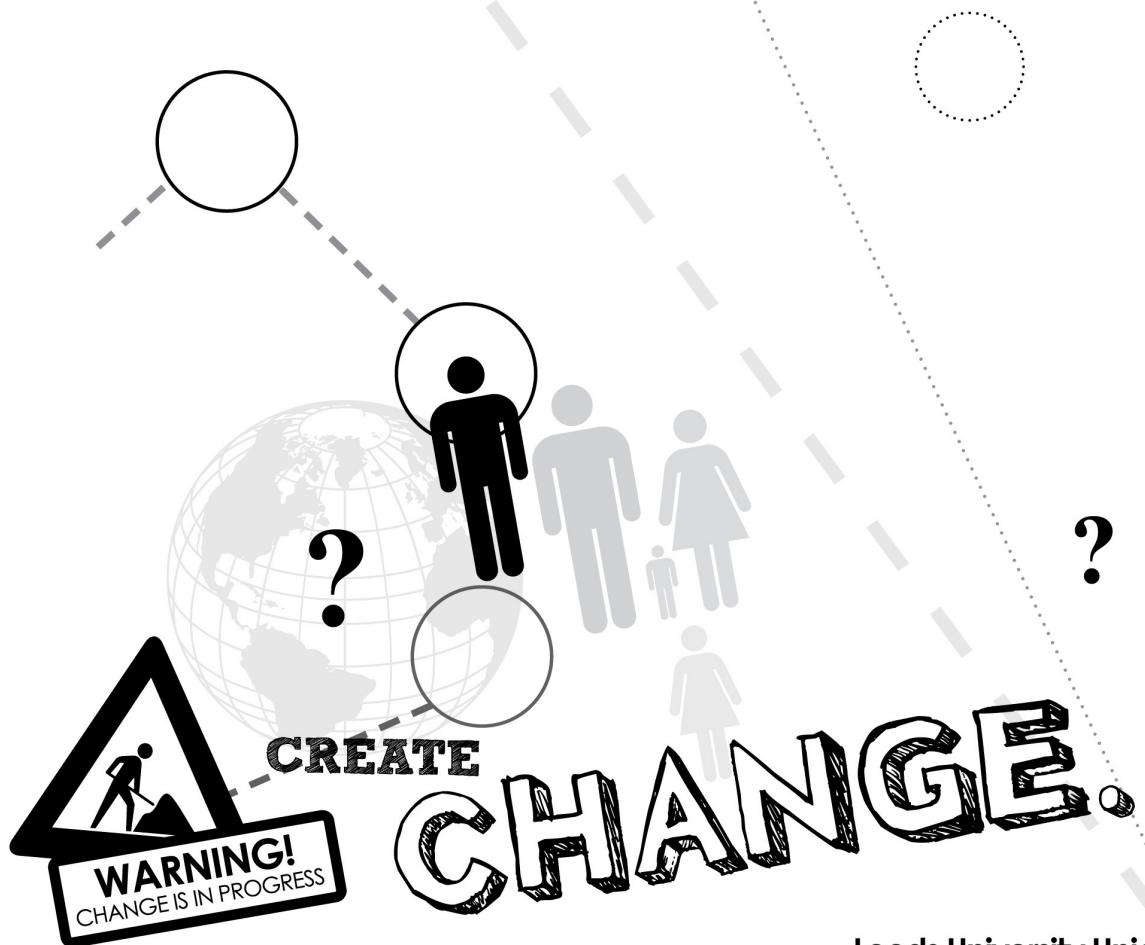


WHO REFLECTS YOU?
NUS **ZONE** CONFERENCE
ELECTION HANDBOOK

**You are
Leeds University
Union.**





Introduction

This booklet aims to help you decide if you want to stand for election and explains how elections at LUU work. It contains details about NUS Zone Conferences and gives you information about how you can stand to represent LUU as a delegate at these conferences. It also contains all the key dates and an easy to follow **six step guide** to standing for election.

Six Step Guide

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Why do we have elections?

As you may be aware, **LUU is a democratic, member-led organisation.** For this reason, it's imperative that officers are elected annually from our student membership to head the organisation and work alongside the 200+ staff whom we employ.

Elections give all our members the opportunity to take an active part in the governance process. With a wide number of choices, our members are in a unique position to decide the future direction and governance of their union. More importantly it allows any member to come forward and present their ideas, solutions and practices for taking the union forward and ensures that we continue to be a forward looking, student centred movement.

It is the mission of LUU to provide effective representation and a range of student led services that are of consistently high quality and embrace the needs of all students. The Unions core values in delivering these services shall be:

Democracy **FUN**
RESPONSIBILITY
Diversity **Quality**



Step one: Deciding to stand

What is the role of an NUS Zone Conference delegate?

An NUS Zone Conference delegate is a representative of LUU who attends one of the NUS (National Union of Students) Zone Conferences. Newly introduced this year the aim of Zone Conferences is to increase the opportunities for students' union officers and representatives to have informal formative debates on key issues relating to each zone.

There are five Zone Conferences in total:

- Society and Citizenship Conference
- Welfare Conference
- Higher Education Conference
- Union Development
- Further Education

Please note: LUU will not be sending delegates to the further education zone conference as we are a higher education institution.

What happens at Zone Conference?

Zone Conferences cannot set NUS policy but will make policy recommendations to Annual Conference. They also provide delegates with the opportunity to stand for the national zone committees, listen to key speakers and participate in workshops. Zone conference also provides a chance to hold the Vice- Presidents to account.

Annual Conference

There will be separate elections to elect the 9 delegates who will attend the 2009/10 NUS Annual Conference.

For more information about these please see the NUS **ANNUAL CONFERENCE ELECTIONS HANDBOOK**

Where can I get more information?

You can get more information about the NUS and conference from the NUS website and Officer online: www.nus.org.uk or <http://www.officeronline.co.uk/events/270919.aspx>

Key Dates you need to know:

LUU election dates

September 2009

Monday 28th: Notice of NUS election is given

October 2009

Friday 2nd Oct –NUS Zone nomination open

Thursday 8th Oct –NUS Zone nominations close – **12noon**

Thursday 8th Oct – NUS Zone conference **compulsory** candidates meeting, **5.30pm, Riley Smith Hall**

Wednesday 14th Oct – NUS Zone polling opens **4pm**

Tuesday 20th Oct – NUS Zone polling closes **4pm**

Wednesday 21st Oct – NUS Zone count

Zone Conference dates

October 2009

25th – 26th Oct – Society and Citizenship Conference

27th – 28th Oct – Welfare Conference

28th – 29th Oct – Higher Education Conference

29th – 30th Oct – Union Development



What LUU expects from NUS Delegates

Attend the Zone Conference - it may sound silly, but before standing in this election you should make sure that you are able to attend the zone conference you are standing for.

Attend training – it's compulsory to attend NUS training, which is designed to give you an understanding of how NUS Zone Conference works and how you can get the most from it.

Prepare yourself – consult other students around conference issues.

Vote inline with Level 1 union policy – LUU policy is categorised into two levels: 1 and 2. Level 1 policy mandates NUS delegates to vote inline with LUU on that issue. You can view the current LUU policy document, which contains details of all current LUU policy at: www.leedsuniversityunion.org.uk

What NUS Delegates can expect from LUU

Support with travel to and from conference

Advice

Training

Step two: Your Manifesto

So, you've decided you'd like to stand for election. The first thing you need to do is think about your manifesto and the information you want voters to know about you.

The 'manifesto' is the key document to get across your message of who you are and what you stand for. It is the only information that voters will have about you at the crucial moment at the polling station.

A well-written and interestingly designed manifesto can make a significant difference in influencing people to vote for you.

Where do you start?

IDEA 1.

Think about what would influence you to vote for someone.

What do you believe? What are the issues of interest to students? Do you believe that transport to the university should be improved? The student rep system could be better? There should be better sports facilities? Whatever they are, make a list of your beliefs.



IDEA 2.

Think about ideas do you have that you think would be popular with students, but are also achievable?

There are many candidates in union elections who have announced that they will make the beer cheaper, only to be given a lesson in economics by other candidates in the election.

IDEA 3.

Select three items/issues off your list as priorities that you will concentrate on.

Outline each issue, how it affects students and what you would do about it if you got elected. **Be concise and to the point** – don't over-describe.

IDEA 4.

Think of snappy titles that you can give to your three beliefs.

Voters tend to scan read election materials, so it is crucial to draw them in with a headline. "Better Transport" will be noticed by those students who are regularly delayed by the bus service.

IDEA 5.

Tell voters who you are.

It's amazing how many candidates forget to tell the voters anything about themselves. Students will often vote for candidates who have something in common with them, so as well as outlining your issues, briefly tell them:

- **what course you are on**
- **where you are from**
- **age, race, gender, sexuality as you think fit**
- **membership of clubs and societies**
- **involvement in political activities, parties and groups**
- **any other involvement in student issues/activities**

IDEA 6.

Make it clear which post you're standing for, and don't forget to ask people to vote for you!

Manifesto format:

Your manifesto will be presented to voters in two ways: online on the elections website and when voting.

To start with, you have a word limit of 250 words, which is checked when you submit your nomination form. All nominations for the election are to be submitted online via a web form at www.leedsuniversityunion.org.uk, which will allow you to apply basic formatting to your manifesto. You will be able to use tools such as bold, italic, bullet points etc. however; you will not be able to inset images.



Step three: The nomination form

The nominations process is a fairly simple one and is there primarily to ensure that only eligible members of LUU (i.e. registered students at the University of Leeds) stand for office. To try and make the process easier for you, the nomination form is only available as a webform and has to be completed online at: www.leedsuniversityunion.org.uk

If you do not have access to a computer, one will be made available in the Campaigns and Democracy Support Officer for you to use.

It is important to note that you need to be proposed and seconded by two other Leeds University students. This is a signal that there are members who wish to see you stand for election.

The information you need to complete the form is:

- **Your name**
- **Your student number**
- **The position you are standing for**
- **The name of the student proposing you**
- **The student number of the person proposing you**
- **The name of the student seconding the proposal**
- **The student number of the person seconding the proposal**
- **Your telephone number**
- **Your email address**
- **Your term time address**
- **Your home address**
- **Your 250 word manifesto**
- **A photograph** (this should be one that you like as it will be use by the CDS Office on election publicity and on the voting website)

You will receive a receipt from the Campaigns and Democracy Support Office to confirm that your nomination has been received.

All completed nominations must be submitted by 12noon on Thursday 8th October 2009.

Please note: Your nomination will not be accepted by the Returning Officer until you have attended the compulsory candidates meeting and signed the campaign rule declaration.

Step four: The nomination deadline!

All nomination forms must be completed and submitted online by 12noon on Thursday 8th October 2009

The online form is available at www.leedsuniversityunion.org.uk

If you are unable to access a computer one will be available for candidates to use in the Campaigns and Democracy Support Office on the 1st floor of the LUU building.

Remember this is the deadline for:

- **submitting the online form**
- **submitting your manifesto**
- **submitting your photograph**

Your photograph

The Campaigns and Democracy Support team will take your picture at the compulsory candidates briefing at **5.30pm on Thursday 8th October.**

If you do not attend the candidates brined or have your photograph taken, you may be penalised by the Returning Officer.

The Compulsory campaigns meeting

There is a **compulsory** candidate's campaign meeting at **5.30pm on Thursday 8th October** in the Riley Smith Hall, LUU. At this meeting the Returning Officer will give you the campaign rules for the election and explain them to you. It is your opportunity to ask for clarification. **After this meeting you will be given 24 hours (until 5pm on Friday 9th October) to sign a declaration form saying you have read and understood the campaign rules.** If you do not complete this declaration your candidacy will be forfeit.

At this meeting the candidates will also write a 'Code of Conduct' for the election, agreeing on behaviour that is deemed to be acceptable, or not, during the campaigning period, in particular the days of voting. **REMEMBER: If you do not attend the meeting and complete the campaign rules declaration your nomination will not be accepted by the Returning Officer.**



Step five: Campaigning

What should I communicate?

If a member picks up the ballot paper and knows **one** thing about you and what you stand for you'll be doing well. Take a look at your manifesto and try and identify one issue that:

1. Will appeal to a wide range of students.
2. You feel especially passionate about.
3. Will not be part of every other candidates manifesto.
4. Can be easily communicated with a simple message.

This issue will serve as the centre piece of your election campaign. Now all you need to do is get your message across.

How should I communicate it?

There are loads of ways to communicate your message, and you can be as creative as you like! The more attention you create, the more successful you'll probably be.

Written

With as many as one-hundred candidates, election time at LUU can be totally manic so getting your message across can be difficult. Remember you're competing for people's attention with lots of other messages. If you're designing a banner, slogan, poster or flyer it's worth doing the *Fire Notice*

Test:



stand.
UNION COUNCIL BY-ELECTIONS

A fire notice is an excellent example of how to communicate a clear and simple message in a frenzied environment (I.E. a fire or election). The problem (the danger of fire) is very clearly outlined followed by the solution (break glass). Use this notice as a template and try and make a fire notice for your election campaign. Outline the problem (your issue) in one sentence and then the solution (this should include voting for you).

Spoken

Talking to people is fundamental to your election prospects. Talking to people is not shoving a flyer in someone's hand and screaming "vote for me". Talking to people is a dialogue; this means asking questions, finding out what *they're* interested in and relating that back to your policies. This process needs to happen as quickly as possible before moving onto the next person.

A **slogan** is a helpful hook especially if it contains your name and you can get people saying it. It's the type of thing that, when presented with a long list of names at a ballot station, might just trigger someone to vote for you.

Action

One of the best ways to promote yourself is to put your body where you're mouth is. So if you promise to increase awareness of Chlamydia if elected then your election campaign should do just that. **What students want to know is what will you change and how it will affect them?** So simply saying vote for me is not enough, what you have to answer is why. If you can show that you're already doing something for them and you've not even been elected yet then you're onto a winner; then when they go to the ballot box they'll remember who you are.

Tactics

Everyone will be talking to people, have posters, stickers, badges, Face book groups, flyers and t-shirts so how are you going to make yourself stand out? In the words of marketing guru Seth Godin...

“You need to do something remarkable and the more audacious the better. This is where you need to get creative, there are loads of things you could do: a carnival, a song, a dance, a game show, a street party, a giant board game – something that relates to your campaign but really stands you out from the crowd.”



Step six: The election

How does the election work?

All LUU elections are run on the **Single Transferable Vote (STV)** system. This is a system which elects candidates on preference rather than the first past the post. It allows voters to rank candidates in order of preference. For every position voters are given the chance to **Re-open Nominations (RON)**. They would vote for RON if they were unhappy with the candidates available but still wanted to engage in the voting process.

To try and help you understand how this works, the details of the 2007/08 Education Officer results are below.

There were six candidates running for one seat:

- Helena
- Vicky
- Danny
- Mark
- Adam
- RON

2216 votes were cast for the position of Education Officer and all 2216 were counted. STV allows someone to be elected on the number of 1st preference votes, but only if they meet a quota of 50%. For this election the quota was 1108 votes. As none of the candidates met that quota the candidate with the least number of #1 votes was eliminated. Once a candidate is eliminated, the #2 votes on their ballot papers are counted and distributed among the other candidates. This continues until a winner is elected. The quota is reduced at each stage of the election by the number of eliminated ballots, which have no second preference vote.

The results:

Candidate name	Stages of voting				
	1	2	3	4	5
Quota	1108	1091.5	1021.5	952.5	840.5
Helena	580	583	599	629	766
Vicky	414	415	427	465 eliminated	-
Danny	719	721	741	811	915 elected
Mark	236	238	276 eliminated	-	-
Adam	222	226 eliminated	-	-	-
RON	45 eliminated	-	-	-	-

After five stage and four candidates being eliminated Danny was the first to reach the quota and was elected.

You can find more information about STV voting on the Electoral Reform Society website at:

www.electoral-reform.org.uk/oldsite20070123/votingsystems/stvrules.htm



In September 2009 LUU is launching its new online voting and members will no longer be able to cast a paper ballot during LUU elections. However, there will still be ballot stations in the Union Building and the Parkinson Building, where members can cast their vote electronically through a touch screen voting booth.

Voting

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The Returning Officer

Union Council appoints a Returning Officer for each election. It is the job of the Returning Officer to oversee the election to ensure that it is fair and open. The Returning Officer will hold a candidates briefing on the **9th October** after the close of nominations at **5.30pm in the Riley Smith Hall**. This is to clarify the rules of the election, which will be distributed to candidates at the meeting. It's the returning officer who will hear any complaints made during the election and they who will decide the course of action to be taken in response. It is the job of the returning officer to ensure the election is fair and open.

Steering Committee

The role of Steering Committee is to hold the returning officer to account. If an appeal is made against a decision made by the returning officer, it is Steering Committee who will hear that appeal. Steering Committee is made up of the Communications and Internal Affairs Officer and members of Union Council. Steering Committee has the power to overturn the Returning Officers decisions.

If you have any questions about the Student Executive elections please contact Clare Hartley, Democracy Coordinator, at c.hartley@leeds.ac.uk, 0113 3801460 or pop into the Campaigns and Democracy Support Office on the 1st floor of the Union building.