



ST@ND ABER

A Guide to Election Campaigning!

Congratulations on standing in the elections; running a campaign can seem daunting, but we hope that the advice in this booklet will be helpful and reassuring. These tips should help you plan a campaign with impact, but bear in mind that they're only guidelines based on what candidates in previous years have found useful; there's no 'magic formula' for a winning campaign! Remember to make your campaign unique and be brave and try new things! Think about it like a project, plan carefully and play to your strengths.

Don't worry if you feel at the moment like you haven't got anything prepared, but make the most of the next week and try to get as much done as early as possible so that once voting opens you can focus on getting out there and talking to students.

Remember to play by the rules, it's not worth the risk of being disqualified, and if you see someone else breaking the rules make sure you let the deputy returning officer know as soon as possible, it's all about a free and fair election.

Good luck!



University & Deadlines

We strongly suggest you try and finish all your urgent University work BEFORE voting opens so that you can prioritise your campaign. Try to plan this carefully, as trying to finish important work while campaigning might cause you undue stress.

Compulsory University - If you have lab or other compulsory time, decide whether you'll attend these during the election. Standing in a Students' Union election does not qualify for Special Circumstances, so it is important that permission is sought should you choose to campaign instead of attend University. We advise you to make your supervisor or tutor aware that you're running in the election. You can copy the Deputy Returning Officer (union.elections@aber.ac.uk) into emails and we'll be able to verify that you are a candidate.

Campaign Team

Firstly, it's important not to worry if you don't have a campaign team, people win and get high numbers of votes without any help if they plan their campaign well. However it's worth trying to find some people to work with if you can.

Get a Facebook group together with some friends who you think might help you. Even if they don't get involved they will still see your posts in here and spread the word or at least think about voting for you.

If you have a close friend who is keen, then perhaps they could manage your campaign for you, but this isn't essential.

When you're out and about, try and campaign with at least one other person for moral support. There will be times when you feel like quitting and they are the person who will keep you going. If you don't have a friend to campaign with, try and make friends with someone else campaigning and buddy up for the day/week.

If you manage to get a team together, think about their strengths and what they will be most happy doing – a happy team is a more productive one! Don't try and force your shy friend to flyer students, if you have a friend who is in university all day they might be able to help you in the evenings. Different roles you could think about are:

- **The Artist** – do you have an artistic or creative friend who could help you design some posters, make some t-shirts or paint a banner? You don't need graphics skills to make an eye-catching poster, you could hand draw them and scan them in - be creative!
- **The Keen Bean** – do you have a friend who is keen to be involved in the whole campaign? They could be your campaign manager and help you delegate responsibilities and plan.
- **The Chatty One** – do you have a friend who is confident and outgoing and would be happy to chat to students? This is the most important thing to do during voting, and having a friend or two to do it with will keep you going and be more effective.
- **The One who loves putting up posters** – do you have a friend who only has a few hours to help? Getting posters up all over campus is a good way to get your name out there and it doesn't take long to put a few posters up.



- **The One who lives on Bridge Street, Portland Road or Fferm Penglais** - if you have friends who live in popular student areas they could put posters up in their windows or maybe even hang banners out for you.
- **The Digital Whizz** – do you have a friend who has the skills to help you make a campaign video or design you some posters or a Facebook banner and profile photo that fits in with your brand?
- **The Social Media Addict** – social media can be really useful, and you can write and schedule all of your posts in advance; you might want to use some of your budget to boost Facebook posts. This can be a bit tricky, but perhaps you have a friend who could show you how to do it?
- **The Parent** – keeping yourself motivated can be difficult; perhaps you have an especially caring friend who can be on hand for when you need a pep talk and to be reminded to get some sleep.
- **The Chef** – see if someone (maybe a housemate) could cook your tea some evenings during voting? It's important you remember to eat, and knowing you have some time for food and a chat with a friend each day will keep you going!

Branding and Design

Creating a strong, simple and memorable brand is really important. You want someone to see your posters, flyers, banners and campaign team and link them altogether. Try create your campaign around something fun! People who don't care about the Union will remember the person who has solid, continuous branding.

Slogans and puns can work well but make sure it makes sense; don't worry too much if you can't find one that fits your name, not everyone uses a slogan and still run a really successful campaign. Think about using one simple colour scheme, and make sure your name is what people will see and remember.

When creating designs, you should have a number of key assets. These are:

- **Facebook banner** – make sure you include your full name, the position you're running for and a picture of you. Also make sure the 'Profile Picture' does not cover the key elements. See if you can get as many of your friends to change their cover photo to this.





- **Poster** – (A4-A3) make sure your name and the position you’re running for is on your poster so people who glance at it will remember the key information about you. Keep the design as simple as possible. Try to make sure this looks good and eye catching in black & white, as the free printing we offer isn’t in colour. You can choose to spend your budget on colour printing but think about how cost-effective it is. You could think about including up to 3 main manifesto points if they are short.
- **Leaflet/Flyers** – (A5-A6) make the most of this and make your flyer double sided, one side could be a smaller version of your poster, with key information on how to vote. The other side could include your policies as bullet points, or a smaller version of your manifesto. Again, make sure it looks good in black & white and that there isn’t too much text on there.

Social Media

Social media is important, but not the be all and end all. It’s important to have a strong presence, but 90% of your social media can be planned and scheduled before voting even opens.

- **Facebook page** – You can use the ‘invite all’ code to invite as many people as possible, including friends that don’t attend Aberystwyth; the more likes the better! Try to get as many of your friends to do this as well. You should be regularly posting on this page throughout your campaign, updating on what you’re doing, etc. But remember that your total number of likes doesn’t necessarily equate to votes. Pages are useful for spreading your brand, so make your posts interactive, interesting and post them at peak times. Posts with images or videos are more likely to have a higher reach, so think about including a simple image of your poster, or perhaps photos of you and your team out and about on campus.
- **Facebook event** – some people create a ‘Vote [name]’ event and invite all their Aberystwyth University friends to attend. You could make the ‘time’ of the event to last



throughout the whole voting period, this will both remind people to vote and spread your brand a little bit further.

- **Twitter** – Again, don't over-estimate the power of Twitter to swing an election, but it might be worth having some presence. You could create a hashtag or post tweets using popular hashtags that are trending in Aberystwyth.
- **Trends** – Think about ways you can tag friends to your page, as this will make your page trend and increase your reach. Photo albums are a good way of doing this – you could get lots of friends to hold your poster or a sign saying, "I'm voting for...", or a more creative sign (examples include cardboard moustaches/saxophones/speech bubbles) and tag them in an album on your page with voting instructions in the album description.
- **Boosted posts** – if you do a video or other big posts it's worth allocating a bit of money (maybe £5) from your campaigns budget to boost this to people who like your page and friends on Facebook. There's more detailed instructions on how to do this at the end of this guide.
- **Like & Share competitions** – this is a more creative and interactive idea, you could spend some of your budget on some small prizes and use them as incentives for people to like and share your content.
- **Video** – There isn't much of a culture of making videos at Aberystwyth University like there are at others, but it's something you could do if you feel confident you have the time and resources to make one. When they're done well they can be effective! As with everything, make sure it fits in with the rest of your campaign branding. Have a look at what people have done at other Student Union's for ideas, but don't expect to make a masterpiece either!
- **Individual Facebook messages** – if you want to you could message people individually on Facebook, it might be worth getting a friend to do this if you don't have time. Send out a pre-written message about your campaign and how to vote to all your Facebook friends in Aberystwyth individually, asking them to share a post & vote for you.
- **Posts in groups and mailing lists** – you can post in any Facebook group you're a member of; you can also ask to join new groups and post there, but it might be a good idea to ask permission from an admin first otherwise your post may be deleted. You can't use an email list you have access to because of a privileged position (e.g. As an academic rep or group committee member), but you could always ask a fellow rep/another committee member to send something out on your behalf, as this is an opportunity everyone has access to.

Manifesto

"I read their manifesto" is the biggest reason voters give for choosing to vote for a candidate, so it's important to take the time to write and design a good manifesto.

The deadline to have the final version of your manifesto uploaded onto our website is 12pm on Thursday 2nd March. The limit is 200 words and a 20-word summary but you don't need to fill this. Remember it's about getting your message across in a clear and concise way not using up the word count.



- **Simple, specific and structured** – Remember to include tangible policies which state what you want to do; think about problems students' experience, and how you would solve them. Be specific rather than vague about what you care about and stand for. A good way to structure a manifesto is to think of three key areas with three key policies or ideas for each section. The rule of three will make it more readable and easy for you to remember when you're talking about it! Remember to present it in a clear, non-cluttered format which fits into the rest of your brand.
- **Feedback** – Get feedback from members of the Full-time Officer Team, friends, and importantly students who don't necessarily know much about the Students' Union. You want to make sure everyone can understand and like your ideas.
- **Learn** – Make sure you know your manifesto thoroughly! This will help when talking to students and during shout-outs. If your friends are helping you when you're out talking to students, make sure they know it as well!

Sports Clubs and Societies

Sports Clubs and Society can support you, although are typically among the least reasons given by voters for making their choice, but it could still be worth approaching them and getting them to support your campaign. You cannot use a Clubs or Societies money or resource to promote your campaign.

Endorsements must be done in accordance with the Club or Society's usual processes and you must be able to evidence if asked – it is your interest to ensure processes are followed.

- **Contact** – be proactive and contact clubs and societies asking to meet with them/their committees to discuss your policies and how you can support them if elected.
- **Research** – before meeting a club or society, look them up to find out what is important to them, and how this relates to the position you're going for; always look to bring this back to your manifesto.
- **Key Clubs or Societies** – there are some clubs or societies that are very large so have large committees and therefore lots of people to potentially contact. You can also find some contact information for clubs and societies on the AberSU Website. Look up sports and societies that relate to your position, e.g. Wellbeing to speak to welfare or campaigning societies as these students might be more interested in you and your campaign.
- **Interviews/question times** – if you do get invited to an interview or a question time with a society, make sure you go as it will be worth some votes and it's a good way to start building these relationships.

Posters and Flyers

The sooner you start putting up posters the better, you have just under two weeks from the close of nominations to the start of voting, so use this time to start getting your name and your brand out there.

We provide free black and white printing, which you'll be able to collect on weekdays but not on the weekend, if you put in a printing request before 12 noon we aim to have it ready for you to



collect at some point the following day. We are only providing printing in Black and White but candidates are free to utilise their campaigns budget on colour printing.

Think about the orders you're putting in and while we won't print unreasonable quantities, don't be too timid and put in small requests as this could waste your time and slow you down. But remember that we won't print more if you haven't picked up your previous print job. If you print things out, make sure you put up those posters and hand out those flyers otherwise it's a waste!

- **Sizes, quantities and colours** – here is a rough guide to the quantities of printing you may want to plan to use. Posters; A3 – 30/50 per voting day, or 250 if you order all of them at the start. Flyers; A5/A6 – 250/500 per voting day, maybe get 1,000 to start with. Think about your design so that it works in black and white and in colour so that your brand is memorable online and on campus.
- **Posters** – put as many of these up as possible, across campus. Focus on areas such as bus stops, teaching buildings, the Students' Union, student residences, even shops and bars in town, etc. Ask your friends to join you on this – even 1 hour of their time is incredibly valuable. Avoid putting posters on the outside of University buildings as campus staff will probably take these down quickly, inside buildings can be more successful and most University buildings have a lot of notice boards you could use but remember to seek permission as much as possible.
- **Llanbadarn and Gogerddan** – don't forget to poster and flyer here! Lots of students based here don't necessarily make a trip to the Students' Union often so could miss your campaign entirely if you don't go to them.
- **Flyers** – some people scatter these everywhere, but think about how effective this is. When flyering engage people in a conversation – ask them about themselves and make your campaign relevant to them, then give them a flyer to take away with them. You could leave flyers in the Library and computer clusters, particularly towards the end of voting – remember to be mindful of others studying. Shops and cafes in town might let you leave leaflets and posters but make sure you ask! But remember that a flyer in someone's hand is more valuable than sat on a desk – it's far better to talk to people.
- **Regularly repeat** – it's inevitable that staff across the University will throw away your flyers and posters so make sure you repeat them on a regular basis.

Banners

We will be providing free banner making material, paint, brushes and twine, from Monday 6th March – they're all available from Union Reception (tbc) for you to use. You can't take any of the paint or brushes home but you can use one of our meeting spaces. It's also a good idea to water down the paint as this makes it much easier to spread on the fabric.

If you want to make a banner, we suggest you make them the week before voting opens. To avoid your banner being stolen, damaged by the weather (it is Aberystwyth after all!) or taken down by University staff it might be a good idea to take your banner down at night and put it back up in the morning.

If you have friends who live in a prominent student area, ask them to hang a banner from their house?

T-shirts



You can decorate up to 5 existing t-shirts without having to cost this up for your budget. You can decorate T-shirts simply with paint or pens but if you buy new t-shirts and get them professionally printed you will have to factor this into your budget. T-shirts can be a good way of getting your name out there and showing off the support you have, but make sure they fit in with your brand!

Door knocking

Door knocking in halls, residences or student areas can be effective in the evenings so worth doing. Try to enlist some friends or fellow candidates to help as it'll be more fun and less intimidating.

- **Plan** – have a schedule of what residences or halls you want to visit on which days. Visit these in the evenings during the week. Flats tend to be slightly better as you can reach several students from knocking on one door and asking to come in to talk to their flatmates. Prioritise which halls or residences you want to speak to first, the bigger ones will be visited by more candidates, and the smaller ones might not see anyone, so use this information in planning your tactics.
- **Speak to first years** – If you know any 1st years, ask them if they can let you into their halls and take you to all their friends. Being introduced to people will be a good way to start.
- **Houses** – if you run out of halls or feel they are too saturated then head into town and start talking to students. Maybe start with friends' houses and then work along the rest of their streets where you know predominately students live. This can take longer but if you have a big team it's worth doing.

Again, when door knocking remember to make your conversations engaging and friendly, just like when you're talking to students on campus.

Think about peak times that people socialise in their homes and halls, e.g. weekend afternoons or evenings where students are not out or away.

Typical day of a campaigner

- **8/8.30am** – make sure you have some breakfast so you're full of energy for the day ahead. Get to campus and hang your banner up.
- **9-5pm** - lecture shout outs on the hour, talking to students and flyering around campus in between. There's more information about accessing the central timetable to plan your shout-outs at the end!
- **5pm** – take down banner; this is optional, it's a risk leaving it up, but if you think lots of people will see it in the evening (e.g. on the Friday/Saturday night) then hang it somewhere visible from the bus!
- **5pm-Late** (8/9pm) – make sure you eat properly throughout the day, and especially at some point in the evening. Then maybe head to halls or other places where lots of students are, and talk to them!
- **10pm-8am** SLEEP – make sure you sleep AT LEAST 8 HOURS EVERY NIGHT. Make sure you sleep AT LEAST 8 HOURS EVERY NIGHT. Make sure you sleep AT LEAST 8 HOURS



EVERY NIGHT. Do not stay up late obsessing over social media, try to wind down and rest so that you can get back out there the next day!

Basic Election Comms – Start of Voting

- **Texts** – send out texts to all your friends reminding them to vote and asking them to get 10 people to vote for you. If 10 of them do it that's 100 votes already!
- **Facebook** – make a post on your page giving exact instructions of how to vote, and ask all your friends to like and share this.

Basic Election Comms – Middle of Voting

- **Facebook message** – send a big message to a hundred or so people saying, "Hey don't forget to vote and tell your friends" in the middle of the campaign.
- **Check-in** – contact some of those you texted or spoke to earlier in the week to see if they have voted and if you can do anything to convince them further.

Basic Election Comms – Last Day of Voting

- **Final Reminder** – send and post final reminders to all your friends reminding them that it is their last chance to vote, remember a vote is a vote whether its case five minutes after opening or five minutes before the end.
- **Recognise your supporters** – take some time to pay tribute to those who have supported or campaigned for you, but don't let it detract from campaigning, use it to encourage others.

Lecture shout-outs during voting week

- **Plan** – Get a timetable of all lectures and plan where you will be at what times (we've included the top 20 lectures at the end but will be adding a more comprehensive list to the Candidates Hub). Try to target large lecture theatres of 1st/2nd years, but don't just focus on these – sometimes smaller ones mean that people concentrate on you more. Make sure you arrive early and ask permission from the lecturers. If you can find ways to personalise your speech to the specific subject of the lecture or demographic of the students you'll be more successful.
- **Structure** – There are various ways to do a lecture shout out. A good way to structure it is to start with your full name & position, then 2/3 policies you'll do if elected with a brief description, then finish again with your full name, position and how students can vote.
- **Practice** – Make sure you practise your shout out with other candidates/housemates/or even in the mirror. Speak clearly, slowly and with confidence & positivity.
- **Friends** – If you have friends that are willing to stand up at the beginning/end of their lectures to do a shout-out for you then make sure you brief them on what to say. You also might want to buddy up with another candidate for shout-outs, this will make it a bit less



daunting. It's unlikely that a lecturer will let lots of candidates speak though so don't push your luck!

- **Don't worry** – it can seem daunting doing this and most people find it scary, but if you plan and practice you'll relax into it by the end.

Go Out And Talk to students!

This is one of the most important campaigning activities so it's really important you do it and do it well. Again, it is really daunting, but it's also something you'll get better at with planning and practice. When people say "I've already voted", check if they've voted for your position, try to carry on and win them over. They might feel like the elections aren't relevant to them but you can try to convince them.

- **Approach** – You don't want to intimidate people, but this is essential, so don't be scared – you'll be surprised at the amount of people that are happy to talk to you. You can speak to people in cafés and social areas, but maybe avoid libraries & clusters as people here are probably busy and focussing on work. Maybe save clusters for the final day! If you can see that someone really doesn't care, thank them and move on, don't waste your time if it's not worth it or if they're rude.
- **Food/souvenir** – think about having something you can give to people, it eases the mood and people love freebies. You can use your budget to make food to hand out or maybe bulk buy sweets or chocolates.
- **Speech** – this is very important, don't talk AT people. You want to engage people with your campaign and convince them to vote for you. Ask them questions and use that information to tailor your policies, e.g. '*Are you part of a society?*', '*What course do you do?*', '*Do you go to the SU much?*'. This makes people feel more connected with you and valued.
- **Don't take too long** – remember that you don't want to irritate people by taking too long, so keep things short and sweet. Leave them with your leaflet, and a brief explanation on how to vote.
- **Be friendly** – keep your positivity up and be polite and friendly, don't pester people or badger them, if someone is clearly in a rush, busy or rude just let them walk on and focus on the next person. If you experience any abuse or if you have a bad experience while out talking to students, remember that the deputy returning officer is the person to go and talk to about it, and we will see how we can help, even if that's just making you a cup of tea.

Self-care

We can't stress this enough; looking after your health and wellbeing is KEY!

Make sure you get 8 hours sleep a night, don't stay up late on Facebook – if you've scheduled in your posts this shouldn't be necessary. Try and switch off from the election and wind down. Try to make this a routine for the week and eat properly – you could pre-make meals and freeze them, make your packed lunches for voting week the weekend before. Make sure you have things for breakfast, even if it's just things you can grab and eat on your way to campus. If you're lucky you might have a friend or housemate who could cook for you so it's worth asking!

We'll be providing a space in the Ground Floor Meeting Room G3 of the Students' Union for candidates to take a break and unwind with tea, coffee and fruit...



Make sure you plan to win the election but are also ultimately prepared to lose. Standing is an amazing experience in which you'll learn and develop skills which you can take with you to the next step, whether that's being an officer or going into the world of work.

That all said have an amazing time and good luck!



Appendix 1: How to Boost Facebook posts

1. Click Advert Manage or Create Advert in the left of your profile.
2. Choose Brand Awareness or Reach as your marketing objective and create advert account
3. Choose your audience:
 - Location: Aberystwyth (most potential voters will be in Aberystwyth)
 - Age and Gender: Completely up to you!
 - Detailed targeting: People who are interested in the Students' Union or Aberystwyth etc.
4. Choose your Budget: Daily will charge you every 24 hours and lifetime is the whole campaign.
5. Choose your Schedule: It's probably best to have a start and end date to save your money!
6. Choose your Optimisation for Advert Delivery:
 - Post Engagement: Deliver it to people you think are most likely to post and share.
 - Impressions: As many people's newsfeeds as possible
 - Daily Unique Reach: As many DIFFERENT newsfeeds as possible
7. Choose your Optimisation for Advert Delivery: Keep as automatic.
8. Choose your Advert Scheduling: You can schedule posts at the times you think will have the most impact. Look at the Union plan to see when we'll be sending emails and when people were most likely to vote last year.
9. Select the post that you want to boost and add your card details and that's it done!
10. Remember: Facebook doesn't let you boost images that contain more than 20% text. Go to

Who do you want your adverts to reach? [Help: Choose your audience](#)

NEW AUDIENCE ▾

Target Adverts to People Who Know Your Business
You can create a Custom Audience to show adverts to your contacts, website visitors or app users. [Create a Custom Audience.](#)

Locations

United Kingdom
United Kingdom
Include ▾ Add a country, county/region, city, DMA, postcode or address

Age -

Gender All Men Women

Languages

Detailed targeting INCLUDE people who match at least ONE of the following

Add demographics, interests or behaviours | [Suggestions](#) [Browse](#)

Exclude people

Connections

Save this audience

How much do you want to spend? [Help: Budgeting & pricing](#)

Budget
£11.00 GBP

Schedule Run my advert set continuously starting today
 Set a start and end date

Optimisation for Advert Delivery

Bid Amount Automatic - Let Facebook set the bid that helps you get the most post

Audience definition

Your audience selection is fairly broad.

Audience Details:

- Location: United Kingdom
- Age: 15-65+

Potential reach: 36,000,000 people

Estimated daily reach

13,000-35,000 people on Facebook
of 25,000,000

This is only an estimate. Numbers shown are based on the average performance of adverts targeted to your selected audience.

https://www.facebook.com/ads/tools/text_overlay to check if your post is okay!

