

The dos and don'ts of campaigning

By [Ciarán Morrissey](#), Comment Editor (2015/16)

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A new election season is upon us and a fresh crop of YUSU hopefuls have begun their foray into the esteemed world of student politics. As always, there are a bunch of puns (some funny, some embarrassing), a joke candidate, and a lot of overlapping pleasantries. With that in mind, it seems appropriate to compile a handy list of dos and don'ts for the campaign trail hopefuls:

DO come up with a pun or humorous catchphrase based on your name. Just make sure it's not awful. I liked the ['don't be a banker!' guy](#) last year, but painting part of your name in a different colour to the rest is just poor effort.



Image: Dylan Chambers

If you can't be bothered to give us laughs, why should we be expected to vote for you?

DO give us a clear set of policies so we know what we're getting into. Everyone promises free stuff and 'more communication'. These are nice things. People like nice things. But if everyone promises the same nice things, the value of those nice things doesn't seem as important. Tell us specifically what you're going to do and what you mean by all the vague statements in your platform.

DO tell us exactly how you're going to have your policies enacted. As said, everyone likes free stuff and greater engagement, the issue is how it's going to get done. As well as telling us what exactly you want as an end goal, tell us how you're going to do it. There's no point in us voting for a President who takes office to find his hands are tied and he can't deliver anything he promised.

DO understand that, as important as your campaign might be, there'll be an awful lot of people who simply do not care. Students who vote in YUSU elections are largely in the minority. Most students aren't going to vote, much less for you, so be nice and let them get on with their day.

DON'T interrupt the catered freshers at meal times to tell them all about your campaign. This is an absolutely terrible thing to do. If your lust for the campus oval office is so great that you're happy to bother people when they're trying to have some food and chat to their mates, you really need to ask yourself if you're doing this for the right reasons. In addition, it's a horrible way to make a first impression. You're less likely to seem like a student visionary and more like a desperate narcissist. Harass them on campus where it's socially acceptable for them to walk away. Don't rant like a madman to a captive audience.

DON'T spam every single freshers group, society page and event on Facebook group with desperate pleas and links to your campaign. As stated, most people simply don't care, and they're going to be told "Hey guys, could you just take a few minutes to read this? It's REALLY important!" dozens and dozens of times over the campaigning weeks. There's not an ignorant mass of students waiting to be enlightened by your platform. If students are interested in the elections, then they'll seek out information. If they're not, leave them alone.

DON'T think of yourself as different to the joke candidates. They (in theory) add a bit of humour to proceedings that can be extremely boring to the rest of the student population. Better than that, sometimes they get apathetic students interested in the elections through sheer curiosity. They're not demeaning or devaluing the YUSU election process; they provide a bit of comic relief and, in all honesty, will be remembered much longer than anyone else.



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