus map.

You can find out more about Selly Oak here:

[Selly Oak - University of Birmingham](#), [Getting here - Selly Oak Campus - University of Birmingham](#)



Activity

Think about the campaign



Introduction to Online Campaigning



Online Campaigning

- You may prefer to campaign online, or do a mix of online and in-person campaigning – and that's absolutely okay!

Online

- Upload a written statement, campaign photo and/or campaign poster on the Guild website
- Social media – Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok, Weibo, Twitter, Discord, LinkedIn etc...
- Post in Facebook Groups
- For all of the above, you can also use memes, videos, campaign photos, GIFs, etc...



What Does a Great Online Campaign Need?

- A plan (e.g. comms/social media plan) – including key messages and how you will communicate to students about it (this plan may be part of your overall campaign plan)
- Having an online presence is important – equally, do not spam social media!
- Posting engaging and consistent content
- Reaching out to a variety of students (if applicable)
- Receiving support from other students (i.e. a campaign team)



Social Media #1

- There are lots of social media websites that you can use for an online campaign



- You may want to create a separate page/channel for your campaign
- You may want to create a comms/social media plan
- On your social media pages/accounts, you can include a written statement, campaign photos, a digital campaign poster, videos, memes etc – the list can go on, and you can be as creative as you like!
- You can also post in Facebook groups etc – there are do's and don't's for this however, which we will provide more information about – a list of Facebook pages can be found later in this document.
- For some initial ideas for your campaign, you could look at previous year candidate election campaigns, and previous Guild campaigns in general



Social Media #2

Facebook pages/groups you can post on:

- Fab n Fresh: [Fab N Fresh - New | Groups | Facebook](#)
- UoB Virtual Neighbourhood: [UoB Virtual Neighbourhood | Groups | Facebook](#)
- Postgraduate Research Community Hub: [PGR Community Hub @UoBGradSchool | Groups | Facebook](#)
- PGT students at UoB: [Postgraduate Taught Students of the University of Birmingham | Groups | Facebook](#)
- Guild Activist Network Group: [Guild Activist Network Group | Groups | Facebook](#)



Talking to Students

What do I say to students when I talk to them?

You can use the below steps as a guide to help with this, for both in-person and online campaigning:

1. Say hi!
2. Ask the student(s) how they are
3. Ask them if they have a spare few moments to talk (this is important, as if students are busy, you don't want to annoy them!)
4. Explain that you are running for a position in Officer Elections, and talk a little about your campaign (ensure that this is short and concise)
5. If the student(s) don't know what Officer Elections are, you can tell them a little about this!
6. Let them know that they can read more information about your campaign in your manifesto, on your social media etc, and more general info about the election on the Guild website – and tell them the voting dates/times and where to vote!
7. If you're talking in person, you could give them a leaflet if you print some
8. Ask them what they think of your campaign, if they're interested in supporting you, and if they have any questions
9. Thank them for taking some time to talk!

You may want to adapt the above steps depending on the vibes, who you are talking to and how well you know the people



Other Helpful Guidance



Example Campaign Day

8:30am: Breakfast

9am: Schedule some posts on Facebook for the week

10:00am: Lecture on campus

12:00pm: Lunch with friends/classmates, drink water & rest

1:00pm: Seminar on campus

3:00pm: Talk to students around campus & post story on Instagram

7:00pm: Rest, eat a snack & drink water

8:00pm: Talk to students at the Tea Society social

9:00pm: Tea dinner with friends/family/flat mates/pets

10:00pm: Reply to comments and messages on social media

11:00pm: Go to bed



Things to Consider

- If you talk to students who disagree with you, don't feel disheartened or discouraged by it – say thank-you for taking the time to talk, and still encourage them to vote too. There are also hundreds of other students that you can talk to across campus too!
- Consider how your campaign can be inclusive and accessible for different students
- Think about how you would communicate with students from countries with different political circumstances – not every country has a democracy!
- Whatever campaign method you use, ensure that you use simple, clear and concise language
- If there are particular groups of students or EDI-related topics that you would like to find out more about (e.g. racism, ageism, homophobia), you can come and talk to us about it, and we can recommend resources for you to read. [You can also find lots of helpful resources in NUS' Mixed Media Library here.](#)



Candidate Support Before, During & After Election



Support in the Guild #1

- **Elections Webpage** - [For all of the information about the election that candidates need to know, please visit the Elections webpage on the Guild of Students website: www.guildofstudents.com/autumnelections](http://www.guildofstudents.com/autumnelections)
- **Elections Team** - for elections questions (e.g. I'm having issues uploading my manifesto) elections@guild.bham.ac.uk.
- [Your Guild President](mailto:president@guild.bham.ac.uk) (Amira Campbell) - president@guild.bham.ac.uk.
- [You can also contact other Guild Officers, including Liberation Officers – you can find their contact details here.](#)
- **Guild Advice** – *for wellbeing, finance, housing, academic and/or international issues*
- You can contact them on guildadvice@guild.bham.ac.uk and/or [find out more here.](#)
- [UoB Chaplaincy Service](#) – *other welfare concerns*
- [UB Heard](#) - a confidential listening and support service for all registered UG and PG students at UoB, provides immediate emotional and mental health support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.
- [Disabled Students' Policy](#)



Support in the Guild #2

During the election, candidates must campaign positively, and not participate in any smear campaigns, in line with the Elections Regulations, Guild's Zero Tolerance Policy, and other applicable Guild and University policies.

Any smear campaigns and negative campaigning from other UoB students will also not be tolerated.

If you experience any inappropriate behavior during your campaign, please inform the Elections Team on elections@guild.bham.ac.uk.

The Elections Team will be there to support you – we will provide you with training and guidance on how to deal with any inappropriate behavior, bullying and/or harassment, and how you can look after your wellbeing in situations like this.



Support at the University...

[University of Birmingham Careers Network](#) are happy to help candidates to reflect on skills they have developed through campaigning etc

[Resources and events from the Careers Network to help you with careers support and applying for opportunities](#)

[Access our careers services 24/7 at a time that suits you with our digital resources hub](#)

[LinkedIn Learning - access your free LinkedIn Learning account to upskill yourself and prepare to enter the world of work](#)

[Hear from our students by accessing our searchable database of student stories](#)



Most Importantly:

Regardless of if you are elected or not elected, you will develop lots of skills, experience and knowledge that will be really useful for other opportunities in the Guild and outside of the Guild

If you're not elected, there's still lots of other opportunities to get involved in the Guild



**Thank-You For
Reading!**

