



General Ballot Elections 2026

Candidate Information & Campaign Rules Handbook

IMPORTANT DATES:

Nominations	January 19th – February 6th, 2026 (by 4:00 p.m.)
Nomination Interview Panel	January 19th – February 11th, 2026 (various)
All Candidates Meeting (ACM)	Friday, February 13th, 2026, 5:00 p.m.
Campaign Materials Due	Friday, February 20th, 2026 (by 12:00 p.m.)
Campaign Begins	Monday, February 23rd, 2025 (at 10:00 a.m.)
Campaign Ends	Thursday, March 5th, 2026 (at 4:00 p.m.)
Voting	Tuesday, March 3rd – Thursday, March 5th, 2026
Results	Friday, March 6th, 2026 (<i>unofficial, pending disputes</i>)

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

Chief Returning Officer (**CRO**): Ismail Ibrahaim Badar
msa.elections@mohawkcollege.ca

Deputy Returning Officer (**DRO**): Melanie Extance, Governance & Advocacy Specialist
Room G108j, msa.elections@mohawkcollege.ca

Position descriptions and relevant policies and documents are available, on the MSA website:
<https://mohawkstudents.ca/student-voice/elections/>

STUDENT EXECUTIVE POSITIONS AVAILABLE: President (1)*
Vice President, College Affairs (1)
Vice President, External Affairs (1)

**Note: President is only open to students in their graduating year*

INFORMATION: Students who may be interested in running for a position but would like more information about positions, time commitment, election process, etc. are encouraged to set up a time to meet with the **Deputy Returning Officer (RO)**. Please send an email to msa.elections@mohawkcollege.ca to book a meeting.

NOMINATIONS CLOSE: **Friday, February 6th, 2026, at 4:00 p.m.**
Nomination forms must be received by the MSA via email (msa.elections@mohawkcollege.ca).

Nomination forms that are late will not be accepted.

REQUIRED STUDENT SUPPORT: All potential candidates are required to go through a Vetting process as identified by the MSA prior to candidacy being confirmed. Potential candidates may be disqualified through this Vetting process. Eligibility criteria is outlined in position descriptions, Bylaws and Elections Policy.

CAMPAINING BEGINS: **Monday, February 23rd, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.**

CAMPAINING ENDS: **Thursday, March 5th, 2026, at 4:00 p.m.**

CANDIDATES VIDEOS:

Candidates are expected to attend a campaign video shoot with the MSA and prepare a speech, no longer than 2 minutes in length. These videos will be branded, given closed-captioned, and posted on MSA platforms. Final versions of the video will be provided back to the candidates to use as part of their campaign.

VOTING PERIOD:

Tuesday, March 3rd, 2026, at 12:01 a.m. – Thursday, March 5th, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. through electronic means (*Simply Voting*). Students who do not receive an email with voting instructions must contact the DRO to have their status reviewed.

VOTERS PRIVACY RIGHT:

Every eligible voter has the right to vote in privacy. All candidates or any others on behalf of a candidate must respect that right. Failure to respect that right by a candidate or any other on behalf of a candidate can result in disqualification from the election of that candidate.

ELECTION RESULTS:

The CRO will retrieve the election results for official filing. The unofficial results will be posted by **4:00 p.m. on Friday, March 6th, 2026, on MSA platforms and Mohawk College email (pending disputes)**.

Results will become official at the Special Members Meeting, scheduled on March 24th, 2026 starting at 3:30 p. m.

TERM OF OFFICE:

May 1, 2026, to April 30, 2027.

LEADERSHIP RETREAT:

Leadership and orientation training is coordinated for all elected, appointed or acclaimed Board Members. **Attendance is mandatory.** The training dates are:
April 28 – May 2, 2025 (overnight)
August 27 – August 29, 2025
December 17 – 19, 2025 OR January 2-4, 2026 (TENT overnight)

CONFIDENTIALITY:

A candidate confidentiality clause will be in effect throughout nominations and elections. The DRO or CRO cannot release any information regarding candidates, positions, acclamations, etc. unless it is relating to a disqualification as per the Elections Policy for general student awareness.

ALL CANDIDATES MEETING: **Friday, February 13th, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.** via Microsoft Teams
Attendance at All Candidates Meeting is mandatory.
Failure to attend may result in disqualification.

ALTERNATIVE ALL CANDIDATES MEETING DATES: **It is the responsibility of candidates to schedule an alternative meeting with the CRO. Failure to attend a rescheduled meeting will result in disqualification.**

CAMPAIGN MATERIAL DEADLINE: **Friday, February 20th, 2026, by 12:00 p.m.**
 Posters (8.5 x 11)
 Candidate Profile

All material must be submitted to:
msa.elections@mohawkcollege.ca

CANDIDATE CAMPAIGNING AND VOTING SCHEDULE:

Date	Location	Start Time	End Time
Monday, February 23	Fennell Campus, C-Wing Atrium	10:00 am	2:00 pm
Tuesday, February 24	Stoney Creek Campus, Cafeteria	10:00 am	2:00 pm
Wednesday, February 25	Fennell Campus, Arnie (Candidate Forum)	10:00 am	2:00 pm
Thursday, February 26	IAHS Campus, Lobby	10:00 am	2:00 pm
Friday, February 27	Airport Campus, Cafeteria	10:00 am	2:00 pm
Monday, March 2	Stoney Creek Campus, Cafeteria	10:00 am	12:00 pm
Monday, March 2	IAHS Campus, Lobby	1:00 pm	3:00 pm
(VOTING DATES) Tuesday, March 3 – Thursday, March 5	Online Ballot	12:01 am	4:00 pm
	Fennell IAHS Stoney Creek	9:00 am	4:00 pm

CAMPAIGN RULES

All candidates will familiarize themselves with and abide by the election procedures and rules. Failure to follow these procedures or rules may result in disqualification from the election.

1. Candidates will be required to attend the **All Candidates Meeting** to review election procedures. The time, location and rules are noted in the “Important Information for Candidates” portion of this package. Failure to attend this meeting may result in disqualification
 - a. If a candidate cannot attend the meeting, arrangements must be made with the Chief Returning Officer (CRO) to schedule attendance at an alternative date via email (msa.elections@mohawkcollege.ca)
2. Candidates are responsible for familiarizing themselves with all material relevant to the electoral process, including but not limited to, relevant policies, Bylaws, MSA political and administrative policies and any other material distributed by the MSA.
3. Campaigning may not start earlier than **10:00 a.m. Monday, February 23rd, 2026**, and social posts must be taken down by **Friday, March 6th, 2025, at 8:00 a.m.** This rule will be strictly enforced. Failure to comply may result in the candidate being sanctioned, as determined by the CRO, or disqualification from the election.
4. Candidates may only run for one (1) position per election.
5. No candidate will be allowed to promise to donate any portion of their salary or wage.
6. Campaigning will be done in majority across Mohawk College campuses or virtually. The MSA can assist with campaigning in the following ways:
 - Each candidate will have their photo, campaign poster, profile, and video posted to the MSA website and on digital screens.
 - Each candidate will have campaign posters posted across the various satellite campuses in assistance with DRO and other MSA staff.
 - Each poster will be equipped with QR codes for further online engagement back to MSA website or socials.
 - The MSA will promote the elections, as a whole, and direct students to the website to view candidate information.
 - The MSA will provide information to candidates which will include tips to promote themselves online, how to engage in person, etc. via the *All Candidates Meeting*
7. Candidates are asked to submit the following, by **Friday, February 20th, 2026, 12:00 p.m.** to the DRO (msa.elections@mohawkcollege.ca):

- Candidate Profile (max 250 words)
- Campaign Poster (8.5 x 11)

8. Candidates will be required to create their own campaign poster(s). The MSA will display posters digitally and will print a few copies of each candidate's poster which will be posted in a location at IAHS, Stoney Creek, Fennell and other satellite campuses. **Individual candidates may not put up posters on their own. This is designated for MSA staff only at pre-approved locations across campuses. Candidates found engaging in this breach will receive a sanction.**

9. Candidates who have questions or need guidance in the creation of campaign materials can connect with the MSA Communications & Engagement Team, along with the DRO.

10. Candidates must campaign as individuals and will not be allowed to campaign with other candidates.

11. Candidates may not use the same campaign used by the MSA to promote the elections as a whole. The CRO will determine whether or not a candidate's campaign is significantly similar to the overall elections marketing.

12. Individual candidate's use of Mohawk College and MSA logos will not be allowed on any promotional material. Candidates may wear clothing that already contains logos on it (i.e., shirts with MSA or Mohawk College on them), but may not put logos on any new clothing items they create for the purpose of campaigning.

13. Student media may choose to interview candidates and while doing so, shall provide equal opportunity/coverage for candidates of certain positions.

14. Candidates may use social media to campaign. Any candidates who use social media sites (LinkedIn, Instagram, X(Twitter), TikTok, etc.) must have open accounts for viewing or they must add the DRO and CRO as a "friend" and provide their handles in order that the DRO, CRO and supporting elections staff may follow and monitor posts.

15. Candidates are encouraged to be creative when campaigning. All campaign material must be approved by the DRO. The DRO and/or CRO may at any time ask that any campaign material be removed that violates election policies or procedures. **All social media campaign materials need DRO approval prior to posting across social media platforms with minimum 24-hour turn-around for approval or denial.**

16. Any in-person campaigning outside of the approved dates, times, and locations is strictly prohibited. The only exception is a pre-approved classroom visit(s) in which the candidate must receive instructor permission (in writing), forwarded to the DRO for records. **Candidates found in breach will be disqualified.**

17. Slander, libel, assault in any form, bullying, harassment and/or unethical campaigning are forbidden and are grounds for disqualification and subject to further disciplinary review under Mohawk College Student Behaviour Policy or legal action.
18. All campaigning must be done in such a manner that will not harm others, Mohawk College's or MSA's reputation. All posters must be in good taste and all campaign materials must be pre-approved by the DRO.
19. MSA members may not campaign at any event or activity where they are acting in an official capacity by virtue of their position.
20. No candidate will be allowed to show students how to vote, bribe them to vote or coerce anyone into voting for them as it may conflict with a voter's right to privacy. Doing so may result in penalties and/or disqualification as determined by the CRO.
21. Candidates may not engage in excessive spending on campaign materials that unfairly give an advantage over others (e.g., purchasing an ad on social media). Purchase towards candy/buttons/decorations for tables is permitted but may not exceed \$100. No reimbursements on materials will be provided by MSA.
18. All deadlines are final. No extensions will be given.
19. If a candidate, MSA staff or Mohawk College community member wishes to file a complaint against another candidate or individual(s) acting on behalf of a candidate, the following process will be used:
 - a. Complaints will be submitted electronically (and signed) to the CRO using the **MSA Elections Complaint Form**, sent to msa.elections@mohawkcollege.ca. The CRO will then meet with both parties and any other relevant parties to determine the facts. The CRO will then determine what, if any, penalty will be imposed.
 - b. Penalties will be determined at the discretion of the CRO based on the offence and the disciplinary policies and procedures of the MSA regarding elections. The penalties may include (but are not limited to):
 - o Verbal Warnings;
 - o Written Warnings, and/or;
 - o Disqualification;
 - o Revocation of MSA membership;
 - o Reporting to *Student Rights & Responsibilities* for further investigation and possible disciplinary action
 - c. The outcome will be communicated to both parties within two (2) business days.

d. If a candidate wishes to appeal a decision, a letter of appeal will be submitted to the *Appeals Committee* (msa.elections@mohawkcollege.ca, Subject Line: CRO Class A/B/C Infraction Appeal). The Board will review the complaint(s), the outcome and determine whether to uphold the sanction. The appeal results will be communicated to both parties in writing via electronic communication within two (2) business days. **The decision of the committee is final.**

20. Current MSA Board members must stay neutral throughout the nomination and campaign period and may not publicly endorse a candidate or participate on a candidate's campaign team. The only exception is, if a current Board member is running themselves, they may participate in their own campaign but may not use any MSA systems (MSA socials, website, etc.) or promote themselves while performing any official MSA duties.

21. If a candidate fails to adhere to any of the policies and procedures with regards to the campaign and election process, they may receive warnings, sanctions or may be subject to disqualification.

PROHIBITIONS AND ENFORCEMENTS

General Prohibitions

1. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, during an election period, no candidate shall:
 - a. Interfere with or disrupt the normal operations of the College including, but not limited to, any business or departments which normally operate on the College campus(es);
 - b. Interfere with or disrupt the normal operations of the MSA including, but not limited to, any business or departments which normally operate on the College campus(es);
 - c. Engage in conduct, whether direct or indirect, that intimidates, harasses, coerces, threatens, or improperly influences MSA staff, Mohawk College employees, election officials, volunteers, or any person involved in the administration or oversight of the election;
 - d. Disrupt any academic settings on campus or the academic pursuits of the student body without written and approved consent of the academic body and DRO (e.g., receiving approval from Faculty to present/campaign to a classroom and informing the RO of the date, time, and class)
 - e. Actively campaign in spaces across any Mohawk College space that is not an MSA approved in-person campaign event;
 - f. Remove, reposition, cover, overlap or deface another candidate's campaign material;
 - g. Use campaign material that has not been approved by the DRO;
 - h. Campaign on or off campus outside of the predetermined campaigning hours by the DRO;

- i. Campaign prior to the commencement of the campaign period;
- j. Offer a student means by which to vote electronically (as outlined in *Campaign Rules*);
- k. Campaign in conjunction (including but not limited to, coalescing or sharing content) with a candidate in a race other than their own held during the same election period;
- l. Engage in any forms of assault or unethical behaviour or campaigning, including those campaigning on behalf of candidates;
- m. Fail to abide by any provisions specified in this policy.

Enforcement Procedures

- 1. The Chief Returning Officer (CRO) is responsible for ensuring compliance with the rules and regulations stipulated by this or any other applicable MSA document. The CRO is empowered to sanction, penalize, and disqualify candidates for contraventions of this document in accordance with the Mission, Vision, and Values of the MSA.
- 2. Infractions of the MSA Elections shall be classified as “**Class A**,” “**Class B**,” and “**Class C**.”
 - a. **Class A Infractions** – shall be considered a contravention of the provisions of the elections policy or campaign rules that are deemed seriously detrimental to either the elections process or perception thereof and cannot be corrected through the application of a Class B or C Infraction. These infractions will also be subject to further investigation under Mohawk College Student Behaviour Policy and/or further legal action.
 - i. Disqualification
 - ii. Revocation of MSA membership
 - iii. Reporting to *Student Rights & Responsibilities* and/or other legal entities
 - b. **Class B Infractions** – shall be considered a contravention of the provisions of this policy that are deemed detrimental to either the elections process or the public perception thereof and can be corrected through the application of sanction. A “Class B Infraction” shall include any action performed by a candidate that confers upon them an unfair or irreparable advantage over their competitors.
 - i. Written warning
 - c. **Class C Infractions** – shall be considered a contravention to the provisions of this policy that are deemed not detrimental to either the elections process or the public perception thereof and can be corrected through the application of a sanction. A “Class C Infraction” shall include any action performed by a candidate that confers upon them an unfair advantage over other competitors.
 - i. Verbal Warning

3. Candidates who receive three (3) Class C Infractions OR two (2) Class B Infractions OR a combination of one (1) Class B and one (1) Class C infractions will be subjected to a Class A Infraction imposed on them by the CRO.

INFRACTIONS, BREACHES, AND SANCTIONS

All sanctions can be given to candidates, whether through complaints, observations of candidate behaviour, or individuals acting on behalf of a candidate. The below outlines an approximate determination of the infraction type (not exhaustive), potential rule breach, and sanction. As per the Elections, Appeals, and Referenda Policy, the CRO has the discretion to impose infractions; however, each candidate retains the right to appeal any sanctions.

Infraction Type	Rule Breach	Sanction
Class A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slander or libel against another candidate (e.g., defamation, spreading rumours, posting misleading information to damage an opponent's reputation) • Slander or libel against the MSA or Mohawk College • Bullying, harassment, discrimination, racism, ageism, homophobia, transphobia, sexualized violence, intimidation, or any forms of violence against a candidate, individuals campaigning on behalf of candidates, general student body, MSA staff, and/or Mohawk College staff • Engaging in any form of physical sabotage • Intentionally disrupting election events or candidate meetings (e.g., voting, social media, etc.) • Fraud • Voter manipulation and/or bribery • Campaigning in an academic setting without permission by instructor and notifying DRO • Campaigning outside of designated times or locations (major time lapses) • Interfering with another candidate's campaign materials (e.g., in person or online) • Failure to attend the All Candidates Meeting without prior arrangement 	<p>Disqualification, Report to Student Rights & Responsibilities and/or Legal Action</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substance abuse or intoxication during campaigning or the promotion of • Current MSA Board Members not staying neutral throughout the elections 	
Class B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not abiding by social media transparency rules (failure to add DRO and CRO as “friends”) • Posting on social platforms without DRO approval and not correcting errors • Campaigning outside of designated times or locations (minor time lapses) • Failure to submit campaign materials by the deadline • Campaigning with another candidate (coalescing or sharing content) • Using unfair campaign strategies that give significant advantage over others (e.g., use of MSA or Mohawk logos) without correction • Failure to remove campaign materials by given deadline post-campaign period 	Written Warning
Class C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Posting on social platforms without DRO approval but immediately correcting it • Posting on social platforms outside of approved times but correcting errors immediately • Using campaign methods outside of approved channels • Requesting permissions or approvals under the minimum 24-hour turnaround time 	Verbal Warning (documented)