

University Rector Elections Policy and Procedures Manual

ALMA MATER SOCIETY OF QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY

Responsibility	Secretary of Internal Affairs
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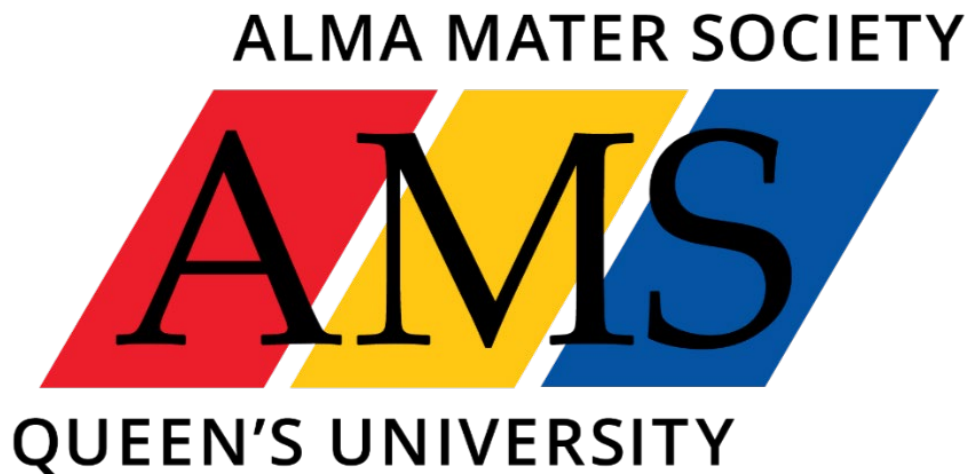


Table of Contents

- Land Acknowledgement 3
- Purpose 4
- Terminology and Definitions 4
- Policy Statement 4
- Scope 4-5
- Roles and Responsibilities 5
- Policy 6
 - Section 1: General 6
 - Section 2: Nominations 6-9
 - Section 3: Campaigning 9-13
 - Section 4: Elections Expenses 13
 - Section 5: Ballots 14
 - Section 6: Tabulations, Results, and Announcements 14-16
 - Section 7: Penalties and Disqualifications 16
 - Section 8: Removal of the Rector 17
- Monitoring 18

Land Acknowledgement

Katarokwi, or Kingston as we understand it today, is abundant in history and modern-day traditions of many First Nations and Metis. In particular, the Alma Mater Society would like to acknowledge the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee territory on which Queen's University resides. These lands surrounding the Great Lakes are immersed in thousands of generations of Indigenous history, including language, art, celebrations, and resilience. We recognize that it was within the Crawford Purchase (1738) that these lands were made available for settlement. The agreements made were upheld by the First Peoples, but not by the British Crown or later Canadian government. While we work on these lands as uninvited guests, we actively benefit from the oppression of Indigenous peoples. Because of our settler positionality, we have an obligation to listen to Indigenous voices. We must act in ways that will condemn past and ongoing violence against Indigenous peoples and support positive change.

As a branch of the society that strives to connect student leaders and facilitate positive change and student advocacy on Turtle Island, we strive to maintain the core values and teachings from Indigenous peoples. We are incredibly grateful for the ability to do so. As the Secretariat Office facilitates Assembly, Elections and Judicial Affairs, it is our duty to ensure that the voices of Indigenous and marginalized peoples are amplified, as well as provide resources on how we can facilitate and help in advocacy that is important. We are set to encourage all members of the Office and student leaders such as Assembly members to reflect on the privileges that they have been on afforded on this land, and use them to ensure campus safety, accessibility and impact for all students. As settlers on the stolen lands of the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples, we must continue to educate ourselves and strive to decolonize every layer of our governance system and curricula to Indigenize our learning.

The endurance of Indigenous peoples and their traditions should be applauded and inspire strength and kindness in us all. The Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant should be used as our compass as we navigate our journey of reconciliation with Indigenous people of Canada. The Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples had a mutual understanding to share the land and resources peacefully with one another. By living on this land, we must also abide by the values that the Dish with One Spoon holds.

For more information, please reference the Queen's University Office of Indigenous Initiatives:

<https://www.queensu.ca/indigenous/land-acknowledgement>

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure standard, coherent policy and procedures for the election of the University Rector. This election is a joint venture between the Society of Graduate and Professional Students (SGPS) and the AMS. This policy works concurrently with the AMS Policy on Elections and Referenda. This policy is also the central governing document over the four part elections process, through nominations, validation, campaigning and voting. This policy is also designed to incorporate all online, hybrid and in-person elections. Ultimate authority is granted to the Rector Elections Team.

Terminology and Definitions

University Rector: An elected, non-voting member of both the AMS Assembly and SGPS Council but shall not be officially affiliated with any faculty or society on campus other than the student body itself as represented by the two student societies, the Alma Mater Society and the Society of Graduate and Professional Students. The University Rector is also one of the students' representatives on the Board of Trustees'.

Rector Elections Team: The AMS Elections Team and the SGPS Elections team, collectively, shall be defined as the Rector Elections Team. The two main authorities of the Rector Elections Team shall be the AMS CEO and the SGPS CRO, with duties being distributed to respective Elections Teams based on their individual Policy on Elections and Referenda.

Consultations: Defined as a formal meeting between a candidate with internal or external groups to learn more about the pertinent group.

Policy Statement

This policy is an elaboration of the AMS Constitution, Section 12.02, which outlines constitutional requirements of the Rector Election. It details specifics related to nomination, campaign, polling, and campaign procedures. Furthermore, it provides clarification on Rector Election expenses as well as policy surrounding removal of the Rector.

This policy is to run in conjunction with procedures on Rector Elections, which outlines candidate processes.

Scope

This policy will only cover University Rector elections and does not apply to other Society elections. This policy has influence over the following individuals:

Rector Election Team: Tasked with executing the elections in accordance with this policy.

AMS Secretary of Internal Affairs of Internal Affairs and SGPS Speaker: Tasked with ensuring that the Rector Elections team abides by this policy manual, and any administrative oversight necessary to carry out this policy.

Candidates: Candidates for University Rector are responsible for familiarizing themselves with this policy manual and ensure that they comply with outlined responsibilities throughout the elections process.

Roles and Responsibilities

AMS Secretary of Internal Affairs: Must liaise with SGPS Speaker to establish dates for the election, timelines, and spending limits. They shall also oversee the Rector Elections Team and aid in policy interpretation and provide administrative resources.

Rector Elections Team: Must execute the Rector election in accordance with this policy. Has the responsibility to contact candidates, organize logistical events, and enforce this policy during the election season.

Candidates: Candidates are responsible for understanding their rights and obligations as outlined by this policy manual and the AMS Constitution (12.02).

Policy

Section 1: General

- I. The term for the Rector shall be three years.
- II. The Rector is permitted to resign at any time, with notification to the student body.
- III. Candidates for University Rector must be a member of either the SGPS or the AMS, as defined by the Policies of the respective societies.
- IV. Upon announcement of the incumbent Rector's intention to resign, an election shall be scheduled that is normally concurrent with the AMS winter term referendum and executive election.
- V. The Rector shall be elected through a campus wide election, which shall be jointly administered by the AMS and SGPS on behalf of their respective societies.
- VI. The election shall be conducted before the end of the calendar year in which the nominations were received.
- VII. The AMS CEO and the SGPS CRO shall ensure that both elections and the nomination and campaign period adhere to this joint policy on rector election. Where a matter arises that is not explicitly considered by this policy, the SGPS CRO and the AMS CEO shall render a joint decision.

Section 2: Nominations

- I. The nomination period is purely designed for organizational purposes and for collecting nomination signatures. No campaigning shall occur during the nomination period.
- II. Consultations using the Rector, AMS Elections or SGPS branding may not take place from the beginning of the nomination period to the beginning of the campaign period.
- III. Nomination Packages will be created by the Rector Election Team and will clearly indicate the logos and names of both Societies. Nomination Packages will be made available at both the AMS and SGPS Front Desks on the opening day of the nomination period, as defined by the established AMS Elections Timeline. These packages shall include the following information:
 - a. "University Rector Election" in the heading
 - b. A Nomination Form signature sheet
 - c. The number of signatures required
 - d. A campaign expense form
- IV. The Nomination Package shall also include the candidate's name, student number, program, department, and contact information.
- V. Prior to receiving the Nomination Package, each candidate shall be required to sign a document indicating their responsibility for the contents of the material, and their agreement to abide by it. Each campaign organization shall designate a "Campaign Manager" to liaise with the Rector Elections Team. The Campaign Manager shall be responsible for receiving and disseminating relevant information from the Rector Elections Team to their campaign organization.
- VI. Nomination forms shall include the nominators name, student number, signature, and acknowledgement that the candidate has adequately informed

- them of their intent in running. All fields must be completed legibly and correctly according to the student list provided by the University Registrar.
- VII. In the event of an online election, signature gathering must take place through a secure form. Ownership of the form must be transferred to the Rector Election Team prior to collecting signatures.
 - VIII. Candidates and team representatives are allowed to share their nomination form online in places such as non-AMS or non-SGPS social media platforms.
 - IX. Nomination forms must be signed by 1% of AMS and/or SGPS members. Candidates may nominate themselves.
 - a. Candidates may not seek nominations from any member of the SGPS or AMS Elections Team, or AMS Executive and SGPS Executive.
 - X. Completed Nomination Packages may be submitted to the AMS Chief Electoral Officer or AMS Secretary.
 - XI. Nomination signatures may not be collected in campus pubs, cafeterias, classrooms, AMS or SGPS offices, and AMS or SGPS services. This also includes online spaces, such as AMS or SGPS-specific Facebook groups, Microsoft Teams, or other related platforms.
 - XII. All collection of signatures in Residence must conform to Residence policies. No room-to-room collection of signatures in Residence shall be permitted.
 - XIII. No form of off-campus collection of signatures shall be permitted.
 - XIV. Each candidate shall, at the time that Nomination Forms are submitted, place \$100.00 on deposit with the Rector Election Team, which shall only be deposited upon instances of fines or penalties as detailed in AMS Policy on Elections, which shall apply to Rector Elections.
 - XV. Candidates shall take an unpaid leave of absence during the campaign period from all extracurricular activities, as well as those holding salaried positions with

the AMS or SGPS that, in the judgment of the Rector Election Team convey unfair advantage, or establish or imply a conflict of interest. Notices of Leave shall be provided to the Rector Election Team.

- XVI. A nominee may withdraw their candidacy at any time before the end of the nomination period, without penalty. Should a candidate or team withdraw during the campaign period, they may lose their deposit, subject to the Rector Election Team's discretion. A notice of withdrawal shall be given in written form to the Rector Election Team.
- XVII. Candidates are to attend AMS Assembly after their nomination package is approved.
 - I. Validation is to follow the Society procedure on nomination and validation.

Section 3: Campaigning

1. General Rules

- I. Campaigning shall not commence until the beginning of the campaign period.
- II. All campaign materials and promotions are subject to the approval of the Rector Election Team. A sample of all campaign materials shall be submitted to the Rector Election Team to be kept on file for the duration of the campaign. All posters must be stamped to indicate approval.
- III. No form of off-campus campaigning shall be permitted. Candidates shall not place campaign materials on trees or utility poles either on or off campus. This includes banners strung from utility poles.
- IV. Any classroom appearance, both on and offline, must be cleared through the instructor in advance of the scheduled time. This contact may be made during the nomination period. Arrangements for classroom talks shall be the responsibility of the candidate's election team. All content shall be consistent

with all approved material, in accordance with both AMS and SGPS Policy on Elections and Referenda.

- V. All email content shall be consistent with previously approved campaign material and shall be above reproach.
- VI. Candidates may request an organization to forward an email to their members using a mass email list. Use of AMS and SGPS mass email lists is prohibited.
- VII. Candidates are not permitted to send mass emails through their own accounts to students that have not consented to receive information from the campaign organization.
- VIII. Candidates are responsible for the conduct of their campaign organization and its members. Any violation of elections policy by said members shall be regarded as a violation by the candidate. Individuals who are not members of a specific campaign organization and who are found to have violated elections policy may be referred to their respective society's non-academic discipline system.
- IX. All candidate websites and other online campaign materials, including content on social networking sites shall be approved by the Rector Election Team.
- X. Candidates looking to hold campaign events must seek approval from the Rector Elections Team of any event (online or otherwise) being held no later than 24 hours ahead of the scheduled time.
- XI. Candidates are responsible for providing the Rector Elections Team with an up to date list of all individuals associated with their campaign within eight (8) hours of notice from the Rector Elections Team.
- XII. No polls or surveys of public opinion regarding Rector Elections shall be published or broadcast on the day(s) of voting.

2. Campus Campaigning Rules

- I. There shall be a limit of 100 posters per team of candidates. Any poster larger than 11" x 17" shall be deemed a banner. There shall be no more than two banners per team of candidates.
- II. All posters must be printed on 100% recyclable paper and must be recycled after the end of the campaign period.
- III. Placement and distribution of Posters and campaign material must adhere to the Elections Policies of both Societies, as well as all university and building policies.
- IV. Candidates must book table space for use during the campaign period in the following campus buildings through the Rector Election Team: The Student Life Centre, Macintosh Corry Hall, and any other building specified by the Rector Election Team prior to the campaign period. The allocation of table and banner space will be done through a lottery process.
- V. Candidates shall be entitled to a maximum of 45 hours of table space for the duration of the campaign period.
 - a. Boothing hours shall be restricted to the hours between 9:00 A.M. and 6:00 P.M.
- VI. All campaigning in Residence must conform to Residence policies. No room-to-room campaigning in Residence shall be permitted.
- VII. No candidate may campaign inside campus pubs or cafeterias. Campaigning shall be permitted in line-ups but shall not occur past the point where patrons are requested to provide identification for entrance. Campaigning in line-ups shall also be subject to any applicable residence or university regulations.
- VIII. Campaign materials shall not be distributed in campus pubs, cafeterias, AMS offices and AMS services. In addition, no AMS or SGPS employees may display campaign materials while on duty.

IX. Each candidate will be required to remove all physical campaign material produced on their behalf for the purposes of the election by 8:00 p.m. on the day preceding the first day of voting. Campaigning through the use of websites and other online media may continue for the duration of the voting days. Candidates or teams will not be allowed to physically campaign during the voting days.

3. Endorsements and Conflicts of Interest

- I. AMS Executive, Directors, Commissioners, Head Managers, and Officers, SGPS Executive Members, SGPS Commissioners and Coordinators, and SGPS Officers of Council shall remain neutral at all times. They may not publicly support any individual candidacy whether on or off-duty nor shall they be permitted to take a leave of absence to do so. AMS and SGPS offices, email addresses and other office resources shall at no time be used for any purpose relating to an individual campaign. All other AMS and SGPS salaried staff shall be permitted to support an individual candidacy while off-duty but shall not be eligible to take a leave of absence to do so. Off-duty campaigning by AMS or SGPS salaried staff may not occur in the vicinity of any AMS or SGPS service.
- II. No candidate shall seek or receive endorsement from any University faculty or staff member.
- III. No candidate shall seek or receive endorsement from any elected member or representative from AMS Assembly or SGPS Council in their positional capacity.
- IV. A student holding a position within either the AMS or SGPS non-academic misconduct system shall be required to take a leave of absence in order to participate in a rector election in any capacity. Any student nominated to sit on the Rector Election Appeal board may not have participated in the rector election in any capacity.
- V. Any student holding a position on the AMS Judicial Committee shall be required to resign their position in order to participate in a Rector election in any capacity.

VI. The AMS Assembly and SGPS Council shall be neutral forums. No promotional materials shall be displayed or distributed at these meetings and all questions shall be directed to all candidates.

VII. Candidates may receive nominations from clubs and campus groups that do not fall into the categories stated above. Campus news outlets are permitted to endorse candidates.

4. Debate

I. During the Campaign Period, an All-Candidates Debate will be organized by the Rector Election Team for all students to attend.

II. The debate rules will be pre-determined by the Rector Election Team.

III. The default debate rules are as follows:

- a. The debate moderator will be the AMS Secretariat.
- b. Each candidate gets a 3-minute opening and closing.
- c. Candidates will alternate who answers first, with a coin toss to determine the opening order.
- d. Questions will be pre-submitted to the Rector Elections Team from students.
- e. Candidates will get up to 2 minutes to answer.
- f. Each candidate will get 1 rebuttal of 30 seconds to make a follow up statement. The subsequent answer from the candidate will be 1 minute.
- g. Personal attacks and harassment will result in dismissal from the debate at the discretion of the moderator.

IV. Candidates must release their platform at least 24 hours prior to the debate, but it is recommended to release it sooner.

V. Paid advertisements through social media and news outlets are permitted.

Section 4: Elections Expenses

- I. Rector Elections Expenses shall follow the AMS Policy on Elections Expenses, with the exception that all finances are to be approved by the Rector Elections Team and not the AMS CEO.
- II. The spending limit in the Rector Election shall be decided upon by the Rector Election Team and approved by both AMS Assembly and SGPS Council.

Section 5: Ballots

- I. Voting for the Rector Election shall be conducted by each individual society in the manner outlined in their individual Elections Policy.
- II. Voting shall take place concurrently, and both Societies will be afforded the same opportunity, in terms of time, to cast their ballot.
- III. Candidates shall appear on the ballot in an order determined by lottery.
- IV. Ballots presented shall contain identical phrasing and identifying of candidates, such that a ballot cast in either election is to be considered identical to one cast in the other election.
- V. Both societies shall review the ballot of the other society to ensure the ballot is constructed in accordance with this policy.

Section 6: Tabulations, Results, and Announcements

- I. The votes cast in each election shall be combined into one collection of votes cast, so as to avoid a divisiveness of results between societies.
- II. Where there are exactly two candidates, the candidate with the greater number of the total votes, from the combined collection of votes, will be deemed the successful candidate.

III. Where there are greater than two (2) candidates, preferential balloting will be employed, using the following method:

- a. Initially votes shall be counted according to the highest preference expressed on a ballot. If a candidate receives sufficient ballots marked for them with first preferences to achieve a simple majority of fifty percent plus one (50% +1) of the ballots cast, they shall be declared the winner.
- b. If no candidate receives sufficient ballots marked for them with first preferences to achieve the fifty percent plus one (50% +1) threshold of ballots cast, then a second round of counting shall occur. The candidate with the fewest number of ballots marked with first preferences for them will be removed from the second round of counting and the ballots marked with first preferences for this candidate shall be redistributed according to the second highest preference expressed on that ballot.
- c. If two or more candidates tie for the least number of first preferences in the first round of counting, then they shall both be eliminated and their ballots redistributed according to their second preferences.
- d. This same procedure shall be repeated until one candidate receives sufficient votes to achieve a simple majority of fifty percent plus one (50% +1) of the ballots cast, at which point this candidate shall be declared the winner.
- e. If only two candidates remain and neither has reached the fifty percent plus one (50% +1) threshold of votes cast, the team with the highest number of votes shall be declared the winner.
- f. If there is no second highest preference expressed on the ballot, then the ballot shall be considered spoiled.
- g. If there is no first preference expressed then the ballot shall be considered spoiled.
- h. If, after a first preference is expressed, there follows a set of preferences that are expressed in a non-sequential manner, the preferences after the interruption of the continual sequence shall be discounted.
- i. If two or more candidates tie for the lowest number of high preferences being considered in a particular round, other than the first, then the candidate that had the fewest first preferences will be eliminated from contention and those ballots will be redistributed according to those ballots next highest expressed preferences.

- IV. If a candidate is disqualified, ballots shall be interpreted as if the disqualified candidate had been removed from contention in the first counting round.
- V. At no time will any member of the Rector Election Team reveal the split of votes based on the two Societies, and wherever possible knowledge of this information should be avoided altogether.
- VI. The Rector Election Team shall publicly announce the results of the Rector election immediately after the candidates have been notified. Following this, they shall directly notify the AMS and SGPS Executives, and the Secretary of the Board of Trustees, of the results of the Rector Election. Should the candidate not be available the results will be made public no less than two (2) hours after they have been confirmed by the Rector Election Team.
- VII. Any ballot, which is spoilt or rejected, including a blank ballot, shall be considered in the total number of ballots cast.
- VIII. Any computer software used by the Rector Election Team shall be available to any member of the society on demand for the purpose of inspecting it and perusing its constituting code.
 - a. Any campaign organization requesting clarification about the election results must do so by submitting a formal written request to the Rector Election Team within 48 hours of the release of the results.

Section 7: Penalties, Complaints and Disqualifications

- I. Rector Elections penalties and disqualifications will follow the Policy of the AMS on Elections Policy on Violations, Penalties and Disqualifications, with the exception that any decisions shall be made by the Rector Election Team.
- II. Prior to the campaign period, complaint forms will be made available to teams and on the AMS website to report infractions of this policy, following AMS Elections and Referenda Policy on Disputes.

- a. Complaint forms must be submitted to the Chief Electoral Officer no later than 24 hours after the infraction has taken place.
- III. In cases of appeal of a decision rendered by the Rector Election Team, a Rector Election Appeal Board shall be struck consisting of four members of the AMS Judicial Committee and two members of the SGPS Judicial Committee. The responsibility to chair shall alternate between the two societies each Rector election or referendum, with the chair to be independently selected from the respective society's non-academic misconduct system.

Section 8: Removal of the Rector

- I. The Rector may only be removed from office following a campus-wide referendum in which a minimum of 20% of the entire student body (based on enrolment figures from the Registrar's Office) vote. In order to remove the Rector, the following referendum question shall be posed: "Shall [name of Rector] continue to hold the office of Rector of Queen's University at Kingston? Yes, No."
- II. If greater than 50% plus 1 of ballots cast record a No vote, the Rector will cease to hold office, effective immediately. In the event that less than twenty percent of the electorate have cast ballots, the referendum question shall be subject to the following sliding scale based on total voter turnout:
 - a. 15-19.99% shall require greater than 55% plus 1 of the ballots to record a No vote to constitute removal.
 - b. 10-14.99% shall require greater than 60% plus 1 of the ballots to record a No vote to constitute removal.
 - c. 5-9.99% shall require greater than 65% plus 1 of the ballots to record a No vote to constitute removal.
 - d. 0-4.99% shall require greater than 70% plus 1 of the ballots to record a No vote to constitute removal.
- III. The referendum shall be held upon receipt by either the AMS CEO or the SGPS CRO, of a petition to do so which has been signed by at least four percent of the entire

student body, being all eligible AMS and SGPS members (based on enrolment figures from the Registrar's Office).

- IV. All AMS and SGPS members shall be eligible to vote on this question.
- V. This Referendum will be conducted in accordance with the same procedures for electing the Rector, adjusted for a referendum, as opposed to an election.

Monitoring

Compliance with this policy shall be the joint responsibility of the AMS Secretary of Internal Affairs and the SGPS Speaker, who jointly oversee the administrative functions of the Rector Elections Team. Compliance will be closely monitored and any actions seen to deviate from this policy shall be immediately corrected by either the AMS Secretary of Internal Affairs or the SGPS Speaker.

This policy is to remain identical in the By-Laws, Policies, Policy Manuals, and Constitutions of both the SGPS and the AMS. If at any time a change is to be made by either Society, it must be agreed upon by both Societies before being brought forward to approval. Changes to this policy are not effective until approved by both the AMS Assembly and the SGPS Council.

Contact Person	Secretary of Internal Affairs
Date of next review:	March 2026
Related policies, procedures, and guidelines	Constitution Section 12.02; AMS Elections and Referendum Policy
Policy superseded by this policy	N/A