



# **FCSA Officer Elections**

## **Candidate Handbook**

## FCSA Officer Elections Candidate Handbook

Thank you for considering standing for a sabbatical officer role within Fife College Students' Association!

This handbook provides information to help you plan and promote your campaign. It also includes forms to complete your nomination and compile your manifesto pledges.

### The Benefits of being a Sabbatical Officer

As one of the leaders of the FCSA you will become the voice for every student, shaping and directing the future of the students' association. You'll have the opportunity to work with the colleges' senior management; helping to make major decisions to ensure that every student of Fife College has the best possible college experience. You can also work with national organisations to promote the voice of FCSA.

Being a sabbatical officer is a great addition to anyone's CV. You will gain access to numerous training opportunities and develop new skills which will increase your employability in your future career path. Just by being a part of the election process you will gain experience in managing budgets, working to deadlines, and team management.

This is your chance to become a change maker and create lasting improvements to the student experience at Fife College.

### Am I eligible?

You can stand for election as long as you meet the following criteria:

1. You are enrolled and registered as a student of Fife College for the current academic year.
2. You are aged 16 years old or older.
3. You are a member of Fife College Students' Association. (membership is automatic when you enrol, unless you write to the Board of Governors and 'opt out')
4. You must not have any current College disciplinary sanction against you

5. If you are elected you must be willing to take a year out of your studies. If you plan to continue to study the college will hold your place on your course.

## **Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG)**

All full-time officers must be able to obtain satisfactory membership of the PVG Scheme from Disclosure Scotland. If elected, you must apply, via the College, to join the PVG Scheme. The cost will be met by the college.

## **Board of Governors**

The Student President and Vice President for Education and Representation are appointed members of the Board of Governors.

A person is not eligible for appointment as a member of the board (and therefore not eligible for either of these positions) if the person -

(a) has within 5 years of the date on which the appointment would take effect, been sentenced (following conviction for an offence in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or the Irish Republic) to imprisonment for a period of not less than 3 months, whether suspended or not, without the option of a fine;

(b) is an undischarged bankrupt; or

(c) has been removed from office under section 24 of the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 1992 or section 23Q of the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 2005.

If you are in doubt about your eligibility you should seek your own legal advice or contact the General Manager of the Students' Association.

## **Remuneration**

All sabbatical officer positions are full time salaried posts. For the upcoming academic year the Student President will be paid £17,520. The two Vice President posts will be paid £16,905.

The sabbatical officers will receive 39 holidays for the upcoming year. These can be taken subject to the FCSA annual leave guidelines.

## What skills do I need?

Training will be provided to help develop key skills for your role however basic IT and effective communication skills will provide you with a good basis for success. The FCSA staff and external partners will also offer training to help you develop into your role.

## What we expect of you

Being a sabbatical officer can be demanding. It would be difficult to carry out your duties effectively alongside any other employment; as such we recommend that your sabbatical position would be your only employment.

All FCSA officers are required to be professional, cooperative and flexible in line with the needs of their post. These positions operate within a defined policy and procedural framework and if elected you will be responsible for maintaining awareness of current policies and procedures and working within them.

All our officers sign a Code of Conduct and are expected to value democracy, equality and diversity.

Working as part of a team with a high level of flexibility and self-direction, you are expected to have commitment to your own learning and personal development.

## Your Election Campaign

### **Plan it!**

The college has 7 campuses and it's important that you use your campaigning time effectively to share with as many students as possible. Therefore it's important to use your time wisely, so planning ahead is key.

The FCSA staff will provide you with a planning template however it would be useful to consider the following questions in advance:

- When are you spending time on each campus?
- Which buildings will you be able to campaign in?
- When will there be a lot of students around to campaign to?
- Where are you going to put your manifestos up?

### **Campaign Teams**

You can ask your fellow students to become part of your campaign team. Your campaign teams can help to promote your campaign across campuses allowing more students to hear your messages.

The election process can be quite demanding for candidates - you don't want to burn out. Having an effective campaign team can help to manage your workload and promotion.

Make sure your team understands your campaign aims. Students will ask why they should vote for you, and they need to be able to sell you as the best candidate.

It's important your team understand the election rules. They are representing you, so you are ultimately responsible for them.

### **Make sure students remember you!**

Flyers and posters can be a good way of highlighting your campaign; however in recent discussions, most students said that they are more likely to vote for a candidate who they have spoken to and discussed issues with.

Students noted that they are less likely to read long paragraphs and prefer more concise information.

Speaking to students in social, canteen and communal areas across campus can be very successful. Ask them for 2 minutes of their time and explain why they should vote for you.

The College has a diverse student body. Do your campaign aims speak for every student of Fife College?

FCSA Staff will produce a supply of manifesto posters and flyers for you. These will include your photo, name and position you're running for along with details about voting.

## Respect

Whilst you may disagree and criticise the policies of another candidate, you are not permitted to make any comments on the personal. Any such attacks will result in a warning being issued. This ruling also applies to remarks made on social media, iLearn, and in emails.

Always respect a student's right to say no. Under no circumstances should students feel hassled or pressured into voting.

## Conduct

Face to face canvassing of students and the use of campaign materials is not allowed until after the Candidate Meeting.

You are allowed to organise a campaign team, the members of which must be current students. Names of team members must be submitted to the Returning Officer by the Candidate Meeting.

You are responsible for the conduct of your campaign team.

You are expected to conduct yourself appropriately at all times; intimidation or bullying of other candidates or voters will not be tolerated.

You must not attempt to undermine the fair and democratic running of the election in any way.

If the Returning Officer decides any candidate has conducted themselves inappropriately at any time throughout the election, they may issue a warning or disqualification. Any candidate who receives a second warning will be disqualified.

## Candidate Publicity

Each candidate will receive a budget of £100 to be used to produce promotional materials and cover the costs of your campaign. To ensure fairness in the election you cannot use personal finance or receive donations in cash, or kind, from any source.

The FCSA staff will provide a supply of flyers and manifesto posters for you. You are not permitted to print or copy additional materials however you can order more from the FCSA staff if needed.

You can distribute publicity at any time after the Candidate Meeting up to the close of voting.

You can display publicity on designated notice boards at each campus.

You may not use FCSA club, society, or group email lists to promote your campaign. Make every attempt to ensure no emails are sent out on your behalf by groups. A warning may be issued by the Returning Officer. These groups, clubs or societies are unable to actively endorse you.

## Writing a manifesto

Your manifesto is an introduction to you, your policies, and your election aims. It outlines what you stand for, and why you feel you are the best person for the job.

FCSA Staff will produce a manifesto poster for every candidate. These will be distributed at the Candidate Meeting. This will be made from the information you provide us on the template in this document. When we receive your nomination we will confirm your preferred layout from pre-existing templates.

Here are a few things to consider when compiling your manifesto information:

Be creative and inspiring. Let your personality show through so students know who they are voting for. What will set you apart from the other candidates?

Don't make promises you can't deliver. Do your research; is what you are planning achievable during a year in office?

Discuss your ideas with your friends and other students to gather opinions. Do your ideas resonate with them? If they weren't your friends, would your manifesto convince them to vote for you?

Be concise. Some voters may not read your manifesto in depth and will only scan through it, so make sure your main points don't get lost.

Don't forget to include:

- Your name and position you're running for.
- Outline who you are, your skills and any relevant experience.
- Why you feel you're the best candidate.
- What you want to change.

All election manifestos will be publicised on the FCSEA iLearn page and social media channels. You will be given copies of your manifesto to hand out to students and put on notice boards.

## Before the nomination period closes...

Complete the nomination form in this document in full and get two students to nominate you.

Make sure you sign the declaration.

Complete the manifesto template at the end of this document.

You can submit your nomination form and manifesto details to any campus reception, FCSA office or by email to the Deputy Returning Officer, Debbie Chalmers: [debbiechalmers@fife.ac.uk](mailto:debbiechalmers@fife.ac.uk)

These must be submitted before the nomination period closes at 5pm on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> April.

## Candidates' Meeting

All candidates must attend a Candidates' Meeting. This is where we will talk you through the election process and distribute campaign packs. It's a chance to ask the Returning Officer questions you may have.

The Candidates' Meeting will take place on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> of April. The venue will be confirmed once all nominations are received.

## Dates to Remember

Nomination period opens:	Monday 21 <sup>st</sup> March at 9am
Nomination period closes:	Monday 18 <sup>th</sup> April at 5pm
Candidates' Meeting:	Thursday 28 <sup>th</sup> April
Voting opens:	Friday 29 <sup>th</sup> April at 12 noon
Voting closes:	Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> May at 12 noon
Results announced:	Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> May at 4pm

**FCSA Officer Elections**  
**Nomination Form**



Position you're standing for: \_\_\_\_\_

Personal Information			
Name			
Student ID		Date of Birth	
Course			
Email			
Phone			

Two students are required to nominate you; please ask them to complete their details below. Please note that two signatures are required for all posts. No member may nominate more than one candidate for any one vacancy in any one election. If this should happen, that nominee will be removed from all candidates' forms.

Nominee 1	
Name	
Course	
Student ID	
Signature	
Nominee 2	
Name	
Course	
Student ID	
Signature	

**Declaration:**

I (insert name) \_\_\_\_\_ declare I am currently registered as a student at Fife College for 2015-16 and an ordinary member of Fife College Students' Association.

I agree to abide by all regulations governing the elections and understand misconduct can lead to disqualification.

Contd...

I have read and understood the remit for my position and if successfully elected agree to carry out my duties as stated and any others as directed by the Student Council or Executive Committee.

I understand if elected for a full-time sabbatical position, I must apply via the College to join the PVG Scheme run by Disclosure Scotland.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please send your completed nomination form along with your manifesto information to Debbie Chalmers, FCSA General Manager:**

**[debbiechalmers@fife.ac.uk](mailto:debbiechalmers@fife.ac.uk)**

**You can also hand these documents into any reception or FCSA Office.**

**All nominations must be submitted by 5pm on Monday the 18<sup>th</sup> of April.**

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## Creating your manifesto

Please complete the questions below with a maximum of 200 words in each section. These can be short paragraphs, bullet points, or any other format you would prefer. Feel free to use additional sheets if necessary.

What experiences and interests do you have that make you suitable for the role?  
(max 200 words)

In relation to the role you are applying for, what issues do you believe affect students at Fife College and why? (max 200 words)

If elected what will you pledge to do about the issues you identified and what will you do to improve the student experience at Fife College? (max 200 words)

Why should students vote for you? (max 200 words)