

By-Elections rules: Autumn 2025

Chester Students' Union (CSU) Elections aim to be free, fair, and accessible to every UoC student. It is the responsibility of Chester Students' Union to ensure the smooth running of the elections. This document outlines the rules, guidelines, and processes to make that happen.

The rules will be communicated to every candidate at every election candidate briefing and can be discussed further with the Chester Students' Union Team on individual request.

The Deputy Returning Officer is CSU's Head of Membership Services, and the Returning Officer is the Charity Director of National Union of Students (NUS). Candidate support will be given by the Democracy & Campaigns Coordinator.

Eligibility

There are certain criteria which members must fulfil to be eligible to run or vote in Chester Students' Union's Elections.

Self-nomination

To run for a CSU Part-time Officer position, candidates must:

- Be a full member of Chester Students' Union at the time of election.
- Be a full registered student at the time of the election.
- Be aware of the duties and responsibilities attached to these roles.
- Have full student status for the current Academic Year (October 2025 - June 2026).
- Identify as the type of student you are nominating yourself to represent.

Voting

To vote for a CSU Part-time Officer position, students must:

- Have full student status.
- Be a full member of Chester Students' Union.

Candidates must:

- Abide by current Chester Students' Union [Policies](#) and [Values](#), UoC Student [Code of Conduct](#), and the Law.
- Be responsible for the conduct of their campaign team during the Election process, ensuring they follow the rules outlined in this document. Candidates may receive penalties (including removal from the election) if their campaign team break any of these rules, as decided by the DRO and/or RO.
- Attend either the candidate briefing, or a 1-to-1 with the DRO or Democracy & Campaigns Coordinator prior to campaigning.
- Declare their campaign team (names and student IDs) during or before attending the mandatory Candidate Briefing.
- Not undertake campaigns activity using role privileged information (e.g., Student Groups Mailing List, professional social media accounts, etc) This list is not exhaustive, and any other identified role privileged information is at the discretion of Chester Students' Union.
- Not infringe a students' right to vote confidentially and freely, or influence or campaign to students while they are voting. Students must be allowed to vote in private; candidates must never be present

when students are voting. Students requiring support to vote must be directed to a member of Chester Students' Union staff.

- Not touch any other students' electrical devices.
- Not use their own electrical devices to obtain votes from others; this is strictly prohibited.
- Not remove, alter or move another candidates' campaign material.
- Not exceed the cap on spending set by the Deputy Returning Officer, whether claimed or unclaimed.
- Not swap incentives for votes. Candidates may offer freebies as part of their campaign, but this may not be given in exchange for a vote.
- Only nominate themselves for one role per election.

Further Guidance:

- Please remain respectful of others while campaigning. This includes, but is not limited to, not 'spamming' students on social media, and not direct messaging students without prior permission/consent.
- Please use the Chester Students' Union logo on campaign materials. Do not use the University of Chester logo on any campaign material (including social media). Posters must be sent to the Democracy & Campaigns Coordinator to approve before printing.
- Candidates must not campaign in lectures/seminars/Teams channels/Moodle spaces without prior permission from the lecturer and it must not cause disruption to teaching activity or physical or online learning spaces.
- The Deputy Returning Officer shall set a maximum campaign budget of £30 for each part-time Officer candidate prior to the opening of nominations. Candidates must not exceed the budget limit, even if they do not claim the expenses.
- Donations and uncommon items used for campaigning must be costed and included in the budget limit.
- Candidates must submit a campaign spending return within one hour of the close of voting to csuelections@chester.ac.uk, detailing all expenditure and providing evidence (receipts). If no spend has occurred, this also needs to be communicated by the same deadline. Missing this deadline means candidates cannot claim any expenses.
- Candidates cannot be endorsed, or be perceived to be endorsed, by external businesses or University initiatives/departments.
- If candidates are members of societies or sports groups, they must remove themselves from the room or call while the group deliberates whether they would like to endorse the candidate in the election. Society committee members must not use their society events to campaign, and cannot post their own campaign materials on society platforms.

Additional Rules:

- Chester Students Union and University staff and departments must remain apolitical in all CSU Elections.
- Student Staff and Officers, whilst in working hours, wearing staff uniform (including CSU branded lanyards) or using platforms provided to them as part of their role, cannot campaign for themselves or others. Rerunning Officers should limit or avoid student-facing activities once candidates have been announced.

Complaints

Chester Students' Union will strive to deal with complaints informally in the first instance. All complaints must be emailed to csuelections@chester.ac.uk for the attention of the Deputy Returning Officer.

- Any complaint regarding a candidate's conduct must be submitted to csuelections@chester.ac.uk as soon as practicably possible after the alleged incident. The complaint deadline is one hour after the election vote closes.
- Any complaints **must** include:
 - The complainant's name.

- Any affiliation you have to any campaign in the election.
- The name of the candidate against whom the complaint is being made.
- The election rule that has been breached.
- Evidence relating to the alleged breach. Complaints without evidence will not be considered.
- What action you believe the Returning Officer should take.

The Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer will decide on the penalty (if any) of any candidate complaint. This can range from a verbal warning to disqualification from the election. The Returning Officer is responsible for the final interpretation of these rules and the final decision.

The Election Rules are written and reviewed by Chester Students' Union and may be altered in reflection of circumstances throughout and between the elections.