

**ELECTIONS**  
**HOW TO**  
**RUN A**  
**GREAT**  
**CAMPAIGN**

**gsu**

---

**ELECTIONS**

## **WELCOME FROM THE REPRESENTATION TEAM**

So, you have decided to run for a position in this year's GSU Elections. Firstly, you should give yourself a huge pat on the back as you are one of a select few who have decided to run to represent the 20,000 students here at Greenwich University.

There is a lot to look forward to when campaigning in a Students' Union election, but it may seem to be a bit daunting. This booklet is designed to help you run a successful campaign, maximise the resources you receive and most importantly have a fun experience. Also, we hope this booklet will help with campaign ideas as well as providing you with tips with what works well and what may be best avoided.

As a Students' Union, we are here to support you in preparing for the election and act as a guide through the process. Campaigning can be tough, so it is vital that you take care of yourselves. Remember to eat regularly, get plenty of sleep and make sure your University work comes first. You can drop into the Students' Union at Greenwich and speak to the Representation Team during working hours, or the Students' Union Advice Team and for those in Medway, the GK Unions Advice Team is always there to help.

If you would like to arrange a meeting or telephone call to discuss campaign ideas and what previous candidates have done, please don't hesitate to contact our Democracy and Engagement Coordinator Chiron Hooson at [c.hooson@gre.ac.uk](mailto:c.hooson@gre.ac.uk) or [elections@gre.ac.uk](mailto:elections@gre.ac.uk). Alternatively, you are always free to pop into the Students' Union at the Dreadnought Building, 30 Park Way, Greenwich.

**Voting will open 4th March at 10pm and close 7th March at 2pm.**

In the next few weeks you will need to write a manifesto, create posters and flyers, campaign materials, campaign plans, attend candidate question times and a candidate briefing, all of which can take up to six to ten hours in the few weeks before voting begins (for more precise dates see the key dates section). There are also optional crafting campaign materials sessions.

Happy campaigning!



**Heather Doon**  
Representation and Advice Manager



**Arushka Theagarajah**  
Academic Representation Manager



**Chiron Hooson**  
Democracy & Engagement Coordinator



**Esther Olorunsomo**  
Representation Coordinator

**ELECTIONS TIMELINE**

Title	Description	Date	Location
Nominations open	Nominations are open for any Greenwich student to stand for election for either a Full-Time Officer (paid) or a Part-Time Officer (unpaid).	28th January 10am	
Thinking of running sessions	We realise that running is not a decision you make without careful consideration. Therefore, we have lots of sessions set up to give you more information, guidance and support in making the decision	7th February 11am-1pm  5th February 2pm-4pm  6th February 10am-12pm	Greenwich  Avery Hill  Medway
Nominations close	Don't leave it to the last minute as some students do, otherwise your nomination may not go through.	14th February 5pm	
Medway candidate briefing and training	For candidates based in Medway, we are holding a candidate briefing and training session in GK Union. This compulsory session will go over all the information you need, tips/tricks to campaigning and training sessions on how to get students to vote for you. There will be a networking session with GK Union staff over lunch time.	15th February	GK Union, Medway
Manifesto drop in sessions	To help candidates to write their manifestos, we are holding various manifesto drop in sessions for anyone who would like a second opinion and guidance on their manifestos.	14th February 2pm-4pm  18th February 1pm-4pm  15th February 1pm-2pm	Dreadnought, Greenwich  SU Office, Avery Hill  GK Union, Medway
Full-Time Officer candidate videos	This year we will be offering every Full-time Officer candidate time to record a short video of themselves answering questions from students and a one-minute speech on their manifesto.	18th February 2pm-5pm  19th February 9.30am-4.30pm	Dreadnought, Greenwich
Greenwich candidate briefing and training	For candidates based in Greenwich, we are holding a candidate briefing and training session in Dreadnought. This compulsory session will go over all the information you need, tips/tricks to campaigning and training sessions on how to get students to vote for you. There will also be a networking session with SU staff afterwards	19th February 4pm-6.30pm	Lower Deck, Dreadnought Building

Manifesto deadline	All candidates must finish their manifesto at this time and date to ensure it is featured in our manifesto booklet we give out to students during the elections.	20th February 4pm	
Faculty Officer online Question Time	Faculty Officers will be given the opportunity to answer questions from students online, answers of which will be published as an article on our website.		
Campaigning Week	Candidates will be allowed to spread the word they are running through posters, leafleting, talks with student groups and lecture shout outs.	25th February-1st March	
Medway campaigning day	All candidates are encouraged to come to Medway to campaign around the campus and get themselves known to students.	26th February 11am-4pm	Medway campus
Medway Question Time	All Full-time Officer candidates are invited to attend a Medway special Question Time which will focus on the issues affecting the campus and how candidates will work towards resolving these if elected.	26th February 5pm-7pm	Medway campus
Candidate drop-in sessions	Candidates are always supported throughout the elections and can book a one to one session with a staff member any time leading up to the election.	28th January-1st March 9am-5pm	Dreadnought, Greenwich
Candidate crafting sessions	We always encourage candidates to think outside the box which wacky campaigning materials such as billboards, sign posts, banners and flyers, therefore we provide crafting sessions with all materials you need to create these things	28th February-1st March 9am-6pm	MR 026, Dreadnought
Candidate breakfast	A great opportunity for candidates to meet in the morning, grab some breakfast and set off campaigning.	4th March 9.30am-10.30am	Boardroom, Dreadnought
Voting opens	All our 20,000 students will be able to vote online and at our voting stalls.	Monday 4th March 10am	
Dreadnought Voting Stall	Say hello to one of our GSU Staff who will be there to help you through the voting process. All you need to bring is your student ID.	Monday 4th Thursday 7th March  10am-3pm (Monday only) 11am-3pm (Tuesday/ Wednesday) 11am-2pm (Thursday)	Dreadnought, Greenwich

GK Voting Stall	Say hello to one of our GSU Staff who will be there to help you through the voting process. All you need to bring is your student ID.	Monday 4th-Thursday 7th March 11am-2pm	GK Hub, Medway
Avery Hill Stall	Say hello to one of our GSU Staff who will be there to help you through the voting process. All you need to bring is your student ID.	Monday 4th and Thursday 7th March 11am-2pm	The Dome, Avery Hill
Stockwell Street Stall	Say hello to one of our GSU Staff who will be there to help you through the voting process. All you need to bring is your student ID.	Monday 4th and Wednesday 6th March 11am-2pm	Stockwell Street Library
Candidate Breakfast	A great opportunity for candidates to meet in the morning, grab some breakfast and set off campaigning.	Tuesday 5th March 9am-10am	Dreadnought
Medway Focus Day	All candidates will be encouraged to spend the majority of the day campaigning in Medway.	5th March 11am-3pm	GK Hub
Candidate Breakfast	A great opportunity for candidates to meet in the morning, grab some breakfast and set off campaigning.	Wednesday 6th March 10am-11am	Dreadnought
Candidate Breakfast	A great opportunity for candidates to meet in the morning, grab some breakfast and set off campaigning.	Thursday 7th March 10am-11am	GK Hub
Voting Closes		Thursday 7th March 2pm	
Results Night	All candidates and students gather to find out who is elected and celebrate everyone's hard work campaigning	Friday 8th March 6pm-10pm	Lower Deck
SU Careers Afternoon	A session open to all students looking at the opportunities to get involved with SU's when you graduate University.	Friday 15th March 2pm-4pm	Dreadnought
Residential Training for New Officers	Newly elected officers start their training.	Monday 20th and Tuesday 21st May	Off campus

**FULL-TIME OFFICER KEY DATES**

	Informal lunch celebration
	Officer team building residential
	Officer team building residential
	Trustee board - handover
	Handover week – first day
	Handover week
	Sabbatical residential
	In office, office party & FTO leaving do
	Trustee Board

**FACULTY OFFICER KEY DATES**

	Officer Team building residential
	Officer Team building residential
	In Office, office party & FTO leaving do

## **PREPARING YOURSELF FOR AN ELECTION**

Campaigning in any election can be very time consuming and this also applies to Students' Union Elections. It is advised that you should set aside the voting days (4th – 7th March) so that you can put as much focus as possible into the election, and make sure you don't miss reaching out to students!

All students can vote in the election, as all students are automatically members of the Students' Union, so be prepared to talk to as many as possible! Please make sure your studies do not suffer during elections – the best way to do this is to prepare ahead of time and make sure any deadlines are completed as early as possible. Your degree should always come first!

It is also very important to look after your wellbeing during elections as campaigning can be very tiring and stressful. Feel free to use our candidate hub in the SU which will be full of cosy chairs and snacks to relax at any point during elections week. Also, you can in contact with our candidate support lead Chiron Hooson on our designated elections phone number where we can help you with any queries you may have.

### **Top tips to be prepared:**

- Have your manifesto, slogan and pitch all remembered off by heart so that you can easily pitch to students what a vote for you means to them
- Tell all your friends that you are running and try to form a campaign team
- Make yourself a timetable so you know exactly where you will be when campaigning, so you can maximise the number of students you reach
- Utilise social media; buffer is a good software to help you schedule posts
- Make your campaign materials before election week to put less pressure on yourself
- Make sure any urgent coursework is completed before voting opens
- Schedule in little treats for yourself and time to relax in-between campaigning so you don't burn yourself out

## **UTILISING CAMPAIGN MATERIALS**

The most effective materials you can find are lying around the house such as cardboard, old bed sheets, paper, old bathroom curtains etc. At the SU we are running two crafting sessions where you can use materials we provide for free such as paint or cardboard.

- **Thursday 28th February: 9am – 5pm**
- **Friday 1st March: 9am – 5pm**

All candidates will have their accounts credited with £5 printing credit once they are confirmed and approved as candidates (by 25th February). Candidates can also spend some of their own money on campaign materials. Faculty Officer candidates can spend up to £20 of their own money, and Full-time Officer candidates can spend up to £40 of their own money.

## **HERE IS A LIST OF IDEAS OF WHAT YOU CAN CREATE:**

### **1) Posters**

The easiest way to design a poster is to use your computer and print in A3 and A4. You can put them in plastic wallets to attach on poles or stick 10 A4 posters together to create a giant poster. You can also put multiple designs on one sheet of A4 and cut it out into fliers. Do make sure you put the SU logo and voting elections link on any poster you create so that students know you are a candidate in the GSU Officer Elections.

### **2) Bedsheets/Shower curtains**

One person's rubbish is an election candidate treasure with this material! You can easily paint on bedsheets and hang them up with cable ties somewhere for people to see in the university campus. Another idea is finding a rod of some kind and making yourself a big flag. There are endless opportunities with this material and a lot of ideas on the internet with what you can do.

### **3) Cardboard**

You can always find this material lying about and there is a lot you can do with it! It's a great way to show your artistic side with painting on slogans, placards, making picture frames for selfies, and lots more. Again, very much up to your imagination!

### **4) Leaflet**

Print lots of mini versions of your poster on A4 to create A5 fliers/leaflets! Having a little leaflet or even a small business card can be very useful to give to students you talk to, so they have something to remind them to vote for you and any information you want them to know.

### **5) Stickers**

Very cheap to buy a roll of plain stickers, design them as you like and give them to students as they walk to a lecture or after having a conversation with you. Do make sure you don't stick them on University property or walls otherwise you will be breaking graffiti laws.

### **6) T-Shirts**

In your campaign pack you will have three plain shirts to do as you wish. You can use the crafting sessions to paint your name, position and slogan on the shirts or even use a stencil from a cardboard cut out to make things look arty.

## **USING SOCIAL MEDIA**

For elections, social media is a hugely beneficial tool to get yourself out there and reach students who might not necessarily be on campus all the time, e.g. commuting students, students on placement and students abroad.

If you are out campaigning all day, make sure you leave some time to deal with social media and other electronic communications. You might want to go into a library during parts of the day to spend some time online, as it is a good break if it's cold outside.

You can always use a service like Hootsuite or Buffer to schedule your posts in advance. We encourage you to be creative with your campaigning methods, and online campaigning is a great way to do this. If you can get a social media post to be seen by large sections of the University population, then this will increase the visibility of your candidacy. Putting out entertaining posts with good, concise information and links to the voting website is a fantastic way of prompting people to put you as their first choice.

**There are many things you can do to help your campaign and get your friends involved such as:**

### **Facebook**

This is one of the best platforms to reach students. You can create posts from your account which friends can share, create a page, create events, open a private campaign group, post in SU and university groups, upload various media and go "live". Obviously, you don't need to do all these things, but it certainly presents many opportunities to tell students to vote, share your manifesto points and get friends to share your posts! Scheduling posts, or having a friend manage a page or group may be worth thinking about while you are out campaigning during the week.

### **Twitter**

During the elections, we will be using the #electionsgre to promote the elections to students and get them engaging with candidate questions times. Using this # in posts will be useful to help get yourself out there and reach more students. Instagram: This is a great way to share photos of you campaigning throughout the week and utilise the #electionsgre

### **Campaign Video**

Some candidates have found from past elections recording an engaging campaign video has hugely benefited their campaign and helped to bring manifestos to life. Fun and slap-stick sing along videos of people's manifestos has even been given national news attention in Students' Union elections which has given videos 10,000s of views and brought candidates to the attention of students. Creating a video can be very time-consuming and may end up pulling time away from other tasks, so do consider what is manageable and make sure you have lots of friends helping you with them.

### **Website**

This can be a very good way to explain more about your manifesto and yourself through an easily accessible website.

### **Email**

Having an email that students can contact you on if they wish to ask you questions can be a benefit at being able to interact with votes and give personal responses

## PHYSICAL CAMPAIGNING

On the voting days (4th-7th of March) we encourage you and your supporters to join the Elections Team where we will be running roadshows.

Once campaigning has begun, you may find extra people want to get involved in your campaigning. You will need to brief them about what they can do for you and take responsibility for their actions – any penalties given because of their behaviour will be applied to you. Candidate supporters are expected to follow all election rules, so make sure you send the rules to your campaign team.

**The key to running a successful campaign is getting as many people as possible to see your face and know there is an election on.** 10% of students vote in our elections, and so if you can show your face and brand to the other 90% you stand a good chance of getting their votes - and a good chance of winning. Don't worry about fighting over the same voter base, find different students and get them to vote instead!

You will need an eye-catching brand that runs through your visual and written communications. You might make badges with your name, face, position and the phrase "Vote #1", handing them out to all of your friends you can get to wear them. Hopefully people will ask people about the badge and if nothing else it is a visual reminder that the election is on. Another good visual cue is to paint t-shirts for your campaign team.

**Most people will vote because they have had a conversation with a candidate.** Having a concise message to give people can make the difference as to whether or not someone thinks you're the person for the role. Aim for a 60 second pitch as to why they should vote for you, so you can have this conversation confidently and effectively over and over again!

## HERE'S A GUIDE TO HELP YOU CONSTRUCT THAT PITCH:

1. Introduce yourself and the role you are running for "Hi, I'm Gus, and I'm running to be your next GSU Officer!"
2. Let them know Elections are on, and they have a right to vote "Did you know that Voting is open for SU Elections? As a student, you have a right to vote for this important role."
3. Now ask them a question that leads into one of your campaigns. For example if you wanted to work on housing, you could ask "Have you ever had any problems with your accommodation?" This will give you the opportunity to talk about how you can help them! "Have you ever struggled to find nap space on campus? If so, you should vote for me because..."
4. Explain what your main aims are succinctly "I want to make sure there are more accessible lectures at night for cats on campus, plenty of beds for naps, and cat nip available all over Avery Hill"
5. Then tell them any experience or traits that makes you suitable "I can use my experiences as a loud cat on campus to lobby the University to ensure students have what they need: plenty of places to sleep, accessible lecture times, and treats to enjoy."
6. Then ask them to vote for you as first choice for your chosen position, or if they already have a first choice in mind, ask them to put you as second. The fact that the election uses the alternative vote system means that the second-choice votes are still very important! "Don't forget to Vote Gus #1 (or #2!) for GSU Officer! You can vote online now!"

**Look out for your welfare, and make sure you have plans in place for support.** Another important thing for your campaign team to do is to look out for your wellbeing. Campaigning, especially physical campaigning, can be tiring and stressful, so having one person in charge of making sure you have eaten a hot meal on voting days to take regular breaks can be really helpful!

## **TOP TIPS TO ACE CAMPAIGNING INCLUDE:**

### **Talk to students**

This should be your primary focus to see as many students as possible throughout the days of voting. Most students will be on their way to a lecture or busy studying, so make sure to keep your pitch short and sweet (preferably one minute or less). Keep in mind there will be rules which explain where you can and can't campaign. However, there are many places you can find students such as University café's, SU spaces, open study spaces, outside lecture rooms and campus walkways. We will have voting stalls around the campus and if a student wishes to vote for you after your conversation, you can point them to the stall, however you will need to then leave them to vote by themselves. You can also advise student to vote online.

### **Organise your campaign team**

"Together everyone achieves more" spells TEAM. Asking your friends to spare a few hours in the week to help you campaign will hugely help you with reaching students and taking some pressure off you to get around everywhere. With your campaign team in their customized t-shirts and cardboard banners means you can distribute them across the campus and get them talking to students on your behalf. Make sure your campaign team are well-rehearsed in knowing your manifesto, why you're standing and what a vote for you means for students.

### **Lecture shout-outs**

This is a great opportunity to talk to 100-200 students in a space of two minutes. Ask friends to share their lecture timetables with you and create a campaign week schedule for yourself to go to lecturers which have the highest number of students. Do make sure to arrive before the lecture starts and ask the lecturer for permission to speak at the lecture, explaining why you want to speak and that you will only take a moment of their time. Otherwise you may risk violating rules. Keep your speech to: SU elections, your name, your position, why they should vote for you and how to vote.

**Note:** Lecturers are not required to do this, and some will not want to. Please do not put any undue pressure on University staff to allow you to give a shoutout. No means no.

### **Sweets**

Using inexpensive sweets as an icebreaker can be very effective to get a student's attention and for them to be more willing to give you a moment of their time for you to do your vote pitch.

### **Stand out**

As you are trying to win students over for them to vote for you as their first preference (or second/third) this is very important. Make your presence known and be eye catching. For example, this could mean organising a flash mob or perform a song out loud with your friends.

### **Timetable**

Your schedule will be very busy during the three days of voting, so it may help you to create a timetable, so you know exactly where and when you will be campaigning. This way you can plan lecture shout-outs, which parts of campus to target across the week, student-led activities to attend and your campaign team knows where you are.

Feel free to use the timetable template on the next page.

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00		Medway Focus Day			
9:00	Candidate breakfast	Candidate breakfast Greenwich-Medway bus	Candidate breakfast	Candidate breakfast	
10:00	Voting opens	Greenwich-Medway bus			
11:00	Dreadnought voting stall opens GK voting stall opens Avery Hill voting stall opens Stockwell Street Library Voting stall opens	Dreadnought voting stall opens GK voting stall opens	Dreadnought voting stall opens GK voting stall opens	Dreadnought voting stall opens GK voting stall opens Avery Hill voting stall opens	
12:00	Lunch time campaigning	Lunch time campaigning	Lunch time campaigning	Lunch time campaigning	
13:00	Lunch break	Lunch break	Lunch break	Lunch break	
14:00	Avery Hill voting stall closes GK voting stall closes Stockwell Street Library voting stall closes	GK voting stall closes	GK voting stall closes	Avery Hill voting stall closes GK voting stall closes Stockwell Street Library Voting closes	
15:00	Dreadnought voting stall closes	Dreadnought voting stall closes Medway-Greenwich bus		Candidate check in event (Dreadnought)	
16:00					
17:00	Society events (Dreadnought)	Society events (Dreadnought)	Fixtures (Avery Hill, Southwood)		
18:00	Rest	Rest	Rest	Rest	Results night

## **WHERE CAN I CAMPAIGN?**

### **On campus**

The best way to get votes is to talk to students about why you would be great for the role, and how the policies in your manifesto would make their experience at university better.

It's worth being on campus while the SU voting stalls are open, because then interested students can ask you questions before voting. You can talk to students and give out leaflet inside and outside the buildings on all three campuses, however, if a member of SU or University Staff asks you to stop for any reason please do so.

### **Online**

As detailed in the social media section, online campaigning can be just as important as in person campaigning. So, try to make a short and engaging campaign video, and remember to share any branded graphics digitally on Facebook!

### **Question time (Full-time Officers)**

Question Times are a great place to prove to students that you are better for the role than your competitors, and that the policies in your manifesto are better than theirs. You need to attend the question times at Medway and the candidate video recordings at Greenwich, if you cannot attend please send your reason to not being able to attend to [election@gre.ac.uk](mailto:election@gre.ac.uk) (if you are a student at Medway Campus we can give you a return bus ticket to the event). Make sure you prepare for question time, remember you can always ask for campaign team to ask you tough questions so you have your answers ready.

## **IMPORTANT DO'S AND DON'TS**

### **DO**

- Meet as many students as possible
- Have fun campaigning and enjoy the experience, regardless of the result
- Keep pitches to students short and sweet
- Be creative with your campaign materials
- Have friends support and help you
- Use social media
- Take regular breaks and pace yourself
- Plan in advance
- Utilise lecture shout-outs
- Take lots of photos to remember the experience
- Keep your ideas secret until campaign time

### **DON'T**

- Doubt yourself, your abilities and campaign. As said by Winston Churchill: "Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts."
- Forget your university deadlines!
- Overspend on your campaign budget!
- Don't tire yourself or your campaign team out
- Don't lose enthusiasm if some students are disinterested in the election
- Don't promise the world
- Disrespect or jeopardise other candidates' campaigns
- Leave lots of rubbish around campus as you will be responsible to clean it up



---

***ELECTIONS***

[greenwicksu.co.uk/elections](https://greenwicksu.co.uk/elections)