

ELECTION AND REFERENDA PROCEDURES

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1. Purpose and Scope

- 1.1. The purpose of the Elections and Referenda Procedure is to provide a set of guidelines, rules, and regulations to govern all Elections and Referenda associated with the Federation of Students in a fair, independent, and consistent manner.
- 1.2. The Board is given authority to establish procedures for Elections and Referendum not contrary to the by-laws of the corporation or the rules and regulations set by the University of Waterloo, as may pertain to University Senatorial elections. In the event of discrepancy between this procedure and the by-laws, the by-laws shall always supersede this procedure.
 - a) This procedure shall also apply to Elections of undergraduate student representatives to the University Senate, subject to Senate By-law 3.
- 1.3. No changes or suspensions of these rules may be made to the Elections and Referenda Procedure thirty (30) days prior, or during any active Electoral Event unless any section expressly provides for suspension.
 - a) In accordance with these procedures, an active Electoral Event is set to run from the first day of the Nomination Period until the results of such an Electoral Event are ratified.

2. Elections and Referenda Code of Conduct

- 2.1. It is expected that all candidates, members of referenda committees, members of non-arm's length parties, and Administrators understand and abide by the rules and regulations set herein, and by the Federation of Students at all times.
- 2.2. In spite of any differences or disagreements that may arise during a particular Election or Referendum, all participants, all non-arm's length parties, and Administrators are expected to maintain decorum at all times, and to be polite, courteous, respectful, and refrain from discrimination. Ultimately, individual conduct and behaviour may be considered a direct reflection of the candidate's suitability to lead and represent their peers.
- 2.3. All campaigns are to be conducted in good faith, and in the spirit of fair play. In addition to upholding the principles of honesty, mutual respect, and fair competition, examples of bad faith behaviour or actions that violate this Code include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a) Sabotage of the campaigns of opposing candidates or referendum committees;
 - b) Repeated frivolous or vexatious complaints, allegations and/or appeals, where the complainant ought to know that the complaints have little to no reasonable chance of success;
 - c) Defaming or knowingly misrepresenting the statement or character of another individual;
 - d) Making, condoning, or endorsing derogatory/false statements or messaging, spoken, written, or electronic;

- e) Abuse of benefits acquired by virtue of a candidate's Office;
 - f) Aggressive campaigning, harassment, or otherwise engaging in behaviour that is either known, or ought reasonably to be known, to be unwanted by any other individual;
 - g) Knowingly or purposefully engaging in behaviour that would result in the assignment of Demerit Points, as outlined in Section 6 of these procedures. Demerit Points are intended to deter certain behaviours that are deleterious or damaging to the spirit of the Elections process or to the University community and should never be used as a tool to bolster or further a campaign;
 - h) Persistent attempts to undermine the ability of the Chief Returning Officer (CRO), Electoral and Referenda Officer (ERO), ERC, or any Administrator to carry out their responsibilities
 - i) Any attempt to undermine the electoral process
- 2.4. Proven violations of this or of any other provision, in part or in whole, of any governing document of the Federation of Students will be subject to sanctions as deemed appropriate by the ERO or CRO, in conjunction with the Elections & Referenda Committee (ERC). The ERC is expressly empowered to, based on a positive result of an investigation, faithfully assign penalties enumerated herein or disqualify a candidate, campaign team, or a referendum committee from an active Election, By-election or Referendum.

3. Definitions

- 3.1. "Administrator" shall refer to any staff member or volunteer of the Federation of Students directly or indirectly involved in the operation of any Electoral Event hosted by the Federation of Students. This may include the Executive Director or their designate(s), the Chief Returning Officer, each Election & Referendum Officer, members of the Elections & Referenda Committee, and Polling Clerks.
- 3.2. "Allegation" shall refer to an official claim that a candidate, campaign team, or a referendum committee has, in part or in whole, violated these or any other procedure, by-law, or policy of the Federation of Students or of the University of Waterloo.
- 3.3. "Appeal" shall refer to an official request made by any member of the Corporation to review a ruling of the ERO in response to a duly submitted allegation.
- 3.4. "Appellant" shall refer to any individual or group of members from which the CRO has received an appeal regarding an Election
- 3.5. "Arm's length party" shall refer to any individual or group of individuals not involved in any way with a candidate, campaign team, or referendum committee.
- 3.6. "Campaigning" shall refer to any activity or attempt to solicit votes in favour or against a candidate, campaign, or referendum position during any Electoral Event. Campaigning can occur even in the absence of active campaigning, or of campaign

materials electronic, physical, or otherwise. Campaigning is further described in clause 10.1

- 3.7. “Campaign Team” shall refer to a group of two (2) or more candidates in any active Electoral Event, including non-arm’s length party members, depending on their level of participation in a candidate’s campaign. Where a dispute arises as to whether or not to classify a non-arm’s length party member as part of the Campaign Team, such dispute will be treated on a case-by-case basis and determined by the CRO.
- 3.8. “Complainant”, in these procedures, shall refer to any individual or group of members from which the ERO has received an official complaint, or allegation during any Electoral Event.
- 3.9. “Defendant” shall refer to any party named in a complaint or allegation received by the ERO during any Electoral Event
- 3.10. “Electoral Event” shall refer to any Election, By-election or Referendum executed by the Federation of Students.

“*Election*” shall refer to a formal voting process by which the members of the Federation of Students designate an individual to hold office;

- a) “Election Period” shall refer to the Board-approved dates when an Electoral Event is underway. This period includes nomination period, interim period, campaign period, and Voting Period;
- b) “Nomination Period” shall refer to the period in which undergraduates are self-selected or selected by their peers for an available position;
- c) “Referendum Committee Organizing Period” shall refer to the period equivalent to the nomination period, for a referendum electoral event.
- d) “Interim Period” shall refer to the timeframe between the nomination period and campaign period during which prospective candidates are prohibited from campaigning or engaging in any activity that may be construed as campaigning;
- e) “Campaign Period” shall refer to the only period in which campaign activities are permitted, as approved by the Board;
- f) “Voting Period” shall refer to the period that eligible voters are allowed to cast a ballot;

“*General Election*” shall generally refer to an Election held, typically in the winter academic term, in which all Officer, Director, and some undergraduate Senate seats are open;

“*By-election*” shall refer to an election that occurs outside of the General Election period;

“*Referendum*” shall refer to an event conducted by the Federation of Students in which all of its members are posed a question with a “Yes” or “No” answer, or such other answers as may be determined by the Board;

- 3.11. “Executive Director” shall refer the Executive Director of the Corporation or their designate or designates as circumstances dictate.
- 3.12. “Fair Market Value” shall refer to the lowest price of a product or service, without special concessions or discounts, from a set of at least three prices from merchants in Waterloo Region or easily accessible electronically. Prices that are affected by discounts accessible to all (such as sales and group deals) are to be considered fair market value.
- 3.13. “The Federation”, the “Waterloo Undergraduate Student Association (WUSA)”, the “Corporation”, or another business operating name or similarly derived terms shall all collectively refer to the Federation of Students, University of Waterloo.
- 3.14. “Frivolous Allegation”, “Frivolous Appeal” or similarly derived terms shall, for the purposes of these procedures, refer to those proceedings initiated without merit, a sufficient basis on which to argue or sufficient evidence or proof, whether physical, anecdotal, documentary, or otherwise.
- 3.15. “Governing Year” shall mean the period between May 1st and April 30th of the following calendar year.
- 3.16. “Full Week” refers to a 7 calendar-day period beginning on a Sunday and ending on a Saturday.
- 3.17. “Identifying Mark” shall refer to any mark, symbol or combination of marks and symbols that can be used to clearly identify or distinguish a candidate or team from any other candidates or referendum committees in their Election, By-election or Referendum. Identifying marks include, but are not limited to, the candidate’s name, URL, design, picture, logo, or team affiliation. All material branded with a shared Identifying Mark will be equally expensed to all team members.
- 3.18. “Instant Runoff Voting” (IRV) refers to a ranked choice voting system for single-winner elections.
- 3.19. “Member of the Federation of Students” or similarly derived terms in this procedure shall be congruent with all provisions, terms, and considerations as stipulated in the bylaws of the Federation of Students.
- 3.20. “Nomination Form” shall refer to the official document indicating the intention of any member of the Federation of Students to run for a vacancy in an Election or By-election. The Form must indicate, at minimum, the following:
- a) The Nominator and the Nominee, both of whom must be members of the Federation;
 - b) The Nominee’s first and last name(s);
 - c) The Nominee’s desired position of candidacy;
 - d) The Nominee’s faculty and year of study;
 - e) The Nominee’s student identification number;
 - f) The signatures of verified undergraduate members;
 - g) The Nominee’s address(es); and

- h) If applicable, the team with which the nominee will identify during the applicable Campaign Period
- 3.21. “Non-arm’s length party” shall refer to any individual or group of individuals who have volunteered, supported, or provided assistance in any way to a candidate’s or referendum committee’s campaign. Activities of “non-arm’s-length party” members shall also include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a) Public campaigning with a candidate, campaign team, or referendum committee,
 - b) Campaigning using the official materials of any candidate, campaign team, or referendum committee,
 - c) Performing any task that supports or assists a campaign that is not considered campaigning, exempting services that are available to the public and purchased at fair market value.
- 3.22. “Officer” shall refer to the President and Vice President(s) of the Corporation.
- 3.23. “Polling Station” shall refer to physical polling stations that provide access to physical and online voting platform used for elections.
- 3.24. “Referendum Committee” refers to the group of individuals leading the campaign on either side of a referendum.
- 3.25. “Respondent”, in these procedures, shall refer to any party named in an appeal received by the ERO regarding an Election.
- 3.26. “Signature” shall refer to either a written signature on a physical nomination form, or an authenticated electronic signature on an online nomination form.
- 3.27. “Single Transferable Vote” (STV) refers to a proportional ranked choice voting system for multi-winner elections.
- 3.28. “Vexatious Act” shall refer to any act or proceeding initiated with an intention to harass, delay, overwhelm, or embarrass any candidate, campaign team, non-arm’s length party, any member of a referendum committee, any voting member, or any Administrator.

4. Elections and Referenda Committee

- 4.1. The Elections & Referenda Committee (ERC), through the Chief Returning Officer (CRO) of the Federation of Students, is responsible for the oversight, and the fair and impartial execution of all Elections, By-elections, and Referenda administered by the Federation of Students. In the execution of their roles, the ERC shall:
 - a) Act impartially and shall not show or promote bias towards any candidate, campaign team, or referendum committee during any Electoral Event for which they are a member of the ERC;
 - b) Not sign any nomination form of any candidate or any document related to a referendum position during any Electoral Event for which they are a member of the ERC.

- 4.2. The ERC shall have the following membership:
- a) Four (4) full members of the Corporation as elected by Board, and the Chief Returning Officer, who shall be Chair. Under no circumstances shall any voting member of ERC be a candidate for an active Election or By-election, join a Referendum committee, endorse, or campaign on behalf of any candidate, team or referendum position.
 - b) The Executive Director as a non-voting resource member.
- 4.3. The Board shall reserve the right, by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote, to remove or replace any member of ERC due to a real or perceived conflict of interest, misconduct, or breach of any of the rules and regulations set herein.
- 4.4. Duties and responsibilities of the ERC shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
- a) Final adjudication and ruling on all appeals to decisions made by the Federation's CRO during an active Electoral Event
 - b) Ruling on all allegations for which the recommended or determined penalty is disqualification or rescission of a member's candidacy in an Electoral Event
 - c) Having sufficient and adequate knowledge of the Elections & Referenda Procedures of Board to review and rule on all appeals to decisions made by the Chief Returning Officer
 - d) In conjunction with the CRO, EROs, Executive Director, and all other relevant persons, reviewing the Elections & Referenda Procedures and suggesting amendments to or rescission of any portion of these procedures they deem advisable
 - e) Working in conjunction with the Chief Returning Officer and other relevant Officers of the Corporation or Board to propose solutions to issues arising during an active election, by-election, or referendum
 - f) Determining Referenda wording, and ensuring that fair, unbiased language is used
 - g) Providing feedback on other aspects of Electoral Events, as necessary
 - h) In accordance with the Bylaws, referring all matters relating to Electoral Events of substantial controversy to Board
 - i) Assisting the Chief Returning Officer in the execution and operation of Electoral Events
- 4.5. Chief Returning Officer (CRO)**
- a) There shall be a Chief Returning Officer (CRO), who shall be the Chair of the ERC and provide day-to-day supervision of the execution of Elections, By-elections, and Referenda. Responsibilities and duties of the CRO of the Federation shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following:

- i. Being an authority on interpretations of the Federation of Students Elections and Referenda Procedure, subject to the policies and by-laws of the Federation of Students and any interpretations thereof
- ii. Acting as a resource to candidates and campaigns who may request clarification on a rule interpretation, and, communicating appropriate directives for all candidates to understand
- iii. Receiving any and all appeals on rulings made by any of the Federation's EROs during an active Electoral Event and where necessary convening the ERC to execute its duties
- iv. Conducting independent reviews and appeals of any rulings of EROs and issuing an appellate decision for the matter in question
- v. Ensuring that the Elections & Referenda Procedures and all relevant rules and regulations of the Federation and the University are upheld during any and all Elections, By-elections, and Referenda
- vi. Running any All-Candidates Meetings with the support of any EROs
- vii. Together with the appropriate officers and staff, preparing the transition and orientation of their replacement, ensuring continuity of the role, with consideration of the needs of the incoming CRO
- viii. Planning regularly scheduled Electoral Events, in consultation with relevant staff and compliance with procedure
- ix. Serving as the Chair of the Elections & Referenda Committee (ERC), and executing those duties associated with and required of a Chairperson
- x. Approving all informational packages and content issued by the Federation for all candidates and referendum committees
- xi. Notwithstanding the President as the primary spokesperson of the Federation of Students, being the official spokesperson for the ERC, and for those responsibilities delegated or required of ERC
- xii. In conjunction with the appropriate Administrators, preparing a debrief report, including a summary of all allegations and appeals, of the any Elections, By-elections, and Referenda for public access and, if necessary, presentation of the same, within sixty (60) days of the conclusion of such Electoral Events
- xiii. In conjunction with the Executive Director and one (1) additional member of the ERC, serve as a scrutineer for the initial viewing of results of all Electoral Events after its associated Voting Period
- xiv. In conjunction with relevant Administrators, confirm and publish for ratification at the next possible General Meeting or meeting of Board the official results of the Electoral Event
- xv. Other duties arising from or relating to the above, as required.

- 4.6. The Chief Returning Officer shall be hired by the Board based on their qualifications to manage and oversee election and referenda processes
- a) Normally the CRO shall be hired at the beginning of the governing year, at the first meeting of Board if the position is vacant.
 - b) Under no circumstances shall the CRO be a candidate for an active Election or By-election, join a Referendum committee, endorse, or campaign on behalf of any candidate, team or referendum position
 - c) Moreover, the CRO shall sign a statement of intent not to participate in any other capacity in an Electoral Event, except for casting their ballot if they are eligible to do so
- 4.7. Electoral and Referenda Officer (ERO)**
- a) There shall be at least one (1) Electoral & Referenda Officer (ERO) per Electoral Event, who is a full undergraduate member of the Federation of Students, and who shall be hired by and liaise with the Federation of Students' Chief Returning Officer and Executive Director for the period of one Electoral Event at a time, unless otherwise determined by the CRO.
 - b) Under no circumstances shall any ERO be a candidate for an active Election or By-election, join a Referendum committee, endorse, or campaign on behalf of any candidate, campaign team or referendum position.
- 4.8. Responsibilities and duties of the ERO shall include the following:
- a) Being an authority on interpretations of the Federation of Students Elections and Referenda Procedures, subject to the policies and by-laws of the Federation of Students, and interpretations and rulings of the CRO.
 - b) Determine whether a candidate, team of candidates or referendum committee has violated the Election & Referenda Procedures.
 - c) With the assistance of the Executive Director and CRO, ensuring that candidates, campaign teams, and referendum committees are informed and aware of these procedures, and any other by-laws, policies, and procedures, as it pertains to Elections & Referenda.
 - d) Supporting the CRO with running any All-Candidates Meetings in pursuit of the above.
 - e) Adjudicating allegations of misconduct or breach of any provision provided in this procedure.
 - f) Assessing penalties against candidates, campaign teams, or referendum committees found to have been acting in violation of any portion of these procedures. In all cases where the resulting penalty is disqualification or any other decision which may result in the rescission of a member's candidacy, the matter shall be referred to the ERC for resolution as soon as feasible.

- g) Enforcing, reporting of and verifying all campaign spending by all candidates, campaign teams, and referendum committees and reporting the same to the CRO
- h) Assessing Fair Market Value, determining campaign reimbursements, and ensuring compliance of Section 7 of these procedures, Budgets & Spending Limits
- i) Remaining impartial and unbiased in all Elections and Referendum matters and ensuring that the Elections and Referenda are fairly run,
- j) Assisting the CRO in settling, recording, and publishing all allegations and disputes between candidates and teams, and
- k) Additional duties and responsibilities as assigned by the CRO and/or the ERC

4.9. Polling Clerks

- a) There may be multiple polling clerks hired to ensure the smooth operation of each polling location for the duration of the Voting Period. All Polling Clerks shall be hired by and liaise with the Federation of Students' Chief Returning Officer and Executive Director. This shall not exclude the use of the Federation's promotional teams serving in such capacity.
- b) Under no circumstances shall any Polling Clerk be a candidate for an active Election or By-election, join a Referendum committee, endorse, or campaign on behalf of any candidate, team or referendum position. Nor shall Polling Clerks be any full-time staff member of the Federation of Students.
- c) The duties of the Polling Clerks shall include:
 - i. Being familiar with and upholding Section 11 of these procedures
 - ii. Being the first point of contact and a resource for voters on the days of election
 - iii. Verifying the eligibility of all voters
 - iv. Administering online and paper ballots, and enabling voters to cast their votes
 - v. Monitoring the voting area to which they are assigned
 - vi. Assisting students with voting process on the days of elections, and
 - vii. Other duties assigned by the Chief Returning Officer and Executive Director.

4.10. Executive Director

- a) The Executive Director, or another party designated by the Executive Director serves as a resource for all electoral matters of the Federation and shall support the CRO in serving as the main point of contact with candidates and committees in any electoral event.
- b) The Executive Director's duties and responsibilities as it pertains to Elections & Referenda shall include the following:
 - i. Serving as a non-voting resource member of the ERC.

- ii. Supporting the hiring, oversight, and adequate and sufficient training of all Polling Clerks
- iii. Assisting the CRO with oversight of the operation of all polls during the Voting Periods of all Electoral Events
- iv. Assisting the CRO in the preparation and execution of the All-Candidates' Meeting
- v. Preparation of any informational materials and packages for approval by the CRO
- vi. Verifying Nomination Forms for all Electoral Events
- vii. In conjunction with the CRO and one (1) additional voting member of the ERC, serve as a scrutineer for the initial viewing of results of all Electoral Events after its associated Voting Period

5. By-elections and Referenda Outside of the General Election & Referendum Period

- 5.1. For an Electoral Event occurring outside of the Annual General Election, the Nomination Period shall ordinarily only occur during the following periods
 - a) Between May 1st and August 31st of each year, inclusive
 - b) Between the beginning of the third (3rd) Full Week of September to the end of the first (1st) Full Week of October
- 5.2. Under extraordinary, or otherwise extenuating circumstances the Board may call an Electoral Event outside of the guideline provided above.
- 5.3. It is recommended that each phase of an Electoral Event be conducted at minimum in accordance with the following guidelines:
 - a) Nomination Period: 7 days
 - b) Interim Period: 2 days
 - c) Campaign Period: 5 days
 - d) Voting Period: 3 days. At least two (2) days of the Voting Period shall occur on full business days of the Corporation. The voting period is recommended to coincide with the end of the Campaign Period

6. Allegations, Decisions, Penalties, Appeals

6.1. Allegations

- a) By submitting an allegation form, a member of the University community alleges that a candidate, campaign team or referendum committee, or any of non-arm's length party, has violated portions of this procedure, or any relevant by-law, policy, or procedure of the Federation of Students.
- b) General Rules for Submission of Allegations
 - i. All allegations pertaining to an active Electoral Event shall be submitted in writing via an online submission form found on the Federation of

Student's website or main office. Allegations submitted via any other means will not be accepted.

- ii. Normally, allegations should not be submitted anonymously, and all Complainants will identify themselves to the ERO or CRO. Anonymously submitted allegations may be dismissed at the discretion of the CRO.
 - iii. Submissions of allegations will be accepted by the ERO until two (2) hours after the conclusion of the Voting Period. Any allegations submitted after this deadline will be considered for review at the discretion of the CRO.
- c) Once an allegation is received, the ERO shall notify the complainant(s) of its receipt.
 - d) Candidates, campaign teams, and referendum committees shall be immediately notified by the ERO of any allegations made against them, and shall be permitted to present a defense or pieces of counterevidence against the allegation to the ERO. At the discretion of the CRO, the ERO may withhold information regarding the complainant from the defendant. All pieces of counterevidence and/or an accompanying defense shall be prepared and submitted no later than forty-eight (48) hours after being notified of an allegation.
 - e) The ERO shall normally endeavour to process individual allegations and come to a ruling within seventy-two (72) hours of its receipt, but may take as much time as reasonably necessary where permitted by the CRO.
 - f) All allegations shall be kept strictly confidential by all involved parties until a decision has been rendered and publicized by the ERO.
 - g) The ERO reserves the right to dismiss any allegation which causes reasonable suspicion that the allegation was made Frivolously or Vexatiously or for purposes that violate, in letter or spirit, any portion of this procedure.
 - h) Any candidate, campaign team, or referendum committee may file a grievance against an ERO or the CRO alleging failure to enforce procedure and uphold and apply rules fairly and equitably to the CRO or ERC, respectively.
 - i) All such allegations shall be provided to the ERC for information or decision, respectively.

6.2. Decisions

- a) The ERO shall separately inform the complainant and the defendant of their decision within two (2) business hours of having made said decision, and shall make accessible to all members of ERC all documents associated with that particular allegation, and the rationale behind the ruling.

- b) The ERO shall, within four (4) business hours, inform the public of their decision after informing the complainant and respondent. At minimum, the ERO shall prepare for publication on the Federation's website a listing of the allegation, including all parties involved, all relevant pieces of evidence, the decision of the ERO in light of the evidence presented, a summary of the rationale behind the decision, and the determined penalty

6.3.Appeals

- a) After receiving the decision of the ERO, the defendant or complainant may appeal the decision to the CRO by submitting an online submission form found on the Federation of Student's website or a completed, written form delivered to the main office.
- b) Appeals must be submitted to the CRO within twenty-four (24) hours of receiving notice of the decision of the ERO or within two (2) business hours of the end of the Voting Period. Any appeal submitted after these deadlines will be considered for review at the discretion of the CRO.
- c) Appeals shall be kept strictly confidential by all involved parties until a decision has been rendered and publicized by the CRO.
- d) A decision of the ERO shall be considered appealable if the appellant, which must either be the complainant or defendant named in the original allegation, is able to reasonably establish any or all of the following:
 - i. There is evidence that a procedural error or a set of procedural errors were made significant enough to alter the final decision made by the ERO
 - ii. There is reasonable belief that portions of this procedure have been improperly applied in letter or spirit
 - iii. There is reasonable suspicion of bias during any portion of the decision-making process
 - iv. There is new information relevant to the original allegation that was not originally discovered or presented, especially pieces of information that could alter the final decision. Under no circumstances can a new allegation or issue be brought by way of appeal.
 - v. That the determined penalty exceeds the nature of the violation or offense
 - vi. That inadequate consideration was given to the provided evidence
 - vii. If a complaint was dismissed as Frivolous or Vexatious and the appellant believes themselves to have a reasonable case
- e) A decision of the CRO may be further appealed to the ERC if the appellant, which must either be the complainant or respondent named in the original allegation, is able to reasonably establish any or all of the requirements set out in the foregoing provision or requests independent review by the ERC.
- f) The appellant must include in their appeal, the following information:

- i. All relevant case information, such that the CRO or ERC, as the case may be, will be able to accurately identify the allegation in question. Under no circumstances can a new allegation or issue be brought by way of appeal.
 - ii. A description of and the reasoning for appeal, including grounds for appeal.
 - iii. A description of what the appellant(s) are seeking.
 - iv. All relevant documentation to supplement or support the above
- g) The CRO shall immediately notify the ERO or ERC, as the case may be, the respondent and the complainant that an appeal has been received.
- h) Within twenty-four (24) hours of receiving the appeal, or twelve (12) hours after the end of the Voting Period, the CRO or ERC, as the case may be, shall make its decision. The CRO or ERC may, in consideration of all evidence gathered and presented, do any of the following:
 - i. Uphold the original decision
 - ii. Alter the penalty of the original decision, within the limits of this procedure
 - iii. Refer the ERO or CRO, as the case may be, to review a decision in light of new information or with consideration to a specific section of this procedure
 - iv. Overturn the decision and present an alternate ruling, thereby eliminating the decision's penalties so received
- i) All rulings rendered by the ERC with respect to a further appeal of a decision made by the CRO shall be final.
- j) Notwithstanding any provisions within this section, the ERC shall be empowered to initiate a review of any decision of the CRO or ERO at any time until the conclusion of the Electoral Event.

6.4. Penalties

- a) The ERC and its agents shall have the discretion to assign demerit points for confirmed allegations made against a candidate, campaign team or referendum committee not exceeding those limits stipulated in the Demerit Point Schedule.
- b) Candidates or campaign teams shall have a maximum of ten (10) demerit points. If a candidate receives eleven (11) demerit points or more, they shall be disqualified from the election, thereby voiding their candidacy and forfeiting 100% of their potential reimbursement for incurred campaign expenses¹

¹ See Section 7 of these procedures for additional information on reimbursement reductions.

- c) Referendum committees shall have a maximum of ten (10) demerit points. If a referendum committee receives eleven (11) demerit points or more, they shall be disqualified from the referendum.
- i. Any referendum committee disqualified for any reason shall not be reimbursed for any referendum expenses and shall be prohibited from further campaigning. The committee will be required to remove all posters and campaign materials and shall not participate in public forums. Upon disqualification and during the Voting Period, signs will be posted, and the Federation's website will be updated, informing voters of the disqualification
 - ii. Notwithstanding the disqualification of a referendum committee, the referendum option associated with a disqualified referendum committee shall remain on all ballots.

6.5.Demerit Point Schedule

Any penalty that would singularly and immediately disqualify any candidate or referendum committee must be confirmed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the ERC

Violation	Penalty (maximum penalty, <i>per infraction</i>)
Spending over the allotted budget	2 points for every \$15 over the allowable ² budget, rounded up
Failure to declare campaign expenditures	2 points
Purposefully and significantly misrepresenting a candidate's own character or statement(s), or the character or statement(s) of another candidate, campaign team, or committee	10 points
Impersonation of another candidate or committee	11 points
Campaigning outside of campaign period	2 points, up to a maximum of 8
Speaking to or email a class without the permission of the instructor	2 points

² See Section 7 of these procedures for a full listing of budgets

Directly providing a method of voting to voters during Voting Period, or campaigning to a voter while voting	3 points
Distribute money, drugs, or alcohol, or any other form of bribery, for campaign purposes	11 points
Entering into contractual obligations ³ with any group(s) on or off campus that may affect the Federation of Students during their term in office	11 points
Lying to, or intentionally misleading ERC or its agents regarding matters pertaining to their role(s) or allegations and appeals	11 points
Making a public allegation that another candidate, campaign team or referendum committees has violated any rules before a decision has been delivered and made public by the ERC or its agents	5 points
Receiving or soliciting funding or monetary equivalent from students or other individuals.	8 points
Receiving funding and staff, volunteer, or material support from external political/advocacy organizations or external unions/associations (e.g. funding from CUPE, CFS, OUSA, or other schools' student associations)	11 points
Serious breach of democratic process (e.g. intentionally compromising ballots, etc.)	11 points
Minor ⁴ contravention of the spirit, or indirect or implicit violation of these or any other relevant bylaw, policy or procedure of the Federation of Students	6 points
Major ⁵⁴ contravention of the spirit, or indirect or implicit violation of these or any other relevant bylaw, policy or procedure of the Federation of Students	11 points

³ As distinguished from a campaign promise

⁴ The ERO or CRO shall have discretion in determining if a violation is minor or major based on the other described violations.

7. Budgets and Spending Limits

7.1. Spending limits for all Electoral Events shall be the following:

Seat	Spending Limit (Canadian Dollars)
Director	
Single (1) Candidate	150
Two (2) Candidates	180
Three (3) Candidates	200
Four (4) or more Candidates	$200 + [10 \times (\text{Total Candidates} - 3)]$
Officer	
Single (1) Candidate	375
Two (2) Candidates	400
Senator	
Faculty Candidate	150
At-large Candidate	250
Referendum Committee	500

7.2. In accordance with Senate Bylaw 3, all campaign costs for undergraduate senatorial candidates seeking Senate membership shall be borne by the candidate and will not be reimbursed by the University of Waterloo. The senatorial candidates may request reimbursement for all campaign expenses as detailed in clause 7.3 below.

7.3. Declaration of Campaign Expenses

- a) Candidates, campaign teams, and referendum committees must submit to the CRO and ERO a complete, categorized listing of all campaign expenditures with accompanying receipts no later than the End of Business one (1) day after the end of the Voting Period. Photocopies or non-original receipts of expenditures may be accepted at the discretion of the Federation of Students' Accounting Department.
- b) Candidates or referendum committees that do not have any expenditures are still required to indicate to the ERO that no campaign expenses were incurred. Written or electronic communication to this effect is sufficient to satisfy this provision.

7.4. Spending Limits for Candidates Seeking Multiple Positions

- a) Spending limits may not be combined. An individual may use the greatest spending limit available to them, and must still submit a complete, categorized listing of campaign expenditures, which includes expenditures shared for both positions sought.

7.5. Accessibility Fund and Accommodations

- a) In accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Federation of Students recognizes its duty to accommodate candidates and referendum committees who face barriers to participation in elections and referenda due to accessibility needs, including but not limited to disabilities (visible or invisible), religious observances, and caregiving responsibilities.
- b) An Accessibility Fund shall be established to offset reasonable, accessibility-related expenses that are necessary for candidates and referendum committees to participate equitably in an election or referendum.
- c) Accessibility-related expenses approved under this section shall not count toward the campaign spending limits set out in Section 7.1 of these procedures.
- d) Candidates and referendum committees seeking support from the Accessibility Fund must submit a request to the CRO.
- e) The CRO, in consultation with the Elections and Referenda Committee, shall review requests in line with the requirements of the Ontario Human Rights Code.
- f) Accessibility Fund support is capped at \$200 per candidate or referendum committee. Requests exceeding this amount shall be considered on a case-by-case basis through individual consultation with the CRO.
- g) Where candidates are unable to actively campaign on campus due to geographical or accessibility-related reasons, they may apply to use the Accessibility Fund to cover the cost of a poster run.

7.6. Rules Regarding Reimbursements

- a) Upon receipt of a candidate's, campaign team's, or referendum committee's listing of campaign expenditures, the CRO or ERO shall tally and prepare a cheque request totaling all approved campaign expenses which shall be made payable to the candidate, or to a representative member of the campaign team or referendum committee.
- b) In case of disagreement, the CRO shall have final say as to what will be considered a campaign expense.
- c) The Fair Market Value of all donated or significantly discounted campaign materials and gifts-in-kind will be assessed by the ERO or CRO and will count towards the candidate, campaign team, or referendum committee's Spending Limit. Notwithstanding the foregoing, only the net cost incurred to acquire a product or service will be reimbursed.
- d) Candidates, campaign teams, and referendum committees accruing three (3) or more demerit points in any Electoral Event shall receive a reimbursed amount reduced by the following amounts:

Accrued Demerit Points	Reimbursement Reduction
0	0%
1	0%

2	0%
3	20%
4	30%
5	40%
6	50%
7	60%
8	70%
9	80%
10	90%
11+	100%

8.0 Nominations & Nomination Period

8.1. During the nomination period, Nomination Forms shall be made available in the Federation of Students office and on its website. Candidates are advised to submit their preferred team names and their associated Identifying Marks to the CRO for approval prior to submitting their nomination forms to avoid being rejected for reasons listed in clause 8.7. Nomination forms and informational packages shall normally be reviewed and approved by the CRO prior to an Electoral Event.

8.2. Any undergraduate member of the Federation of Students may run for any Officer or Director position.

8.3. Officer Seat

- a) Nominations for Officer positions shall require the signature of the candidate and the signature of, at minimum, one hundred (100) members of the Federation of Students.
- b) Nominations for an Officer position shall also require the candidate to indicate their agreement to the following statement: “I understand that as an Officer, I will be expected to balance the best interests of the undergraduate student body and those of the corporation. I understand that if elected, I will be required to complete documents such as Conflict of Interest Declaration forms, attend all board trainings and comply with all other responsibilities indicated in procedures, as well as the policies and bylaws of the Corporation.”

8.4. Director Seat

- a) Nominations for a Director position shall require the signature of the candidate as well as the signature of, at minimum, twenty-five (25) other members of the Federation of Students.
- b) Nominations for a Director position shall also require the candidate to indicate their agreement to the following statement: “I understand that as a Director, I will be expected to balance the best interests of the undergraduate student body and those of the corporation. I understand that if elected, I will be required to complete

documents such as Conflict of Interest Declaration forms, attend all board trainings and comply with all other responsibilities indicated in procedures, as well as the policies and bylaws of the Corporation”.

8.5. Senate Seat

- a) Nominations for an undergraduate faculty seat on the University Senate shall require the signature of the candidate as well as the signatures of twenty-five (25) other members of the Federation of Students from the appropriate constituency.
 - b) Nominations for an undergraduate at-large seat on the University Senate shall require the signature of the candidate as well as the signatures of one hundred (100) other members of the Federation of Students.
- 8.6. Submitted nomination forms shall not be open for public inspection. However, the names of nominated candidates shall be public.
- 8.7. All team names and their associated Identifying Marks are subject to approval by the Chief Returning Officer or designate with the following criteria:
- a) Team names cannot be similar, to the point where a reasonable voter would confuse one with another,
 - b) Teams shall not unreasonably associate themselves with the branding of the University of Waterloo or the Federation of Students, including any colours or mascots thereof, and may not outright assume the colours of any constituency for the purposes of election to that constituency, and
 - c) Team names should not include offensive language.
- 8.8. If more than one team submits a nomination form with the same name, the team that first submitted a completed nomination form shall have right of that name.
- 8.9. The CRO, or designate, with the assistance of the Executive Director, shall check the validity of each Officer, Director, and Senate nomination form.
- a) Qualifications for undergraduate members of the University Senate are set out in the bylaws of the University of Waterloo Senate.
 - b) The CRO, or designate, shall additionally inform the University Secretary of the validity of each Senate nomination form.
- 8.10. If a nomination is found to be invalid, the nomination shall be rejected, and the candidate shall be notified. Candidates may correct and resubmit rejected nomination forms, provided that they are successfully resubmitted by the end of the second (2nd) business day following the close of the Nomination Period.
- 8.11. **Unopposed Candidates**
- a) *Officer Candidates*
If, by the conclusion of any Election or By-election Nomination Period, there is only one candidate nominated for any Officer position, the binary yes/no vote will apply.
 - b) *Director Candidates*

If, by the conclusion of the Election or By-election Nomination Period, the number of candidates nominated for Director positions is less than or equal to the number of seats available, the binary yes/no vote will apply to each candidate.

c) Senate Candidates

If, by the conclusion of any Election or By-election Nomination Period, the number of candidates nominated for any undergraduate Senate position is less than or equal to the number of seats available for that position, all members who submitted valid and complete nomination forms for that undergraduate Senate seat shall be acclaimed.

8.12. Exclusivity

- a) A member of the Federation of Students may not run concurrently for two Board positions. This shall be taken to include the candidacy of an Officer concurrently with that of a Director or candidacy for two Officer positions concurrently. Additionally, members of the Federation of Students may not concurrently run for or hold two positions with the Board within the same governing year.
- b) Members of the Federation of Students running for an Officer position or Board seat may concurrently run for any one undergraduate vacancy on the University Senate unless prohibited by the Chief Returning Officer of the University.
- c) A member of the Federation of Students may not run concurrently for two University Senate positions. This shall be taken to include, but is not limited to, the candidacy for a Senate at-large seat concurrently with that of a constituency seat. Additionally, members of the Federation of Students may not concurrently run for or hold two positions with the University Senate within the same governing year.
- d) During the nomination period, candidates may receive nominations for multiple positions; however, once the campaign period begins, candidates must remain committed to the position they have declared and may not switch to any other position after campaigning has started even if they have received the required nominations for other positions that they are otherwise prohibited from running concurrently for. This ensures fairness, prevents confusion among voters, and upholds the integrity of the election process.

8.13. Special Rules Concerning Incumbents

- a) Anyone holding a paid, unpaid, elected, or volunteer positions within the Federation is expected to continue to execute the duties and responsibilities required of their current roles during all Electoral Events.
- b) Candidates, members of Referendum committees, and Non-arm's length parties are not permitted to use their position(s) to gain advantage in elections. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - i. Use of official social media for campaign purposes

- ii. Abuse of powers of office to influence voters (e.g. promising or awarding of prizes or money).

9.0. Informational Sessions & All-Candidates' Meeting

- 9.1. The Interim Period of any Electoral Event is intended to allow all candidates, campaign teams, and referendum committees to prepare and finalize their campaigns and campaign strategies. Absolutely no campaigning may occur during this period, and until the beginning of the Campaign Period. This provision shall be strictly enforced by the CRO.
- 9.2. During or before the Nomination Period, the CRO, ERO and other relevant persons shall hold informational sessions to explain the responsibilities/duties attached to the roles available, and the rules for the election, by-election and/or referendum.
- 9.3. At the All-Candidates Meeting which typically holds during the Interim Period, the ERO shall, at minimum, distribute summaries of the most recent version of the Elections and Referenda Procedure and other documents to candidates and committees, as well as how to obtain other informational resources.
- 9.4. All candidates and committee members are required to attend these meetings in person or online.
- 9.5. It is then the candidates and/or committee's responsibility to thoroughly read the Procedures and notify the ERO that they have read, understood, and will abide by all rules and regulations.
- 9.6. Candidates and committee members will be prohibited from campaigning until they have satisfied the above requirement. Also, only candidates who have attended the All Candidates Meeting and have indicated compliance with clause 9.5 will have their names listed on the ballots.
- 9.7. A mailing list of all candidates, referendum committees, and all campaign support persons shall be created by the CRO. The list shall additionally be made available to the ERC and its agents, and shall be used to communicate important updates to all candidates, and their agents and supports as necessary. It is the responsibility of each candidate and referendum committee member to ensure that they are receiving all elections- and referenda-related communications from the ERC and its agents, that they are kept apprised of important updates, and that they report any problems they might encounter in this regard to the ERO immediately.

10.0. Campaign Rules & Regulations

- 10.1. Campaigning may consist of, but is not limited to, any and all activities undertaken by an individual candidate, a campaign team, a referendum committee, or a non-arm's-length party that serves to influence voters in favour or in opposition of a particular candidate, group of candidates, or referendum position during an Electoral Event. Such activities may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a) Promotion of a candidate's or campaign team's candidacy during an Election or By-election
 - b) The distribution and/or posting of any and all forms of advertising or communication likely to influence voters towards a particular candidate or Referendum option;
 - c) Speeches, rallies, or any other form of public demonstration or campaigning.
- 10.2. The following is not considered campaigning:
- a) Publicly declaring an intention to run in an upcoming Election;
 - b) Wearing branding associated with a team or Referendum position;
- 10.3. All candidates, campaign teams, and referendum committees shall publicly declare, and have readily available a listing of, all members of their campaign, including their agents and supports, for the entirety of the Campaign Period. In addition to holding a physical listing, the aforementioned list shall additionally:
- a) Be posted in an easily accessible location on the candidate's, campaign team's, and referendum committee's website, if applicable.
 - b) Be readily available for inspection if requested by any member of the Federation of Students
- 10.4. Physical materials such as posters, signs, and banners, are permitted at the discretion of University of Waterloo Plant Operations. As such, there are restrictions to these materials to ensure compliance with Plant Operations. At any time, candidates may receive notice either directly from Plant Operations or from the ERO requiring alterations to physical materials.
- 10.5. All printed campaign materials will not be hung up on walls or surfaces with harmful materials, this includes, but is not limited to, duct tape, glue, etc.
- 10.6. The CRO shall provide all candidates with a digital copy of the official WUSA Elections logo, which shall be used on all election-, referendum- and campaign-related materials. The CRO, in consultation with appropriate marketing staff, shall obtain permission from University of Waterloo Plant Operations to physically post campaign and elections-related materials on campus for the duration of the Campaign Period, and shall notify all candidates of applicable posting restrictions and requirements.
- 10.7. Candidates, campaign teams, and referendum committees shall be responsible for ensuring that all social media postings organized by the candidate, their campaign team or their committee follow the rules outlined in this procedure.

11.0. Polling Procedures & Regulations

- 11.1. The voting period for any Electoral Event shall last at least forty-eight (48) hours. Each vote shall have the value of one (1) and shall represent a unique, eligible voter

- 11.2. The CRO, in conjunction with the Executive Director, shall decide where to place physical polling stations on the University campus during each election cycle. The CRO will endeavor to place Polling Stations in areas frequented by sizeable concentrations of undergraduate students and ensure that the locations of polling stations will allow equitable access to students from each faculty.
- 11.3. Each physical Polling Station will be set up to accept physical paper ballots, and include portable electronic devices to allow voters to submit online ballots
- 11.4. There may be at least one physical Polling Station during any Electoral Event. Where Polling Stations are required, at least one physical Polling Station shall be situated in an easily accessible location within the Student Life Centre
- 11.5. Societies are expected to make at least one online polling station available in a location of their choosing, upon request of the Federation of Students. Societies that are reasonably unable to comply with this request should notify the CRO of the same.
- 11.6. Polling Stations for the General Election may be held in various locations on the University of Waterloo main campus for the duration of the Voting Period.
- 11.7. The Elections & Referenda Committee shall have the power to extend the voting period no more than seventy-two (72) hours beyond the date and time previously established, in the event of extenuating circumstances where inclement weather, mass power or internet connection failures occur during elections, or similar, which, in the measure of the committee requires extension to ensure fair and equal right to suffrage.
- 11.8. In the case of a voting period extension, if there are not adequate resources for staffing a polling station (e.g. polling clerks unavailable), the requirement for a polling station is waived.
- 11.9. No member of the ERC, save only the CRO, may have access to live polling data during the Voting Period that is not generally accessible to all members of the Federation.

11.10. Electronic Ballots

- a) Ballots for elections shall be electronic and shall list, in random order, the preferred name(s) of the candidates, surname(s) first, if applicable. If a candidate has declared their affiliation with a particular Campaign Team, the Team name should also be listed, in parentheses, following the preferred name(s) of the Candidate.
- b) The CRO, in conjunction with the IT Department of the Federation of Students, shall ensure that electronic ballots are functional prior to the first day of the Voting Period

11.11. Online Voting Platform

- a) The online voting platform shall be usable only by members of the Federation of Students.

- b) The online voting platform shall ensure that voters cannot cast more votes than they are entitled to cast.
- c) The online voting platform shall use the list of voters prepared by the CRO, in conjunction with the Executive Director and IT Department, to validate voters.
- d) The online voting platform shall provide immediate feedback to voters about the status of the ballots that they have cast.
- e) The online voting platform shall allow a voter to decline the ballot.
- f) The online voting platform shall store each vote and the time that the vote was cast in an electronic medium.
- g) Votes cast shall not be traceable to the voter who cast them.

11.12. Voting Methods and Eligibility

- a) For officer elections and by-elections votes shall be tallied using Instant-Runoff Voting (IRV).
- b) For director elections and multi-winner director by-elections votes shall be tallied using a modified BC Single Transferable Vote (BC-STV) system: excepting that one candidate for each faculty from which candidates have been nominated shall be guaranteed to be elected in accordance with the provision of the Bylaws. For single winner director by-elections votes shall be tallied using Instant Runoff Voting (IRV).
- c) For director by-elections in which the number of candidates nominated from unrepresented faculties is greater than or equal to the number of seats available, then only those candidates shall be permitted to contest the by-election.
- d) For faculty Senator elections and by-elections votes shall be tallied using Instant-Runoff Voting (IRV).
- e) For at-large Senator elections and multi-winner by-elections votes shall be tallied using BC Single Transferable Vote (BC-STV). For single winner at-large Senator by-elections votes shall be tallied using Instant-Runoff Voting (IRV).
- f) For Senator elections and by-elections, each full member of the Federation shall be eligible to vote once for each constituency in which they are registered, and once for at-large candidates.
- g) Results of votes (excluding referendums) conducted using IRV and BC-STV shall be interpreted by administrators under the principle that not ranking one or more candidates means that the voter prefers the seat(s) to remain unelected if the candidates that they ranked aren't elected. Explanatory text (or verbal instructions for in-person voting) communicating this principle shall be included in applicable ballots.

11.13. Polling Stations

- a) Polling stations shall be staffed by two (2) polling clerks.

- b) Polling clerks shall act impartially and shall not show or promote bias towards any candidate, campaign team, or referendum committee during any Electoral Event in their capacity as a Polling clerk, even if those opinions are solicited.
- c) Physical polling stations shall have at least one electronic device that is connected to the Internet.
- d) Polling clerks may assist voters with online voting but are prohibited from voting or casting a vote on behalf of another voter, except where requested to do so by a voter for the purposes of a physical accommodation.

11.14. Counting Ballots

- a) Following the verification of the results tabulated by the online voting platform, the ERC shall issue a statement certifying the election and its fair conduct (known as the ‘unofficial results’). Unofficial results shall be published on the Federation’s website within two (2) Business Days following the conclusion of the Voting Period and shall be noted as unofficial results, pending ratification.
- b) All disputes regarding the counting of ballots shall be received by the Elections & Referenda Committee (ERC) via the CRO and shall be settled before the ratification of the results of the electoral event(s) in question.
- c) Notwithstanding any portion of these procedures, the results of any and all Electoral Events shall remain unavailable and inaccessible until the conclusion of the Voting Period, save only for the CRO.

11.15. Ties

- a) Normally, in the event of a tie, a run-off vote will be held as soon as is practical, in which only the two candidates or referenda options with the most votes will be eligible.
- b) Notwithstanding these provisions, the Board may, prior to the beginning of any Electoral Event, determine the method by which a tie is handled, and may choose to hold a vote of Board in the event of a tie. In such a case, Directors maintain the right to vote in the election *and* in the vote of Board.

11.16. Rules for Candidates and Committees During the Voting Period

- a) Candidates, campaign volunteers, and referendum committees may still campaign during the Voting Period
- b) Although candidates, campaign volunteers, and referendum committees are not permitted to provide a mechanism of voting (e.g. laptop, tablet, phone) to any eligible voters, they can communicate to voters on how to vote such as sharing the link to the voting platform.
- c) Candidates, Non-arm’s length parties, and referendum committees shall not be present and shall not in any way influence a voter’s decision while a voter is in the process of voting

11.17. Ratification of Results

- a) Results of all Electoral events shall only be finalized and considered official once confirmed at the next available General Meeting of the Corporation or meeting of Board.
- b) Ratified results shall be provided to the Secretary of the Corporation as soon as reasonable following ratification.

12.0. Referenda

12.1.Scope

- a) The purpose of this section is to outline additional rules and regulations that specifically concern referenda hosted by the Federation of Students. Unless explicitly stated, all rules and regulations that normally govern Elections and By-elections conducted by the Federation of Students shall also apply to referenda endorsed and conducted by the Federation.

12.2.General Rules for Referenda:

- a) A referendum may be initiated by any one of the following methods:
 - a) A Requisition or Petition;
 - b) A Members' Meeting; or,
 - c) The Board.
- b) A referendum pertaining only to a constituency may also be initiated in accordance with the constituency Society's governing documents, provided the referendum shall only concern and impact members of such constituency, and shall not alter the nature of the relationship of such constituency with the University of Waterloo, the Federation of Students or other constituencies thereof⁵.
- c) Exempting requisitions or petitions for referenda from the membership, referenda shall not normally be called for any matter that can reasonably be considered or approved by the Board.
- d) Only members of the Federation of Students, as outlined in the by-laws of the Federation of Students, may be a member or chairperson of an ERC-approved referendum committee. Only members of referendum committees may campaign on behalf of a referendum position.
- e) In accordance with section 10 of these procedures, the chairperson of each committee shall publicly declare, and have readily available a listing of, all members of their campaign, including Non-arm's length parties, for the entirety of the Campaign Period.
- f) Rules governing referendum campaigns shall not impede any officer or member of the corporation from carrying out duties reasonably incident to their portfolio.

12.3.Requisition or Petition Process for Referenda

⁵ The Board reserves the rights to ratify any such referendum itself and to quash the execution of any such referendum if it has already been ratified by the constituency Society, but shall not do so unreasonably.

- a) A petition shall be considered valid if it is signed by at least 2900 or ten percent (10%), whichever is fewer, of the voting members of the Federation of Students, and if it is submitted within the same academic term as when it was reviewed, excluding those signatures found to be invalid. Unless explicitly exempted by ERC or Board, petitions with signatures collected in a previous academic term must be reviewed and re-approved.
- b) All petitions to hold a referendum must be submitted in writing or electronically and must include, at a minimum for each signatory, the following information:
 - i. Name,
 - ii. University of Waterloo Student ID,
 - iii. Program,
 - iv. Term,
 - v. University of Waterloo email,
 - vi. Date signed, and
 - vii. Signature or electronic equivalent;
- c) The CRO, or a suitable designate, shall ensure the validity of the petition and of each signature upon the submission of the petition. Validity of digital and physical signatures will, at a minimum, require legibility, accuracy and completeness of the petition contents listed above, and membership of the signatory in the Federation of Students. The submission of a petition, and the collection of signatures for the petition must be completed within the same academic term, unless otherwise permitted by ERC or the Board. If any of these conditions are unmet for a signatory, their signature will be considered invalid for the petition.
- d) Electronic and physical petitions must clearly state the general nature of and intent for the referendum, any proposed text for ballot questions being requested, and a reasonable effort shall be made to inform each potential signatory of the above prior to their signing of the petition.
- e) All remaining valid signatories of petitions shall be sent an official email from the CRO, or a suitable designate, confirming that they indeed signed this petition and did so of their own free will. If any signatory replies in the negative, then their signature will not count towards the required number for the petition to be considered valid.

12.4.Referenda Questions

- a) If a petition garners the necessary number of valid signatures under the above conditions, the Elections & Referenda Committee will be responsible for interpreting the text and spirit of the petition and, if appropriate, selecting an appropriate, unbiased Arm's-length party to consult on writing an unbiased question for the resulting referendum.

- b) The Committee will normally strive to develop positively-worded questions that are simple and may be answered in a clear “yes” or “no” manner, where “yes” denotes agreement with the spirit of the question.
- c) Notwithstanding the foregoing, Board may draft, reject, or otherwise amend any language for a referendum developed by the Elections & Referenda Committee provided at least one-third (1/3) of Directors file a notice with the President for the same. Upon receipt of such a request, the President shall promptly call a special meeting of Board for consideration of the item.
- d) If a referendum is initiated in any way other than a petition, then the Elections & Referenda Committee will be responsible for interpreting the text and spirit of the proposed question and if appropriate selecting an appropriate, unbiased Arm’s-length party to consult on writing an unbiased question for the resulting referendum.
- e) The text, method of voting, and timeline for all referenda approved or developed by the Elections & Referenda Committee, or another committee or body as charged by Board, shall be subject to approval by Board before the measure proceeds to ballot.
- f) If Board deems a proposed referendum question not to be in line with any law, bylaw, procedure, or policy, or deems it to be misleading, open to misinterpretation, discriminatory in any way against any group of students, factually incorrect, or unrelated to matters of the Federation, and they cannot amend it to be compliant with these criteria, then Board shall not ratify such a referendum and the Board shall not include within any General Meeting agenda the ratification of such a measure.

12.5.Voting Period for Referenda

- a) The rules concerning the Voting Period for all referenda shall be congruous with those for General Elections, unless otherwise determined by Board. Generally, referenda conducted by the Federation of Students shall always be congruous with the by-laws.
- b) Normally, Instant-Runoff Voting (IRV) will be used as the voting method of all referenda in which a single outcome is required. BC Single-Transferable Voting (BC-STV) will normally be used as the voting method of all referenda in which more than two (2) outcomes are permissible.
- c) Votes in referenda will be tallied according to the voting methods above, with the option receiving the most votes declared the winner.

12.6.Quorum of Voters

- a) Quorum for any referendum question open to all members of the Federation of Students shall normally be 200 members. In addition, the Board may separately determine the quorum for any question, in an amount not less than 200

members, provided the level of quorum is commensurate with other similar referenda questions.

- b) Normally, in the event that a question impacts only a particular voting demographic⁶, and not the entirety of the membership of the Federation, only those parties shall be queried. Quorum for any such referenda questions shall normally be 5% sum total of those members, unless otherwise determined by the Board. If a constituency Society has determined quorum requirements, they must meet this minimum standard or receive exemption on a case-by-case basis from the Board.

12.7.Ratification of Referenda Results

- a) All referenda conducted by the Federation shall normally be ratified by the Board. Referenda occurring in conjunction with the General Election may be ratified by the next available General Meeting.
- b) All referenda of a constituency Society may be ratified by the Board, however, such referenda shall normally be ratified in accordance with the Society's governing documents.
- c) Ratification shall not be construed as consideration of the outcome of a referendum, but rather agreement that the referendum and ballot for the question was conducted in a fair and accessible manner.
- d) Ratification for referenda shall not be unreasonably withheld by Board; any such refusal or failure to ratify must be justified and provided in writing to the membership and posted across the Federation's media platforms.
- e) In the event of failure or refusal of Board to ratify the results of a referendum, the ERC will conduct a review of the referendum, the polling process, and any peculiarities that may have warranted such action and provide a summary report to Board. The results of such a review shall be similarly made public.

⁶ E.g., A referendum may involve only part time students or members of a particular constituency.