2023 GSA General Election and Election of the Associate Vice-President Labour: CRO Decision in the matter of alleged breaches brought against Pruthak Patel – 2 March 2023

Several other candidates and students brought to my attention that a candidate for Vice-President Academic, Pruthak Patel, violated several sections of GSA Bylaw and Policy. The GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (GSA ERC) was consulted with respect to this matter and, as per GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section I.POL.11.2.e, and a decision was made based on this consultation. The candidate’s total vote count was deducted by 37.5% after all of the votes were totalled. Please find a summary below of the rationale for this consequence, which also notes the infractions reported and the sections of GSA Bylaw and Policy that were deemed to have been violated:

- A student came forward with a screenshot of another candidate sending them a message on LinkedIn asking them to vote for the candidate in question. This is a violation of GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section I.POL.10.4. Although the candidate was not involved in this message, the other candidate was acting as a campaign volunteer. This resulted in a deduction of 10%.
- Multiple students came forward noting that the candidate accessed student offices and was disruptive. This is a violation of GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section I.POL.10.11. This resulted in a deduction of 7.5%.
- One student raised concerns that the candidate asked students to see their phones with the voting ballot displayed. This is a violation of GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section I.BYL.1.1. This was considered an incredibly serious violation that compromises the integrity of the election process (as students felt they were being pressured into voting for the candidate and also because the candidate may have been able to cast additional votes for themselves). Given the seriousness, this resulted in a deduction of 20%.

This information was communicated to the candidate, and they were informed they had twenty-four (24) hours to appeal the decision to the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (GSA ACB).