

2019 VUPA AGM MINUTES

Thursday 10th October 2019 at 3pm



1. Registration

- The 2019 President, Rachel Brisbane, reminded all postgraduate students in attendance to sign the Registration Form and noted that they must be currently enrolled postgraduates at VU.
- The Attendance Register is attached as Appendix 1.

2. Welcome & Meeting Open

- The 2019 President, Rachel Brisbane, officially welcomed all postgraduate students in attendance to the Annual General Meeting and officially opened the meeting at 3.13pm.

3. Acknowledgement of Country

- The 2019 President, Rachel Brisbane, acknowledged the traditional and indigenous peoples as owners of the land and paid respects to elders and leaders past, present and emerging.

4. Overview

- The 2019 President, Rachel Brisbane, outlined the activities on the agenda and that the contents of the report would be presented to the group, questions invited and the motions presented. This would be followed by an election for the four open office bearer positions.
- The 2019 President, Rachel Brisbane gave an overview of
 - VUPA, noting
 - 5,000 postgrads at VU, funded from the SSAF fees paid by students each year.
 - VUPA is run by postgrad students – who are all busy studying, working, raising children, volunteering, doing hobbies and sport etc - for postgrad students for the benefit and betterment. As well as social events to improve connection and networking, we also contribute to policy design and feedback through the peak body,

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- CAPA and work with VU leadership to represent the concerns of postgrads at VU.
- Our board aims to represent the diversity and experience of VU's postgraduates (equity groups including queer; accessibility needs; people of colour; womens; international; parents as well as research/coursework/part-time/full time)
 - Continuing Work, noting
 - The VUPA board met each and every month to move motions and discuss events. The 2019 President noted that VUPA ran its signature social events including the High Tea at Parliament House and participated in as many of the VU leadership and committees as we could. This includes ORTQI, Respect & Responsibility and the SSAF governance committee.
 - 2019 New Projects & Initiatives, noting
 - This year we piloted a karaoke night; international postgrad student buddy program; and hosted the first ever inter-collegiate postgrad cocktail evening, that was sold out with attendance over 80 (including the VC, Prof Peter Dawkins)
 - VUPA worked through the issues raised at our last AGM, with the 2019 President updating the group on how they have responded to the questions raised
 - Transparency re SSAF fees – SSAF Fees paid by international students were previously not clearly reported and this process has changed as of last month
 - Increasing income via sponsorship activities and greater funding from VU – although external sponsorship has not been sought, VUPA was successful in 3 SSAF grants, gaining internal sponsorship of events and is about to submit a funding proposal to take VUPA

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from \$12K annual budget to just over \$85k in our 2020 application)

- Sustainability of VUPA – the point above on funding along with handover practices works towards this.

5. Financial Report

- The 2019 President, Rachel Brisbane introduced the incoming 2020 President, Jeremy Yap who is currently the 2019 Vice-President to present the financial report as the Treasurer, Vanessa Alilie was unable to make the AGM.
- The 2019 Vice-President, Jeremy Yap, highlighted the main areas of expenses and income for the \$12K annual budget VUPA receives noting this funding comes via VUSU.
- The 2019 Vice-President, Jeremy Yap, asked for questions. The questions recorded were as follows
 - Question – what is CAPA?
 - Response – CAPA is the peak body representing all member postgraduate associations around Australia. CAPA takes on our advocacy and policy input at a federal level.
 - Question – Why is the financial statement presented with expenses, then income, rather than using standard practice which is the opposite?
 - Response – Thank you, we will fix this for next year as we will adopt financial practices suitable for an independent association.

6. Thanks to the 2019 VUPA Board Members

- The 2019 President, Rachel Brisbane thanked all those on the 2019 Board for their contributions with special thanks to those who were outgoing
 - Carmelina Monea – who came on as the Volunteer Office bearer
 - Vanessa Alilie – who did a wonderful job as Treasurer
 - Neelam Yadav – who is leaving us after a year of serving as our Secretary

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- The 2019 President, Rachel Brisbane noted that each year four of the eight positions vacate as part of rolling two-year terms.

7. 2020 Independence from VUSU

- The 2019 President, Rachel Brisbane provided an overview of the drivers for separating from the student union as being aligned with the practices of successful postgraduate associations and in response to difficulties with timely decision and funding release operating via the governance of the undergraduate union. She noted that the problems extended back over many years of VUPAs 18 year history and were not specific to the current VUSU executive, with whom an otherwise good relationship was enjoyed.
- The preparation was noted as extensive with the current Board working to complete the draft constitution for adoption which is presented at this AGM; preparing insurances; a 3-year budget and other documentation necessary to support incorporation.
- The 2019 President, Rachel Brisbane noted that the support of VU leadership was critical and had been obtained.
- The 2019 President, Rachel Brisbane noted the focus areas in VUPA's 3-year plan as
 - Advisory on implementation/impact of block mode at postgrad level
 - City West Preparation
 - SA/SH survey – impact of release, participation and results on our community
 - Mental Health & Wellbeing – largely through initiatives on social connection and improving visibility and use of VUs free counselling services; yoga, mindfulness and meditation
 - Financial Hardship – advisory on this reality to VU and federal policy
 - Diversity – amplifying the value of diversity
 - St Albans Campus Revitalisation

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- The 2019 President, Rachel Brisbane handed over the 2019 Vice-President, Jeremy Yap to overview the draft Constitution presented for adoption. The 2019 Vice-President, Jeremy Yap highlighted that the majority of the constitution is standard to meet the rules and regulations required to be noted by Consumer Affairs Victoria, who incorporate associations.
 - Questions on the Constitution were invited and recorded as follows
 - Question – Who will audit the financial records once VUPA is an incorporated association?
 - Response – An external professional and registered auditor.

8. Motions

- The 2019 President, Rachel Brisbane noted that as the Annual Report, Financial Report and Constitution for adoption had been presented, there would now be six motions to vote on. Elections would be held after the motions.
- Before moving the motions, the 2019 President, Rachel Brisbane asked if there were any final questions on
 - The 2018 Minutes
 - The annual report
 - The financial report
 - The new constitution and rules

9. Motions

Motion #1:	To accept the minutes from the previous, 2018 AGM		
	Moved: Rachel Brisbane	Seconded: Pooja Ganger	24 : in favour 0 : opposed 0 : abstentions Carried : YES

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Motion #2:	To accept the Annual Report provided		
	Moved: Carmelina Monea	Seconded: Omella Jayasinghe	24 : in favour 0 : opposed 0 : abstentions Carried : YES

Motion #2:	To accept the Financial Report provided		
	Moved: Rachel Brisbane	Seconded: Jeremy Yap	24 : in favour 0 : opposed 0 : abstentions Carried : YES

Motion #3:	To record a vote of thanks to the outgoing VUPA Executive		
	Moved: Rachel Brisbane	Seconded: Ruwangi Fernando	24 : in favour 0 : opposed 0 : abstentions Carried : YES

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Motion #4:	To record a vote of thanks to the Returning Officer, Dylan Styles.		
	Moved: Rachel Brisbane	Seconded: Carmelina Monea	23 : in favour 0 : opposed 1 : abstentions Carried : YES

Motion #5:	To adopt the new constitution and rules.		
	Moved: David Lopez	Seconded: Pooja Ganger	24 : in favour 0 : opposed 0 : abstentions Carried : YES

Motion #6:	To incorporate the association.		
	Moved: Neelam Yadav	Seconded: Fua Gloria Lameko	24 : in favour 0 : opposed 0 : abstentions Carried : YES

10. Motions

- The 2019 President, Rachel Brisbane handed over to Dylan to explain how it the election processes, positions open for nomination and election and to overview the position responsibilities.

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- Dylan Styles, the Returning Officer explained the nomination and voting processes; advised that the following positions were open as up to a 2-year term; and provided a brief description of duties.
 - VP Coursework
 - Equity Officer #1
 - Equity Officer #2
 - Events Officer
- Nominations were recorded as
 - VP Coursework – David Lopez & Dawn Lafata
 - Equity Officers (2) – Richa Senjali, Carmelina Monea and Shahed Nishai
 - Events Officer – Ajay Srinivasagan
- Each nominated candidate was invited to give a short speech of no longer than 3 minutes and respond to up to 2 questions, which were asked of each candidate.
- The Returning Officer, Dylan Styles conducted election voting processes and provided candidates nominated the opportunity to have a scrutineer during the vote count for their position.
- Election results were recorded as
 - VP Coursework – David Lopez
 - Equity Officers (2) – Richa Senjali and Carmelina Monea
 - Events Officer – Ajay Srinivasagan

11. Welcome to the 2020 VUPA Board

- The 2019 President, Rachel Brisbane congratulated and welcomed the 2020 VUPA Board.

12. VUPA AGM Close

- The 2019 President, Rachel Brisbane officially closed the AGM at 4.55pm