

HWUMSA Elections
2026/27
Campaign Protocols

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Date: 12 November 2025

PART I PRELIMINARY

A. SHORT TITLE

This protocol document may be cited as the Campaign Protocols.

B. INTERPRETATION

In this document, unless otherwise stated –

- “Bribery” refers to any act of giving or receiving favor, such as money, gifts or any advantages, that influence one’s decision;
- “Candidates” refers to shortlisted candidates who have received confirmation emails from hwum.iec@hw.ac.uk;
- “HWUMSA” refers to HWUM Student Association;
- “IEC” refers to Independent Election Commission;
- “Nomination period” refers to a period where students can nominate themselves for any of the elected positions;
- “Plagiarism” refers to any act of imitating a person’s work or idea in any form, with or without their consent, and not giving full acknowledgement to them;
- “Sabotage” refers to any act of gaining advantages against a person by destructing their equipment or property to disrupt fair competition;
- “Students” or “Student body” refers to students studying at Heriot-Watt University Malaysia;
- “University” refers to Heriot-Watt University Malaysia (HWUM).

PART II GENERAL

A. AUTHORITY OF INDEPENDENT ELECTION COMMISSION

1. The IEC has the authority to make amendments to the Campaign Protocols. Shall amendments be made; candidates will be notified before the amendment takes effect.
2. The IEC has the authority to impose penalties, which may include disqualification, on candidates if they fail to abide by the Campaign Protocols.

B. BRIEFING

1. Shortlisted candidates will be notified by 19th January 2026 via email by hwum.iec@hw.ac.uk, along with a request for them to attend a briefing about the campaign period on 21st January 2026, (time 2:00 pm MYT).
2. Attendance is mandatory for all shortlisted candidates. Candidates may bring up to two people from their campaign team to attend the briefing.
3. Where a candidate is unable to attend the briefing:
 - a. They must notify IEC in advance of the reason of absence;
 - b. They may nominate a representative to attend the briefing on their behalf;
 - c. If neither the candidate nor their representatives can attend the briefing, they will be deemed to accept any decisions made during the briefing. The IEC shall arrange for a separate briefing with the candidate should a valid reason for absence be provided.

C. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. The preparation period will commence from 19th January 2026 to 8th March 2026. Candidates are advised to take this period to:
 - a. Form their campaign team,
 - b. Develop their campaign manifesto and strategy,
 - c. Prepare any materials required for the campaign, and
 - d. Build alliances with student leaders (i.e., club leaders and class representatives)
2. A workshop (refer to Clause 24) will be organized by the IEC during the preparation period to help candidates prepare for their campaign. Attendance at these workshops is **optional**.
3. The campaign period will commence from 19th January 2026 to 8th March 2026. Candidates should utilize this period to campaign and convince students to vote for them.
4. Several events will be organized by the IEC during the campaign period to help promote candidates to the student body (refer to Clause 28). Attendance at these events, including Candidate Showcase and Question Day, is **mandatory** for all candidates.
5. Candidates are required to submit a photo of themselves by 25th January 2026. Candidates are also mandated to submit their manifestos (in text, 1080x1350px format (for Instagram usage) and 1920x1080px format (for Website usage)) and their answers to the following questions by 25th January 2026.
 - a. What motivated you to nominate yourself?
 - b. What three priorities will you pursue?
 - c. What would you bring to the role?
6. Candidates are provided with several platforms (refer to Clause 25) to promote themselves. Should candidates wish to use the platform given, the IEC must be notified in advance via email. Candidates are also permitted to use platforms not provided by the IEC subject to the rules and regulations in the campaign protocols.
7. A RM100 budget will be provided by the University to each candidate to run their campaign. A claim template will be provided by the IEC for fund claiming purposes at the end of the voting period. Candidates are expected to store receipts as supporting documents for any claims. The subject of any email regarding claims must include "Election Claim" at the beginning. All the claims must be submitted within 2 weeks after the election end and any late submission will be rejected.
8. The voting period will commence from 9th March 2026 (12:00AM MYT) to 12th March 2026 (4:59PM MYT). Election results will be announced on 13th March 2026 (4:00PM MYT).
9. The campaign protocols will be valid until 8th March 2026.

CAMPAIGNING RULES

1. Candidates must abide by all University rules, regulations, policies, and ordinances. Should candidates require full details, candidates are advised to refer to the [University website](#).
2. Candidates must not seek endorsements from serving elected HWUMSA officers (i.e., President, Vice-Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer) and University staff (including university service providers, such as guards and cleaners) in any capacity. Candidates may, however, seek endorsement from other HWUMSA officers in their individual capacities (i.e., they may only endorse candidates as peers but not HWUMSA officers).
3. Candidates are allowed to campaign together with other candidates for different positions. However, votes will be cast for each candidate independently.
4. Campaigns are only permitted to be conducted within the allocated timeframe (19th January 2026 to 8th March 2026). Any candidate who conducts a campaign activity before or after this period will face consequences such as **disqualification**.
5. Candidates are not permitted to use resources exclusive to only them, i.e., resources that are not readily available to all other candidates. Where candidates require clarifications of what resources are permitted to use, candidates are advised to consult the IEC.
6. The following requirements regarding campaign materials, events, and other strategies must be met:
 - a. Candidates are expected to behave honorably and responsibly.
 - b. No reference to competing candidates is allowed, especially anything that may be deemed derogatory, defamatory, insulting or offensive.
 - c. No reference to any specific individual or organization, external or in HWUM, without prior consent, is allowed, especially anything that may be considered derogatory, defamatory, insulting or offensive. Similarly, no reference to HWUMSA or HWUM (including the use of their logos).
 - d. No sabotage towards other candidates is allowed. This includes getting access to and/or manipulating other candidates' campaign literature.
 - e. Any mention of religion, race, politics, or any other potentially sensitive topic is strictly prohibited. Explicit content is also strictly forbidden.
 - f. Any act of bribery and plagiarism are strictly prohibited.
 - g. No personal information, including that gathered from students, is allowed to be publicized.
7. Any suspicion of a candidate violating the campaign regulations must be raised promptly to the IEC. Any information about the Complaint Protocols will be made available on the Election Rules page.

D. CAMPAIGNING GUIDANCE

1. Candidates may incorporate the following to help with their campaigns:
 - a. Forming a small team to assist with campaign management and design at the earliest convenience.
 - b. Drafting a timeline which outlines the plans scheduled throughout the campaign period.
 - c. Highlighting 3-5 achievable plans or adjustments for the upcoming academic year. Benefits to the student body from said plans or adjustments must always be discussed in an efficient and concise manner. Long paragraphs should be avoided.
 - d. Being creative with promotional materials. The design and structure should draw voters' attention. Including one or two catchphrases or taglines may help candidates stand out from the rest.
 - e. Utilizing the venue booked by the IEC during campaigning week.
2. Candidates may consider the following to utilize their provided RM100 funds:
 - a. Purchasing necessities (prizes or equipment) for physical/online events.
 - b. Printing brochures or leaflets to promote manifesto.
3. A workshop will be organized by the IEC to help candidates prepare for their campaign. Participation in the workshop is **compulsory**:
 - a. Workshop on The Reality of HWUMSA
 - i) Description: Roundtable session from HWUMSA 11.0 executives to talk about their experiences and responsibilities in HWUMSA etc.
 - ii) Date: 28 January 2026
 - iii) Time: 2.00pm – 4.00pm MYT
 - iv) Venue: Seminar Room 3, Level 2, East Wing

E. CAMPAIGNING PLATFORM REFERENCES

1. Several platforms are provided by the IEC for candidates to run their campaign. Candidates may choose not to utilize platforms provided which include:
 - a. Election Website: A profile page for each candidate
 - b. HWUMSA Instagram/Facebook: 2 posts per candidate
 - c. Email blast: Once per candidate
 - d. WhatsApp blast through class representatives and club presidents: Once per candidate (Candidates may also coordinate their own WhatsApp blast through their own network without any restriction)
 - e. Plaza during Candidates Showcase Day: Candidates may set up booths or organize events at said venue
2. Should candidates have further queries to use the platforms in Clause 25, candidates may contact the IEC team listed below. Note that all promotional materials will be prepared by the candidates:
 - a. WhatsApp blast: Jacqueline (+6016 8286019)
 - b. HWUMSA Instagram/Facebook post: Hannah (+6012 2615764)
 - c. Email blast: Hannah (+6012 2615764)
3. Candidates are responsible for updating their profile pages on the website.
 - a. Profile update can be done via [Profile Page Form](#) before 1 March 2026.
 - b. Should candidates wish to amend their profile pages, they are to contact Hannah (+6012 2615764) after submitting the Profile Page Form, to update the website database.
 - c. Request for profile page amendment after 1 March 2026 will not be entertained, except request for changes to graphics such as posters or videos.
4. In addition to the platforms listed in Clause 24, several events are organized by the IEC to help students know more about their candidates. Candidates' participation in these events is **mandatory**. These events include (subject to changes):
 - a. Candidate Showcase and Question Day
 - i. Description: Candidates are formally presented to the student body and have their first encounter with them. Candidates are encouraged to carry out minor events (such as giveaway, games)

and interact with the student body. The 2nd session is a session for candidates to present their manifestos and plans to all students and engage with all students.

- ii. Date: 24 - 26 February 2026
- iii. Time: 9.00 am – 2.30 pm MYT – (GMT+8)

I. PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL GUIDELINES

1. Candidates have full discretion to post content on any platform, so long as the content and platform comply with Clause 19 and 20.
2. Should candidates wish to use music in their content, **non-copyright music** must be used.
3. Should candidates wish to create video content, the length of the video must be **less than 1.5 minutes**.
4. Graphic size for Instagram posts is recommended to be:
 - a. Aspect ratio – 4:5
 - b. Size – 1080 x 1350
5. As recommended by HWUMSA, the album feature on Instagram which allows up to 10 graphics should be used by candidates.

J. PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL SUBMISSION

1. Candidates are provided with only **2 Instagram Post quota** to share content regarding their campaigns. Candidates are free to choose when to use these slots and the content can be in any format. Granted the **daily limit of 5 Instagram Posts** by HWUMSA, candidates' content will be posted based on a first come first serve basis.
 2. In accordance with Clause 25 and 34, candidates are to send their content (posters or videos) and captions [via this link](#) at least 3 days prior to the posting date.
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