

CHIEF RETURNING OFFICER POLICY

**POLICY: EL-02
ELECTIONS**

Reviewed	Executive Director	May 2022
Approved	Executive Committee	May 2022

POLICY INTENT

The intent of this policy is for SABVC to successfully manage the role of the Chief Returning Officer (CRO). The CRO is responsible for overseeing all aspects of SABVC's elections and referendum. The CRO must be fair and unbiased when inspecting and enforcing SABVC bylaws and Election policy and procedures.

CONTEXT

As per the bylaws, the CRO is an individual hired or appointed by SABVC for election proceedings. The CRO will ensure compliance with SABVC bylaws and policies and will assist in conducting free and fair elections and referendums.

POLICY

Chief Returning Officer Eligibility, Selection, and Orientation

1.0 An individual is not eligible to become the CRO if they are:

1.1 A current student; or

1.2 Have graduated from a BVC Program within one year of the election.

2.0 The Executive Director is responsible for posting the CRO job description, seeking applications, and recommending the CRO for approval to:

2.1 The Executive Committee for the September election;

2.2 Students' Council for the March election and Board of Governors Representative appointment;

2.3 Students' Council for a referendum;

2.4 Student's' Council for any necessary appointment or electoral process after September election;

3.0 The Executive Director shall orient the CRO.

4.0 The CRO shall be a neutral individual with no apparent, potential, or explicit conflicts of interest or biases in the election or referendum and shall be able to handle the challenges and demands that may come with the position.

5.0 The CRO shall be available for SABVC during work hours for the nomination period, campaign period, election date(s), and 5 business days after the election results are announced.

5.1 In case SABVC Appeals Committee receives an appeal after the election results, the CRO must be available for SABVC until the appeal process is finalized.

Election Responsibilities

6.0 The CRO shall act independently from SABVC with no apparent interest in the outcome of the election to ensure fair and equitable elections. The CRO must not have any actual or perceived Conflict of Interest in respect of the election, all as determined by the Executive Director and Council, acting reasonably.

7.0 The duties and responsibilities of the CRO include:

7.1 Being the main communication channel and answering questions in person on campus and/or online via email between nominees, candidates, and SABVC;

7.2 Being responsible for the official results and all SABVC election official announcements to potential candidates, nominees, and candidates;

7.3 Managing the candidate's nomination packages;

7.4 Reviewing, analyzing, and making decisions to respond to complaints, comments, and inquiries regarding candidate conduct and the administration of the election, documenting all issues, and sanctions thoroughly;

7.5 Reviewing inquiries regarding SABVC Electoral and Appointment Policy, and SABVC Election Campaign Procedures;

7.6 Address and document in writing any misconduct or violation of election bylaws or policies;

7.7 Being part of the Electoral Committee as a member;

7.8 Chairing the All Candidates Meeting;

7.9 Attending the All Candidates Forum;

7.10 Being present on campus during the election date(s) to monitor the voting process;

7.11 If the voting process is held in person, the CRO is responsible for assisting the Executive Director in:

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7.11.1 Overseeing the voting process including the transportation of ballots and ballot boxes; secure set-up and tear-down of voting stations each day; and confirming the eligibility of voters;

7.11.2 Facilitating the counting of ballots;

7.11.3 In the event of a tie, the ballots shall be immediately recounted. If a tie vote is confirmed, the CRO shall determine the winning Candidate by a coin toss;

7.12 Assisting the Executive Director and a minimum of two witnesses in examining and announcing the results of online voting;

7.13 Verifying the final election tallies and declaring the names of the elected Candidates;

7.14 Providing a final report detailing the election process to SABVC.

8.0 A CRO shall be paid a fair honorarium to be determined each year by Students' Council in compensation for their service.

Reporting

9.0 The CRO is to report all appeals to the Appeals Committee; election and referendum matters to the Students' Council; and operational matters to the Electoral Committee.

Candidate Conduct

10.0 Candidates who currently hold a position on Council or as an Executive shall not use, or appear to use, their position to further their campaign.

10.1 Any current Executives who are running in an Election must take a leave of absence from their position during the Campaigning Period and submit their keys to the Association until the election is complete. Arrangements for the Executive's duties and responsibilities shall be made prior to the commencement of their leave.

10.2 Candidates shall not attend SABVC events during the Campaigning Period.

11.0 SABVC resources shall not be used for the purpose of campaigning.

12.0 All Candidates and Campaign Team members for SABVC Elections are deemed to be associated representatives of SABVC and shall hold themselves to the standards defined in the BVC Learner Code of Conduct. Specifically, all Candidates and Campaign Team members shall:

12.1 Be registered for the election and attend the All Candidates Meeting;

12.2 Be personally responsible and liable for any damages resulting from the campaign;

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- 12.3 Be responsible for ensuring that practices that are unfair to other campaigns, as determined by the CRO, are not undertaken by a Candidate's Campaign Team; and
- 12.4 Be responsible for complying with and leading their Campaign Team to comply with the provisions of SABVC bylaws, policies, and regulations outlined during the All-Candidates Meeting.
- 13.0 At the discretion of the CRO, disqualification or punishment, including letters of reprimand, removal of campaign materials, or suspension from campaigning, may be issued if a Candidate and/or a Campaign Team exhibits inappropriate behaviours including, but not limited to:
- 13.1 Campaign material(s) such as handbills are brought into unapproved areas;
 - 13.2 Trivial or vexatious complaints;
 - 13.3 Sabotage by a Candidate or their Campaign Team of another Candidate's campaign material;
 - 13.4 Sabotage by a Candidate or their Campaign Team of any SABVC promotional material related or not to the election;
 - 13.5 Repeated violations;
 - 13.6 Undue Influence on an SABVC Member; and/or
 - 13.7 Bribery.

RELATED POLICIES

EL-01 Electoral and Appointment Policy

EL-01-A Election Campaign Procedures

GV-01 Policy on the Role of Students' Council

GV-02 Policy on the Role of Executive Committee