



HOW TO Campaign



HOW TO CAMPAIGN

Running in the Elections is your chance to lead a campaign that's bold, creative and completely your own. It's exciting, rewarding and a brilliant way to build your confidence and skills.

This guide covers what to think about when planning your campaign – from how to get your message across to what's in (and out of) bounds.

Make sure to check out the full election rules so you know what's allowed and can keep things fair for everyone.

The most successful candidates bring the energy and put the work in – showing up online, on campus, and everywhere in between to get their message out.

#1 Have Fun

The first and most important piece of advice we can offer you in creating your election campaign is to find joy in the experience. Whilst this will keep you motivated; it will also help to engage students in your process. This engagement will help students get to know you and give you a better chance at getting elected.

#2 Tell a Story

Messaging is the core to any good campaign. Find a good hook and slogan that will communicate your story of change in a few words.

Whilst you don't need to write an epic novel, you do need to connect the dots. Demonstrate to others how you are the best person for the role through your storytelling. This means who you are, what you plan to do, how you will achieve your goals, and why it's important.

Essentially, your aim is to tell the story of why you are the right person to deliver change and empower the students you are representing.

#3 Prioritise

Campaigns can become overwhelming. You need to carefully plan what you are going to do, including budgeting, risk assessing, and making sure you have a clear idea of what to do if something unexpected happens.

Think about what is most important to telling your story, and then think about the most resourceful ways of making this happen. You need to think carefully about what time you have available to commit to campaigning, and where your energy is best placed. You have to prioritise what will get you noticed, but also what will be manageable.

#4 Research

Find out what has worked well in the past, as well as what doesn't work so well. Look at other student unions, as well as any national or international campaigns that have caught your attention. Use these to inspire how best to deliver your own.

Get to know the student population through research too. Not everyone thinks and feels like you or the people around you, so it's your job to find out what students want. Address any gaps in your knowledge about the people you are representing, as well as how to bring them along in the journey.

This is a fantastic opportunity to engage students and make them aware you are a candidate in the elections. Run polls on social media, speak to people, find out what priorities students have for making their experiences both on and off campus the best they can possibly be.

#5 Find a Team

It can be challenging trying to campaign on your own. This doesn't mean you need to find a team of 100 to successfully become a Full-Time Officer. Consider what skillset you already have and try to find people with different skills to help drive your campaign.

The maths is quite simple. Find one person to support you, then there is suddenly two of you. You can then each go out and recruit another person. Now there's four of you. If you repeat that process, you will quickly get more people advocating on your behalf, and they will be there for support. Think of ways you can co-create your campaign with your team using all your different skills and so you can appeal to more people.

#6 Be Creative

To stick out from other candidates, you need to be memorable. This is where creativity comes in. Think of it like good branding or marketing. It's not just about the look, but about the feeling too. What response do you want voters to have from your campaign? What do you want them to take away from it? How will this show voters who you are and what you represent?

If you're a Full-Time Officer candidate, you are provided with a small budget for campaigning, so you will need to get resourceful. It will ask you to find creative solutions for an effective campaign. Pull on all the resources you have from previous experience, your team, and your research.

#7 Figure Out Your Channels

Finding the best route to engage students can seem challenging, but you want to make sure that you are reaching as many people as possible. That's why you need to maximise use of all the relevant and available channels. Where will you be promoting and reaching the students you want to represent? Is it on social media? Do you have plans on Streatham and St Luke's?

Physical materials are also good, like badges or stickers and posters or leaflets. You can also work with your team to make banners and signs to use when campaigning. It's important to think about accessibility.

Not all students will use the same channels or respond in the same ways. Make sure to mix it up to have the best reach. Some creative inspiration:

- Organise a flash mob for a low-cost solution to grab attention.

- Rewrite the lyrics to a song and create a music video to show off your passionate.
- Use a theme to create an easily recognisable brand.
- Jump on social media trends to get your message across in a fun way

It's important that once you have decided on the visual identity of your brand, you keep this consistent across all platforms you are using, from stickers and t-shirts to social media posts and videos.

If you are unsure of whether your campaign ideas follow the rules, please get in touch via elections@exeterguild.com.

Good luck with your campaign!