



**Constitution of the
Victoria University Postgraduate Association
(VUPA)**



**Victoria University Postgraduate Association
is affiliated to the
Victoria University Student Union Inc,
and is recognised as a standing committee of the union.**

Amended on the 16th of March, 2017

1.0 Introduction

Victoria University Postgraduate Association (VUPA) is a body within the **Victoria University Student Union (VUSU)** that is designed to address the needs of postgraduate students. Postgraduate students are those undertaking degrees such as Graduate Certificates, Graduate Diplomas, Masters by Coursework, and those enrolled in research degrees, such as Masters by Research and Doctor of Philosophy.

The Association acts primarily as a link or contact point for all postgraduates. This is achieved by conducting workshops, seminars, conferences and organising social events. The Association's committee represent the views of postgraduates and hold membership rights to official University committees. The Association's committee also receive invitations to meet with external organisations and other University bodies, ensuring the needs and interests of postgraduate students are widely represented.

2.0 Name

- 2.1 The name of the Association shall be the **Victoria University Postgraduate Association** herewith referred to as **VUPA**.

3.0 Definitions

In this Constitution and the Regulations made hereafter:

- 3.1 "Postgraduate Student" means any postgraduate student currently enrolled in a course of study at Victoria University.
- 3.2 "University" means "Victoria University"
- 3.3 "**VUSU**" means the **Victoria University Student Union Inc.** which is the peak organisation representing students at Victoria University.
- 3.4 Ad-hoc positions means creating a position that is agreed upon at the AGM, the creation of this position will last for one term and to be reviewed at the next AGM.
- 3.5 "Honorarium/ Honoraria" means a payment granted in recognition of a special service for which custom or propriety forbids any fixed business price to be set

4.0 Authority

- 4.1 **VUPA** shall have the authority to do things in accordance with its objectives.
- 4.2 Act as a standing committee of VUSU and be subject to the rules and regulations of the Union.

5.0 Membership

- 5.1 All Postgraduate students so described in 3.1 will have the right to attend all meetings, to vote in the election of office bearers and on business of the general meetings and to hold executive office in VUPA.

6.0 Objectives

The objectives of VUPA are to:

- 6.1 Further the interest and welfare of postgraduate students to all relevant bodies;
- 6.2 Provide services in accordance with the objectives of VUPA;
- 6.3 Promote and facilitate cultural, social, educational and recreational interaction between postgraduate students;

- 6.4 Foster goodwill, understanding and interaction between all postgraduate students;
- 6.5 Oppose the existence, creation or perpetuation of any disadvantage, inequality or injustice, which obstructs the achievements of the objects of VUPA;
- 6.6 Grant any organizations whose aims and objectives are consistent with those of the VUPA, affiliation or disaffiliation with VUPA.

7.0 The VUPA Executive Committee

The executive committee of VUPA shall be:

- 7.1.1 President;
- 7.1.2 Vice-President (Coursework)
- 7.1.3 Vice-President (Research)
- 7.1.4 Secretary;
- 7.1.5 Treasurer;
- 7.1.6 Equity Officer;
- 7.1.7 Marketing Officer;
- 7.2 The executive committee will be elected by:
 - 7.2.1 President will be elected within the Annual Elections in accordance with the VU Student Union rules and regulations
 - 7.2.2 Other executive roles will be elected within the PSAGM.
- 7.3 No committee member may hold more than one position on VUPA at the one time.
- 7.4 The executive may also create other roles deemed appropriate for the year they are in office.
- 7.5 All elected committee members of the incoming VUPA committee shall assume office on the 1st of November.
- 7.6 The term of office of all Committee members of VUPA shall terminate when the newly elected Committee members take office unless the officer is re-elected.

8.0 Role and Functions of VUPA and its Officers

- 8.1 VUPA:
 - 8.1.1 Shall be responsible for implementing the aims and objectives of VUPA;
 - 8.1.2. Under the auspices of the VUSU, VUPA is the representative body for Postgraduate students at the University
 - 8.1.3 Shall have the management and supervision of VUPA:
 - 8.1.4 Shall direct the subcommittee members in achieving the aims and objectives of VUPA;
 - 8.1.5 Shall determine the budget for VUPA in consultation with VUSU.
 - 8.1.6 May make recommendations to VUSU in relation to policy and regulation
- 8.2 The President shall:
 - 8.2.1 Be the official spokesperson of VUPA;
 - 8.2.2 Have the discretion to call VUPA Extraordinary Student Meetings (VUPAEGM) and VUPA meetings as they deem appropriate;
 - 8.2.3 Chair the meetings of VUPA and have a casting vote in addition to a deliberative vote, at the discretion of the Committee.

- 8.2.4 Chair the Postgraduate Students Annual General Meetings (VUPAAGM), VUPAEGM's and all other meetings conducted under the aegis of VUPA;
 - 8.2.5 Establish and maintain good relations with other organizations whose aims and objectives are similar to that of VUPA.
 - 8.2.6 Be responsible for the overall supervision of the operations of VUPA and have the discretion to delegate this supervisory function to another VUPA Committee member as required;
- 8.3 The Vice-President (Coursework and Research) shall:
- 8.3.1 Assume the duties and responsibilities of the President in their absence;
 - 8.3.2 Be responsible for all Coursework and Research issues affecting Postgraduate students across the Higher Education and those carried out by the Association.
 - 8.3.3 Liaise with the Secretary in relation to the administration of Coursework and Research issues.
 - 8.3.4 Shall co-ordinate any campaigns as required by the Association for Coursework and Research students.
 - 8.3.5 Shall address students' problems and in co-operation with the VUSU and take appropriate measures to ensure that Postgraduate students are adequately represented.
- 8.4 The Secretary shall be:
- 8.4.1 Responsible for the minutes and correspondence of VUPA;
 - 8.4.2 Responsible for organising meeting times, dates and venues;
 - 8.4.3 Responsible for assisting the President in preparing the annual report;
 - 8.4.4 Responsible for clearing the Association's mail;
 - 8.4.5 Responsible for informing appropriate University staff of the Association's operations.
- 8.5 The Treasurer shall be:
- 8.5.1 Approve payment for expenditure committed in accordance with the VUPA budget.
 - 8.5.2 Liaise with all elected members about budgets for campaigns, activities and other expenditures.
 - 8.5.3 Responsible for efficiently maintaining an accurate account of all financial matters and regular reporting pertaining to VUPA;
 - 8.5.4 Responsible for administering all financial matters in accordance with finance procedures;
- 8.6 The Equity Officer shall be:
- 8.6.1 Responsible for all social and cultural activities carried out by the association within this department;
 - 8.6.2 Responsible for representing equity for all marginalised communities within all meetings and work with the committee to achieve Equity, Diversity and Respect within the committee
 - 8.6.3 Liaise with the Treasurer for payment of activities and campaigns within this folio

8.6.4 Responsible for drafting a calendar every semester on the various activities to be carried out by this folio

8.7 The Marketing Officer shall be:

8.7.1 Reporting to the President and committee regarding the running and organisation of advertising and marketing campaigns and events

8.7.2 Assist officers in the formulation and execution of events and the marketing of these events

8.7.3 Advise and manage the advertising, branding, awareness and marketing of VUPA and all of its subsidiaries and events

8.7.4 Manage and/or assist in the management of all VUPA social media accounts at the discretion of the board.

8.8 Ad-hoc positions can be created under the discretion of the VUPA AGM

9.0 Publication of materials

9.1 All persons producing material for VUPA must ensure that the material is not defamatory.

9.2 The President shall have access to material prior to publication and; may on legal advice stop the publication.

10.0 Management of funds

10.1 All Executive committee is responsible for the management of funds of VUPA;

10.2 VUPA must maintain adequate and accurate financial records of its financial operations.

10.3 VUPA may pay honoraria to its members, including office bearers.

10.4 Honoraria will be awarded under the discretion of the VUPA board (up to \$500), in relation to the key performance indicators agreed upon with the president December 1st and May 1st.

10.5 Honoraria will be awarded at the end of the year post performance review, held between Officer and President.

10.6 The conclusion of the performance review and awarding of honoraria by the Officer and President can be contested by the outgoing board.

10.7 The President will not receive honoraria from the VUPA Board whilst receiving bursary from VU Student Union.

11.0 VUPA Meetings

11.1 VUPA committee meetings shall be convened at the discretion of the President provided that written notice of at least three (3) academic days is given to VUPA members.

11.2 A request for a meeting can be made by a member of the executive committee supported by a petition of 10 Postgraduate students.

11.3 Notice of a VUPA meeting shall be deemed to have been given if the member is personally advised either orally or in writing.

- 11.4 The Secretary shall set the agenda for VUPA meetings. Any agenda item suggested by VUPA members shall be included in the agenda.
- 11.5 The quorum of the VUPA shall be half plus one of the VUPA executive committee.
- 11.6 All Executive Committee members of the VUPA shall have one (1) vote each
- 11.7 All resolutions of the VUPA shall be passed by a simple majority of votes.
- 11.8 All resolutions relating to financial and legal matters of the VUPA shall be passed by a majority of 75% of the total votes exercised.
- 11.9 The Executive Committee must meet at least 4 times a year

12.0 Removal of Committee Members

- 12.1 Any Postgraduate student may seek to remove any Committee member(s) of the VUPA for non-performance of their duty or for malfeasance by moving a motion of 'no confidence', which must be approved by not less than two-thirds of the Postgraduate students present at a VUPAAGM or VUPAEGM. In the event that such a motion is passed, a casual vacancy will arise.
- 12.2 Any VUPA Committee member may be removed from office by not less than a two-thirds vote of the executive committee of the VUPA, which shall then create a casual vacancy.
- 12.3 Person(s) dismissed under Section 7.1 and 7.2 may stand again at the next election but may not be co-opted until after the next election.
- 12.4 Any VUPA committee member removed under Section 12.1 or Section 12.2 shall be reinstated by the VUPA if a motion to reinstate such a member is approved by not less than a two-thirds vote of the members present at a VUPAAGM or VUPAEGM.

13.0 Chairing

- 13.1 All meetings must be chaired by the President as outlined in Sections 8.2.3 and 8.2.4 in the Constitution unless otherwise decided by the meeting.
- 13.2 If the President is not present or does not want to Chair, the meeting must elect another Executive Committee member to Chair.

14.0 Casual Vacancy

- 14.1 In the event of a resignation or a removal in accordance with Section 12.0, the remaining VUPA Executive Committee shall, subject to Section 7.0, appoint any Postgraduate student eligible to hold the position to fill the vacancy until the subsequent election period.
- 14.2 If the number of elected Committee Members of VUPA is reduced to four (4) or less, a by-election must be held for all positions not held by elected members.
- 14.3 Subsequent to Section 14.1, a by-election must be held within four (4) academic weeks of the vacancy arising.
- 14.4 A by-election need not be held if the vacancy occurs within six (6) months of the annual elections.

15.0 Post Graduate Students' Association Annual General Meeting (PSAGM)

- 15.1 A VUPA AGM shall be facilitated by VUPA in Second Semester of each year at which the meeting will:
 - 15.1.1 Consider any matter deemed necessary by VUPA;

- 15.1.2 Consider recommending the dismissal of any person elected under this constitution for non-performance of duty or for malfeasance. A non-performance of duty shall be deemed to be a serious misconduct making a person unsuitable to hold office.
- 15.1.3 Consider any other matter and make recommendations to VUPA, except for amendments to this Constitution.
- 15.2 The requirements for a valid VUPA AGM shall be:
 - 15.2.1 The quorum for a VUPA AGM must be Twelve (12) students including Five (5) members of the Postgraduate Association must be personally present and signed into an attendance register to constitute a quorum for the conduct of the business of a PSAGM
 - 15.2.2 At least seven (7) days notice must be given by announcement by notice on posters.
- 15.3 Except as provided for in Section 15.2 above, a simple majority of votes is required to pass any motion moved in a VUPA AGM.
- 15.4 Decisions of a VUPA AGM are binding on the VUPA.
- 15.5 All Postgraduate students may participate in a VUPA AGM and each may exercise one vote. The VUPA AGM may be held in conjunction with VUSU or ISA.
- 15.6 All Postgraduate students at the PSAGM may vote to elect the incoming executive in reference to 7.2

16.0 Postgraduate Students' Association Extraordinary General Meeting (PSEGM)

The requirement for a valid VUPAEGM shall be:

- 16.1 A request by petition of at least twenty (20) Postgraduate students or a motion unanimously approved by VUPA or requested by a committee member removed under Section 12.
- 16.2 The requirements for a valid VUPA AGM shall be:
 - 15.2.1 The quorum for a VUPA AGM must be Twenty Five (15) students including Five (5) members of the Postgraduate Association must be personally present and signed into an attendance register to constitute a quorum for the conduct of the business of a PSAGM
- 16.3 At least ten (10) days notice must be given by announcement by notice on posters.
- 16.4 Decisions of a VUPA EGM are binding on the VUPA.
- 16.5 All Postgraduate students may participate in a VUPA EGM and each may exercise one vote.

17.0 Constitutional Amendments

- 17.1 Any recommendation to amend this Constitution must be approved by VUSU and a two-thirds majority of the Postgraduate students within the elected office bearers of VUPA
- 17.2 All Constitutional amendments shall be adopted within one week of being passed by VUSU and VUPA.

18.0 Constitutional Framework

This constitution is a subset of the VUSU Constitution and if at any time there is a conflict between the constitutions the VUSU Constitution shall prevail.

