

Your Students' Association Elections 2023

Pledge Guidance

Writing pledges can seem like a really scary and confusing thing, but it is a very important task if you're thinking of running in Your Students' Association's elections.

Your pledges are, at their most basic, a way for you to tell your fellow students who you are, what you'd do if you were elected and why they should vote for you. Think of the personal statement you wrote to get into your course, that was a way to persuade UHI to let you on the course, so your pledges should work in a similar way.

Along the same lines as a campaign poster or manifesto, your pledges are a way to talk in more detail about what your plans are, if you were to become a Local or Regional Officer. An important thing to note is that your pledges will appear on Your Students' Association's website AND on the voting pages, so it's a great way to sell yourself to students right up until they vote!

Sounds good, but what do I actually include in my pledges?

Ultimately that's up to you but here are some key things we think would be useful for students to know before they cast their vote:

1. Who Are You?

Not in a deep way, but as simple as your name, the course you are studying, what academic partner you are based at and the year or level of study you are in (ie: Davey Jones, studying year 2 HND Life at UHI Fibchester)

2. What Role Are You Running For?

It's important to let students know what role you are standing for in this election. Be sure to check our election webpage or Nominations Guidebook for the correct role name.

Remember you can only run for one position per election, so if you're unsure which one to choose as there are more than one available at your AP, or if you're torn between a local and regional role, please get in touch and we can help you make the right decision.

3. What Would You Do if You Ran?

What issues have you spotted during your time as a student at UHI? What would *YOU* do to make the student experience even better? It is important to remember, if you are elected, you will then be held to account by students to make your pledges happen. So please be sure that anything you state you will do if elected, can actually be achieved!

4. Why Should Students Vote for You?

This is slightly different from the above. Instead of saying what you want to achieve, here you should state why you are the best choice for getting the job done. This is your chance to help swing students your way and stand out from the crowd. What skills or knowledge do you have that sets you apart from other candidates? How will your pledges help improve their experience?

5. Where and How Should Students Vote For you?

Make sure to include the dates of the elections and the all-important webpage. If you're running for a local role, be sure to check if there will be a polling station on your campus, with Your Students' Association's local team!

Any final tips?

- If you're not sure of the issues students face/what you'd do if you won your election, speak to your Student Voice Rep who will know of key issues going on (if you are not already one yourself that is!) Don't ask Your Students' Association's local team though – they can't give specific pledge advice, but they can lend a friendly ear if you want to chat through any concerns.
- Read the role description of the role(s) you are interested in – not only will this tell you the specifics of the job but it can also give you some ideas on what to include in your pledges
- DON'T GO OVER THE WORD COUNT! The word limit is set to make our elections fair. If you go over the limit, then what is shared on our elections webpage and social media will be cut off at the 500th word
- Don't see your pledges as a CV or a cover letter for a job application! Avoid long paragraphs or writing out all of your points – focus on 3-6 of the ones you believe to be most important, use bullet points and try to make sure it's easy to understand, so students can read it and know what it is you want to do. Remember you can expand more when you go out and talk to students during your campaign, or if you plan to use digital campaigning in any way
- Submit everything before the deadline – This makes things a lot easier and also means that you can concentrate on your campaign plan! As well as this, late materials may not be accepted by Your Students' Association.

OK I kind of know what I'm doing, how do I get it to you?

You can submit all of your materials via the nominations form, available via <https://forms.office.com/e/8iVyZaA4mv> alongside any other materials.

You can also submit your pledges to hisa.returningofficer@uhi.ac.uk before 10am on Monday, 26th February.

I can ask questions though, right?

100% - keep in touch with Elliot our Elections Coordinator at Elliot.Stradling@uhi.ac.uk and if you're running for a local role, your local staff member will also be in touch once you nominate yourself.