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**CODE OF CODUCT FOR CANDIDATES**

**Any breach of the Code of Conduct may result in penalties and could result in withdrawal from the election.**

Wolves SU is committed to ensuring that the elections are conducted in a fair and appropriate manner and that candidates engage in an equal and positive campaigning experience that helps students to vote. We aim to provide all candidates with support and guidance to ensure a clear understanding of the regulations and procedures.

We don’t believe that restrictive rules help the elections process to engage students in discussions about the future of their experience, or help them to vote. As such, our rules are deliberately minimal.

We expect candidates to behave civilly and honestly and to ensure that they and their campaign teams support this. We ask all candidates to read this Code of Conduct and sign it before campaigning starts to show you are aware that you will be held liable for your own actions or anyone acting on your behalf.

**This must be returned to** **lisa.burton@wlv.ac.uk** **by Monday 22nd February by 17:00**

**CONDUCT**

* All candidates must attend the mandatory Candidates’ Briefing Meeting on Monday 22nd February at 12 noon, unless prior leave is given by Lisa Burton – lisa.burton@wlv.ac.uk.
* All candidates are responsible for ensuring they have permission to post publicity or to canvass in specified areas. Any publicity that is deemed to break our Equal Opportunities and diversity policy (located in the Candidate Hub) will be treated very seriously.
* Candidates must also be aware that they are responsible for any activities carried out by their campaign’s teams or supporters and the publicity that they distribute on your behalf. If any of their team breaks the rules outlined in this document, the candidate will receive the penalty.
* If you are unsure about any activity that you intend to carry out during the elections period then Wolves SU strongly advises you check before doing so. To do this you should contact lisa.burton@wlv.ac.uk

**CAMPAIGNING**

* Campaigning can only begin after the official start time of 09:00 on the 26th February; this includes social media and websites.
* Whilst publicity does not need to be approved by Wolverhampton Students’ Union, if you are unsure in any way about the content then we strongly advise you check before using it, to do this you should contact Lisa Burton at lisa.burton@wlv.ac.uk.
* In light of Covid-19 measures, we will not be allowing candidates to use printed materials, this is to ensure campaigning remains socially distanced.
* Candidates cannot move, alter or remove another candidate’s virtual publicity.
* Candidates cannot do any face to face campaigning. For the avoidance of doubt, election campaigning is promoting that you are running in the election, either verbally or through written material.
* No candidate shall attempt to bribe, intimidate or harass another candidate, staff member or voters either physically, verbally or online.
* Candidates cannot campaign within student halls.
* Candidates cannot campaign when on duty either as a member of Union Staff or as a volunteer.
* Candidates cannot use Union resources for their campaigns such as mailing lists.

**FACE TO FACE ACTIVITY**

* In light of Covid-19 measures, we will not be allowing candidates to use any face to face campaigning techniques, which includes but is not limited to, campaigning on campus, lecture shout outs, campaigning in halls.

**ONLINE ACTIVITY**

* You can produce your own election videos and upload them on to your own website, but please keep in mind any costs (for example paying for a domain name etc) will need to be accounted for, recorded and receipted and cannot go over your budget of £50.
* You can use facebook ads but again be mindful of costs and do not go over your budget
* You can upload a video to YouTube and add it to the website where your manifesto is, this will need to be done by the manifesto deadline on 24 February at 16:00.
* Candidates cannot use pre-existing mailing lists or WOLF topics.
* Candidates may use social media but all platforms they use must be public, open and accessible to other candidates.
* Candidates can not use Canvas chat.
* Candidates can not post in closed groups. The exception to this is if a candidate has received an endorsement from a society who promotes this is their closed group. If a society does decide to promote a candidate in this way then they must link their post to the candidate page of the website.

**CANDIDATE ENDORESMENT**

* Any current student can endorse and be a supporter of your election campaign.
* Union Societies wishing to endorse a candidate or a group of candidates must ensure that this is done via a democratic decision of the committee. Guidelines have been created and can be found in the Candidate Hub, including a form to complete declaring their support of a particular candidate.
* Societies wishing to promote a candidate through social media or email must include a link to the website <https://www.wolvesunion.org/elections/> where all other candidates’ manifestos can be read.
* All complaints received about this process not being adhered to will be taken very seriously and investigated, this could affect the candidate(s) position in the election.
* You are not allowed to be endorsed by an external company or promoted via a commercial company. For example, a local business would not be able to appear on your promotional material nor can they openly support a single candidate.

**SLATES/CAMPAIGN TEAMS**

* Students are allowed to run together as a team, and this is known as a Slate.
* Candidates are responsible for any activities carried out by their campaign team and this includes those in the same slate as them.
* There must be no ‘negative campaigning’; such as candidates or supporters making unsupported attacks on other candidate’s manifestos or personal nature.
* Any challenge which is deemed to be personal is not allowed.
* Slates may choose to share resources but each individual candidate will be accountable, and will only be reimbursed, for their own budget allocation. We will need evidence that you haven’t overspent, e.g. receipts showing you have spent no more than £50 on your campaign.
* You are allowed to take advantage of offers that may be made to a group of people ordering more materials. However, when submitting your costs, the full price should be accounted for. For example, if you have a 3 for 2 offer, you would have to claim the cost of all three items within your £50.

**VOTING**

Candidates are not allowed within 5 metres of a polling station; this includes public computers on campus and mobile phones.

* Candidates cannot communicate with voters whilst they’re voting.
* Candidates cannot vote on behalf of a student or encourage someone else to do it.
* Candidates cannot use personal electronic devices to enable students to vote such as laptops, iPads or smart phones.

**BUDGET**

* Candidates must not spend more than £50 (fifty pounds) on their campaign.
* All costs must be declared with receipts by 17:00 Thursday 4th March to receive reimbursement. We will not reimburse any money to candidates who fail to hand in receipts before this date.
* Candidates must provide receipts to prove they have not broken financial regulations before results are announced Failure to do so could result in disqualification.
* Candidates cannot be sponsored or use ‘freebies’ donated by friends, family or businesses in their campaigns.
* No candidate shall seek to gain advantage over another candidate by spending more than the allowed limit because they have greater funds or resources at their personal disposal.
* Candidates may choose to share resources (or run on a slate) but each individual candidate will be accountable, and will only be reimbursed, for their own budget allocation. We will need evidence that you haven’t overspent, e.g. receipts showing you have spent no more than £50 on your campaign.
* Wolves SU knows that some items, for example bits of wood, cardboard boxes and string, are easily available and might not result in campaign costs. We encourage innovative campaigning and use of resources but we don’t want candidates to get carried away.
* We will listen to serious complaints of over-the top use of items and may ask candidates to prove fair use, and ask them to stop using unfair items.

**ELECTION GRIEVANCE**

If you feel an election principle has been broken, which if unresolved would mean an election was not fair and equitable, then you are able to raise an election grievance. Grievances will not be accepted after the close of voting and only students at the University of Wolverhampton, who are members of the Students’ Union, can submit a grievance. Anonymous grievances will not be accepted.

To complete an elections grievance, you will need to fill in the grievances form, <https://www.wolvesunion.org/vote/grievances/> which will require the complaint to be based on fact and will require evidence, in the form of screenshots/photographs or any other evidence. The complaint will then be considered by the Deputy Returning Officer or nominee/ complaints panel who will decide to accept (uphold) or reject the grievance in writing. You will have the right of appeal on this decision. The Returning Officer reserves the right to consider grievances as vexatious and may take disciplinary action accordingly.

In order to guarantee a fair hearing during Election Grievances, it is necessary that all communication between the parties involved (complainant and campaigner) takes place through the Deputy Returning Officer. For the parties involved in an Election Grievance the following applies:

* 1. No contact: you are not to communicate in any way with each other regarding the complaint;
	2. No recriminations: you are not to complain about someone making a complaint in order to strike down a complaint, nor are you allowed to gossip or spread rumours about a complainant in order to force them to withdraw a complaint.

You may be disqualified from the election if you are found to break either of the above rules for violating the fairness of the election grievance procedure. Any complainant found in violation may lose their right to vote, or reported to the University for having violated the fairness of an election.

**Election Penalties**

There are three types of penalties that can be applied to restore fairness and rights following the violation of an Election Principle, it is important to note that these are not prescriptive but outlines the type of action available to the Deputy Returning Officer and Returning Officer to restore the fairness of an election:

* 1. Campaign Penalty: this includes confiscation of materials, instructions to remove social media posts, cancellation of events, and so on;
	2. Campaign Ban: this can be used to prevent a team campaigning to remove any specific advantages gained from misconduct;
	3. Disqualification: this is applied only in the most serious of circumstances where no other penalty can redress unfairness caused.

**Election Appeals**

If you would like to appeal the decision made then this must be done withintwo hours, or within an hour after the close of voting. Any right to appeal will be disclosed to the complainant and campaigner when a decision is issued. If you’re dissatisfied with the outcome of a grievance, you can request the opportunity to appeal which will be heard by the Returning Officer.

Requests for appeal can be on the following grounds:

* 1. Review the procedures followed at the grievance stage;
	2. Consider whether the outcome was reasonable in context;
	3. New material evidence you were unable, for valid reasons, to provide earlier in the process.

You will be informed of any outcome in writing, the decision of the Returning Officer is final.

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| **I agree to abide by all of the above rules of regulations and understand that any breach of the above by me or my campaign team, may result in sanctions.** |
| Signature |  |
| Name |  |
| Date |  |
| Position |  |