Mock Elections 2024
Cue Cards

Contents

CUE CARD: CAMPAIGN

BECOMING A CANDIDATE

Anyone can stand as a candidate, as long as <u>four other people nominate* you</u>.

Candidates need to choose which political party to stand for (see the *Which Party?* cue card (pp. 4-7)). Check out the party information/websites to help make your decision.

Your own party? If you don't think you fit into any of them, why not start your own party?

Once you've picked your party, you need to get a campaign team together to help you through the election. Your campaign team is really important because they will help you to...

- Decide on your party's policies** and aims.

- Get your campaign moving and encourage other students to vote for you.

The *Get Your Party Started!* cue card (p.8) will help you build the campaign team for your party.

Sign up!

If you want to be a party candidate, fill in the nomination form and give it to the Election Returning Officer (or the teacher co-ordinating the election) by the deadline!

If more than one person wants to be the candidate, it will be up to the party members to decide who represents them.

Jargon Buster

* Nominate: to suggest or propose a candidate.

** Policy: a plan of action for your party if it gets elected.

CUE CARD: CAMPAIGN

WHICH PARTY? ENGLAND

To help you decide which political party to stand for look at the websites of the main parties.

Conservative Party   conservatives.com

Green Party   greenparty.org.uk

Labour Party   labour.org.uk

Liberal Democrats   libdems.org.uk

Reform UK   reformparty.uk

CUE CARD: CAMPAIGN

WHICH PARTY? SCOTLAND

To help you decide which political party to stand for look at the websites of the main parties.

ALBA

albaparty.org

Scottish Conservatives

scottishconservatives.com

Scottish Greens

greens.scot

Scottish Labour

scottishlabour.org.uk

Scottish Liberal Democrats

scotlibdems.org.uk

Scottish National Party

snp.org

Reform UK

reformparty.uk

CUE CARD: CAMPAIGN

WHICH PARTY? WALES

To help you decide which political party to stand for look at the websites of the main parties.

Welsh Conservatives

Ceidwadwyr Cymreig

conservatives.wales

Wales Green Party

Plaid Werdd

wales.greenparty.org.uk

Welsh Labour

Llafur Cymru

welshlabour.wales

Welsh Liberal Democrats

Dem Rhydd Cymru

libdems.wales

Plaid Cymru

The Party of Wales

partyof.wales

Reform UK

reformparty.uk

CUE CARD: CAMPAIGN

WHICH PARTY? NORTHERN IRELAND

To help you decide which political party to stand for look at the websites of the main parties.

Alliance

allianceparty.org

Democratic Unionist Party

mydup.com

Green Party Northern Ireland

greenpartyni.org

Social Democratic and Labour Party

sdlp.ie

Sinn Féin

vote.sinnfein.ie

Traditional Unionist Voice

tuv.org.uk

Ulster Unionist Party

uup.org

CUE CARD: CAMPAIGN

GET YOUR PARTY STARTED!

Jobs: A candidate is only as good as their party, so make sure you have a great team.

There are lots of jobs to be done within the party from designers to policy makers.

It is important that everyone knows exactly what their job is, so draw up a table like this one and write it all down:

NAME	JOB TITLE	TASKS	DEADLINE

Use the *Party Campaign Team Jobs* cue card (p.9) to help you fill in the table.

Get Elected!

Once you have got your team you can start work persuading people to vote for your party.

1. **Policies:** these are your action plan, the things you will do if you are elected.

2. **The campaign:** these are the activities you run to make sure voters hear about your policies. Campaigns involve things like speeches and posters to convince voters that you have the best ideas.

Use the *Campaign* (pp.9-14) and *Policy (*pp.15-16) cue cards to help you start winning votes!

CUE CARD: CAMPAIGN

PARTY CAMPAIGN TEAM JOBS

A candidate is only as good as their party, so build a great team.

JOB	ROLE/RESPONSIBILITIES
Agent	The person who co-ordinates and manages the party's campaign at the election. They make sure that all the jobs are done on time so the candidate can focus on meeting voters.
Candidate	A person who stands for election to Parliament. A candidate can be nominated by a political party or stand as an independent.
Canvasser	A party member who has the job of promoting the party's message and policies to voters to persuade them to support them.
Designers	People in charge of making the rosettes, posters, leaflets etc.
Digital Co-ordinator	The person responsible for the party's online/social media campaign.
Policy makers	People who develop the policy ideas and write the manifesto.
Party members	Members of a party who help to run the election campaign – volunteering for whatever jobs need to be done!
Press officer	A person who promotes information about the party and its policies to journalists. The best are sometimes known as 'spin doctors'!
Speech writers	People who help the candidate to write speeches for when they address the electorate – particularly important in helping a candidate prepare for the hustings.

CUE CARD: CAMPAIGN

CAMPAIGN CHECKLIST

Write a checklist of all the things that you will do as part of your campaign.

Here are a few ideas for campaign activities:

- ✓ **Design a logo** - the party logos on the *Which Party?* cue cards (pp.4-7) may be a useful guide – or you could come up with something new.

- ✓ **Rosettes** – get as many people as possible wearing them to demonstrate support. Use the *Rosette template* to make them.

- ✓ **Posters and leaflets** – design eye-catching campaign materials to display and give out around school. (Use the cue card on p11.)

- ✓ **Hustings** - if your school is holding one be sure to prepare a speech setting out exactly why people should vote for you.

- ✓ **News coverage** - get yourself into the school newsletter (or even the local paper or radio station) with a newsworthy press release. The press release cue card (p.12) has some top tips to help you write it.

- ✓ **Go viral** – promote your campaign to voters through social media channels like Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter. Always use the hashtag **#mockelections2024** to tag your content if you want others to see how great your campaign is!

- ✓ **Party election broadcast** – produce a short film setting out your campaign message and policy commitments from your manifesto and promote it to voters through social media.

Use the *Campaign* cue cards (pp.11-14) to help you with your campaign activities.

CUE CARD: CAMPAIGN

LOGO AND POSTER

An eye-catching poster and a bold logo are great ways to let people know about your party.

If you are standing for a party that already exists (e.g. the Conservatives/Labour) you could use or adapt their logo.

Use the party logos on the *Which Party?* cue card (pp.4-7) as a guide.

Want to invent something new?

- Design a logo that is recognisable and coveys what your party is about.

- Think of what you like and dislike about other logos.

- Create logos and posters with colours and images that will attract voters.

- How can you make your posters stand out from other people's?

- What should be bigger: the name of the candidate or the name of the party?

Top Tip……
Make sure people get the message!

If there is too much information, voters will miss the point.

CUE CARD: CAMPAIGN

PRESS RELEASE

Read all about it!

What better way to get your message out there than getting yourself into the school paper. Or even better, get into your local newspaper or on the local radio!

To get media coverage you need to write a press release. This gives journalists lots of exciting information that makes them want to write about you and your party's campaign.

Here are some tips…

- What is it about: a person, a party, an event?

- Why is the story important? Why would readers be interested?

- Come up with an eye-catching, news-worthy headline.

- Include times, dates, facts & figures. Journalists are interested in 5 key facts known as the 5 W's:

  1. **Who** is it about? Who is affected? Who benefits? Who loses?
  2. **What** will happen? What are the consequences? What does this mean for the reader?
  3. **Where** will it take place? Where should readers go for more information?
  4. **When** will it take place? (time, day, month, year)
  5. **Why** will it take place? Why is it important? Why should readers care?

Top Tip……

Keep it simple! The best press releases are short and sweet. Write no more than one side of A4 and remember to check your spelling!

CUE CARD: CAMPAIGN

DIGITAL CAMPAIGN

The internet is vital to campaigning these days. It is a great way to grab voter attention quickly.

School website or blog – ask the teacher co-ordinating the election if you can post news updates on the site so people know about your Mock Election.

Facebook – set up a Facebook group for your campaign. Make sure you get the title of your group right – this is how people will search for and link to you.

Once the group is set up let your supporters know – word will soon spread.

Instagram – share key moments in your campaign with your voters, supporters, friends and family. Take a picture or video, choose a filter to transform its look and share it through Instagram.

Twitter – can you sum up your campaign in 280 characters? Tweet links to pictures and videos of your campaign – include the **#mockelections2024** hashtag.

YouTube – post and share videos of your campaign, hustings, and the result ceremony. It will help preserve a national record of Mock Elections 2024!

*Always remember to use the hashtag **#mockelections2024** to tag your content so others taking part in Mock Elections across the country can see it.*

Top Tip……

You can't do everything – prioritise what online/social media channel you want to use. And remember to keep updating it – post news and requests when you can; this will help keep your supporters engaged. And always include the **#mockelections2024** hashtag!

CUE CARD: CAMPAIGN

PARTY ELECTION BROADCAST

Political parties make campaign films called Party Election Broadcasts.

Parties normally show theirs on TV, but you could ask your teacher if you could show yours in a lesson or special election assembly.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT...

Plan: A good film needs a good plan. So draw up a mind-map of all your ideas, decide what your message is and make a plan!

Script: Keep your script short and simple. Make sure voters hear the most important messages. Remember to include your party slogans and your logo!

Storyboard: This is a special plan used for films. It should tell you what will happen in every shot of the film. You could draw pictures or just write down what will happen. Come up with an exciting start and a memorable finish!

Filming: Pick an interesting place to film and change camera angles to make it more exciting. Remember to stick to your storyboard!

CUE CARD: POLICY

MAKE YOUR OWN MANIFESTO

Your policies (the things you would do if elected) tell voters what your party is all about. You need to have strong, clear policies so that people know what your party believes in. If people believe in the same things and like your policies, they will probably vote for you!

Most parties have a policy on issues such as education, the environment, health, money and law and order. So, at election time, they produce a 'manifesto' that summarises their main promises in each policy area in a simple and accessible way and then they promote their top pledges in all their campaign materials.

You can have some fun policies, but the sensible ones give your party a serious and professional image.

What are your pledges?

Use the *Make Your Own Manifesto template* to write your own manifesto pledges. Your pledges can be short and sweet – for example:

- **Pledge 1:** "Introduce a national 'rent-a-bike' scheme – to support the environment."
- **Pledge 2:** "Charge smokers for using the NHS – taxpayers shouldn't have to pick up the bill for some people's poor lifestyle choices."
- **Pledge 3:** "End stop and search powers for all police – it creates tension and mistrust in local communities."
- **Pledge 4:** "Increase funding for apprenticeships – to support young people into jobs."
- **Pledge 5:** "Introduce 'life skills' classes in all schools – so everyone is prepared for the responsibilities they will face when they leave school."

Think carefully about why you want these policies – and think about the arguments against them. How much would they cost, and how would that be paid for? You'll have to defend them so it's important to think about how you will explain your policy case and how you will rebut your opponents arguments against them!

Make (colourful!) copies of your manifesto to hand out to voters around the school.

CUE CARD: POLICY

OPINION POLLS

What do your voters really think?

To get people to vote for you, you need policies that they care about. The best way to find out what voters care about is to ask them! So carry out an opinion poll….. use the model *Opinion Poll template* to help get started.

TOP TIPS

Decide how many students you will survey. Think about issues like gender and age balance. If the whole school is voting, the more people you survey the more reliable the results will be.

Think carefully about the questions you want to ask – and spend time getting the wording right. If the question is 'leading' it will give you a biased result!

When posing a question will it be:

* *open-ended*, where respondents provide a response in their own words?
* or a *closed question*, where they are asked to choose from a list of response choices that you have provided?

For example, if you ask,

* Version 1: 'What one issue matters most to you in deciding how you will vote?'

You will get a very different response than if you ask:

* Version 2: 'Which of the following issues matter most to you in deciding how you will vote: the economy; the NHS; the environment; education; or transport?'

Version 1 may lead to some interesting information that you weren't expecting!

Version 2 is easier for counting voters' priorities in terms of broad policy areas (which you can then use to inform your manifesto pledges), but it doesn't allow for a very personal response.

CUE CARD: ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

GET YOUR ELECTION STARTED!

Without an election administration team there will be no election. The election team needs to get organised as soon as polling day is announced – there's a lot to do! The team is responsible for:

- confirming the nomination of candidates;
- registering voters;
- getting polling cards and ballot papers ready;
- preparing polling stations and ballot boxes;
- counting the votes; and
- reporting the result to Mock Election HQ.

Key jobs are:

JOB	ROLE/RESPONSIBILITIES
Returning Officer	This is the election co-ordinator. They oversee the whole election process, supervise the count and announce the result.
Polling Clerks	They supervise voter registration and organise and run polling day.
Counting Clerks	They count up the ballot papers after the polling stations have closed and confirm the result.
Stewards	If it is a big election the team may need stewards at each polling station to control the crowds on election day!

It is important that everyone knows exactly what their job is, so the Returning Officer who manages the team should draw up a table like this one and write it all down.
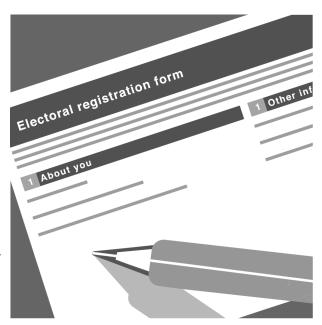
NAME	JOB TITLE	TASKS	DEADLINE

Everyone in the team should have a copy of the list so they know their responsibilities and what others on the team have to do.

CUE CARD: ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

REGISTERING THE VOTERS

Every student in the school has the right to vote. But if they want to do so they must be on the electoral register.

If time is short you could omit this stage and simply use the school or class register as the electoral roll.

If you do want to incorporate electoral registration in your mock election then every pupil needs to be given a *Voter Registration Form* to sign up.

The Electoral Registration Officer will appoint some members of the team – usually *Polling Clerks* – to organise the voter registration drive to get as many people registered as possible by the deadline.

This could be done in form time or the *Polling Clerks* could set up a Voter Registration desk in a prominent place in the school – perhaps the canteen so people can sign up while they queue for lunch!

Remember, it's not compulsory!

Voting is *not* compulsory but it often helps to remind people that…..

…every vote counts *and*

…no vote means no voice!

Across the world people in many countries are still denied the right to vote. In this country, people have fought and died for our right to vote (like the suffragettes in the last century who fought for the right of women to vote). Now all we have to do is register and we can vote! (There are exceptions: our nationality or being in prison can restrict our right to vote in the UK.)

CUE CARD: ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

PREPARING FOR POLLING DAY

Running like clockwork? Here's a checklist of all the things that need to be done – on top of electoral registration – to prepare for polling day.

✓ **Candidate nomination forms** – ensure these are collected and kept in a safe place – each candidate needs 4 other people to nominate them.

✓ **Notice of Poll posters** – once the candidate names are confirmed these need to be completed and displayed in prominent places around the school to inform students of the upcoming election.

✓ **Poll Cards** – every voter is given one. In addition to their name it has their electoral registration number on it, and useful information about how to vote. The team needs to prepare these and distribute them to voters before polling day.

✓ **Polling Stations** – the equipment and papers for election day need to be prepared in advance.

   ✓ **A polling booth(s)** – students must be able to vote privately in the Polling Station. A cardboard box on a table – with one side and the top removed – does the job!

   ✓ **A ballot box** – the local council may be able to lend you an official box. If not, cover/paint another cardboard box black, put a slit in the top and paint the words "Ballot Box" in white on the sides. Then apply the *security seal* so it cannot be opened until after the Polling Station closes at the end of the election.

   ✓ **Ballot papers** – these show the name of all the candidates/parties and are what people use to vote. When voters arrive at the polling station with their *Poll Card* the *Polling Clerk* will cross them off the electoral register and give them a ballot paper. The election team need to get enough ballot papers ready in advance of polling day to ensure each voter can have a paper – with some spares in case people make a mistake!

   ✓ **Polling Station Posters** – these need to be printed in advance. They will be put on display outside the Polling Station on election day so voters can see where they have to go to vote.

CUE CARD: ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

THE COUNT

Before you can announce the results, votes must be counted. Here are some tips on how to do it:

- The *Counting Clerks* should count up the total number of ballot papers in the ballot box and write it down.

- Then sort the ballot papers into piles for each candidate, with one pile for spoilt ballot papers (where voters have not made a clear choice, or where they have voted for more than one candidate).

- Agree the number of spoilt ballot papers with the *Election Returning Officer* and write it down.

- Then count the votes for each candidate and write them down.

- The total for all the candidates together plus the spoilt ballot papers should be the same as the total number of votes taken out of the ballot box at the start of the process.

- First Past The Post: the winner is simply the candidate with the most votes!

Announcing the result

The *Election Returning Officer* announces the result at a special ceremony. An official speech has to be used:

"I, the Returning Officer for <school name>, announce that the total number of votes cast for each candidate are as follows: <total votes for each candidate in alphabetical order>. I declare that <winning candidate's name> has been elected as the Member for <school name>."

Registering the result as part of the national Mock Election

The *Returning Officer* should then register the result with the national Mock Elections HQ at the Hansard Society. The school co-ordinator who applied for this toolkit will have received a form to complete by email. It will take no more than two minutes of your time. The **deadline to submit results is 6pm, Thursday 4 July.**

CUE CARD: PRESSURE GROUPS

GET HEARD!

Even if you do not join a political party, you can still have an effect on what political parties do. A group of people who care about the same issue can come together to form a pressure group. These try and get political parties to support their ideas. They do this by running a campaign about one issue, or a few related issues.

Examples of pressure groups include:

- Fawcett Society – campaigns for women's rights in areas like equal pay, more women in company boardrooms and in Parliament.

- Friends of the Earth – campaigns on environmental issues such as climate change.

- Liberty – campaigns to protect civil liberties and human rights.

- Taxpayers Alliance – campaigns for a low tax economy and greater transparency about how taxes are spent.

- Unlock Democracy - campaigns for democratic reform including a new electoral system and an elected House of Lords.

Have a look at what they say and do. Think about the issues that interest you and you care most about.

Set up your own pressure group to campaign for the policy pledges you'd like to see the candidates and parties adopt.

Use some of the campaign methods the parties will be using – posters, leaflets and rosettes – to communicate your message.

Instead of producing a policy manifesto, draw up five demands and ask each of the candidates to respond!

CUE CARD: JARGON BUSTER

BALLOT PAPER	This is the piece of paper you use to cast your vote. It shows a list of candidates and their party. Voters have to mark a cross (X) next to their choice.
CANDIDATE	A person who has been nominated to stand for election for a political party or as an independent.
CANVASSER	People who want a candidate to win can help them by becoming a canvasser for their election campaign. A canvasser asks voters who they will support and tries to persuade as many people as possible to vote for their candidate.
CONSTITUENCY	The UK is divided into 650 areas called constituencies. The voters in each constituency get to elect one MP to represent the people in their area in Parliament.
ELECTION CAMPAIGN	Around election time, candidates and their supporters organise events and activities to convince people that they are the best person to vote for.
ELECTION RETURNING OFFICER	The person who supervises the election in each constituency.
ELECTORAL REGISTER	A list of all the people who are eligible to vote at elections. It is not compulsory to vote but if you want to do so you have to be on the register.
ELECTORATE	The group of voters able to take part in an election.
HUSTINGS	An event where voters can hear the views of the different candidates standing in an election.
MANIFESTO	Written by the political parties at election time, it sets out what they will do – their policy pledges – if elected.
MP	At a general election voters in each constituency vote to decide who will represent them in Parliament. The person they choose is known as an MP which stands for Member
NOMINATE	To suggest or propose a candidate.
OPINION POLL	A survey undertaken by parties to help find out what voters think about particular issues.

CUE CARD: JARGON BUSTER (page 2)

PARLIAMENT	Where politicians meet to amend and approve laws and make decisions about how the Government is allowed to run the country.
POLICIES	A plan of action for a political party – detailed ideas setting out how they propose to run the country.
POLITICAL PARTY	A group of people who share similar ideas about the way the country should be governed and who work together to elect MPs to Parliament.
POLL CARD	This is sent to everybody who is registered to vote. It has important information about the election on it – when, where and what time to vote.
POLLING STATION	The place where voters go to cast their vote on election day.
PRESS OFFICER	They promote the candidates and political parties to the media. They work to get good things about their candidate into the newspapers or on radio and television so voters can learn about what they are doing.
PRESSURE GROUP	A group of people who care about the same policy issue – e.g. the environment – and work together to try and get political parties to support their ideas.
VOTING	Voting is what happens when there is an election. It is how voters make a decision about who they want to represent them in Parliament.