

Guide to Writing Your Manifesto

Welcome



In this guide, You will learn about...

1

**What is a
Manifesto?**

2

**Manifesto
Writing
Process**

3

**Manifesto
Writing
Tools**

What is a Manifesto?

A manifesto is a public declaration of policy and aims that candidates can use to try and convince voters to vote for them. Manifestos are usually in the format of a written document, but they don't have to be.

. To this end, it usually contains information about:

- Who you are and what position you are running for
- Why you want to win the election – why are you passionate about this role?
- What would you do if you won the election – what projects and policies would you introduce?
- What experience and skills you have that make you a good candidate – have you been involved in the SU before? Have you worked on projects related to the role?
- Often it will include a slogan – to make your campaign more memorable!

Visual Manifestos

Visual manifestos are a bit different (but mostly the same)...

It is a manifesto in a more visual form. This could be a poster or a video.

A visual manifesto is...

- Visually interesting (a brand, colours...)
- It includes who you are (e.g. a picture of you)
- It includes your Policies/promise and Experience

Please note: Video cannot be uploaded on the website so if you decide to make a video, you will need to upload it on a 3rd party website such as YouTube.

Creating a Manifesto

When Creating your manifesto, think about the following:

- It's a chance for you to 'talk' to students you might not meet while campaigning.
- How can you students on your side?
- What do students care about?
 - Ask your friends!
 - What would make people vote for you?





Manifestos & Their Role In Elections

Manifesto Mistakes

Although there is no one right way to write/ produce a manifesto, there are four mistakes' candidates in Students' Union elections often make when writing/ producing their manifesto.

These four manifesto mistakes are...

- **Not being authentic!**
- **Not asking the reader to vote for them!**
- **Not letting the reader know when and how to vote for them!**
- **Not integrating their manifesto into their overall campaign plan!**





The Manifesto Writing Process

The manifesto writing process is a **three-stage process**.

- The first stage of the manifesto writing process is **planning** and **preparation**.
- The second stage of the manifesto writing process is **drafting** and **designing**.
- The third stage of the manifesto writing process is **reviewing** and **revising**.



Stage 1: The Manifesto Writing Process



Planning & Preparation

Before you try to draft and design your manifesto you first **need to identify your ...**

- **Goal(s)**
- **Message(s)**
- **Audience(s)**





The Manifesto Writing Process

Drafting

The next stage of the manifesto writing process is to drafting your manifesto.

To draft your manifesto will first need to convert your message(s) into a series of **policy pledges** and/ or **story statements**.

- A policy pledge is a section of text in a manifesto that outlines to the reader **an action that you promise to do if elected**.
- A story statement is a section of text in a manifesto that outlines **a personal attribute(s) that is desirable** to the reader.

Policy pledges and story statements should be kept as **short** and **simple** as possible.





Stage 2: The Manifesto Writing Process

Drafting & Designing

The next stage of the manifesto writing process is to draft and design your manifesto.

To draft and design your manifesto will first need to convert your message(s) into a series of **policy pledges** and/ or **story statements**.

- A policy pledge is a section of text in a manifesto that outlines to the reader **an action that you promise to do if elected**.
- A story statement is a section of text in a manifesto that outlines **a personal attribute(s) that is desirable** to the reader.

Policy pledges and story statements should be kept as **short** and **simple** as possible.





Stage 3 - The Manifesto Writing Process

Reviewing & Revising

Once you have drafted your manifesto, the next and final stage of the manifesto writing process is review and revise it before submitting/ publishing it.

The purpose of reviewing and revising your manifesto is to ensure that it...

- **Is within any word count and/ or document specification limits**
- **Contains no spelling and grammar mistakes**
- **Contains no incorrect dates and times, or broken hyperlinks, or incorrect internet and email addresses**



Designing and Publishing your manifesto



Once you have drafted and reviewed your policy pledges and/ or story statements, the next step is to order and arrange them in an **appealing** and **attractive** way that makes the manifesto **clear** and **easy** to read and understand.

Several different **designs** can be used make a manifesto appealing and attractive, as well as clear and easy to read and understand. This depends on the way you want to display your manifesto, so either a written manifesto or visual manifesto or both

Design devices commonly used in manifestos include...

- **Text Formatting (Bullet Points, Bold, Italics, and Underlining)**
- **Different Fonts & Font Sizes**
- **Images & Graphic (Photos/ Clipart/ Diagrams)**
- **Colour schemes & Design Themes**
- **Slogans & Catchphrases**
- **Questions & Exclamations**



The technical stuff for visual manifestos..



Sizing and format:

- A4 portrait
- JPEG Format (as high a resolution as possible)

Programmes you can use include:

- Photoshop (if you have access)
- GIMP (Free online software similar to Photoshop)
- Microsoft Publisher
- Adobe (free for all students)
- Canva

Please do not use

- **Microsoft word or save as a pdf as you cannot display this on the website as an image**



Be sure to ... on Manifestos both posters and videos.



Be concise and use clear language

Include key policies but keep them short

Easy to read font on a good readable size

Ask friends to check it over for typos or the ideas you have

Add captions to your videos

Don't forget to include:

- Aston Students' Union Logo
 - The vote link: www.astonsu.com/vote/
 - When voting opens and when voting closes.
- The position you are running for



Manifesto Examples



This is an example of what you include in your written manifesto...

Who am I?

My name's Stu Dent and I'm running to be your President!

Why am I running?

I live and breathe the Students' Union, and I want to use my passion to make sure that the Students' Union can thrive in the future.

What will I do?

If you elect me as your President, I will:

- Push to ensure that students get a fair accommodation deal on campus
- Make scrutiny of your Officers more transparent

Why vote for me?

I've got bags of experience of working with the student community:

- I'm a student rep
- I'm chairperson of my society
- I work for the University as a Student Ambassador

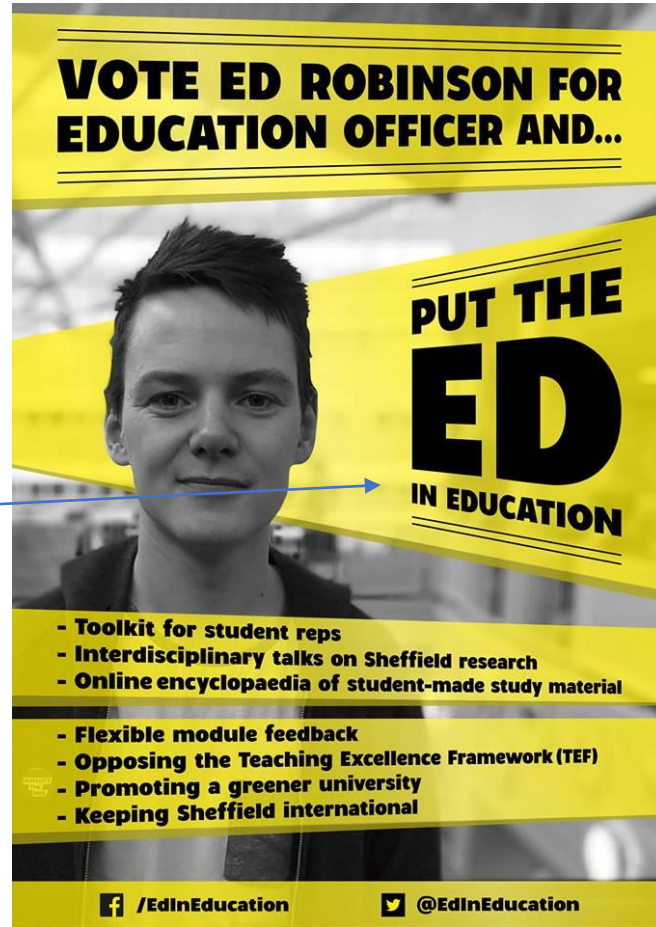
So, remember: **Vote for Stu – he's thought it through! Voting closes 13th March.**



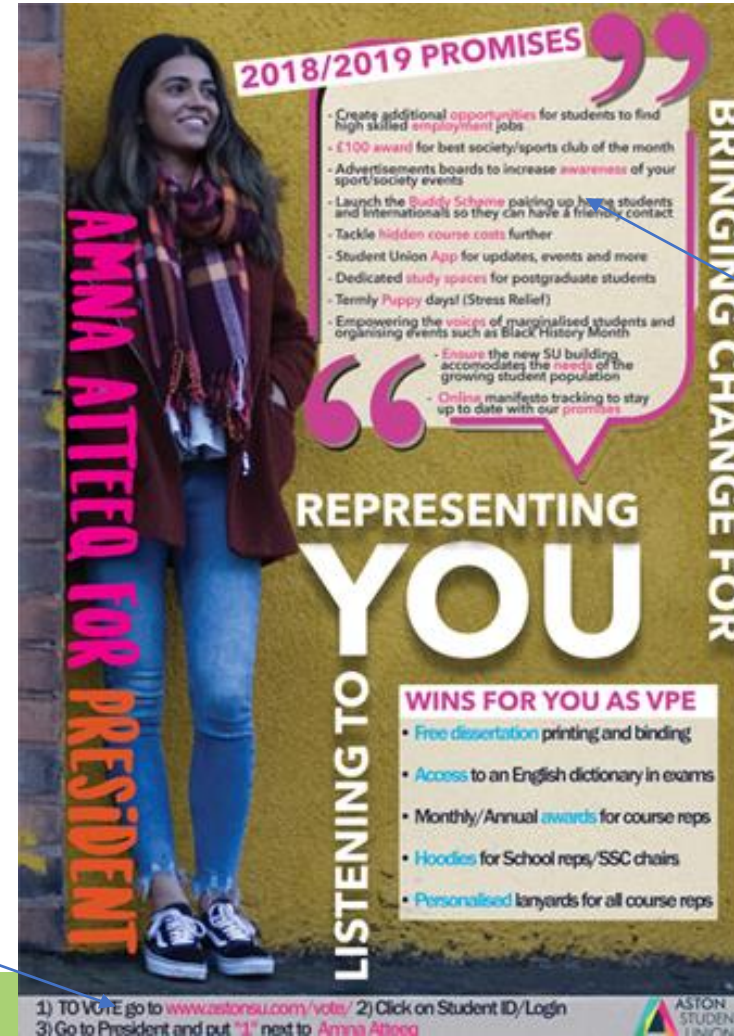
Visual Manifestos

Examples...

Bold branding and slogan



Link to voting page!




Key points

Visual Manifestos



Examples...

**OHEMAA KONADU-PEPRAH
FOR VICE PRESIDENT OF
EDUCATION 2018**





PROMISES

- 1) LIBRARY SERVICES- 24 HOUR LIBRARY ACCESS TO ALL STUDENTS ALL YEAR ROUND
- 2) PROFESSIONAL MENTORING- EXTEND PROFESSIONAL MENTORING TO ALL SCHOOLS AND ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO ENGAGE WITH PROFESSIONALS IN THEIR ASPIRING SECTORS.
- 3) SCHOLARSHIPS- RAISE AWARENESS SURROUNDING AVAILABLE SCHOLARSHIPS/BURBARRIES AND PROVIDE BASIC APPLICATION SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS.
- 4) WASS HOURS- INCREASE LECTURER 1-1 HOURS FROM 15 MINUTES PER STUDENT TO 30MINS PER STUDENT.

**YOUR EDUCATION,
MY PRIORITY!**

VOTE!
FEBRUARY 22ND - MARCH 1ST
LINK TO VOTE! www.astonsu.com/vote/

@heems_xo   Indiyaa @heemsxo

Vote Alice #1

22nd February - 1st March
www.astonsu.com/elections

Who am I?

My name is Alice Coombes. I'm a Psychology & Sociology graduate and your current Vice President Welfare at Aston. I have also been your Equalities & Environment officer, LGBT+ president, ARC receptionist and general welfare devotee.

What have I done as VPW?

- ✓ Secured monthly on-campus sexual health testing
- ✓ Run SAFE week and introduced Aston's own Mental Health Week
- ✓ Set up Student Minds & passed a policy to make it a free society
- ✓ Secured £1000 from the NUS for a sustainable food enterprise

Re-elect Alice for VP Welfare

For mental, sexual & overall health



What else can I do for you?

- Build on the International Buddy Scheme, introduced by myself and the VP Education
- Bring back International Freshers' Welcome
- Launch a food enterprise giving students a healthy, cheap and ethical alternative to store-bought lunch
- Organise accessible events for isolated students
- Mental wellbeing training for students
- Lower fees for refugees and asylum seekers
- Start a video series on budgeting including things like shopping and cooking

Bold, contrasting type & clear brand

Why vote?

Why Vote for Me?

I have a genuine passion for making a positive and long-lasting impact that will enrich YOUR educational experience at Aston University. I will ensure to act on arising issues that affects YOUR development and introduce and implement change for YOUR success as a STUDENT at Aston University.

Manifesto Drop-in Sessions



If you have any questions about creating your manifesto or need guidance to get started, feel free to join one of our optional manifesto drop-in sessions.

Session details:

- Session 1: Wednesday, 12th February 2025, 1–2 PM, SU Room 3
- Session 2: Monday, 24th February 2025, 1–2 PM, SU Room 3



Manifesto Deadline



- You must submit a written manifesto or a visual manifesto, or both by the 3rd of March at 10 am
- It is up to you to design these. You can edit your manifesto (and photo) until 10 am on Monday 3rd March 2025.
- Failure to do this could lead to your withdrawal from the Elections.



If you have any questions

Contact the Student Voice Team

voice@union.aston.ac.uk

