

# ***ELECTIONS*** ***MANIFESTO*** ***HANDBOOK***



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## WHAT IS A MANIFESTO?

Simply, it is a document or article used to give voters information about you and what you want to work on. You should use this to persuade students to vote for you and support your ideas. The best manifestos are clear, concise and eye-catching. The worst tend to be long, boring and confusing.

## DOES IT MATTER?

Yes! Voters are encouraged to read the manifestos by staff and every good candidate has a good manifesto. Students do make comments when a manifesto is missing or is disorganised. A good manifesto can win over voters without you having to speak with them!

## OKAY, SO WHAT DO I NEED TO INCLUDE?

If you think of the elections as an interview, the manifesto is like your CV and cover letter. You want to give students information about why you are the right candidate for the job; Like a CV you are trying to show that you can do the job. You also want to show voters that you have their interests at heart; Unlike a CV you are also sharing your ideas or policies that you would hope to work on if you were successful.

Including a photo in your manifesto is the #1 priority, if you do not upload a photo of yourself you will be really disadvantaged as most people connect more when they see a face. A slogan is important too, but make sure it makes sense, a bad slogan could derail your messaging. A good slogan is used on every piece of election material.

After reading your manifesto you should be able to answer two questions:

### **1. DO I THINK THIS PERSON COULD REPRESENT ME AS A STUDENT WELL?**

### **2. DO I UNDERSTAND AND SUPPORT WHAT THIS PERSON STANDS FOR?**

## WHAT DOES A GOOD MANIFESTO LOOK LIKE?

Use headings if that is appropriate as the structure of your manifesto can make 300 words look much easier to read. Play around with bullet points, spacing and text styles. You can include photos on your online manifesto. Remember to test how your manifesto will look on a phone too!

## ANY TOP TIPS?

Get your mates to have a look at it, they are better placed to spot mistakes and unclear wording and ensure that the message you want to put across is obvious.

You do not need to put every idea you have on the manifesto – you can include these in other messaging, videos, social media posts etc.

Have a nice clear photo of you, group photos, side profiles and poor-quality images look unprofessional and unclear. You want voters to recognise you from your online campaign and spot which manifesto is yours, also people are bad at remembering names so a good picture could gain you a vital few votes.

Personal branding should be the aim of any good campaign, and this must run through your manifesto too. A theme that people see and instantly think of you will be a strong benefit to gaining votes. Colours, images and slogans can all be branded up. Think about big brands and their marketing, this is what you want to emulate.

Finally, be yourself. People will recognise reasonable and realistic ideas, a free car for every student might gain a few laughs but many students could see this as a sign that you are not right for the job. Writing a manifesto that reflects who you are is easier to sell and those who know you or meet you on the campaign trail will respect that you are being authentic and honest.



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