LSE STUDENTS' UNION

Campaigns Guide

Campaigns Guide

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1.What is a campaign?

A campaign is a collective effort to achieve change through mobilising people and power. This change can be big or small. For example, someone could campaign in their family to introduce meat-free days, however, a campaign can also include nationwide goals such as the Decolonising the Curriculum campaign that spans all of the UK, affecting secondary and higher education.

1.2 Am I a campaigner? Why should I start a campaign?

Campaigning is about shaping the world around you and creating change regarding an issue that is important to you, no matter how small or big. You might have already engaged in campaigning without realising it - for example, by advocating for yourself and others, whether that is in a small setting such as a friend's or family circle or within your school, social clubs, or local community. Anyone can be a campaigner no matter their reach, background, or knowledge on the subject matter they want to campaign about – all you need is passion and dedication to make a change.

Campaigning can not only be a great way to create the change you want to see in the world, but also help you learn some valuable skills such as project management, event planning, marketing and communications skills, team-building skills and stakeholder management skills.

2. What does it mean to be a SU campaign?

2.1 What is a SU campaign?

SU campaigns should aim to achieve tangible change in policy, practice and behaviour within communities, which means they are not just about raising awareness on an issue. This can be through running events, stalls, campaigning tactics, community organising and engaging with (student) media. Have a look at the table below to find more information on what SU campaigns are/are not.

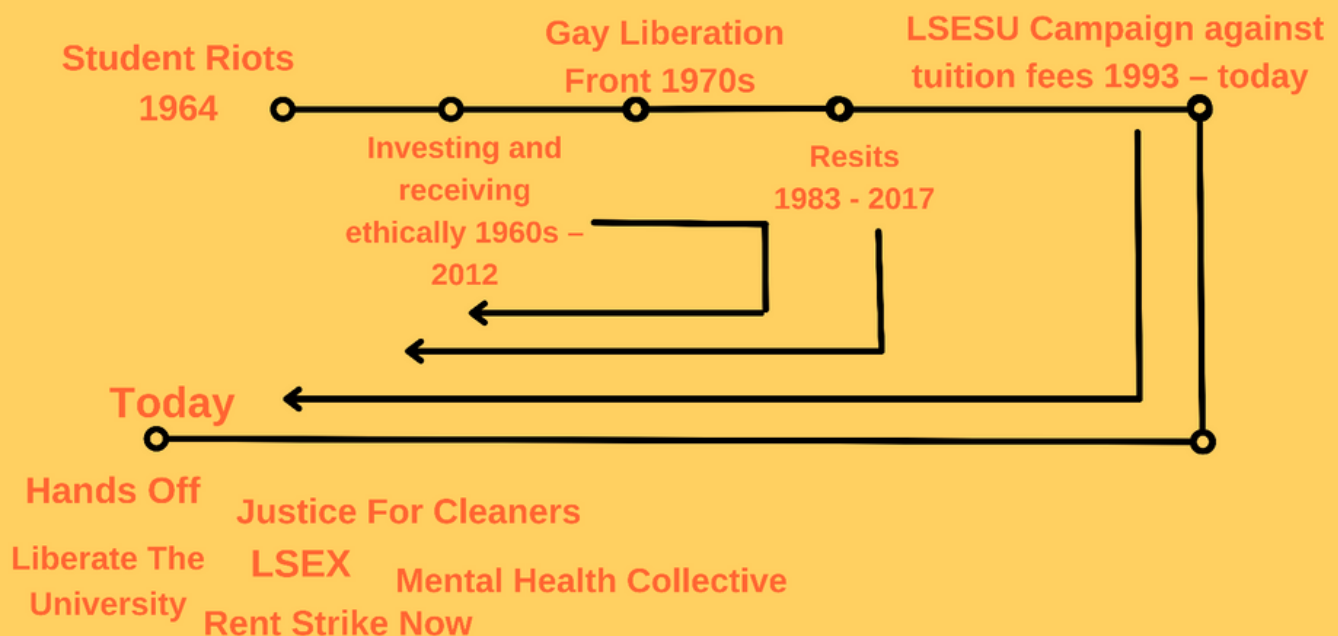| A campaign is:	A campaign is not:
Student-led	A one-off event
Run by more than one student	Fundraising
On an issue that affects members as students	A week of talks organized by a society
Runs over a minimum of 3 months	Sole aim of 'awareness-raising'
It combines events with the community-organising	An academic project
Aims to make a structural change at LSE	Service delivery
Doesn't duplicate an existing campaign	

If you are unsure if your group should be a society or a campaign, please have a look at the document here, which lists the key differences.

2.2 Why should I start or join a SU campaign?

As a student, LSE is your community, and you are in the best position to know about issues affecting students or notice where change needs to happen within the university and its community. Through campaigns, you can make your voice be heard, affect positive change for you and your fellow student community as well as potentially have the power to influence national and international politics.

Becoming a Students' Union campaign means your campaign will have a wider reach to other students as you will have access to resources such as 1-1 support from a coordinator, funding from the SU, marketing and communication support, as well as a network of other student campaigners that you can connect with. The SU exists to represent students' interests and we want to support you in achieving the biggest impact possible for your campaign.

As an SU campaigner you would also join a network of activists and fellow campaigners at LSE and become part of a long-standing tradition of successful campaigns that have been organised in the past at LSE.

Student Riots 1964

Gay Liberation Front 1970s

LSESU Campaign against tuition fees 1993 – today

Investing and receiving ethically 1960s – 2012

Resits 1983 - 2017

Today

Hands Off

Justice For Cleaners

Liberate The University

LSEX

Mental Health Collective

Rent Strike Now

2.3 How do I become a Students' Union campaign?

This process is simple, all you need to do is contact SU campaigns and a coordinator will assist you with this. They will set up a meeting with you to come up with a Campaigns Plan and ensure your campaign meets the criteria for becoming an SU campaign. If your campaign plan is deemed to be contentious, your campaign plan will be sent to the Students' Union executive for a democratic decision to approve or reject your campaign. If your campaign plan is non-contentious, you will receive immediate approval and be able to get started!

2.3.1 What is a contentious campaign?

A contentious campaign meets one of the following criteria:

It is perceived to curtail the rights of those protected under the 2010 Equality Act.

It will significantly change LSE's and/or LSE SU's strategic priorities outside of regular SU democratic processes.

You should also have a look at section '4. I am interested in campaigning but don't know where to start - how do I start or join a campaign?' where the process of joining or starting a campaign is explained in detail.

2.4 What support is available to SU campaigns?

1-1 guidance and support throughout your campaign

Campaign materials

Funding of up to £250

Digital and physical communications

Research workshops and training

Activist socials and networking

Support with event planning

I am interested in campaigning but don't know where to start - how do I start or join a campaign?

3. If there is already an existing campaign that you would like to join, visit the Current Campaigns page and click on the campaign you would like to join to find more information.

Starting your own campaign can seem intimidating, you might already have a concrete idea of how you want to run your campaign, or you might not be sure which exact issue your campaign should address. No matter at what planning stage you are at, we have compiled this guide to help you with your first steps.

The exercises in this guide are entirely optional and here to help you think through some of the first steps in your own time. However, please feel free to contact a Campaigns and Policy Coordinator at any point! You do not have to finalise the points in this guide before contacting someone for

3.1 Identify what your campaign is about

If you are unsure how to narrow down the issue you want to address or how to approach it, we are here to help you. Simply contact SU campaigns and a coordinator will support you with this.

You might also want to use the tool on the next page to narrow down and explore the issue you want to campaign about. This is completely optional and designed to simply help you

Creating an issue tree:

For example, this is how an issue tree would look like for one of the current SU campaigns, Justice 4 Cleaners: Justice for LSE Cleaners is a collective of students and cleaners who work with the trade union UVW to end the exploitation of LSE's cleaning staff.

The issue they decided to successfully campaign around was bringing LSE cleaners in house, meaning they would be employed directly by LSE.

Consequences

Their labour rights were not directly controlled by LSE,

which meant that they were exploited more easily, especially regarding fair pay.

Issue

Cleaners were not employed directly by LSE

but outsourced from external companies.

Root Causes

Low paying occupations are disproportionately filled by migrants and marginalised groups of people as they face added obstacles within the labour market due to language barriers, harsh immigration policies, lack of support and information on their rights. This vulnerable position can easily become exploited by external companies to make more profit and avoid offering better employee rights.

Create your own issue tree:

Concequences

Issue

Root Causes
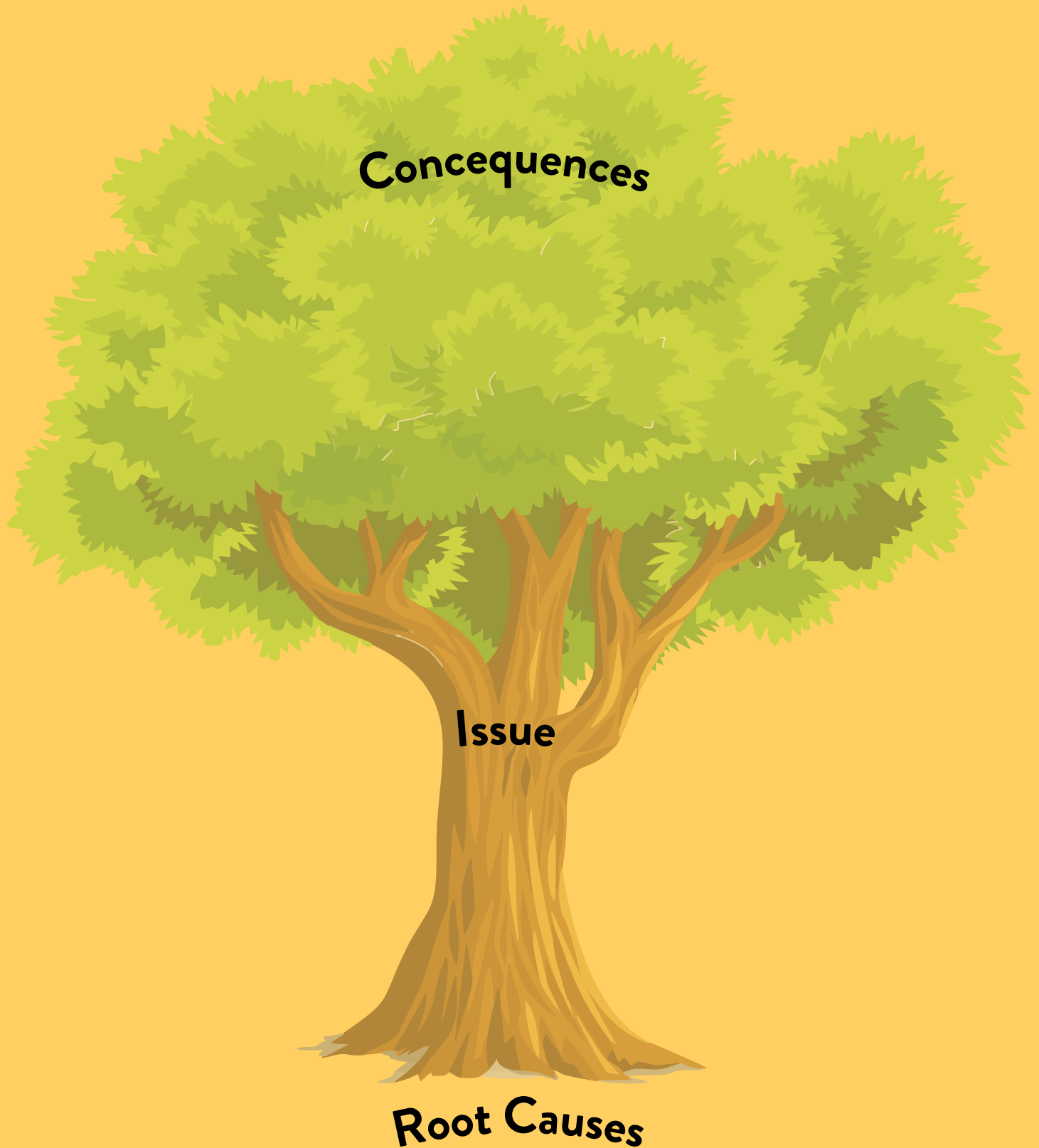
3.2 Identify who can help you achieve this change.

In order to get your campaign started it is important that you think about who the important stakeholders are regarding the issue you want to address. This means any people who are affected by the change you want to make, people who hold the power to make this change or potential allies or opponents to your cause.

Here is a tool to figure out who your stakeholders are and what their roles would be in your campaign:

Power-mapping your stakeholders

Some questions to help you find out who your stakeholders are:

  Who does this campaign impact? Who is your natural ally?

  Who are key decision-makers?Who influences the key decision-makers?

  What drives these decision-makers?

Sort your stakeholders into this table based on how much influence they have and how supportive they would be to your campaign.

Stakeholder	High Influence	Low Influence	Supportive	Unsupportive	What is their key interest?

3.3 Identify how to achieve this change.

In order to figure out how you best achieve this change you need to write a campaign strategy. This includes:

  identifying your aims and objectives;

  who your team members are;
  which tactics you want to use;
  what resources you will need;

  and a timeline for your campaign.

3.3.1 Writing aims and objectives

In order to set realistic and tangible objectives, use the SMART acronym: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and anchored within a Time Frame.

Example of a current campaign's aim:

Hands Off LSE is a current SU campaign, working with the School to improve the process of reporting sexual misconduct and improving support for survivors.

Examples of a SMART objective:

Hiring a Sexual Violence Advisor for students for the new academic year (specifically, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and within a Time Frame)

What is your campaign's aim?

What are your objectives?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

3.4 Who is the core group that is involved with the campaign?

Name	Email

3.4.1 What tactics will you use to achieve your objectives and why?

When deciding on your tactics think about how this impacts key stakeholders and what resources are needed for each tactic. E.g. Petitions, releasing research and repor
Marches, Leaflets, photo ops, Teach-ins, Boycotts, Sit-ins, Rent withholding, external
forum media, Strikes, Lobbying

E.g.
o Petition
o Releasing research and reports
o Marches
o Leaflets

o Photo opp
o Teach-in

o Boycott
o Skit
o Sit in

o Rent withholding
o Forum
o External media

o Strikes
o Lobbying

Tactic	Supplies	Funding	Marketing & Communication	Labour
Student March and Teach-Out	E.g. Banner material, paint, stationary	E.g. for events, speaker costs, refreshments, handouts	E.g. Social media promotion, posters, pamphlets	E.g. LSESU staff labour Your team labour LSE teaching staff labour

Rank your tactics according to effort and escalation

	Less effort	More effort
High level escalation		
Low level escalation		

3.5 Identify a timeline for your campaign.

A timeline is essential for every campaign as it helps you keep track of your different goals and by when you want to achieve them. A timeline is also helpful as it allows you to plan for important deadlines such as funding application deadlines, or key events related to your campaign such as national student marches or the term timetable.

Create a timeline for your campaign:

week 1	week 2	week 3	week 4	week 5	week 6

week 7	week 8	week 9	week 10	week 11	week 12

3.6 Identify how you will know if you achieved this change?

An important part of a campaign is reviewing and reflecting if you have achieved your goals. In some cases, this might be straightforward such as Hands Off's aim to employ an Independent Sexual Harassment Officer, which they achieved this year. Other goals can be a bit harder to measure such as improving the support of survivors at LSE. One way to measure such goals is to create a survey or write a report on your campaign and the effects it has had on other students.

How will you know that you've hit your objectives and aims? What will you do afterwards?

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4. Next steps

Hopefully this guide will have helped you in finding out what your campaign will be about. If you are still unsure, do not worry and contact SU campaigns to schedule an appointment and receive help with this. If you feel like you have a better idea of your campaign, you can set up basic campaign training with a coordinator and create a campaign plan.

Once your campaign plan has been approved, you are good to go! You can now access all SU resources for campaigns and start planning your first action points to achieve your objectives. An important part of this is booking additional training sessions with a campaigns coordinator on topics such as activist burnout and writing press releases to ensure you have all the knowledge you need to succeed in your campaign.

You can book these via the same process as your initial appointments by emailing SU campaigns.

For more information on how to apply for funding and event planning, speak to a campaigns coordinator or visit the section for existing campaigns in the Campaigns Hub.

Contact

su.campaigns@lse.ac.uk

https://www.lsesu.com/voice/campaigns/