

CUSA^X elections

Notice of Decision from the Chief Returning Officer – 2024 General Election - Complaint #2

Details of Complaint: On February 6, 2024 the CRO received multiple complaints from electors alleging that Kamran Azizli, a Presidential candidate, committed numerous violations of the Poster section of the Campaign Guidelines and of the University’s Posting Policy through campaign posters put up around campus on February 6th. Although multiple complaints were submitted, due to the closely related and overlapping nature of them, they were consolidated and dealt with as a whole through this investigation and decision. Specific complaints included the alleged posting of campaign posters on or in spaces other than existing boards designated for postings in the Nideyinàn, Tory, Southam Hall, Library, and Nicol buildings, along with the campus tunnels.

Fact Findings: The CRO investigated the complaint, and reviewed numerous pieces of video and photo evidence from multiple sources. They found that the evidence was able to corroborate the allegations that the candidate’s campaign posters had been placed contrary to the rules and regulations outlined in the Campaign Guidelines¹, as posters were observed in and on locations other than existing boards designated for posting. This included posters observed on campus walls, tables, library study rooms and tables, classroom signage, classroom desks and bathroom countertops. As per the Campaign Guidelines, *“Posters may only be affixed on campus to existing bulletin boards and existing wall spaces specifically designated for postings.....”*. It further states that all posting must be done in accordance with Carleton University’s Posting Policy² which states that *“Posters and other notices may not be affixed to walls, pillars, bathroom stalls, doors, windows or any other location not specifically designated for public display purposes.”*

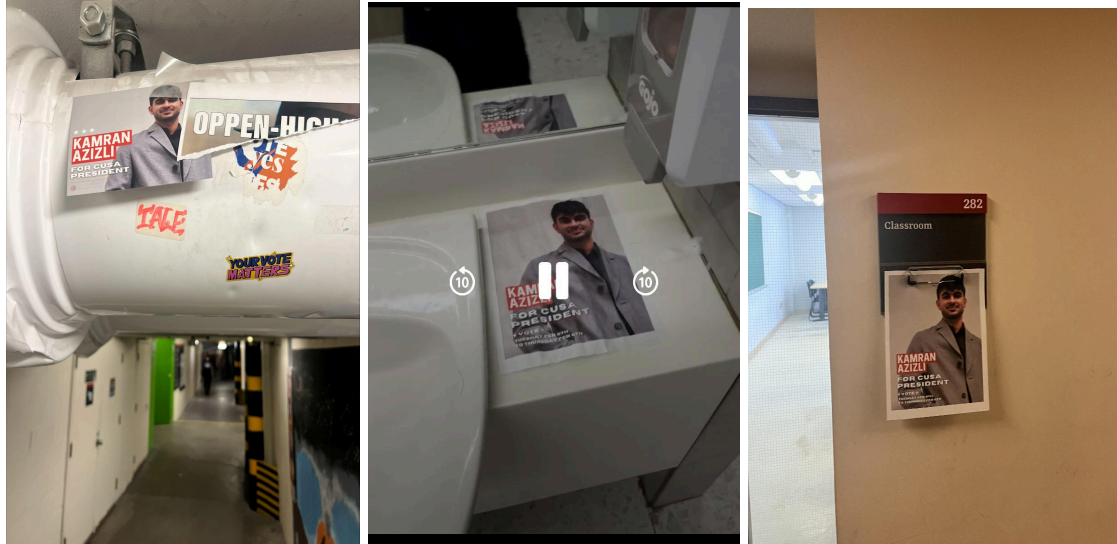
As part of their investigation, the CRO also contacted Carleton University Library Services who confirmed that their staff had noticed unauthorized candidate postings in the Library on February 6th, and that their staff were removing unauthorized materials as they went about their jobs.

¹ [Campaign Guidelines](#)

² [Posting Policy](#)

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A non-exhaustive sample of evidence reviewed is presented in the pictures below, which show unauthorized posters from the candidate found on locations that are not existing boards designated for posting, including 1) Campus tunnels; 2) Bathroom countertop in the Library; 3) Classroom signage in Nideyinàn building.



Analysis: In reviewing the photo and video evidence submitted, the CRO considered the large quantity of posters found that were not in compliance, along with the breadth of locations they were found in, and reasonably concluded that the postings were part of an intentional campaign strategy to gain the candidate visibility. They further considered that the appearance of the posters not in compliance coincided with the opening of the voting period on February 6th at 9:00am, and therefore the candidate could have received a real or perceived unfair advantage from these actions.

When contacted, the candidate was apologetic and fully cooperative with the CRO, and committed to removing the posters not in compliance as soon as possible on the evening of February 6th. The candidate asserted that they were not aware the posters were in non-compliance, and while the CRO appreciates their cooperation and willingness to quickly rectify the situation as soon as possible, as per S. 81 of the Code, ignorance of any provision is not a defence. Furthermore, the CRO specifically highlighted at the all-candidates meeting the need for candidates to carefully review the postering rules and regulations

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provided in the Campaign Guidelines as there were detailed requirements that had to be adhered to.

Conclusion: Upon investigating and analyzing the complaint submitted, it is concluded that the candidate did engage in campaign posting in violation of the Campaign Guidelines and Carleton University's Posting Policy through posters of the candidate put up in and on numerous locations around campus on February 6, 2024.

Decision: For the reasons outlined above, the CRO issues Kamran Azizli, a Presidential candidate, a minor electoral offence for a violation of the Campaign Guidelines issued under the Electoral Code and a penalty of two demerit points. Furthermore, the above decision is conditional on the candidate following through, in good faith, their commitment to remove as many of the posters in violation as possible the evening of February 6th. Any remaining posters in violation must be removed by 12:00pm on February 7th, and no additional posters in violation may be put up. Failing to follow through on the above may trigger the re-opening and reassessment of this decision, and further penalties applying.

Issued: February 6, 2024 by: