



# 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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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/](http://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 ...**

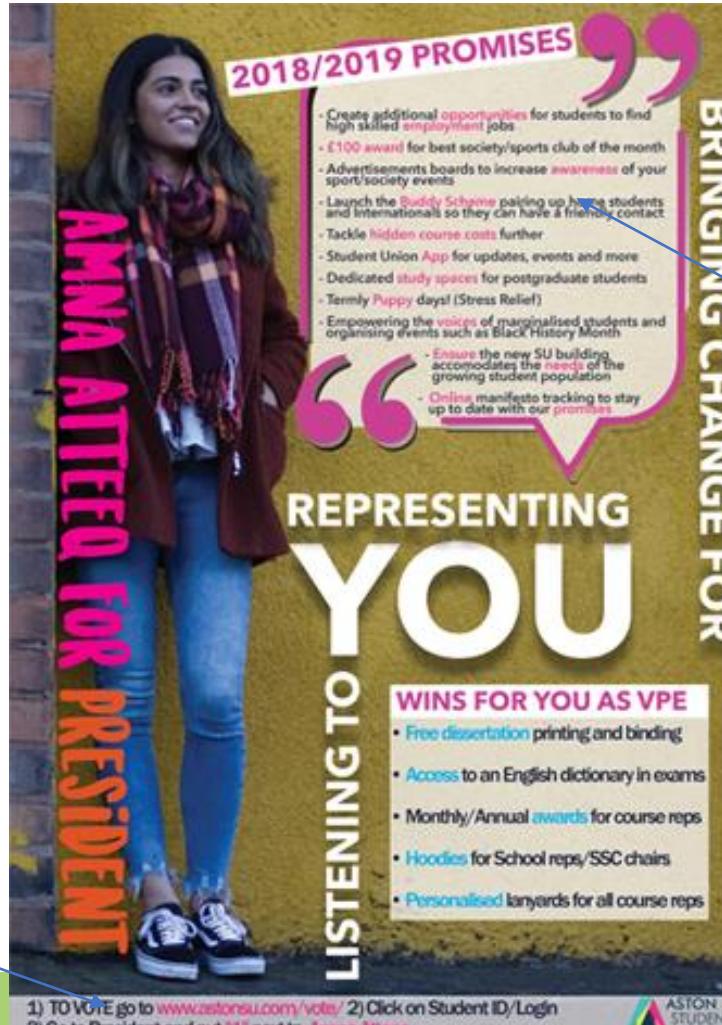
# Visual Manifestos

## Examples...

Bold branding and slogan



Link to voting page!



Key points

# Visual Manifestos



## Examples...

Why vote?

**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/BURSARIES AND PROVIDE BASIC APPLICATION SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS.
- 4) WASS HOURS - INCREASE LECTURER 1-1 HOURS FROM 15 MINUTES PER STUDENT TO 30 MINUTES PER STUDENT.

**YOUR EDUCATION, MY PRIORITY!**

**VOTE!**

**FEBRUARY 22ND - MARCH 1ST**

**LINK TO VOTE! [www.astonsu.com/vote/](http://www.astonsu.com/vote/)**

**@heems\_xo**  **@heemsxo** 

**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.

### Vote Alice #1

22<sup>nd</sup> February - 1<sup>st</sup> March  
[www.astonsu.com/elections](http://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.

### Re-elect Alice for VP Welfare

For mental, sexual & overall health



#### 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
- ✓ 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

# 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.

Please refer to the dates on the main election webpage



# Manifesto Deadline

- You must submit a written manifesto or a visual manifesto, or both by the deadline set.
- It is up to you to design these. You can edit your manifesto (and photo) until the deadline set on the website.
- Failure to do this could lead to your withdrawal from the Elections.



**Please refer to the dates on the main election webpage  
for the deadline**



# If you have any questions

Contact the Student Voice Team

[voice@union.aston.ac.uk](mailto:voice@union.aston.ac.uk)