

# Candidate Guide

## INTRODUCTION TO CAMPAIGNING

**GET  
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**2024**



**BRIGHTON**  
STUDENTS' UNION

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# Introduction to Campaigning for Elections

Planning your campaign doesn't need to be overwhelming. Break it down into simple steps using this guide alongside the "How to Campaign for an Election" workshop, or by itself. With these tools, you'll be well-equipped to run a successful campaign.

## Self-Reflection:

Before diving into your campaign, take some time for self-reflection. Consider these questions to align your campaign goals with your own:

- Why are you running?
- What is important to you?
- What do you want to change or keep?
- How do you plan to connect with others?
- How will you deliver your aims?
- What approach will you take to ensure democracy?
- Do you have experience or are you new to representation?
- Who are you representing?
- Anything else?

It's important to engage with students that your campaign feels authentic to you and your passion for change.

## Action Plan:

Create an action plan to map out your goals, tasks, and deadlines. Here's a breakdown of what each section entails:

- **Goal:** Your overarching aim for the campaign.
- **Task:** Think of it as smaller goals that you'll need to achieve your main goal!
- **Action:** Steps to be taken for each task. These need to be more specific, and easy to cross off the to-do list!
- **Timeframe:** Time you have to execute the tasks.
- **Deadline:** Final date when tasks should be complete.

Goal	Task	Action	Timeframe	Deadline
Have a successful voting period	Encourage people to vote	Post on social media	12-14 March	14 March

Remember if you're delegating tasks within your team you might have to also keep track of who's doing what!

## People:

Engaging with students will be one of the main aims for your campaign, remember you will have to get people on your side to gather votes! The following questions should help you prepare for different people you will be engaging with - have a think about them!

- Who do your goals align with?
- Who will be affected by your manifesto?
- Who can help you achieve your aims?
- Who are you going to target with your messages?

Have a think about who you're not reaching out to with your manifesto - this will help find any gaps you may have on your aims.

## Building Your Team:

While not mandatory, building a team to support your campaign can be very beneficial to get different approaches and perspectives. It can be incredibly helpful to manage elections stress and it can offer valuable support and diverse perspectives:

- Assess your own skills and areas where you may need some help.
- Consider individuals who share your values and can contribute effectively to your campaign.
- Clearly communicate roles and expectations within your team.
- Ensure open communication and flexibility among team members. Remember they are volunteering their time to help you!

## Resources and Communication:

Plan how you'll use resources and communicate your message effectively:

- Get creative with resources like posters, images, banners, and videos.
- Ensure posters stand out with your name, photo, key policies, voting details, and slogans. (Check out our videos on how to make posters and Instagram posts on Canva for free!)
- Consider alternative communication methods such as Q&A sessions or live videos.
- Align your communication strategy with your target audience and campaign goals.

## Reflecting and Adjusting:

As you move with your campaign it's important to keep re-evaluating your approaches and your resources. Remember that it's okay if your approaches change to adjust to new situations!

- What is working well?
- What isn't working well?
- What have we learnt?
- What are our challenges?

This reflection can happen at any point in your campaign and it's a good opportunity to gather your thoughts and refocus on your own wellbeing. Try doing it with your team or someone who can keep an objective perspective!

- What could be tweaked?
- Do we have enough time or resources to implement it?
- What new actions might we need to take?
- Will any tweaks have an impact, or will it take us away from other goals?

## Engaging with students

The apathy staircase is a technique used in campaign building to engage your audience and emphasize the importance of your campaign:

1. **Experience:** What is something that matters to students?
2. **Injustice injection:** What about that experience is unacceptable?
3. **Vision:** What is the ideal solution for the injustice?
4. **Call to Action:** What action do we need to take to get there?

Sometimes we also refer to it as the Anger, Hope, Action model:

1. **Anger:** Make someone angry about the issue. Explain to them what you are campaigning about and why it is unfair or unjust.
2. **Hope:** Don't leave someone angry about the issue. Give them hope that it can change. Identify why there is hope at this particular moment. Talk to them about it and why it is so important to support your campaign now and what the chance of success is.
3. **Action:** This is the most important part of the conversation and often the part that most people forget. Always have a clear action you'd like people to take and ask them to commit to it (e.g. vote for you in the elections!).

It's important that you follow this order when writing your manifesto and social media posts - ensure people know why you want change rather than jumping straight into possible solutions!

## Top Tips:

Keep these top tips in mind as you navigate your campaign journey:

1. Be confident in yourself and your message.
2. Embrace rejection as part of the process.
3. Engage in meaningful conversations with voters.
4. Ask questions!
5. Stand out from the crowd.
6. Take a clear stance on key issues.
7. Utilize your campaign team and their connections.
8. Maintain a sense of humour and humility.
9. Have lots of materials for your candidate brand.
10. Foster friendly relations with fellow candidates.

Remember, while not every tip may apply to your situation, the experience gained from it is invaluable. Stay adaptable, focused, and passionate about your goals. Good luck!

## Action plan template:

