

# INVESTIGATION REPORT

Investigator Name	Roger Weston	Report Date	16/02/2021
Investigation Start Date	15/02/2021	Investigation End Date	16/02/2021
Candidate subject to investigation	Zahra Chouthy, Usama Anwar, Ezmeer Ali		

## Evidence Review

List any potential evidence gathered during evidence review. Note the type of evidence and describe the surrounding circumstances of the occurrence.

Time	Type of Evidence	Description
15/02/2021 07:26	Email	Original Complaint
15/02/2021 07:26	Screenshots	Appendix 1- Screenshots received as part of Original Complaint
16/02/2021 01:33	Email	Second Complaint received
16/02/2021 11:03	Email	Advice received from the Returning Officer

## Summary & Recommendations

Please summarize your thoughts on this investigation and note your suggestions for follow-up or resolution of this case.

A complaint was received regarding campaigning by the candidates Zahra Chouthy, Usama Anwar, Ezmeer Ali. The complainant claimed that the candidates have breached both University COVID-19 regulations and the Union's elections regulations.

A second complaint of the same nature has also been received.

The University is currently enforcing the wearing of face-coverings in all indoor spaces on campus to reduce the spread of COVID-19. To assist with this the Students' Union has banned all candidates from campaigning in indoor spaces during the elections period.

The screenshots, and associated videos show footage taken by the candidates of themselves within University buildings on Waterside Campus and not wearing masks.

There are two issues here which can be viewed separately:

- Was there a breach of University guidance regarding the use of face masks in university buildings?
- Did the videos also constitute a breach of elections regulations outlined in the candidate briefing regarding the ban on campaigning in indoor spaces?

The Returning Officer has been consulted on this issue as it was an issue not encountered within the University of Northampton Students' Union elections in the past.

## Decision

- Was there a breach of university guidance with regards to use of face masks in University buildings?

The DRO and Ro have found that there was a clear breach. The video is clearly filmed inside University of Northampton buildings, contains the candidates and none of whom are wearing masks in the space.

- Has there been a breach of SU elections regulations regarding campaigning indoors?

The original rule as presented at the Candidate Briefing was focussed on the concept of face-to-face campaigning and did not consider the filming of election videos in the space. As a result, no action will be taken regarding a breach of campaigning rules. There is however a breach of the SU's requirement that candidates adhere to any university regulations, but this is covered in point 1.

As a result, the Returning Officer has agreed to the following sanctions:

- A final written warning is issued to the candidates involved with regards to their breach of Covid-19 rules both set by the SU and University.
- The videos in question are removed from all platforms within 12 hours of this decision being published.

**APPENDIX 1-** See images on following pages

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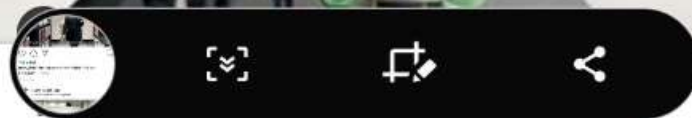
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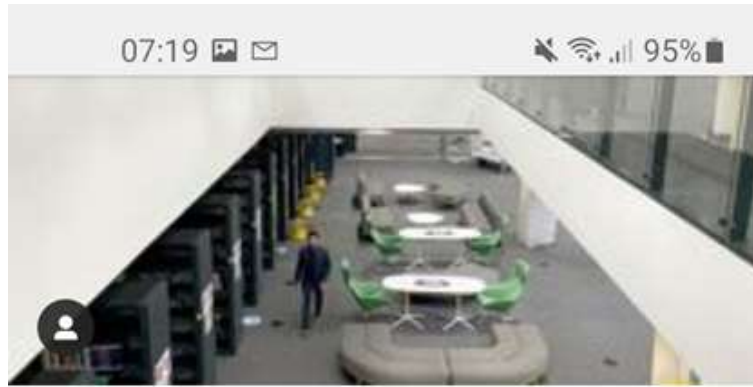


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