

SAPO Election Policy, Governance Framework & Code of Conduct

1. Purpose and Objectives

- Establish a transparent, fair, democratic, and professional election process.
- Promote accountability, professionalism, ethical leadership, and member participation.
- Protect the integrity and reputation of SAPO throughout the election cycle.

2. Election Authority

- An independent Election Committee shall supervise and manage the election process.
- The committee shall announce election schedules, verify eligibility, manage nominations, conduct voting, verify results, and resolve election-related concerns.
- Committee members must remain neutral and shall not contest elections during the same cycle.

3. Positions

- President
- Vice President
- General Secretary
- Information Secretary
- Treasurer
- Student Affairs Secretary

4. Eligibility for Voting

- Must be a registered and active SAPO member.
- Membership dues must be cleared before the announced deadline.
- Must comply with SAPO ethics, rules, and policies.

5. Eligibility for Contesting Elections

- Must be an active SAPO member belonging to the Prosthetics & Orthotics profession.
- Must maintain good professional and ethical standing.
- Must not hold executive or representative positions in other O&P associations or educational institutions that may create conflicts of interest.
- Must contest only one position during an election cycle.
- Must submit complete nomination documents before the deadline.

6. Nomination Process

- Nominations must be submitted within the announced timeline.
- Incomplete, false, or late submissions may be rejected.
- Candidates may withdraw before the official withdrawal deadline.

7. Campaigning and Code of Conduct

- Candidates shall conduct themselves with professionalism, honesty, and respect.
- Personal attacks, defamation, harassment, misinformation, coercion, intimidation, bribery, and vote buying are prohibited.
- Campaign materials must be factual, professional, and approved by the Election Committee before distribution.
- Association resources, branding, funds, staff, or mailing lists may not be used for personal campaigning.

8. Social Media Guidelines

- All election-related content must be respectful, factual, and professional.
- Negative targeting of candidates or members is prohibited.
- Private messages, screenshots, and internal communications must not be shared publicly.
- Campaign content must clearly reflect personal views and not official SAPO positions.

9. Voting Framework

- All positions shall be contested through a formal voting process.
- One member is entitled to one vote per position.
- Voting may be conducted physically, online, or through a hybrid model.
- Secret ballot principles shall be maintained to ensure confidentiality.

10. Election Integrity and Oversight

- Independent observers may monitor the election process.
- Each candidate may nominate up to two scrutineers, subject to approval.
- Any tampering with voting processes may result in immediate disqualification.

11. Results, Tie-Breaking and Re-Elections

- Official results shall include total votes cast and votes received by each candidate.
- In the event of a tie, a re-vote or transparent draw may be conducted.
- Where a sole candidate fails to achieve the required threshold, the position may be declared vacant and re-election conducted.

12. Complaints and Appeals

- Complaints must be submitted in writing within the specified timeframe and include supporting evidence where possible.
- Appeals related to nominations, disqualifications, or election disputes shall be reviewed fairly and impartially.

13. Elected Members and Conflict of Interest

- Elected members must formally accept their role in writing.
- A No Conflict of Interest Declaration shall be signed before assuming office.
- Members are expected to serve their full term unless exceptional circumstances arise.

14. Voter Guidelines

- Election communications will be sent through registered contact details.
- Each voter is responsible for maintaining access to their registered email/login credentials.
- The voting platform will operate on a one-voter, one-account, one-vote principle.

15. General Principles

- Transparency
- Accountability
- Professionalism
- Neutrality
- Inclusiveness
- Democratic Participation
- Respect for Diversity