

**Student Election  
Commission  
2025-26**



# **Election Manual 2026**

---

**STUDENTS' GENERAL  
ELECTIONS 2026**

Indian Institute of Technology Madras

# Foreword

The Student Election Commission (SEC) of IIT Madras, constituted under the Students' Constitution (Chapter V, Section III, Clause VI), is entrusted with conducting free and fair student elections. In line with the recommendations of the Lyngdoh Committee, the SEC is committed to ensuring equal opportunity for all students to contest and participate in the electoral process.

At the heart of the SEC's mission is the belief that the power to shape the future of our campus rests with the students. We are committed to conducting free, fair, and inclusive elections that empower every student to participate, regardless of background. Through a transparent and evolving electoral process, we aim to strengthen responsibility, engagement, and the democratic spirit of IIT Madras.

We express our sincere gratitude to Prof. Ramkumar P, Chief Election Officer, and Prof. V. B. Maji, Deputy Election Officer, for their guidance, and to the Dean (Students) for unwavering support. With this collective effort, the SEC remains committed to fairness, integrity, and inclusivity, empowering students to lead responsibly and shape our campus with vision.

Thankfully,

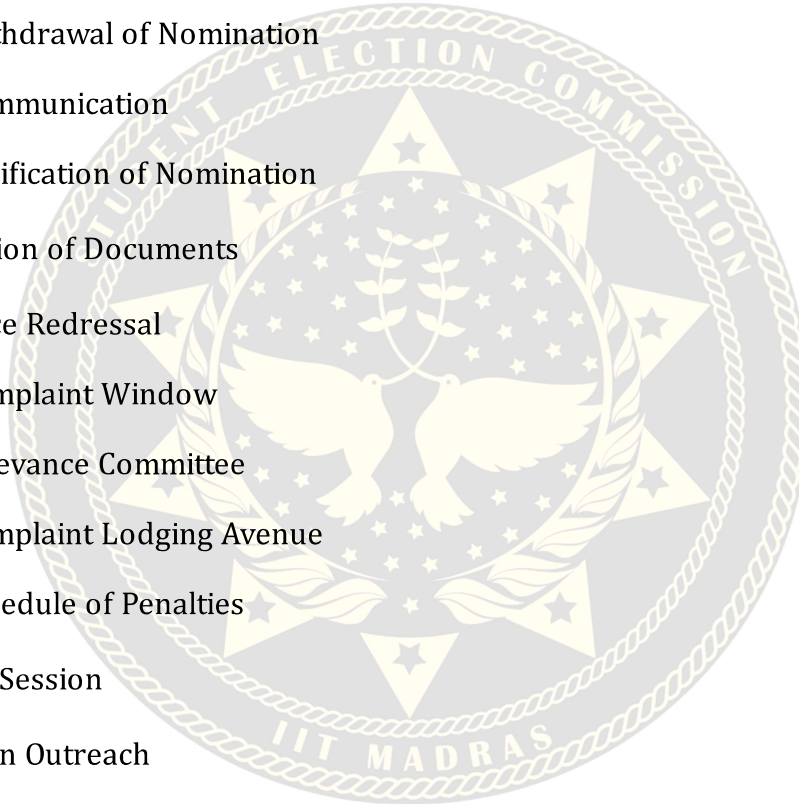
Mokshagna Teja G (HS24H055)  
Chief Election Commissioner 2025-26

Mythrayee K L (ME23B181)  
Election Commissioner 2025-26

Karthik Kurimindla (NA22B009)  
Senior Student Advisor to SEC

# Contents

- I. General Guidelines
- II. Election Notification
- III. Nomination Process
  - 1. Eligibility Criteria
  - 2. Filing of Nomination on Nomination Portal
  - 3. Withdrawal of Nomination
  - 4. Communication
  - 5. Verification of Nomination
- IV. Submission of Documents
- V. Grievance Redressal
  - 1. Complaint Window
  - 2. Grievance Committee
  - 3. Complaint Lodging Avenue
  - 4. Schedule of Penalties
- VI. Briefing Session
- VII. Campaign Outreach
  - 1. Campaigning Period
  - 2. Code of Conduct
  - 3. Candidate Outreach Forums
- VIII. Electorate
- IX. Polling
  - 1. Polling Date
  - 2. General Voting Norms



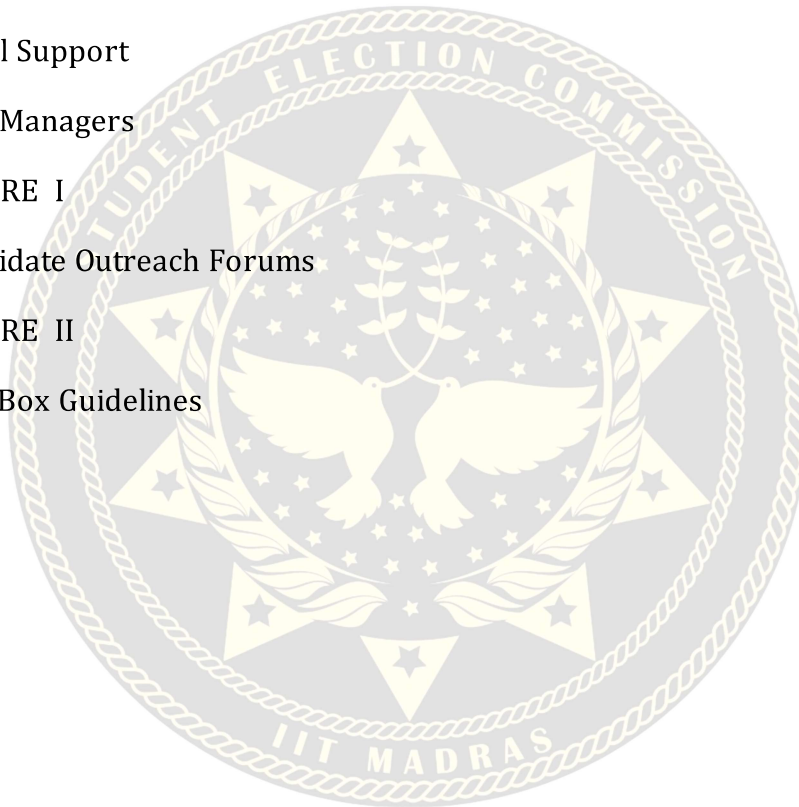
- 3. Special Provisions
- 4. Polling Venues
- 5. Electoral Verification
- 6. Voting Instructions
- 7. Movement Restrictions on Polling Day
  
- X. Counting and Results
- XI. Vacancy after Elections
- XII. Technical Support
- XIII. Election Managers

ANNEXURE I

Candidate Outreach Forums

ANNEXURE II

SoapBox Guidelines



# I. General Guidelines

1. Elections to all the posts in the Executive Council, Student Legislative Council and Hostel Councils shall be conducted by the Student Election Commission along with the Election Officers.
2. As per Chapter VII, Section I, Clause I of the Students' Constitution of IIT Madras, "the Student Election Commission will be empowered with the full authority to enforce any and all regulations, rules, policies and procedures related to Student Elections."
3. Expenses of the same shall be met from the Gymkhana Fees.
4. For Students' General Elections 2026 (SGE 2026), election shall not be conducted for the posts of:-

Department Council

Department of Applied Mechanics and Biomedical Engineering : Two positions for the newly offered B.Tech courses

- Computational Engineering and Mechanics
- Instrumentation and Biomedical Engineering

Hostel Councils

- Swarnamukhi Hostel
- Mandakini A Hostel
- Mandakini B Hostel

# II. Election Notification

The Student Election Commission shall prepare the Election Notification which shall be made public by the Office of the Dean (Students).

Election Notification shall contain the following details:

1. List of Post(s) open for Election and their corresponding Electorate(s)
2. Relevant dates, including but not limited to

- a. Nomination Window
  - b. Last date for Withdrawal of Nomination
  - c. Date of release of Valid Nominations
  - d. Last date for Documents Submission (Manifesto/SoP/Feasibility Report)
  - e. Date of release of Final Nominations
  - f. Briefing Session
  - g. Campaigning Window
  - h. Soapboxes
  - i. Polling Day
3. Eligibility Criteria
  4. Nomination Process
  5. Process for filing Complaints

## **III. Nomination Process**

### **1. Eligibility Criteria**

The following qualifications hold for all posts contesting in the elections:

- A. In case of B.Tech., DD, M.Tech., M.A., M.B.A., and M.Sc. students, the nominee's CGPA must be equal or exceed 6.5 at the date of filing the nomination;
- B. The nominee must have obtained the pass grade in NCC/NSO/NSS/NCA if NOT a research scholar;
- C. The nominee must NOT have a U, W, or I grade at the date of filing the nomination, except for an "I" grade in OB courses, which is exempted;
- D. In case of P grade, the nominee must NOT have ANY P grade in the preceding two semesters at the date of filing the nomination;
- E. The nominee belonging to a taught programme must have completed a minimum average of 45 credits per semester up to the previous semester from the date of filing of nomination.

The average shall be calculated as follows:

Average Credits per Semester = (Total Credits earned up to the previous semester) ÷ (Number of semesters completed)

This value must be greater than or equal to 45.

- F. The nominee must not have been found guilty of gross misconduct by the Hostel Disciplinary Committee, Complaint Committee Against Sexual Harassment, or any similar competent authority;
- G. The nominee must be a member of the electorate of the post they are contesting for;
- H. No person shall contest for more than one post concurrently;
- I. The nominee must remain a student for the entire academic year for which they have been elected. A Self Declaration confirming this, signed by the nominee must be submitted during the time of nomination;
- J. For M.S. and Ph.D. research scholars, the nominee should have cleared satisfactorily all the required courses for which they have registered, and should have received the scholarship amount uninterruptedly as evidence of having maintained satisfactory progress in research;
- K. In the case of sponsored candidates, permission from the sponsoring agency must be obtained for contesting any post;
- L. In the case of international candidates, students who have come to IIT Madras from foreign universities/colleges for a period of at least 1 academic year, permission from your parent university/college must be obtained for contesting any post.

All eligibility criteria mentioned above shall be strictly adhered to without fail.

**Note:** Not all eligibility criteria may be applicable to fresher candidates, given their current stage in the academic program.

## 2. Filing of Nomination on Nomination Portal

Nominations for all posts shall be filed online through the Nomination portal. Link to the Nomination portal shall be made known to the General Student Body (GSB) by SEC through mail.

Any and all efforts of collusion, including but not limited to the purposes of intimidation or circumventing the secrecy of the process while filing nominations are prohibited.

Any student/scholar fulfilling the aforementioned eligibility criteria for a post can login to the Nomination portal and submit the details as required.

Each candidate's nomination should be supported by a Proposer and a Secunder, both of whom shall belong to the electorate represented by the post sought by the candidate. No one can propose/second more than one candidate for the same post.

The candidate must submit the Self Declaration form through the Nomination Portal, adhering to the specified format and size requirements.

It is the candidate's sole responsibility to ensure that all required fields (such as name, roll number, hostel/department, post name, signature) are accurately completed. Failure to comply with any of these fields will result in the nomination being deemed invalid, without any exceptions.

### 3. Withdrawal of Nomination

Nomination once filed, can be withdrawn any time before the deadline for the same as announced in the Election Notification.

### 4. Communication

Candidates will receive comprehensive information and other crucial deadlines through the official mail of SEC. Candidates are required to provide their WhatsApp Contact Number both in the Self Declaration form attached in the Election Notification as well as in the Nomination Portal to ensure efficient dissemination of information.

### 5. Verification of Nomination

Verification of eligibility criteria and declarations submitted during nomination shall be carried out by the SEC.

In case of doubt, the candidate shall submit to the SEC the relevant documents proving their eligibility when called for. Failing to do so would result in disqualification.

Please be advised that submissions of incomplete undertaking forms will not be accepted for valid nominations. The SEC will not be held responsible for any requests regarding the consideration of incomplete forms.

## IV. Submission of Documents

Candidates shall submit the following documents once their nomination is declared as Valid Nomination by SEC through the Nomination Portal.

Manifesto and Feasibility report are mandatory for all candidates for valid candidature; and submission of Statement of Purpose (SoP) is mandatory for all the candidates contesting for the post of Legislator.

### 1. Manifesto

Manifesto should contain the candidate's vision, plans, initiatives they propose to undertake if elected to the post, and any other bona fides to proffer their credibility or qualification for the post.

The manifesto shall not exceed one page (one side) of A4 dimensions and shall have a minimum font size of 9.

### 2. Statement of Purpose (SoP)

Candidates contesting for the post of legislators shall submit a Statement of Purpose in addition to their Manifesto. It shall, but is not only limited to contain the following.

- a. The Standing Committees (minimum three) that they wish to be a part of;
- b. The policies/problems that they shall raise as members of the Standing Committee(s);
- c. The general policies/initiatives that they shall raise in the Student Legislative Council.

### 3. Feasibility Report

A report containing the feasibility checks done for initiatives/plans listed in the Manifesto and SoP. Financial, temporal feasibilities, timelines, budgets, and checks with administrative authorities on approvals/sanctions may be listed out.

The submitted Manifesto / Feasibility Report / Statement of Purpose shall form the official basis of the candidate's campaign narrative. Any substantial deviation during campaigning may be examined by the SEC.

The SEC reserves the right to review, seek clarifications, and publish submitted documents in a standardized format for public access.

## V. Grievance Redressal

### 1. Complaint Window

The Complaint Window shall remain open throughout the entire Election Schedule across all stages. Students should file their complaints only through the Complaint Tab available on the SGE 2026 Nomination Portal.

These complaints shall be reviewed and resolved by the Student Election Commission (SEC). The Commission shall exercise its full authority to investigate complaints and impose appropriate actions.

### 2. Grievance Committee

The Grievance Committee will also be responsible for addressing complaints related to the election process. It shall have full authority to impose appropriate actions based on the availability of the Committee and the severity of the complaints. Depending on the severity of the complaint, the composition of the Grievance Committee might vary.

The decision of the Grievance Committee shall be final and binding.

#### **Composition of the Grievance Committee:**

The Grievance Committee shall comprise the following members, depending on the requirements of the case:

- Senior Faculty Member (Chairperson)
- Dean (Students)
- Deputy Registrar (Students)
- Chief Election Officer

- Deputy Election Officer
- SECC Faculty Advisor
- Chairman or Vice Chairman, Council of Wardens
- Members of the Student Election Commission

### 3. Complaint Lodging Avenue

All complaints regarding elections must be filed through the **SGE 2026 Nomination Portal** which would be used by the contestants to file their nominations. GSB can look over the Valid nominations after which they can launch a complaint on the same portal against any candidate(s).

### 4. Schedule of Penalties

Based on the severity and nature of the violation, the Student Election Commission may impose one or more of the following penalties on candidates or associated individuals (including supporters):

- **Written Reprimand:** Issued to the candidate or involved individuals.
- **Discretionary Punishment:** Includes the reduction of SEC-designated campaigning items or any other appropriate sanctions.
- **Public Letter of Apology:** The candidate or involved individuals must issue a public letter of apology to the electorate, acknowledging the violation.
- **Suspension of Campaign:** The candidate's campaign may be suspended for an appropriate period.
- **Cancellation of Nomination:** The candidate's nomination may be canceled if the violation is severe.
- **Sanctions on Non-Candidates:** For non-candidates found guilty of misconduct, appropriate disciplinary actions will be taken in accordance with complaint redressal procedure as outlined in the Students' Constitution.

The penalty imposed shall be proportional to the severity of the violation, and the SEC shall determine the most appropriate action on a case-by-case basis.

---

## VI. Briefing Session

SEC shall conduct a briefing session regarding the campaigning guidelines for SGE 2026. In addition to it, a session on mental wellbeing shall also be conducted by SEC in collaboration with the Wellness Centre, IIT Madras.

Attendance at this session is mandatory for all candidates whose names feature in the final nomination list released by the SEC.

Failure to participate in the session on the specified date and time, as delineated in the Election Notification shall result in appropriate penalties.

## VII. Campaign Outreach

### 1. Campaigning Period

Any form of campaigning is restricted to the campaigning period as declared in the Election Notification.

### 2. Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct for campaigning shall be notified separately through 'Model Code of Conduct' document.

### 3. Candidate Outreach Forums

The Student Election Commission shall organize candidate outreach forums, including Soapboxes and other interaction platforms between the candidates and the electorate, as it deems appropriate.

*Refer to ANNEXURE I for guidelines issued by the SEC on such forums.*

The sole right to regulate, organise and formulate the rules and guidelines regarding all candidate outreach forums lies with the Student Election Commission.

## VIII. Electorate

The electorate for each post is as specified in the Election Notification and Students' Constitution.

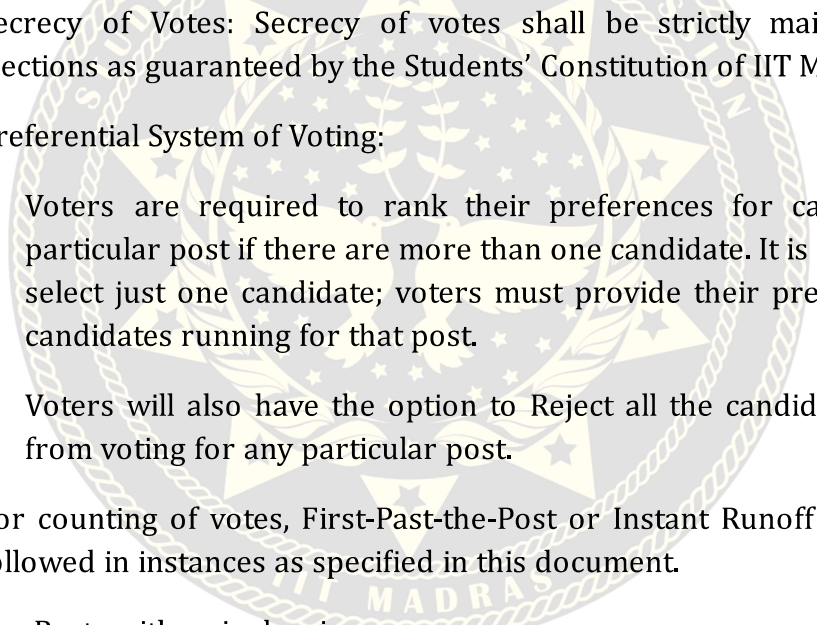
The Student Election Commission shall obtain, and verify the validity of all voters at least 4 days before the date of the election. This preliminary voter list must be made accessible online in an appropriate form and publicized to the General Student Body, and requests for changes must be entertained till 48 hours before the election. Each hostel needs to maintain a voter list of its residents only.

## IX. Polling

### 1. Polling Date

Polling date shall be as announced in the Election Notification.

### 2. General Voting Norms

- 
- a. Secrecy of Votes: Secrecy of votes shall be strictly maintained for all elections as guaranteed by the Students' Constitution of IIT Madras,
  - b. Preferential System of Voting:
    - i. Voters are required to rank their preferences for candidates for a particular post if there are more than one candidate. It is not sufficient to select just one candidate; voters must provide their preferences for all candidates running for that post.
    - ii. Voters will also have the option to Reject all the candidates or Abstain from voting for any particular post.
  - c. For counting of votes, First-Past-the-Post or Instant Runoff Voting shall be followed in instances as specified in this document.
  - d. For Posts with a single winner:
    - i. In case of two candidates: First-Past-the-Post voting will be followed.
    - ii. In case of more than two candidates: Instant Runoff Voting system with full ranking where voters shall rank all candidates in their order of preference.
  - e. For Posts with more than one winner: A direct selection process from the existing pool of candidates among whom the tie has occurred will be done by the Warden/HoD/Dean (Students) for hostel, department, and Executive Council positions respectively.

### 3. Special Provisions

Recognising the diverse academic pursuits that may necessitate the absence of students from campus, alternative voting methods will be facilitated on Polling Day.

The Student Election Commission will hold the exclusive authority to assess and decide the eligibility of students who are unable to be physically present on campus on polling day due to academic engagements such as conferences, semester exchanges, or internships outside the Institute.

### 4. Polling Venues

Polling Venues shall be set up in all the functional hostels along with common polling booths, details of the same would be made known to the voters in advance. Officers in Polling Booths shall be deputed through the authorities concerned in collaboration with SEC.

### 5. Electoral Verification

The booth officers shall obtain the Institute Identity Card from each voter and verify the identity of the voter with the list made available for the booth.

- a. In absence of the same, a letter signed by the Hostel Warden/Department HoD may be used.
- b. Any photo authenticated digital identity proof issued by the Institute or CCW which if acceptable to SEC shall be considered credible identity proof for casting vote.

### 6. Voting Instructions

Voting instructions will be made available to students in an appropriate format 48 hours before the elections. These shall be displayed in the polling booths as well.

### 7. Movement Restrictions on Polling Day

- a. All students/scholars shall carry their physical ID cards on the day of the election.

- b. Entry of non-residents to hostels excluding the SEC team members shall be reasonably restricted from **16th March 2026, 10:00 PM to 17th March 2026, 10:00 PM.**
- c. Any form of canvassing on election day is prohibited.
- d. No incentives will be promised/provided to voters to vote for a candidate, including facilitating vehicular travel to and from the polling station.

## X. Counting and Results

### A. Definitions

1. **Total Votes Cast:** The total number of votes recorded for a particular post, including abstain votes, reject votes, and valid candidate preference votes.
2. **Abstain Vote:** A vote where the voter has explicitly chosen to abstain from selecting or ranking any candidate for the post.
3. **Non-Abstain Vote:** Any vote where the voter has either expressed preference for one or more candidates or has chosen to reject all candidates.
4. **Reject Vote:** A vote where the voter has explicitly indicated rejection of all candidates contesting for the post.
5. **Valid Vote:** Any non-abstain vote that is properly cast in accordance with the prescribed voting procedure.
6. **Electorate:** All eligible voters entitled to vote for the particular post.

### B. Preconditions for Counting

The Counting of votes for a particular post shall proceed only if all the following conditions are satisfied:

1. The number of non-abstained votes exceeds 50% of the total votes cast for that particular post.
2. The number of rejected votes, out of the non-abstained votes, is less than 50%.

If either of the above conditions is not satisfied, all candidates shall be considered rejected and the post shall be declared vacant.

---

## C. Categories of Vote Counting

The counting of votes shall be conducted using one of the following methods, as applicable;

### A. First Past the Post (FPTP)

The First-Past-the-Post voting system shall be used only when there are two candidates contesting for a particular post.

Votes for each candidate will be counted. The candidate with the highest number of valid votes shall be declared as the winner, provided the rejection conditions specified in above Section B are not met.

### B. Instant Runoff Voting (IRV)

This method shall be used when more than two candidates are contesting for a particular post.

Given the candidates are not rejected,

- a. The first preference of a voter will be counted as the vote total for the respective candidate in the first round.
- b. If any candidate receives more than 50% of these first preference valid non-abstain votes polled, that candidate shall be declared as the winner.
- c. If no candidate achieves more than 50% of the votes polled at this stage, the counting process enters the next round.
- d. The candidate with the least first preference votes shall be eliminated and their votes shall be redistributed among the rest of the candidates as per the next higher level of preference (second preference) of each voter.
- e. After redistribution, if any candidate receives more than 50% of the valid votes, the candidate shall be declared as the winner. In absence of a candidate reaching 50%, the next round of counting will begin.
- f. The process of elimination and redistribution shall continue until a candidate secures more than 50% of the valid votes or the lone remaining candidate shall be declared as the winner.

## D. Abstain Votes

Abstain votes shall be counted in determining the total votes cast for a post. They shall be ignored during the calculation of rejection for a post.

These votes shall not be considered as valid votes for any candidate. They shall be excluded from calculations determining candidate vote shares during the counting process.

Results shall be deemed official if it is published by the Office of the Dean (Students), duly signed, to the General Student Body and shall be kept confidential until such publication.

# XI. Vacancy after Elections

## A. Executive Council positions

1. SEC shall conduct Special Elections in case a position remains unfilled or if an elected representative resigns with more than three months to go before the scheduled General Elections as stated in Chapter VIII, Section I (II) of the Students' Constitution of IIT Madras.
2. In case of a vacancy in a special election, the appointment procedure shall initiate and the appointee will continue until the next general election and shall gain full executive power.
3. If an elected representative resigns with less than three months remaining before the scheduled General Elections, the SEC will issue a 'Call for applications' via student mail.
4. The appointee shall be a member of the GSB for the entire academic year, not just the interim period.
5. The appointee shall also satisfy the eligibility criteria set forth by the SEC.
6. The appointee shall be chosen by the corresponding Faculty Advisor and Dean (Students).
7. The current secretary shall inform the SECC and notify the SLC once the selection has been made.

8. SLC shall ratify the appointee within 2 weeks of the receipt notification. Lack of motion from SLC during this period would result in automatic ratification.
9. The appointee shall not stand for the subsequent election.
10. The appointee shall not be referred to as acting or interim but an entity as a whole to emphasise the authority granted to him/her.
11. The current secretary may request for a limit on the powers granted to the appointee to make structural changes in the verticals under the executive with a reasonable explanation and shall be granted upon the approval from the Faculty Advisor.

### **B. Hostel and Department Council positions**

1. SEC shall 'Call for applications' for all the vacant positions with a designated application format. The applicants should necessarily meet all eligibility criteria that are ordinarily required to contest for the same post.
2. SEC shall gather all these applications and forward it to the respective Warden/HOD to make a choice from the list of applications received. The decision is entirely of the Warden/HOD. Current council members will not have any say in this decision. Candidates thus nominated shall hold the post till the next elections.
3. In case of a lack of response or choice to not select anyone from the pool of applicants by the corresponding Warden/HOD after more than 3 intimations and passage of a designated time (whichever comes later), the Dean (Students) shall be presented a list of all vacancies and can nominate based on mode of preference. Candidates thus nominated shall hold the post till the next elections.

The removal procedure for the direct nominations will follow the same procedure as that of the elected representatives. The procedure for impeachment of secretaries, whether elected or nominated, is governed by the Students' Constitution.

## **XII. Technical Support**

Technical partners shall be beneficially engaged for the smooth conduct of elections. SEC can designate a Website liaison team or any other Technical

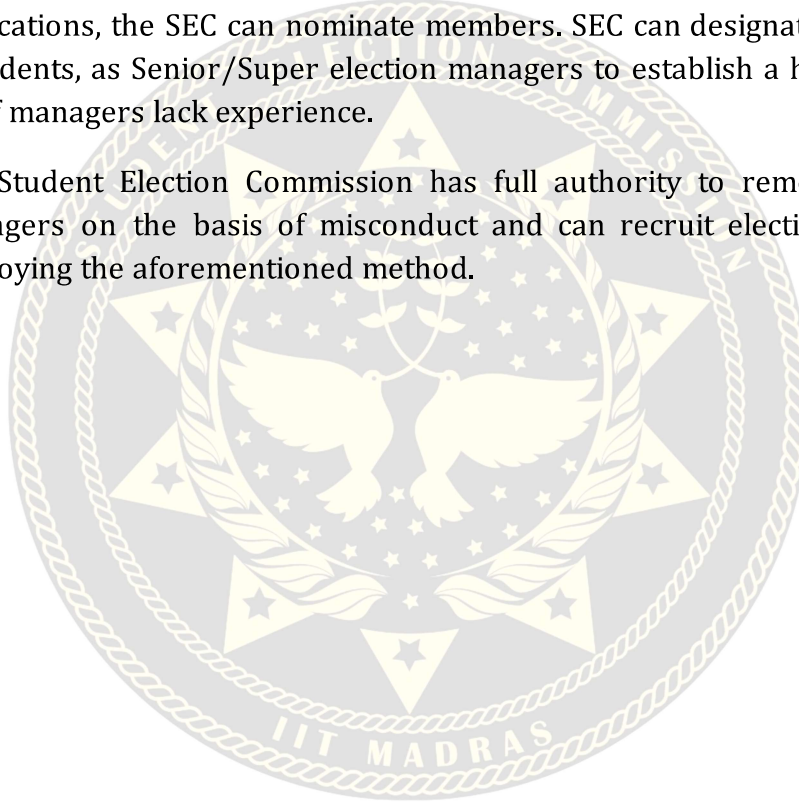
Support Team for conducting Student Elections but under the strict supervision of the SEC Commissioners and Election Officers.

## **XIII. Election Managers**

The Student Election Commission may select students as election managers to assist it in conducting the elections. These managers shall not be members of the commission but shall work directly under the supervision of the commission.

Applications shall be called for from the General Student Body. Absent applications, the SEC can nominate members. SEC can designate, not more than 5 students, as Senior/Super election managers to establish a hierarchy when a lot of managers lack experience.

The Student Election Commission has full authority to remove any election managers on the basis of misconduct and can recruit election managers by employing the aforementioned method.



---

# ANNEXURE I

## CANDIDATE OUTREACH FORUMS

The following clause in the election manual grants SEC this power:

*“The Student Election Commission shall organize candidate outreach forums, including Soapboxes and other interaction platforms between the candidates and the electorate, as it deems appropriate.”*

In order to ensure structured, fair, and transparent engagement between candidates and the electorate, candidate outreach forums shall be classified into the following categories:-

### **Type-A Forums: Mandated by the Student Election Commission**

Type-A Forums refer to forums that are officially organized, mandated, or conducted under the authority of the Student Election Commission (SEC). These are;

- Soapboxes organized by SEC or under its direction
- Closed Door Questionnaire by a Panel, including the Media Body. The video will be recorded and published online.

Participation in such forums shall be governed by rules notified by the SEC. The SEC reserves the right to determine the structure, schedule, and conduct of these forums.

These forums shall proceed as scheduled regardless of candidate participation.

*Refer to ANNEXURE II for Soapbox Guidelines for all posts.*

### **Type-B Forums: Externally Organized Forums with SEC Approval**

Type-B Forums refer to forums organized by individuals, student bodies, or any external group, which are not mandated by the SEC but are conducted with prior approval of the SEC.

The following conditions shall apply:

- Prior approval from SEC is mandatory

- SEC shall have discretionary authority to approve or reject such requests
- SEC shall not be responsible for organizing or publicizing these forums
- These forums shall be conducted only in accordance with guidelines prescribed by SEC
- Any recordings or publications arising from such forums shall require prior SEC approval before release. All such videos are considered a form of electioneering, regardless of bias, and must adhere to SEC guidelines.

The organizers can hold the forum, in whatever form, for a particular post, if and only if, all the candidates who have filed for the post give consent to holding this forum. If a candidate feels that they may not receive fair treatment in the forum, they can choose not to attend. The Forum must not be held for that post in such a scenario.

Holding a forum with only one, or a few of the candidates without consent of one, or a few others standing for the particular post will not reach an approval as it would just be free publicity for the individual participating. The organizers shall present SEC with a consent form from the candidates in the affirmative.

In posts where only one candidate is contesting, SEC should be informed prior, the questionnaire as there is no legitimate scrutiny party in this scenario, and SEC would in all cases avoid giving permission to a flattery video with unserious questioning.

SEC reserves the right to regulate such forums to ensure fairness, neutrality, and compliance with election regulations. Failure to comply with the above guidelines will result in SEC imposing penalties.

# ANNEXURE II

## SOAPBOX GUIDELINES

The Student Election Commission shall organize Soapboxes for candidates contesting Executive Council Posts to facilitate interaction between the candidates and the electorate.

Kindly note, participating in Soapbox is mandatory for all the candidates who are contesting for the Executive Council Posts. Failing to participate in Executive Council Soapboxes shall result in disqualification of the candidates. The final discretion lies with the SEC in examining the reason(s) behind not participating in soapboxes.

For Hostel and Department Council Posts, the Outgoing Council/representatives shall organize Soapboxes among the candidates with guidance from the SEC in the presence of the Election Managers appointed by the SEC.

### **General Norms:**

1. SEC is the final authority on all the issues related to organizing and conducting the Soapbox through the powers granted by the Election Manual and Students' Constitution of IIT Madras.
2. SEC will be moderating the discussion between the candidate(s) and the questioners, as well as the audience in case of Soapbox for candidates contesting for Executive Council Posts (Institute Soapboxes).
3. SEC will hold the right to expel students or anyone else, who it deems to be causing a disturbance in the peaceful functioning of the process.
4. SEC has the constitutional mandate to uphold the integrity of the Students' Constitution of IIT Madras by ensuring that all the GSB members respect and abide by it without any fail. Any individual or organisation not abiding by the same as identified by SECC shall not be allowed to participate in the Institute soapboxes in any manner.
5. SEC has the right to ask participants of the Institute soapboxes to maintain equity in the questions being asked or the areas being covered to a candidate or multiple candidates.

## Rules & Instructions:

1. Invitations will be extended by the Student Election Commission to individuals eligible to participate in the Institute Soapboxes, outlining the pertinent details.
2. The **Outgoing Legislators/Council** are supposed to conduct the soapboxes for their respective hostels and department on prescribed dates as announced in the Election Notification circulated by DoST Office. The timings for soapboxes must align with those specified in the Election Notification for the campaigning period and must be strictly adhered to.
3. In any case, the Outgoing elected representatives are expected to mail the information regarding the scheduled soapbox to the SEC at [sec@smail.iitm.ac.in](mailto:sec@smail.iitm.ac.in) at least **24 hours** before the scheduled soapbox. The email subject should follow the format:

<Name\_of\_the\_Hostel> Hostel Council SoapBox Schedule || DD.03.2026

<Name\_of\_the\_Department> Council SoapBox Schedule || DD.03.2026

Eg.

Narmada Hostel Council SoapBox Schedule || 14.03.2026

Civil Engineering Department Council Soapbox Schedule || 15.03.2026

The email should also contain the following, Name of the Post, Timings and Venue

4. At least one SEC election manager would be present in each soapbox that would be conducted either in offline or online mode depending on the convenience of the candidates and electorate but would not be moderating the same.
5. Candidates should be present at the venue at least **15 minutes** prior to the beginning of their scheduled soapbox.
6. Candidates are requested to dress appropriately as you will be addressing the electorate about your candidacy.
7. Candidates (Hostel and Department Council Posts) are requested to mail the PPTs/PDFs to the outgoing elected representatives in advance and also carry a pen drive with the data you need or any other information you want to show during the soapbox, just in case. Candidates (Executive Council Posts) should mail their PPTs/PDFs to the SEC at [sec@smail.iitm.ac.in](mailto:sec@smail.iitm.ac.in) at least **3 hours** before their scheduled soapbox.

8. The candidate who arrives first will have the advantage of drawing power. The order of the candidates will be determined by drawing lots during the pre-soapbox period, if all the candidates arrive on time. Late arrival will result in forfeiting the drawing power, allowing the candidate present to choose the order.
9. The SoapBox begins with opening presentations where candidates will be given **4-5 minutes** to detail their manifesto, their vision and present their case to the voters. In case of an Executive Council post, candidates will be given **6-7 minutes**. The moderator should not hesitate to interrupt in between if the candidate crosses the limit.
10. Following the opening presentations, the floor will be opened for cross-questioning. Not applicable for posts with one nominee.
  - a. Each candidate gets to ask **2 questions** with **1 follow-up** per question to his/her opponent.
  - b. In the case of Executive Council posts, each candidate gets to ask **3 questions** with **2 follow ups** per question to his/her opponent.

The recipient will have **2 minutes** for answering a direct question and **60 seconds** for a follow-up.
11. In a Soap Box with more than 2 candidates, it is up to the candidate to choose to divide the 2 questions he/she has between the opponents.
12. After cross-questioning, the rest of the time will be split into rounds mostly with other stakeholders and audience questioning. The candidates shall not refer to their opponents during the rest of the session unless prompted or allowed by the moderator proactively.
13. The moderator can choose to ask a follow up to any of the questions if he/she feels the answer to a question wasn't answered to satisfactory need.
14. In between rounds, SEC can choose to ask questions it received from stakeholders who couldn't be physically present or any other questions that it deems appropriate on topics that might not have been touched during the Soap Box.
15. Students who are not part of the electorate shall not be entertained during the soapbox. The audience is not guaranteed a follow-up but will be granted on a case-by-case basis keeping time constraints in mind.
16. A designated time interval during the soapbox proceedings will be dedicated to the Student Ethics and Constitution Commission (SECC) for the purpose of posing

questions to the candidates, specifically focusing on their understanding of the Students' Constitution.

17. The individuals formally proposing and seconding a candidate (Non-Executive Council Posts) will be granted a designated timeframe during the soapbox session to present inquiries.



**Conclusion:**

This Election Manual shall come into force from the date of its notification and shall remain in effect for the conduct of the Students' General Elections 2026 and all processes incidental thereto.

All candidates, election officials, and stakeholders are required to strictly adhere to the provisions contained herein.

The Student Election Commission reserves the sole authority to interpret the provisions of this Manual and to issue clarifications, guidelines, or instructions as may be necessary to ensure the smooth, free, fair, transparent, and orderly conduct of elections.

Issued in the interest of ensuring the integrity and proper conduct of the Students' General Elections at IIT Madras.

**Issued by:**

Student Election Commission 2025-26  
IIT Madras



**Dr. Ramkumar P**

Chief Election Officer

Email: [ramkumar@iitm.ac.in](mailto:ramkumar@iitm.ac.in)



**Dr. V B Maji**

Deputy Election Officer

Email: [vbmaji@iitm.ac.in](mailto:vbmaji@iitm.ac.in)



**Ms. Mokshagna Teja G**

Chief Election Commissioner

Email: [sec@smail.iitm.ac.in](mailto:sec@smail.iitm.ac.in)



**Ms. Mythrayee K L**

Election Commissioner

Email: [sec@smail.iitm.ac.in](mailto:sec@smail.iitm.ac.in)



**Mr. Karthik Kurimindla**

Senior Student Advisor to SEC

Email: [sec@smail.iitm.ac.in](mailto:sec@smail.iitm.ac.in)

\*\*\*\*\*