

# Students' Union Elections Guidance: Student Groups

Student Groups are not allowed to endorse candidates who are running in the Students' Union elections, following policy passed by students. Endorsement means encouraging others to vote for a particular candidate, highlighting a particular candidate's manifesto, suggesting that a particular candidate is the best choice for a role, allowing a particular candidate to contact or speak to members, or providing any other assistance to a particular candidate.

Student Groups include affiliated Societies, Sports Clubs, Student Media Outlets, and Volunteering Groups. This guidance also covers RAG committees.

Please read the frequently asked questions below for guidance on what you can and cannot do and say as an affiliated Student Group. If you have any questions, please always check with your relevant staff support before promising or acting on any candidates' requests.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Can Student Groups follow, like, comment and share candidates posts on social media?

Candidates **can** follow Student Groups on social media from their campaign accounts and they **can** tag Student Groups in their posts. However, candidates **cannot** post on closed groups pages. Student Groups **cannot** endorse candidates on their page/group on social media.

This includes but is not limited to:

- Posting or sharing candidates' manifestos
- Sharing a candidate post or marketing material

An endorsement does not include following accounts, liking posts or commenting on posts, providing the comment is not stating support for a particular candidate or view.

Candidates can use WhatsApp and social media groups not affiliated to the Students' Union; however unofficial social media groups linked to affiliated Student Groups (like social WhatsApp chats for members, for example) should be avoided.

### Can candidates campaign using Student Group mailing lists or social media groups if they are a member of that group?

If a candidate is a member of a Student Group, they also cannot use that group's mailing list or social media pages/groups to campaign. If you are approached by candidates wanting to promote to your members here is what you could say: "I'm sorry, as a Student Group we can't promote you without promoting all candidates however we will encourage our student group members vote in the elections".

### How can Student Group committee members and members support candidates in a personal capacity?

Individuals can support candidates in a personal capacity but not in their capacity as a representative of a Student Group. If individuals are supporting candidates in a personal capacity this should be made clear, their position in a Student Group not stated, and Student Group social media, groups, or mailing lists should not be used to do this.

Members with no representative responsibility for Student Groups are not bound by this as they do not speak for the Student Group.

### **Can Student Groups tell their members the work a candidate has done for their group? (E.g., Sports Officer candidate who has done a lot for a particular Club).**

Individuals in a representative capacity of a Student Group cannot state their positions or use official channels to promote the work a candidate has done.  
Members with no representative responsibility for Student Groups are not bound by this as they do not speak for a Student Group.

### **Can a student group promote a candidate's manifesto?**

Student Groups cannot upload/share an individual candidates' manifestos on official channels. However, Student Groups can promote the elections as a whole to their members.

### **Can candidates attend a Student Group a group event/activity for the purposes of campaigning?**

Student Groups can allow candidates to attend events for the purpose of campaigning. The candidate does not have to be a member of the Student Group. However, this opportunity must be clearly offered (e.g., invitation through post on main social media page) to all candidates standing for any particular position. Student Groups may not in any way endorse any candidate as part of the event (e.g., by holding a debate followed by a vote to identify the groups favoured candidate).

### **How can a Student Group promote the elections?**

Here are some examples of what you can say on Student Group mailing list, social media pages and group chats to promote voting in elections:

“Want your say on who becomes your next Societies Officer/Sports Officer/Volunteering Officer (delete as appropriate)? Check out all the candidates here: [www.qmsu.org/elections](http://www.qmsu.org/elections) and vote before Thursday, 3 March (4pm UK time).”

“Don't forget to vote in the Students' Union elections. All candidates can be found here: [www.qmsu.org/elections](http://www.qmsu.org/elections) Voting closes on Thursday, 3 March (4pm UK time).”

## **Questions and Complaints**

If you have any questions, please always check with your relevant staff support before promising or acting on any candidates' requests.

Anyone wishing to complain, or to let us know if you notice a Student Group endorsing a candidate, should contact us via the Election Complaint Form, providing reasons for the complaint and evidence (such as a screenshot from social media). The Election Complaint Form is available online here: <https://www.qmsu.org/elections/candidateshub/resources/>

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