

# CANDIDATE HANDBOOK

2024-2025



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### Oxford SU Leadership Elections

Every year in Hilary Term, students have the opportunity to shape the future of their Student Union. The Oxford SU Leadership Elections allow students to nominate themselves for voluntary positions, but also full-time paid positions, working as Sabbatical Officers to drive changes that students want to see. Students then vote on who they want to see full these positions.

This handbook contains all of the information you need to know about this year's Elections cycle, the various roles available and how you can get involved.

#### **Elections Timeline**

Friday 12th January (0th Week) 00:00 - Nominations Open

Friday 26th January (2nd Week) 00:00 - Nominations Close

Monday 29th January (3rd Week) - Candidate Briefing

Wednesday 31st January (3rd Week) - Hustings and Campaigning Begins

Monday 5th February (4th Week) 08:00 - Voting Opens

Thursday 8th February (4th Week) 18:00 - Voting Closes

Thursday 8th February (4th Week) Evening - Results Night

#### What is Oxford SU?

Oxford SU is the Student Union for all students at the University of Oxford. We represent, support and create communities for all 26,000+ students, always working to help make the changes you want to see at the University.

We work closely with JCRs and MCRs across the colleges with lobbying support, training, wellbeing products, and more. We are also home to ten student-led campaigns passionately fighting for causes students care about.

As a Sabb team of six, you would work closely with and be supported by a small staff team with expertise in democracy, communications, policy and more!



#### **PRESIDENT**

The President represents Student Members to the University and external audiences at all levels. They uphold the democratic principles and obligations of Oxford SU and ensure that these are implemented across the activities of the Organisation; provide leadership for Oxford SU in policy-making, campaigning, representation; and are a public facing spokesperson for Oxford SU and all its activities. They play a key role in the relationship between Student Council and the Trustee Board.

### VICE-PRESIDENT ACTIVITIES AND COMMUNITY

The Vice-President Activities and Community represents Student Members to the University, and external audiences. They lead in policy making and campaigning work, in conjunction with other Officers, by using appropriate methods to address the needs of students as members of the community. They promote a holistic approach to student life beyond educational and work to facilitate this aspect of student life by organising activities and events. They also serve to encourage students to make a wider contribution to their community and to develop opportunities for students in this area. They are involved in leading projects including charity collaboration, town and gown interaction, sustainability initiatives, sports development, entertainment organization (entz), environmental stewardship, ethical considerations, and fostering an inclusive community. They are a Sabbatical Trustee and play a key role in relationship between Student Council and the Trustee Board.

# VICE-PRESIDENT LIBERATION AND EQUALITY

The Vice-President Liberation and Equality represents Student Members from underrepresented backgrounds (including but not limited to women, disabled students, BAME students, LGBTQIA+ students, international students and socioeconomically disadvantaged students) to the University, and external audiences. They lead in policy making, campaigning and lobbying work in conjunction with other Officers, on inequality issues at the University of Oxford. They take responsibility for driving forward action on inequality in University of Oxford at a student level; and promote the importance and value of work on inequality across the whole work of Oxford SU. They also support student parents and liaise with the University on behalf of students. They are a Sabbatical Trustee and play a key role in relationship between Student Council and the Trustee Board.

# VICE-PRESIDENT POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION AND ACCESS

The Vice-President Postgraduate Education and Access represents postgraduate students to the University, and external audiences.

They lead on work including policy-making, campaigning and lobbying work, in conjunction with other Officers, by using such vehicles as are appropriate to improve the educational experience of all Student Members at the University of Oxford. They work to ensure that, regardless of background, the best and brightest students apply to study at the University of Oxford. They are a Sabbatical Trustee and play a key role in the relationship between Student Council and the Trustee Board.

# VICE-PRESIDENT UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION AND ACCESS

The Vice-President Undergraduate Education and Access represents undergraduate students to the University, and external audiences. They lead on work including policymaking, campaigning and lobbying work, in conjunction with other Officers, by using such vehicles as are appropriate to improve the educational experience of all Student Members at the University of Oxford. They work to ensure that, regardless of background, the best and brightest students apply to study at the University of Oxford. They are a Sabbatical Trustee and play a key role in the relationship between Student Council and the Trustee Board.

#### **VICE-PRESIDENT WELFARE**

The Vice-President Welfare represents Student Members to the University, and external audiences. They lead in policy making, campaigning and lobbying work in conjunction with other Officers, on student Welfare issues at the University of Oxford. They provide support to key student welfare providers including Common Rooms Representatives. They are a Sabbatical Trustee and play a key role in the relationship between Student Council and the Trustee Board.

Full role descriptions can be found on our website: oxfordsu.org/elections

### WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A SABBATICAL OFFICER

Salary: £27,181

Working Hours: 37.5 hours - normally 9am-5pm, Mon-Fri incl. lunch break

Holiday Allowance: 24 days + 6 fixed closure + 8 public holidays

Your normal place of work is 4 Worcester Street, Oxford, OX1 2BX. The expectation is that Sabbatical Officers work in-person as default, unless flexible home working has been arranged at the discretion of your line manager. This is reviewed on an individual employee basis.

#### Key responsibilities of a Sabbatical Officer:

- Sabbatical Officers (Sabbs) are full-time, paid members of staff who
  work at Oxford SU, representing students to drive the changes they
  want to be. Students take a year out from their studies to be a
  Sabbatical Officer; or take on the role after their final year.
- Sabbs sit on almost every University committee, including those at the very highest level. As such, Sabbatical Officers are perfectly placed to make long-lasting change, with skilled SU staff members on-hand to help you navigate the system.
- The six roles have their own remits and responsibilities which are detailed in the role descriptions. However, the Sabbs work together as a team constantly and are encouraged to collaborate on projects.
- Sabbatical Officers also support other student representatives throughout the collegiate University - such as common room Reps, the SU Campaigns, and academic reps.
- Sabbs are also Trustees of Oxford SU, meaning that they sit on Trustee
  Board, which has ultimate responsibility for the strategic success,
  financial sustainability, and legal compliance of Oxford SU as a
  charitable organisation.

#### **VOLUNTARY POSITIONS**

During the elections period, there are also voluntary roles up for elections that students complete alongside their studies. These are: 3x Student Trustees and 9x NUS Delegates.

### STUDENT TRUSTEES

Oxford SU is run by a Board of Trustees, who are ultimately responsible for the strategic success, financial sustainability and legal compliance of Oxford SU as a charitable organisation.

Student Trustees elected in Hilary Term 2024 will serve from 23rd June 2024 to 28th June 2025. Trustees are expected to remain in office for this full year, and so candidates running in their final year should ensure they can fulfil the role outside of Oxford.

### NUS DELEGATES

Oxford SU is a member of the National Union of Students (NUS), which means we have nine voting places at the National Conference.

NUS Conference will be taking place on Wednesday 17th and Thursday 18th April 2024.

Delegates must be available for both days. Attendance will be either in-person (in Blackpool) or online depending on cost. All costs – registration, accommodation, travel, and food – will be paid by Oxford SU.

#### THE ELECTION

To ensure that Sabbatical Officers represent the interests of the student body and have a democratic mandate, they are elected every year.

We have a number of processes in place to make sure that the SU elections are positive, fair and accessible.

This includes the Elections Rules document, which you can find on the elections page, and details the Rules that all candidates must follow.

Candidates should not spend their own money in this election, the SU will reimburse you up to:

- £60 for Sabbatical Officer candidates
- £40 for NUS Delegate and Student Trustee candidates

The Elections Rules detail how you can spend your money.



### Living and Working in Oxford

#### **Working at Oxford SU**

The Sabbatical Officer roles are all full-time jobs, working (on-average) 09:00-17:00, Monday-Friday alongside a permanent staff team in the SU's offices. The SU is a collaborative and engaging place to work, with a small staff team of passionate people, who you will work with closely to deliver your manifesto pledges and more!

#### **Living in Oxford**

As a Sabbatical Officer, you still maintain your full student status which can have a range of benefits. Some Sabbs choose to remain living in College whilst they complete their term, others choose to privately rent in the city with a group of friends. Having student status means that you are exempt from paying Council Tax which can reduce the cost of living out during your term as a Sabb.

#### Work/Life in Oxford

A work life balance is essential for anyone entering a full-time work position. As a Sabb, you can decide how much you want to integrate with student-life in Oxford, or if you would rather create more of a balance.

Being a Sabbatical Officer is a full-time job, with occasional long days for events such as Freshers Fair and more, so creating boundaries with work is also important. Once your day ends, you are not expected to be checking emails or messages, so make time for yourself!

The SU is a social working environment as well, with plenty of ways to get to know your colleagues away from work in a more relaxed environment.

#### RAG Ballot

Each year, RAG supports four charities which are selected by the all-student RAG Charity Ballot in Hilary Term. Of these four charities, two are local charities, and two are national or international charities. Local charities are defined as those based in Oxfordshire and where the majority of their work is conducted in Oxfordshire. These four selected charities will share RAG's fundraising profits for the next academic year so from 1st August 2024 to 31st July 2025.

In line with Oxford SU's leadership elections, nominations for charities for Oxford RAG to support will open on the 12th January 2024. At this time, students will be able to outline the work of their preferred charity, how they would benefit from RAG's support, and how the charity can support RAG's growth and development.

Nominations will be open until 26th January 2024. When nominations close the RAG Shortlisting Committee convenes to shortlist nominated charities into a maximum of 6 local and 6 national/international charities which will then be voted on by the student body.



RAG 0xford SU





Find out more about Elections online!

