

Autumn Elections '23

Candidates' Information Pack

Take charge of your Imperial Experience

BECOME A REP!

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Returning Officers

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Welcome

Thank you for taking part in the Autumn Elections 2022.

I'm Tom Newman, Returning Officer. That means it is my responsibility, supported by the Deputy Returning Officer, to ensure that the elections are run fairly and in line with the rules, as set out by the Union's constitution and by-laws.

Student representatives are vital to the student experience. **It is crucial that the student voice is effective in ensuring the Union and College are acting in the interests of students.** The positions in these elections have one thing in common: they can all make Imperial a better place to be. Imperial College Union has a rich history of strong democratic engagement with hundreds of students elected each year to take charge of the student experience. You could be a candidate for Union Council, making policy decisions that affect the entire student body; stand as an Academic Representative working to improve the learning experience; or become a Wellbeing Representative helping students access support and build communities. Perhaps you are interested in championing change - consider becoming part of a Liberation & Community Network. There are a number of positions available in our Club, Societies and Project Committees. We also have a range of positions available for Constituent Union Committees, where you can be part of the active social scene on your course or faculty.

This Candidates' Pack explains more about the positions, gives some helpful tips on campaigning and explains the all important rules. Be sure to read them - when you become a candidate, you confirm that you have read and understood all of the rules - so no excuses. I wish you all the best in your campaigning!

Returning Officer, Tom Newman

TIMELINE

Nominations Open

Monday 9 October 2023

Nominations Close

Tuesday 17 October 2023

Manifestos Deadline

Wednesday 18 October 2023

Start of campaigning

Thursday 19 October 2023

Voting Open

Monday 23 October 2023

Voting Closes

Thursday 26 October 2023

Complaints deadline

Thursday 26 October 2023

Results announced

Friday 27 October 2023



Standing

What positions are available?

Here is a list of the different types of positions you can stand for in this election. A full list can be found on our website, along with short job descriptions about what you'll be expected to do if you win, and how you can make a difference: imperialcollegeunion.org/elections

- **Representatives to Council**
- **Liberation and Community Networks Committees**
- **Academic Representatives – Departmental and Year**
All Undergraduate Academic Reps are elected online in the Autumn Elections. Postgraduate Academic Reps are subject to department.
- **Wellbeing Representatives - Departmental and Year**
- **Constituent Unions Committees**
- **Clubs, Societies and Projects Committees**
- **Postgraduate Taught Representation Chair (lead the representation of all PGT students)**
- **Postgraduate Taught Academic & Welfare Officers (postgrad faculty rep for each faculty)**
- **Postgraduate Research Academic & Welfare Officers (1 x Business, 1 x Engineering)**

How do I stand?

To enter the election process, you first need to put yourself up for nomination. This is a simple online procedure that involves you logging into the Elections voting website using your College login and then choosing which position you would like to stand for. Nominate yourself by going to imperialcollegeunion.org/elections.

Once you have put yourself forward as a candidate, you will be asked for the username of a fellow student to 'second' or support your nomination. Your 'second' will receive an email notification and won't need to take any further action if they're happy to support your nomination. Nominations open, **Mon 17 October 2022** and close **Tuesday 25 October 2022**. Once the nomination period closes, there will be a period in which campaigning is not permitted - candidates are encouraged to review this Candidate Pack and other training material.

N.B. If your election is being held offline, please contact your course administrator for further details.



Top Campaign Tips

Campaigning online and around campus is only allowed after the Campaigning Begins period (from noon on Thursday 19 October 2023). You must not campaign before then, otherwise you will have an unfair advantage over your rivals. Of course, you're allowed to tell your friends you are running before this time, but you are not allowed to put up posters around campus, hand out flyers etc. before this time.

Here are our top tips for campaign success:

1. Design some eye-catching campaign visuals & logo

Online posts & posters are an essential part of a campaign. There's going to be plenty of them, so make sure yours stand out.

2. Create strong, original policies

This one definitely goes without saying. It's easy to say you're going to completely overhaul the Union/your department/your faculty, but that's not necessarily possible or even realistic. Think where you can improve something, how can you do it and whether the electorate is going to take the policy seriously.

3. Demonstrate your experience

If you've been a club captain or sat on one of the Union's Committees, promote this to your advantage.

4. Use social media to your advantage

Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or TikTok are great ways of extending your campaign message. Remember to follow the social media rules.

5. Come up with an imaginative slogan

A witty slogan captures people's imagination and sticks in their minds.

6. Get friends to campaign with you, for you

Get your buddies on the campaign trail to speak to as many members of the electorate as possible.

7. Making speeches in lecture theatres

Giving a quick shout-out to a lecture theatre is a daunting prospect, but a deeply rewarding way of canvassing hundreds of voters at once! However, you may only do this if permission is provided by the lecturer (see Election rules later in this pack)

8. Talk to people

Take the time to explain your policies to people and why you're the right person for the role. You could replace in person conversations with social media Q&A sessions. Answer their questions thoughtfully and there's a good chance they'll head off to tell their friends to vote for you as well.

9. Be inventive

Aside from the first years, many students will have heard all the usual campaign spiels before. Come up with a unique, original campaign to capture those jaded minds!



Campaigning

The Campaign Process

Campaigning begins from Thursday 19 October 2023

No campaigning is permitted before this time. To win an election, you need to run a successful campaign to convince the rest of the student body that you're up to the task.

You need to outline what you think needs changing or improving in the Union or the College and then come up with a campaign strategy that is going to get you and your ideas noticed and taken seriously by the electorate.

One of the most contentious points between candidates during an election can be campaign material. In order for this election to be successful, we have to lay down some ground rules that everyone must follow. Please ensure you abide by all the election rules that follow later in this pack, including those relevant to campaigning."

The Complaints Process

We expect all candidates to abide by the election rules so that it is a fair contest. However, we do have an elections complaints process so you can alert the Returning Officers if someone has breached the rules of these elections. After the close of voting at 2pm on Thursday 26 October, complaints may be received and heard by the Returning Officer until the complaints deadline of 5pm on Thursday 26 October.

No complaints will be received or heard by the Returning Officer after this deadline; cases will be resolved before the results are released for a position. The elections complaints process is as follows:-

1. Any complaint must be submitted using the online Elections Complaint Form available at imperialcollegeunion.org/elections/complaint
2. Only completed Elections Complaint Forms will be considered by the RO or DROs
3. Complaints should be submitted within 24 hours of the incident in question or at the earliest possible moment
4. Complaints cannot be anonymous and the ruling by the RO or DROs regarding any complaint may be communicated to all candidates within the election
5. The RO or DROs may make a ruling including, but not limited to, the following sanctions. Depending on the severity of the breach, any or all of these steps may be by-passed when making a ruling.
 - I. Warning
 - II. Suspension of campaigning
 - III. Indefinite suspension of campaign pending disqualification
 - IV. Having taken the advice of the Deputy Returning Officer, the RO may decide to disqualify a candidate, order a re-run, set aside ballot papers, or uphold a recommendation to require payment of a fine where candidate action has caused physical damage to property as required.
6. All complaints must be received by the complaints deadline stated in the Elections time-line.
7. Complaints regarding the conduct of the Returning Officer must be submitted to elections@imperial.ac.uk. The onus is on the complainant to set out such complaints in writing.

Manifestos

Manifestos give you the chance to show and convince the electorate why you are the best candidate for the role. Written versions will be displayed on the Union elections website. Manifestos often say more about a candidate if they are not submitted in time. Any manifestos submitted after the deadline below will not be published at all.

Other Union student media may also use the submitted manifesto text or contact you to submit a further manifesto.

These regulations are contained within the Code of Practice. In a nutshell, the SSP states that you cannot comment on the performance of a Union staff member or their department if they are the sole member of that department.

Manifestos and your photo must be uploaded to imperialcollegeunion.org/vote by **noon 18 October 2023**. There is a 250 word limit for all manifestos.

Campaign Budgets

Candidates running for Constituent Union committees, Liberation & Community Network positions, Council Representatives, Academic or Wellbeing Departmental Representatives, Club, Society or Project positions may spend up to £25 on their campaign. No reimbursement from the Union will be given – this limit is simply to ensure that candidates may only spend up to the same amount on resources as other candidates.

Candidates are not required to pay a deposit although they can be sanctioned for a breach of rules. It is a requirement that you declare your spending by 19:00, 21 October 2022 to elections@imperial.ac.uk including receipts.

Paper printing of posters (in College departments, at home, etc.) shall be accounted for at the costs below, regardless of where and for how much they were printed. Posters and flyers will be charged at the cost of the size of the distributed media; not the printed size.

Prices for printing are calculated at the College prices:

	A2	A3	A4
Monochrome	12p	6p	3p
Colour	£1	24p	12p

Student Media

Candidates running for Constituent Union committees, Liberation & Community Network positions, Council Representatives, Academic or Wellbeing Departmental Representatives, Club, Society or Project positions may spend up to £25 on their campaign. No reimbursement from the Union will be given – this limit is simply to ensure that candidates may only spend up to the same amount on resources as other candidates.

The Voting System

All voting will be done online. The voting system that the Union uses is the “Single Transferable Vote with Quota System”, sometimes referred to as STV. This enables students to list their preferences for a position, using numbers, with 1 for the first choice, 2 for the second and so on.

The result of this system is that students whose first choice is not elected can still get a chance to state further preferences.

Furthermore it makes it possible that, whilst an individual student may not be the most popular, if they have a larger base of support among the students they typically will be elected.

For every position, voters can choose to ‘re-open nominations’, also known as RON. If you don’t support any of the candidates, you can select RON as one of your preferences. You can also choose to abstain from the election.



How The Election Works: Rules, Regulations and Governance of the Election

Bye-laws

Imperial College Union is governed by a written constitution, which contains byelaws on the elections. Candidates should familiarise themselves with these, which can be found in full at www.imperialcollegeunion.org/your-union/how-were-run/governing-documents.

The Major Election byelaw sets out the broad principles of how these elections are governed and is outlined below. Any other rules are in addition to the rules set by the byelaws.

Byelaw J - Major Elections

Application

1. These Bye-Laws shall apply for all elections conducted by cross-campus ballot, and for all elections of Officers of the Union other than

- 1.1 Management Group Chairs and Treasurers
- 1.2 Representatives to Council

The Returning Officer

The Governance & Membership Committee will, at least once per academic year, appoint an appropriately qualified person to act as the Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer, who may not be a current Member of the Union and whose appointment must be ratified by the Board of Trustees. For the purpose of this byelaw, reference to the Returning Officer may also include the Deputy Returning Officer, where duties have been delegated.

3. The Returning Officer Shall

- 3.1** Be the final interpreter of the Major Elections Bye-Laws.
- 3.2** Oversee the count and declare the results of the elections.
- 3.3** Set rules, regulations and guidelines other than these election Bye-Laws to govern the conduct of the election.
- 3.4** Seek legal advice if they believe that statements made or the contents of publicity could leave the Union open to legal action.
- 3.5** Rule out of order any statement or the content of any publicity which in the Returning Officer's view is in breach of the constitution, the law, or any other appropriate rules and guidelines.
- 3.6** Be empowered to issue warnings to candidates in accordance with these election Bye-Laws and any rules and regulations issued in accordance with the above.
- 3.7** Deliver, or ensure the delivery of, appropriate training to all election candidates.
- 3.8** Make available an information pack to potential candidates for each election outlining relevant rules and procedures
- 3.9** Take decision, on the advice of the Deputy Returning Officer, to disqualify a candidate, order a re-run, set aside ballot papers, or uphold a recommendation to require payment of a fine where candidate action has caused physical damage to property as required.

4. The Governance & Membership Committee is designated as the body to make decisions on any appeals, should a candidate wish to overturn the decision of the Returning Officer.

Complaints

5. The Returning Officer shall deal with complaints regarding the conduct of candidates, their supporters and campaigns, and the administration of elections.
6. Complaints regarding the conduct of the Returning Officer shall be referred to the Governance and Membership Committee. The onus is on the complainant to set out such complaints in writing for the Board of Trustees consideration. The Governance and Membership Committee may order a re-run of the whole or part of the election should the complaint be upheld.

1.1 Complaints regarding the conduct of the Returning Officer must be submitted within 10 College days of the close of voting.

The Process of Elections

7. The Returning Officer shall produce an election timetable which shall outline:

- 7.1** The process for nomination
- 7.2** Details for the submission of manifestos
- 7.3** Arrangements for the ballot

8. The Returning Officer shall produce details of the arrangements for balloting and for complaints procedures, and ensure that they are publicised to all Members eligible to stand, and or vote.
9. The election will be conducted in accordance with the rules outlined by the Electoral Reform Society for running elections by the Single Transferable Vote system for elections with more than one position available, and the Alternative Vote system for elections with one position available.
10. The Returning Officer shall ensure that any additional details, or amendments to the arrangements, are publicised to all students in a timely fashion.

Nomination

11. Nomination forms will be available to all Members eligible to stand.
12. It shall be the responsibility of nominees to ensure that nomination forms are completed accurately and submitted before the deadline.
13. Nomination forms shall require a seconder.
14. Any Member of the Union eligible to vote in the election may second a candidate.
15. The Returning Officer shall have the sole responsibility for declaring a submitted nomination form valid.
16. When the Returning Officer is satisfied, all valid nominations shall be confirmed with the candidates and published.

Manifestos

17. Manifestos must be submitted by the date laid down in the election timetable and must comply with any format requirements stipulated by the Returning Officer.
18. The Returning Officer will ensure that manifestos are available to voters at the point of ballot.

Campaign Publicity

19. The Returning Officer will determine the allowance for publicity available to each candidate for each election.
20. The Returning Officer shall stipulate a maximum amount that candidates may spend on their own election campaigns.
21. All candidates running for the same position shall have an equal publicity allowance.
22. The Returning Officer shall draw up regulations for the conduct of candidates' campaigns. Any breach of these regulations could lead to disqualification from the election.

Hustings

23. The Returning Officer may arrange a hustings for the candidates in an election, and candidates will be notified of the format of these in advance.

Withdrawal

24. Any candidate may withdraw from the election at any point by informing the Returning Officer.
25. If a candidate withdraws during the ballot, or after a point at which the ballots cannot be amended, the Returning Officer will ensure that the voters' next preferences are counted in accordance with the principles of the Electoral Reform Society.

Voting

26. The Returning Officer will ensure that all eligible members of the Union can vote.
27. The Returning Officer shall decide the method of voting and publicise it appropriately.
28. The Voters shall be able to express preferences for as few or as many candidates as they wish subject to the instructions on ballot papers.
29. Ballots shall bear the chosen name of each candidate, and of the position being contested.
30. The order of names on the ballot shall be decided by the drawing of lots or by using an electronic system which ensures the order of names on the ballot is chosen at random.
31. There will be a facility for voting for "Re-Open Nominations".

31.1 For positions which require more than one candidate to be elected, if Re-Open Nominations receives the most votes, nominations must be re-opened for all positions.

32. Voting shall be by secret ballot.

Declaration

33. Results of the election shall be declared by the Returning Officer when the count for each post has been successfully completed.
34. A list of successful candidates will be published within 1 clear day of the declaration of the results, unless there is reason to delay. In this case, a statement of explanation will be published on the website
By-Elections
35. If any Union Office falls vacant, Governance & Membership Committee shall determine if and when a by-election should be called, except the Officer Trustees and elected Student Trustees, in which case the vacancy will be resolved in accordance with the Constitution & Bye-Laws.

Rules & Regulations

1. Any activity or publicity that is illegal, breaches College rules, policies and codes or Union bye-laws, regulations, policies or constitution or GDPR is deemed to be in breach of the election rules.
2. The College is still a place of work for students and staff alike during the election period. Candidates must not do anything to disrupt the normal operations of College or the Union during campaigning.
3. The RO/DRO reserve the right to suspend the elections in the event of a circumstance beyond the Union's control. This may include but not limited to: acts of God, war, strikes or labour disputes, embargoes, acts of competent government or regulatory authorities, pandemic, quarantine or widespread illness, illness of members of staff, actual, suspected or threatened act of terrorism, riot, civil disorder, or any other 'force majeure' event.
4. Lecture shout outs are prohibited unless permission is provided by the lecturer.
5. Lecture chat functions must not be used for campaigning without permission of the lecturer or organiser.
6. Any expenditure must be on activity or items that all candidates could reasonably have had the opportunity to buy or carry out.
7. All campaign material, including any paid for social media advertising, must be accounted for and spend declared, with a suitable receipt.
8. No candidates' publicity may appear before the beginning of campaigning as stated in the Elections timeline.
9. Use of the Union or College logo (apart from the Union-provided Elections Banner) on campaign material is prohibited.
10. Permission must be sought when posters are placed on non-designated poster boards in departments and halls of residences. Designated poster boards are:
 - a. On Union Building poster boards with the exception of the bar areas and the Union Dining Hall and those covered in glass.
 - b. Stairway noticeboards at St. Mary's, on each floor.
 - c. Glass notice boards at Sir Alexander Fleming Building and in the UMO student post room (the student common room in SAF Building, next to the office for the ICSMSU President).
 - d. Reynolds First floor walls and basement walls
 - e. Sherfield walkway
11. All publicity must be in English only or have an English translation of anything said in a foreign language, the translation being equal or greater in prominence.
12. Publicity stunts must not occur on the Queen's Lawn, Queen's Lawn Terrace, Prince's Gardens, or Dalby Court without the consent of the College Secretary. They should never be offensive or dangerous – including contravening Health & Safety considerations. A risk assessment must have been submitted and approved, and appropriate permissions must be sought.
13. Candidates and their campaign team must not harass, coerce, bribe or use intimidation to persuade someone to vote or whom to vote for.

14. Candidates and their campaign team must not obscure, tamper with or remove the publicity of any other candidates nor any publicity for non-election related issues or events.
15. Campaign material and activities must not cause damage to College or Union property.
16. All candidate websites and social media pages should contain a link to the elections website imperialcollegeunion.org/elections.
17. All campaigning conducted through social media should contain the hashtag '#icuElections'. Candidates should declare their social media accounts during the nomination and manifesto uploading period to support the RO/DRO to investigate complaints should they arise.
18. Candidates are allowed to use social media or digital communication chat functions, mailing lists, and other forms of group communication only if they have collected consent to be contacted from those individuals during the campaign period and the group was formed for the sole purpose of campaigning in this election.
19. Candidates are not allowed to use adhesive stickers as campaign materials.



Training for incoming reps, elected in the Autumn Elections 2023, will take place on the week beginning Monday 30 October and will be split into sessions for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Reps in each Faculty. **Training is compulsory for reps, so please ensure you are free to attend this, along with other sessions throughout the week.**



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