

TRINITY
2025

Oxford SU

Elections Candidate Pack

Prepared By:

The SU Elections Team



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oxfordsuelections.org



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Glossary

- **Ballot:** The process of voting or the physical/digital document used to cast a vote in an election.
- **Campaigning:** The activities undertaken by candidates to promote themselves and their ideas to potential voters, including creating materials, giving speeches, and engaging with students.
- **Candidate:** An individual who has been nominated and is standing for election to a specific position within the Students' Union.
- **Elected term:** This is the period of time an elected officer will be in office. This period lasts for one academic year.
- **Manifesto:** A detailed document outlining a candidate's goals, promises, and vision for the role they are seeking to be elected to.
- **Nomination:** The formal process of putting forward a candidate for an elected position, typically involving submitting required documentation and meeting specific criteria.
- **National Union of Students (NUS):** NUS represents students across the UK and is affiliated with many students' unions across the country, including Oxford SU.
- **R.O. (Returning Officer):** The chief official responsible for overseeing the fairness and integrity of the election process.



Glossary

- Deputy R.O. (DROs): Assistant election officials who support the Returning Officer, handle day-to-day election matters, and provide support and advice to candidates.
- R.O.N. (Re-open Nominations): An option on the ballot that allows voters to choose to restart the nomination process if they are not satisfied with the current candidates.
- Sabbatical Officer: A full-time, paid student representative who takes a year out from their studies (or after graduation) to work for the Students' Union in a specific role.
- Single Transferable Vote: A voting system where voters rank candidates in order of preference, and votes are transferred between candidates to ensure a more representative outcome.
- Slate: A group of candidates running together with shared or similar platforms, often supporting each other's campaigns.
- Trustee: A member of the governing body responsible for guiding the strategic direction of the Students' Union as a charity.

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Introduction

Oxford Students' Union is the representative body of the students at the University of Oxford. Every year in Hilary Term, the Oxford SU

We're on a mission to turn Oxford SU into a thriving, student-led union where every student feels heard and represented. We're building a union that truly belongs to the students, driven by your voices and focused on your needs.

We're redefining what it means to be truly student-led – giving students power and influence over the impact of the organisation. We're opening ourselves up through transparency. We want to deliver impact and value for students, the University, common rooms and colleges.

Oxford Students' Union is comprised of four elected, Full-Time Sabbatical Officers and an additional set of Part-Time Officers. We believe students should be central to student representation and our Officers work closely with the Conference of Common Rooms to empower and support the diverse student community at the University of Oxford.

We will be electing our newly introduced Part-Time Officers to boost our equity and community representation - could you be the right fit for one of our roles?

Our Part-Time positions are voluntary, unpaid roles do not qualify as 'major union office holders' for the purposes of the Articles and the Education Act 1994. This means that any of our Part-Time Officers could go on to serve as a Sabbatical Officer and have the opportunity to run for a second term.

As the leading voice for students at Oxford, we're committed to representing every aspect of student life—from education to the broader experience that defines life at Oxford.

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Key Dates & Election Timeline

Friday, 25th April
(0th Week) 09:00

Nominations Open

Friday, 9th May
(2nd Week) 00:00

Nominations Close

Monday, 12th May
(3rd Week)

Candidate Briefing

Tuesday, 13th
(3rd Week)

Campaigning Begins

Monday, 19th May
(4th Week) 08:00

Voting Opens

Thursday, 22nd May
(4th Week) 18:00

Voting Closes

Friday, 23rd May
(4th Week) Evening

Results

Meet the SU Election Team

PROJECT TEAM



Candidate Support & Welfare



Devanshi Ranjan
(She/Her)

Our two Policy and Representation Coordinators, Devanshi and Jacob, will be your first point of contact for campaign and welfare support



Jacob Callicott
(He/Him)

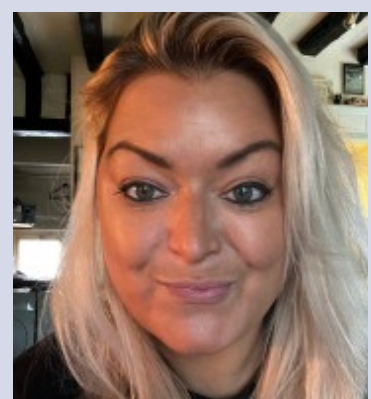


Delivery, Complaints & Compliance



Emilie Tapping
(She/Her)

CO-CEO's Emilie and Nikki will be the executive members handling the delivery of the elections



Nikki Smith
(She/Her)

Meet the SU Election Team

PROJECT TEAM



Deputy Returning Officers (DROs)



Emilie Tapping
(She/Her)



Devanshi Ranjan
(She/Her)



Jacob Callicott
(He/Him)

Emilie, Devanshi and Jacob will be the DROs and will be supporting and advising students and dealing with any complaints. Students can contact them through the elections email: elections@oxfordsu.ox.ac.uk



External Returning Officer (ERO)



nus
national union of **students**

The National Union of Students (NUS) will be the EROs, and this role will be dealing with the final stages of any complaints or decisions about the election. They are contacted through the DROs (students cannot contact them themselves).

POSITIONS FOR ELECTION

THIS YEAR WE WILL BE ELECTING PART-TIME OFFICERS IN ADDITION TO STUDENT TRUSTEES.

ROLE OVERVIEWS

Part-time Officers (PTOS):

Working Hours: 2-4 hours per week (this will vary across the year and hours will reduce during vacation periods).

Equity Officers

Equity Officers represent Student Members from marginalised student communities. They work on policy making, campaigning and lobbying in conjunction with other Officers, on inequality and community-based issues at the University of Oxford. As Oxford SU representatives, you may from time to time be able to work with the Sabbatical Officer team on committee agenda items which concern relevant student communities following SU-provided induction and training. As Chair of an associated RepCom (a space for marginalised or specific student communities to come together, organise, and propose policy), you will be the chief representative for your associated student population and be responsible for spearheading change and raising student voice in this area.

Roles include:

- Class Officer
- Disabled Students' Officer
- LGBTQ+ Officer
- International Students' Officer
- Black and Ethnic Minorities Student Officer
- Suspended Students' Officer
- Women*s Officer

Community Officers

Community Officers are our other new branch of Part-Time Officers. The roles will represent Student Members from Societies, Sports, RAG and those interested in environmental sustainability. Like our Equity Officers, they work on work on policy making, campaigning and lobbying in conjunction with other Officers, on inequality and community-based issues at the University of Oxford. Their relationship with the Equity Officers and the Sabbatical Team will be crucial.

Roles include:

- Environmental Officer
- Societies Officer
- Sports Officer (Sports Federation recruitment)
- RAG Officer

ROLES CONTINUED...

Student Trustee

As a Student Trustee, you'll sit on the Oxford SU Trustee Board – the group responsible for making sure the Students' Union is well-run, financially secure, legally compliant, and always acting in students' best interests.

You don't need to have any prior trustee experience, a specific background, course, or college affiliation, or a deep knowledge of charity law or finance (we'll train you!)

You'll work alongside other Student Trustees, Sabbatical Officers, and External Trustees to help guide the SU's long-term strategy and ensure student voices stay at the heart of decision-making.

CANDIDATE ELIGIBILITY

The criteria for running for any of the Equity Officer positions is self-definition as a member of the representative group. Oxford SU works on self-definition, promoting inclusivity, and advocating for a diverse range of voices and identities within the university community.

All students will be eligible to vote and stand for Student Trustee and Community Officer positions, although the Sports Officer role will be elected as per the Sports Federation procedures.

Running a successful campaign

Your Campaign is your primary platform for communicating a transformative vision. With a 250-300 word limit, you have a focused opportunity to articulate your unique approach to student representation, showcase your experience and officer potential, and outline concrete, achievable proposals.

Campaign Guidelines:

- Maximum 250-300 words
- Submit both plain-text and formatted versions
- Provide image descriptions for visuals
- Focus on impactful, realistic proposals

Campaign Budget and Resources

Navigating your campaign's financial aspects requires careful attention to established spending limits. These guidelines ensure a level playing field and encourage creative campaigning.

Budget Limits: £20

When calculating expenses, consider all campaign materials. Commonly available equipment and free software alternatives are exempt from spending limits. You will need to submit your receipts to the SU by the end of the voting period.



Running a successful campaign

Your campaign should embody our core principles of respect, fairness, and student empowerment. We expect candidates to maintain the highest standards of ethical conduct. Our campaign should reflect respect, fairness, and student empowerment. Please:

- ✓ Seek democratic endorsements
- ✓ Use social media thoughtfully
- ✓ Highlight your ideas and strengths
- ✗ Avoid offering incentives to voters
- ✗ Don't misuse SU resources
- ✗ Keep campaigns positive

Voting Week:

The voting period is your final opportunity to connect with potential voters. Your approach should be engaging, respectful, and compelling.

We are building a Students' Union founded on transparency and fairness. Key compliance principles include seeking guidance from the Elections Team, maintaining ethical standards and adhering to established timelines.

Ultimately, this election is about more than winning a position. It's about becoming a catalyst for meaningful change at Oxford. Your integrity, passion, and vision are your most powerful campaign tools.

We can't wait to see how you'll help shape the future of Oxford Students' Union and our members.

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Media Briefing

DIGITAL FOOTPRINT – THE CAMPAIGN WILL END, BUT YOUR DIGITAL FOOTPRINT CAN HAVE A LEGACY THAT LASTS BEYOND YOUR TIME HERE AT THE UNIVERSITY!

Media in all its forms is a great tool to be utilised to make a great campaign. But it is important to bear in mind that everything -social media reactions, comments to student media, digital content etc.- can become a permanent part of your digital footprint.

Here's what this means:

- **Search Engine Impact:** Articles, posts, and statements (even just a brief comment given to Student Media!) linked to your name can influence how you appear in online searches for years to come, affecting first impressions for internships, jobs and public roles. Regardless of whether you plan to go onto have a public life/career, this is something to bear in mind. NB: It is VERY hard to adjust established SEO.
- **Reputational Damage:** While SU elections and campaigns may feel well contained within the Oxford bubble, the digital sphere extends your influence far beyond. Conduct your campaign in a way you believe would hold up when scrutinised by future employers.

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Media Briefing

Clean Race & Best Practices

Running a campaign rooted in respect and professionalism is how you keep both your digital footprint and (most importantly!) your moral compass intact:

- **Ethical Practices:** Upholding integrity reflects your commitment to clear and principled candidacy, and a clear campaign reinforces trust in the student electoral process, and the SU, within your peers.
- **Respect for Opponents:** Avoid personal attacks and misinformation. Purporting this will affect your digital footprint as well as your opponents.

Posting Online

To ensure a professional and ethical approach, we recommend the following:

- **Candidate Platforms:** We recommend making ‘candidate specific’ platforms for your social media channels and ensuring that your personal accounts are kept separate.
- **Mindful Posting:** On your candidate specific platforms, stick to campaign issues and achievements. Remember that even deleted posts, comments or likes may be screenshotted or archived.



Media Briefing

Student Media: Oxford's active student media can play a huge role in amplifying elections and your campaigns. When engaging with them, treat all interactions as public and permanent, and avoid confrontational statements, even in challenging situations.

External Media: Often, journalists can use pressurising tactics to probe for news stories. Remember, you do not need to engage. If you receive a press request, always inform the SU, especially if you are concerned or feel pressured to engage. Journalists utilise quick deadlines to get reactionary quotes. Ensure conversations are kept formal and avoid using social media platforms for this.

We would strongly advise not to use personal accounts to engage with the press and to maintain a strict campaign/private life separation. This mitigates the press targeting personal aspects of your life and repeated harassment from media channels that can be stressful.

As outlined in the SU Social media briefing:

Don't Engage: Resist the urge to respond when upset; cyberbullies (trolls and sometimes journalists) seek a reaction.

Seek Support: Report abusive and harassing messages to staff and discuss your feelings with your peer candidates, project team or [Harassment Advisors](#).

If you require additional welfare support, Student Welfare and Support Services (SWSS) are available to you. If you have further queries, please contact studentengagement@oxfordsu.ox.ac.uk or commsmanager@oxfordsu.ox.ac.uk.

RESULTS

Voting will close at 18:00 on Thursday 22nd May, and results will be announced on Friday 23rd May.

Any issues will be dealt with between voting closure and results announcement.

WELFARE

The election period is both exciting and challenging. While competition brings energy, it can also create stress, especially if results don't go as hoped. We're here to support you throughout this journey.

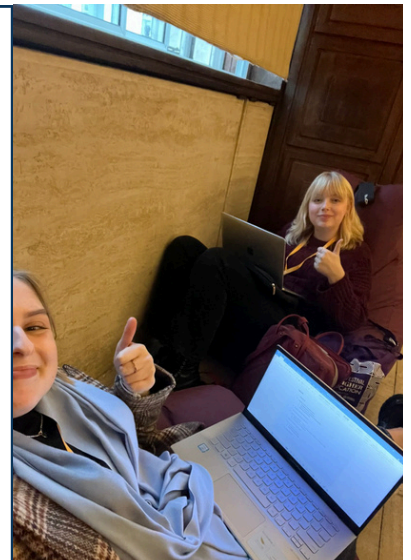
We encourage positive interactions between all candidates. During this intense time when emotions may run high, please treat each other with respect and consideration.

If you experience difficulties with another candidate that create a negative environment, please reach out so we can address concerns through our complaint procedure if necessary.

Remember that elected officers will work together for a full year. Consider how your campaign interactions might affect these future relationships.

Candidate Breakfast: Join us for our special candidate breakfast on (TBD) from 10am in the SU building. This informal gathering will provide an opportunity to connect with Jacob, Devanshi and fellow candidates :)

We're always available to answer questions or discuss concerns, don't hesitate to reach out!

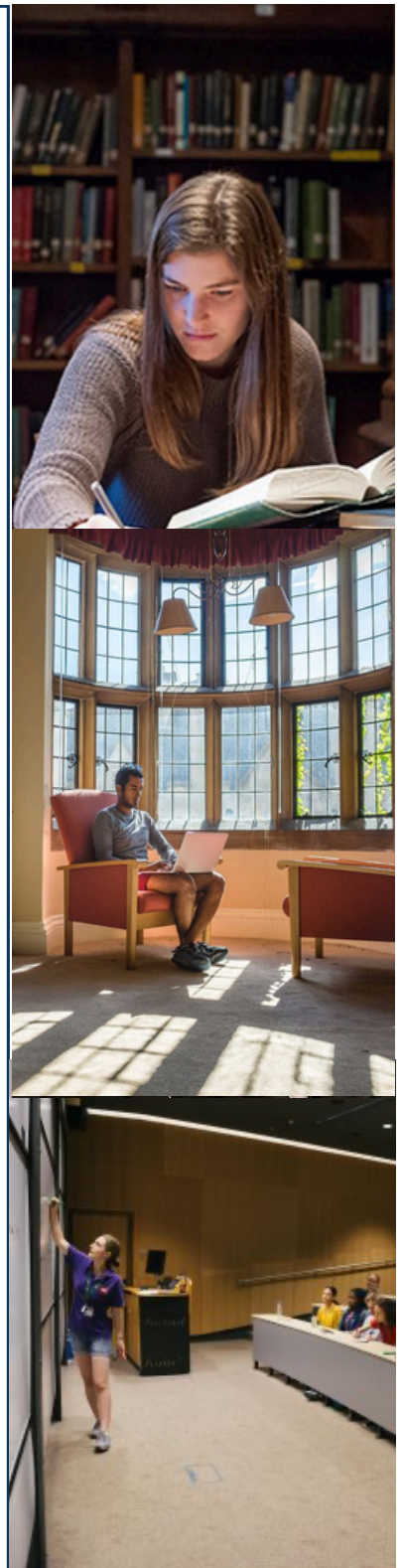


WELFARE

Candidate welfare is a priority for the SU, and we would like to flag key support available to you beyond the project team:

- **SU Advice Team:** our advisers offer free, confidential advice and can help you to navigate challenges you may be experiencing throughout your studies – this can include if your candidature is impacting your studies and or/wellbeing (<https://www.oxfordsu.org/advice-wellbeing/contact-advice/>)
- **Student Welfare and Support Services (SWSS):** the University has wellbeing services that maybe relevant to you during elections, they have harassment and conflict advisors if you are seeking advice away from the SU (<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare>)
- **Student Space:** find advice, information and resources from Student Minds to help you navigate challenges with your wellbeing (<https://studentspace.org.uk/>)

The elections period should be engaging, exciting and fun. Campaigning should be a valuable experience for you regardless of the outcome – your CV will thank you later. However, we want you to take care of yourselves. Votes are never worth the detriment of your wellbeing.



**How can you maintain wellbeing during elections?
Here are some practical tips:**

- **Take regular breaks – engage in hobbies and interests aside from your campaign**
- **Surround yourself with people you care about and who care about you**
- **Meal prepping food/ensuring you are booked in for dinner**
- **Going out for walks**
- **Prioritise getting at least eight hours sleep a night**
- **Forward plan coursework and study prior to ensure you best manage workload**

Take care of yourselves, keep us updated and enjoy the experience.

Good luck!



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