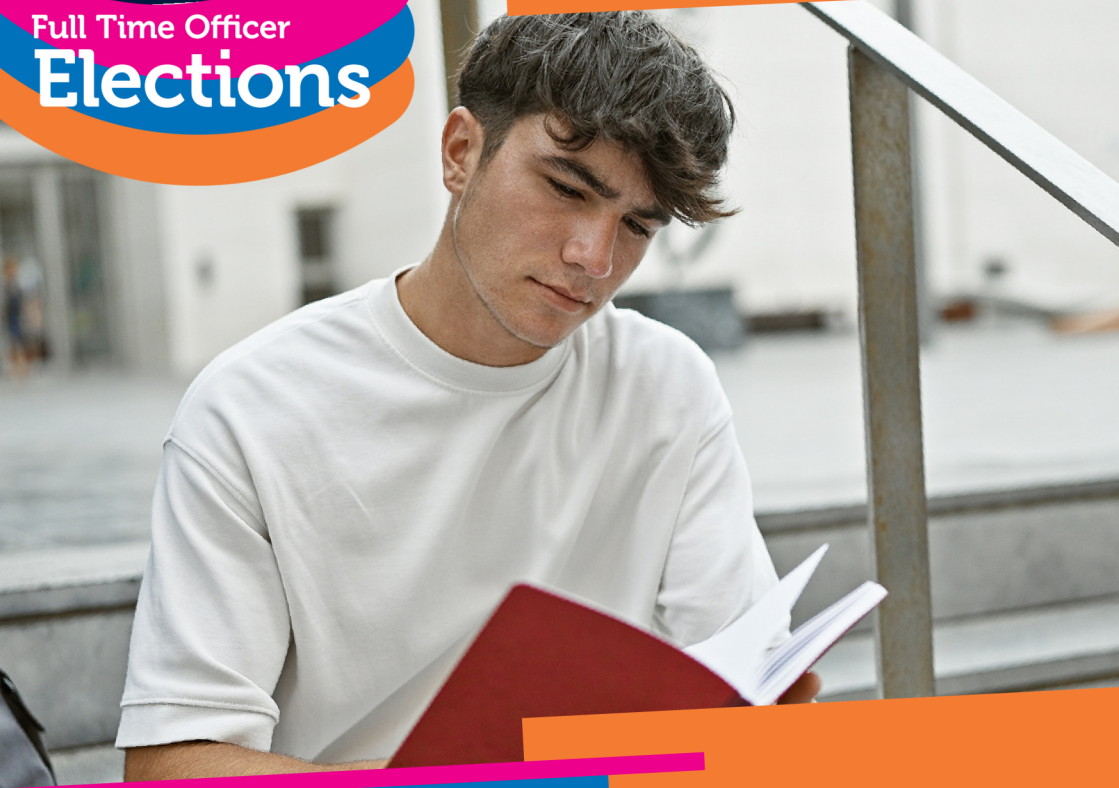


Full Time Officer

Elections



FULL TIME OFFICER **CANDIDATE** INFORMATION



Be part of something...
Bigger

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USEFUL CONTACTS

Contact the Deputy Returning Officer (DRO) Sara McLean elections@gcstudents.co.uk for all your election queries and concerns. If you are unsure of something make sure you contact Sara as soon as possible for clarification. If you are unhappy with another candidate let Sara know and get on with your own campaign.

A portrait of Sara McLean, a woman with brown hair and glasses, wearing a patterned top and a dark cardigan. She is smiling slightly.

Sara McLean (Deputy Returning Officer)

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Candidates information pack. This pack will contain all the information you will need to develop and design your campaign.

Firstly, congratulations on nominating yourself and for being confident and brave enough to run. Campaign week is where you will learn a lot about yourself, how you handle situations, how well you plan, how to improve your communication skills, and how you adapt to last minute challenges.

This pack is designed to help you on your campaign trail for the next week or so. We want you to think about why you are running and be able to communicate that to the students you want to vote. Use this pack and refer back to it at any point during your campaign.

This pack will contain information on what campaign week is, how to run a successful campaign and how to structure your campaign. You will find helpful tips that will help with the running of your campaign and of course we've included helpful contacts.

You can contact the Advice Centre
Kirsty McGregor
advice@gcustudents.co.uk for any
wellbeing concerns or support.

To be kept up to date on how
campaign week is going you can
attend the Candidates Breakfast every
morning during campaign week –
free food, chat with Sara and see
voting turnout



KIRSTY MCGREGOR (SENIOR STUDENT ADVISER)

WHAT IS CAMPAIGN WEEK ?

Campaign week is the week where you will do the bulk of the work in order to be elected as a Full Time Officer. It runs the Monday to Thursday of Week Six of Trimester B with the Friday being Elections night where you will learn the results. You cannot just tell someone to vote for you. You need to let them know why you are the best candidate. What makes you more effective than the other candidates, the point of campaign week is to get out and speak to as many students as possible and demonstrate using your manifesto and pitch why you are the best candidate.

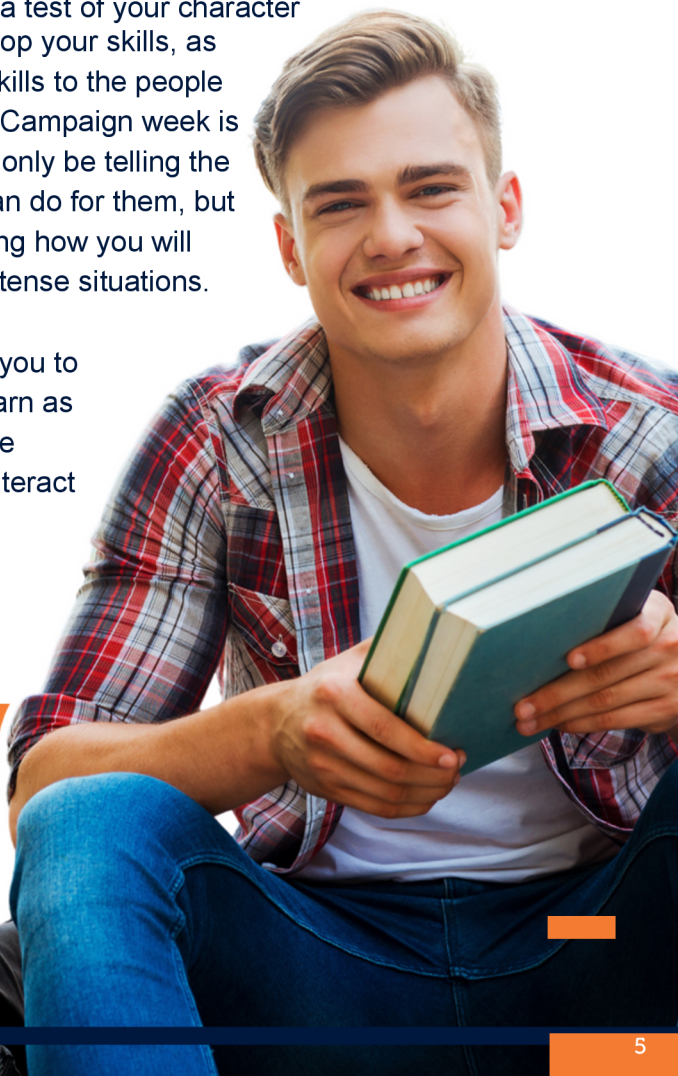
We're not going to lie to you, elections is an intense experience; you are going to be on display for the duration of your campaign, whether this is in person, on posters and flyers or via social media, your face will be seen and you will be recognised. The Students' Association takes great pride in offering all candidates support and



wellbeing advice for the full durations of campaign week and the days beyond as well. Every morning there is a candidates breakfast where the Deputy Returning Officer will update you on the progress of the campaign and the Advice Centre will offer wellbeing activities and tips to help you stay healthy and mentally prepared for the day ahead.

By nominating yourself and deciding to run, you will learn a lot about your character and how to handle different situations. Campaign week will help you develop your employability skills and put them into practise. This will be a test of your character and help boost and develop your skills, as well as, showcase your skills to the people you want to vote for you. Campaign week is a time where you will not only be telling the student body what you can do for them, but also actively demonstrating how you will handle high stress and intense situations.

This week will also allow you to reflect on yourself and learn as you go on how you handle situations and how you interact with different people.



The people you will be interacting with will be looking for you to demonstrate:

RELIABILITY

PROACTIVITY

INSPIRING LEADERSHIP

PRACTICALITY

TRUSTWORTHINESS

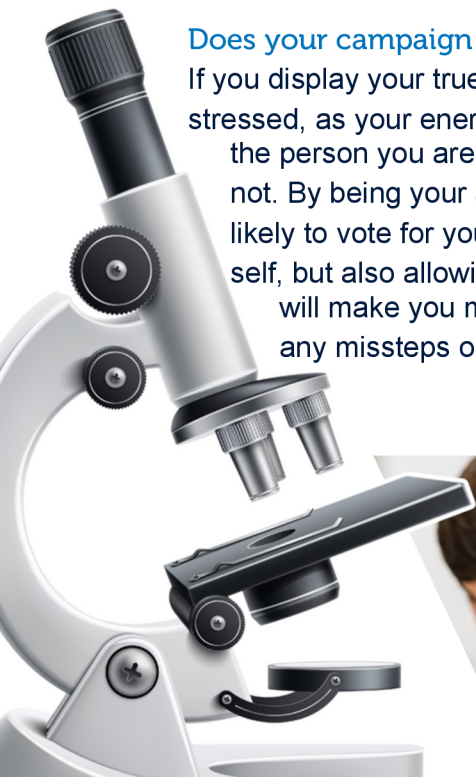
HONOURABLE ACTIONS

You will be under a microscope for the duration of the week and being able to demonstrate these characteristics will let the students know they have a candidate that will work for them and bring about the changes that will improve the student experience.

In order to relieve some of the stress you may feel, ask yourself the following questions:

Does your campaign reflect your true self and personality?

If you display your true self, you will find that you will be less stressed, as your energy will be focused on showing people the person you are, not pretending to be someone you are not. By being your authentic self the students will be more likely to vote for you. You will be showing not only your best self, but also allowing people to see your flaws, which will make you more approachable. It is how you handle any missteps or mistakes that students will notice.



Does your campaign reflect student issues?

Having a campaign that identifies real student issues means, you will find it easier to connect with people and demonstrate that you are working towards helping better the student experience. Make sure that you know your audience and that you are running on issues that affect more than one student demographic. You want to be seen as wanting to help as much of the student body as possible, not just one group.

HOW TO HAVE A SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN?

It is great to get yourself out there and speak to people, make yourself seen, but does your manifesto and campaign appeal to the voters? A successful campaign is not just making sure people recognise your face and name. It is mainly based on the merit of your manifesto and how well you can advertise and demonstrate it to people.

While ambition is commendable, make sure that your manifesto and campaign is achievable. We want you to go out and speak to as many people as possible. You will be making promises and telling people how you are going to make changes, but do not promise the world, make sure you have done your research and know where the real issues are and how you can start to bring about the changes that are needed.



Create a campaign plan.

With the help of your campaign manager, create a plan that will work around your schedule (and your teams if you have one) to make the most of campaigning.

The main areas you will want to take advantage of are the [ground floor of the library](#), the [main concourse](#) and [lecture shout outs](#).

When canvassing the campus make sure that you and your team are not travelling in a pack as that can be intimidating to potential voters, have a pitch ready and be prepared to either be ignored or answer questions.

Make sure that you are speaking to many different students and taking into account what home and international students are looking for in a candidate.

Make sure that your campaign can apply to the different demographics at GCU.



What is a pitch?

A pitch is what you want the voters to know about your campaign, not everyone is going to read your manifesto, so have a flyer with the main point readily available, make sure you have an introductory or opening line that encourages people to stop and listen to you. You cannot expect people to approach you, you must be the one to start the chat, come up with an opening line that conveys your intentions clearly. Some people will be disinterested, that is okay, offer them a flyer and move on.

Keep your pitch brief try to hit your main points, and keep people interested. A pitch that is longer than two minutes is too long and will dissuade your listeners. If you engage with students and strike up a conversation based on your manifesto points the more likely they will vote for you. Not all of your points will apply to everyone, be prepared to adapt your message to the demographic of students you are speaking to.

Be prepared for questions, such as how you plan on implementing and introducing your manifesto points and how you are going to bring about the change you are advertising. The front of your campaign should be listening to the students, if you encounter a student that has a lot of questions about your manifesto listen to them and answer the questions as clearly and concisely as you can. Be prepared to be challenged on your manifesto, some people will have questions, others will disagree with you and want an explanation, it is easy to get defensive when this happens. **Stay calm** and **rational**, **do not argue**, if you believe in your manifesto that will shine through and help further explain your position.



If a student or group ignores you or they say they are not interested then do not be offended; offer them a flyer and how to contact you if they have any questions then let them carry on with their day. An encounter of this kind should take no longer than 15 seconds. Do not try and force your campaign on them as that can result in losing votes and also you could use your time better by moving on to someone else.



Lecture Shouts

Lecture shouts are the quickest and easiest way to get your campaign out to as many people as possible; the big lectures normally hold 80-300 people. Make sure that you find out the type of lecture you are going into and tailor your information accordingly. You do not want to be speaking about improving labs to a class of fashion students. A lecture shout should not interrupt a class, but be pre-agreed with the lecturer to take place at the beginning of the class when the lecturer is setting up, or at the very end. If a lecturer does not allow for a lecture shout out, respect their decision and do not argue. Keep your talk short no longer than 1 minute, this is because there will probably be other candidates there as well and the lecturer will want to get the class started.



The lecture shout should be your bullet point pitch:

NAME AND SLOGAN (IF APPLICABLE)

2 OR 3 MANIFESTO POINTS (DO NOT GO INTO TOO MUCH DETAIL)

WHERE THEY CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION ON THE POINTS

VOTE FOR ME – REPEAT NAME AND SLOGAN

LEAVE A BUNCH OF FLYERS AT THE DOOR

As important lecture shouts are, do not just fill your time with trying to hit every lecture every day. Wanting to only hit big lectures can benefit your campaign, as they normally have more than one course in attendance. However, don't centre your engagement just on the big ones, as long as you hit different year groups and make sure you leave your flyers you will reach more people.

Consider smaller lectures and seminar groups as well, take advantage of Celcat to find out the type of lecture you are going into and are not repeating the same classes; tailor your information accordingly.

You can split your team so that while you are at one shout out another member of your team can be scheduled in another one.



Digital Presence

Consider how you are going to use Social Media and Digital platforms. In the past few years Social Media Campaigns have been very successful. In order to do this you will need to make sure that you are reaching the correct audience. You can do this by creating new social pages that make it clear why you have created the page and then adding and following fellow students.



Make sure that you recognise your audience, ask yourself if the information is relevant to them, much like your in person pitch, make sure that you are appealing to your audience. Use different tactics for different demographics. Not all students are the same, if you have a manifesto that only appeals to one demographic then you will alienate others.

Check through what you are writing and saying to make sure it is clear and does not use any jargon or slang. Keep the messages simple and clear, people are less likely to read a large chunk of text, keep your social media posts short and snappy; memes, posters, videos etc.

You can check your stats to see when people are most active, different Social Media will have different activity patterns take advantage of scheduled posts. That way your posts will reach the people that will be most receptive to your posts.

Leaflets, Posters and Flyers

If you think you have enough, you do not! Double up on what you think is a sensible amount, you will be handing flyers and leaflets out to everyone, pinning them to notice boards and leaving some in lecture shout outs. You will need at least 3000 flyers, and you will get through them.

Make sure that your flyers are concise and to the point, think about what the people need to know, do not just print your manifesto on the page, most people won't read it. The flyer is to hand out to everyone, you can use it as a conversation starter or if the people you approach are uninterested, you can hand over the flyer and leave. Make sure that the How to Vote link, your contact details (socials) and a link or a QR code to take people to your full manifesto is on the flyer.

Posters, leaflets and flyers should all be consistent so that people recognise your brand that way you can stand out from the other candidates. Make sure that your photo (candidate photo) is visible so people can see what you look like and only put up on the notice boards and in designated areas. Posters are only allowed in designated areas on campus, don't "risk it" only put them in the correct places. The Deputy Returning Officer will let you know.

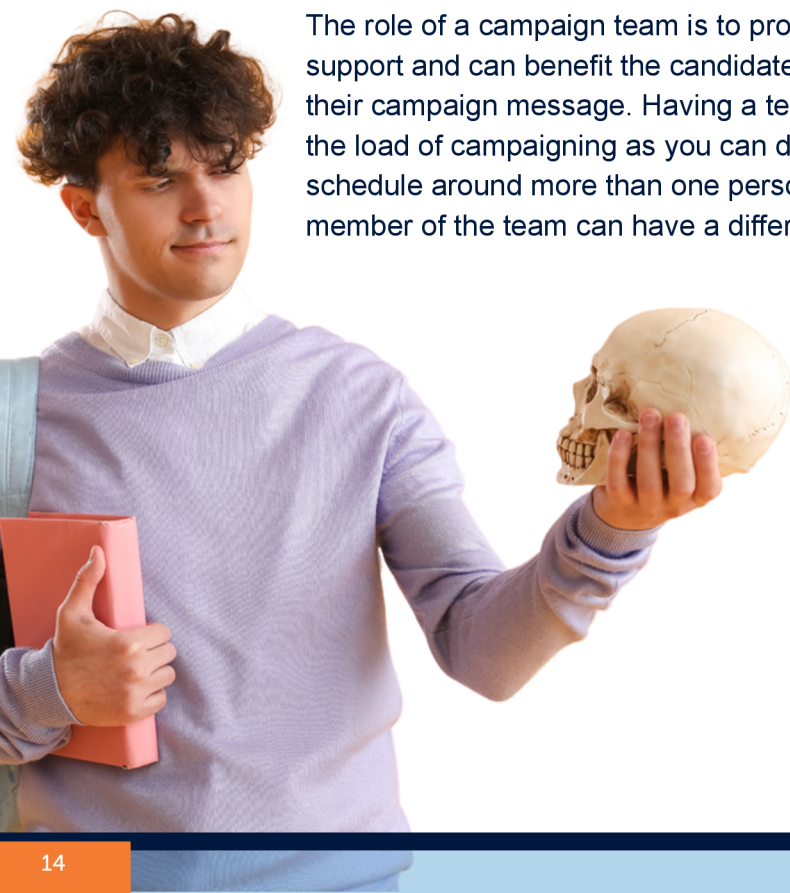


TO TEAM OR NOT TO TEAM?

If you are having a campaign team then you need to make sure that everyone in the team has clear roles and understands exactly what is expected of them. It is up to the Candidate to make sure that everyone in their team understands and sticks to the candidate rules. The actions of your team is your responsibility, if they break any campaign rules it reflects on you, the candidate.

A campaign team is there to support you and help campaign on your behalf for the duration of the campaign week. The team can be made up of friends, classmates and family. The campaign team does not have to be made up of GCU Students' but people you trust to highlight your best self for the duration of the campaign.

The role of a campaign team is to provide extra support and can benefit the candidate in spreading their campaign message. Having a team can lighten the load of campaigning as you can design a schedule around more than one person and each member of the team can have a different role.



For example, a campaign team can be made up of the Candidate, a Campaign Manager, a social media manager and members to help canvas the campus.

There is no maximum number for a campaign team, however, a smaller team is easier to manage and can provide a better quality campaign. A large team can result in voter fatigue and result in lack of engagement with voters. Having a smaller team means that you can control the amount of exposure they give you and help navigate different spaces.

For example, you can have one member solely in charge of your social media posts and scheduling. One team member doing lecture shout outs (making sure that they speak to different year groups and classes). One member canvassing the main campus (speaking to students on the ground floor of the library, on the main concourse and going to and from classes).

While having a team can help lighten the load, they are not there to do the work for you. Each member of your team will have a different role, and it is important that you as the candidate take part in all of the roles so that the students get to know you as well as your team.



Campaign Manager

Having a campaign manager can help relieve some of the stress, as it is their job to help coordinate and manage the team and create a realistic schedule for you, the candidate. They will also be the point of contact for the Deputy Returning Officer if they cannot get in touch with you. A campaign manager will not only help greatly with organisation, but they will also be able to provide support for you and the team.

No Team

Not all candidates will want to have a campaign team. Some people may find it less stressful only having to manage their own time and not to coordinate with others. If this is the case, you will need to plan carefully and make a schedule that you can realistically stick to.

Campaigning is intense and in order to campaign effectively and still make your classes/deadlines a timetable can be beneficial. You can start by modifying your current timetable and identifying your free time during University hours. Even if you do not want a campaign team a campaign

manager can still be extremely beneficial, they can help organise your time around your curriculum and find out when the most beneficial times to be on campus would be. They can also stand in as your delegate for any important meeting you cannot attend. An online campaign can really benefit someone without a campaign team as you can schedule posts and videos.



Branding and Slogans

If you have a campaign team make sure that you have communicated your brand expectations clearly to them. Make sure if you have a slogan that it is easy to remember and applicable to your campaign.



"DELIVERING OUR COMMON INTEREST"

-Chukwuma Egbujor VP GSBS (2022-23)

"CHANGE IT FOR THE BETTER... TOGETHER!"

-Eilidh Fulton Student President (2018-20)



CAMPAIGN RULES

If a Candidate or their Team is caught or reported to be breaking any of the campaign or election rules this can result in the candidate being disqualified from the election. On the next page is a list of some of the campaign and election rules.

To find a full list you can find it on the Students' Association Website on the Candidates Resources page.



www.GCUstudents.co.uk/candidateresources

RULES

No Incentives can be given to voters by candidates

Candidates and their team cannot help students vote. If a student is having issues with voting, you can send them to a member of the Students' Association staff for help. Do not stand and watch someone vote, do not vote for someone else.

Candidate's Briefings and any further meetings called by the Returning or Deputy Returning Officer are mandatory to attend. Failure to attend or to send a nominee to the Candidate's Briefing will result in disqualification from the election.

Candidates can launch their online election campaign after the close of nominations but are not allowed to run a physical election campaign until voting opens. This includes putting up posters and Flying the campus.

Must have completed at least 1 trimester (January intake not eligible)

Must be registered Students for current academic year (registration end date not visa end dates)

Avoid Level 2 of the SA, Level 2, 3 or 4 of the Library, in computer labs or any area specifically designated by DRO (Sara).

No candidate may use Students' Association offices, meeting rooms, employee computers or any other resources not freely available to all students for the purposes of their campaign.

Resources cannot be stored within the SA building.

Don't use the Students' Association or GCU Logos on materials

A candidate cannot use stickers, chalk, glue, Sellotape or bluetack on any surface.

Do not touch other candidates materials

Must remove all materials 24 hours after vote closes

Health and Safety still applies

HOW ARE THE VOTES COUNTED?

Each student can cast their vote by ranking the candidates in order of preference, this is called Single Transferable Vote. This system is used as it better reflects the diversity of voters' opinions.

To be elected the candidate needs to be ranked in the top four of final tally of votes. This is done by reaching a quota of 1st preference vote, there is a different quota for each stage of election. Once a candidate has reached the quota the excess votes are then transferred, who was the second preference, third preference and so on until we have 4 elected FTO's.

Candidates are eliminated starting in last place with all of their votes transferred to the next preferences of their voters. This is why it is a good idea to ask students to rank you in the first three or four places and not just 1st when voting. The first person to be duly elected is offered the Student President role and the others become Vice Presidents. If two people are elected in the same stage, the candidate with the most votes at that stage wins.

Some tips for candidates' wellbeing

HAVE LUNCH – BE PREPARED

SLEEP IS IMPORTANT, AT LEAST 8 HOURS- VOTERS WILL NOTICE THE DIFFERENCE

DON'T SWEAT THE SMALL STUFF!

HYDRATION OVER CAFFEINATION!



Full Time Officer Elections



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