

**STAND**

**VOTE**

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# WRITING A MANIFESTO

**SU** ELECTIONS

Writing an election manifesto needn't be something to tear your hair out about. Essentially, your manifesto should state what you would plan to do during your time in office, and what changes you would make.

### **What is a Manifesto?**

When standing in an election it's crucial that you convey to voters what you stand for and what you would do if you were elected. The way to show people what you stand for is to produce a document that highlights your key aims, this is a manifesto. Simply put, it is what you would do if you were successful. A manifesto should appeal to people and get them to understand who you are and motivate them to vote for you.

It is always good, when forming a manifesto, to talk to students. Find out how they feel and what concerns they have, you can then create solutions or ask how they would want things to be different. Remember to ensure your goals during your time in office are realistic and achievable, and this is where a discussion with the Chief Executive, at one of his drop-in sessions, would be invaluable.

### **What You Should Do**

*Look at what the Students' Union is already doing and its strategic plan for the future*

- It's important that you're realistic in what you say you are going to do. It may sound great saying free drinks and cheap chips – but something like that is unlikely to happen so there's no point misleading voters and setting yourself up to fail.

Find out what matters to students

- A big part of our work is finding out student opinion. You might have some great ideas of your own – but if they don't match up with what the wider student body want then they will think you are out of touch and not representing them.
- Speak to as many people as you can, including your friends, peers, members of societies, sports clubs and course reps. Test your ideas out on them and take on their feedback.

*Prioritise*

- You should focus on a few issues as part of your manifesto and campaign instead of listing lots and lots of different things. That way, students will be clear on what you stand for and see you for what you represent.
- Select three themes/ideas from your list as priorities that you will concentrate on.

*Refer to the national picture*

- It is important to concentrate on local ideas but the national picture also has a part to play. By showing that you are in touch with the topics that are high up on the national agenda students will see you as a good person to represent their needs.

### **Things to Avoid**

- Picking a single issue: you risk alienating a large population of the University and students will want to know that you are more than a 'one-trick pony'.

- Promising things you can't deliver if elected.

### **What Does a Manifesto Look Like?**

There are lots of examples of manifestos available online through a simple Google search, so have a quick look for campaigns run by previous sabbatical officers, NUS officers or even national political manifestos. We ask you to create a manifesto for yourself that we will publish on the website when it comes to voting. We also ask you for 200 words answering the following questions when you nominate yourself:

- Why do you think you're the best person for the role?
- What would you like to achieve in this role?
- In a sentence why should people vote for you?

These answers will go into the candidate guide we create for the elections. You are then free to design your own manifesto, the guidance for this is one page A4 and a 400 word limit. It is good to make the manifesto eye catching and interesting but remember that what you stand for and how you say it, is more important.

### **Submission**

The 200 word manifesto will be submitted as part of your nominations, the A4 400 word page must be submitted to [voice@su.rhul.ac.uk](mailto:voice@su.rhul.ac.uk) by Wednesday 1 March to be used for the website and ballot page.