

**University of Melbourne Student Union**  
**Meeting of the Policy and Regulations Working Group**  
**Minutes**  
**Meeting 2(16), 12PM, 23.06.2016**  
**Location: OB Space, Union House**



This working group has been established by the General Secretary to review and formulate amendments to UMSU's suite of policies and regulations.

**Meeting opened at 12:00 PM by James Bashford**

In attendance: James Bashford (General Secretary), Adriana Mells (Women's Officer), Ryan Davey (Clubs and Societies Officer), Donna Markwell (UMSU Advocacy), Goldie Pergl (Projects and Administration Officer), Frankie Connors (Queer Officer), Wunambi Connor (Indigenous Officer)

This meeting focussed on the Procedures for Student Representatives, which are regulations, and were last amended in July 2006.

**General**

It was established that there is a need for greater guidance for Office Bearers (OBs) on when to refer students to other support services, what their limits of supporting or advising students should be and other guidance on self care for OBs. This would be more appropriately handled in policy than regulations and could be incorporated into the current Acceptable Conduct Policy. This could be worked on with Sally Coates (University Wellbeing) and Ethel (Uni Counselling Service) who have worked with UMSU in the past on similar issues.

It was noted that numbering needs to be updated to reflect current constitution. Several clauses that refer to or are taken from the constitution need to be amended to make their link to the constitution explicit and ensure they are consistent with the current constitution. This will avoid any ambiguity or potential inconsistency with the Constitution

Gendered pronouns should be amended to be gender neutral, the name of the regulations should be changed from "procedures" to "regulations" for clarity and amendment history should be added. It should also be clarified that the regulations apply not only to Office Bearers but all elected representatives, as this is inconsistent throughout the document.

Anachronisms need to be updated (noticeboard requirements, references to Secretary instead of General Secretary, Office Manager instead of General Manager etc.)

The Monash Student Association's *Regulations for Office-Bearers and Members of MSA Bodies* was distributed to those attending for reference and comparison.

**Training**

It was agreed that current regulations around training and induction of representatives is inadequate, while the MSA's regulations provided a good example. Goldie raised a need to include

requirements for *ongoing training* (or “professional development”) while Wunambi agreed there needs to be more consideration of induction for OBs/ reps appointed mid-term.

Goldie suggested representatives should not be able to fill their positions if they have not completed a bare minimum of training (ie: legally required training such as OH&S) and it was suggested a new regulation be included that training be mandatory within 1 month of a representative commencing.\

The scope of training would be at the discretion of President, Pres-elect, GenSec, GenSec-elect and General Manager.

### **Handover**

James has proposed that regulations for handover (currently under the heading “termination of office bearer positions” under clause 14) be renamed and expanded to include a requirement to produce a written handover document. This would not be an overly large additional burden as it could simply be updated each year from the previous version(s) and would ensure a bare minimum of information is passed on regardless of the circumstance of the turnover from one OB to the next.

Ryan suggested face-to-face handovers should also be mandatory but it was generally accepted that this couldn’t be regulated for several reasons such as: situations where an OB may be physically unable to attend and situations where the political differences between incoming and outgoing OBs made a face to face handover impossible ( a real possibility given the elected nature of the positions).

Nonetheless it was agreed that face-to-face handover should occur wherever possible

The written handover document should be provided to the incoming OB, General Manager (which could be delegated to the project and admin. Officer) and archives.

The General Secretary would determine the form of the handover document, which would at a minimum include the form outlined in James’ motion to Council last year requiring handover documents be produced:

#### **Motion**

2. Recognising the need for these requirements to be strengthened, Students’ Council additionally requires that each Department produce a handover document addressing the following:
  - a. An evaluation of events, projects and campaigns undertaken during the year, including recommendations for future Office Bearers.
  - b. A copy of the Department’s initial budget and an accompanying evaluation of the allocations within in and any subsequent changes.
  - c. A list of relevant contacts within UMSU, the University and beyond.
  - d. Advice on issues and situations future Office Bearers will likely encounter, including ongoing problems and projects.
  - e. A list of any significant assets belonging to the Department, and their location and condition, such as banners, audio equipment, iPads, promotional materials etc.
  - f. Any other relevant information, where applicable.

### **OB Accountability and OB reports**

James asked if OBs should have to report individually or with their co-OBs as this has caused issues in the past. It was agreed OBs should have the option to report individually, balanced with the need to ensure both OBs agree to do so. James suggested adopting a similar clause to 8.12 from the MSA.

It was agreed the General Secretary should be required to give OBs a warning if they are at risk of failing their attendance or reporting requirements, to ensure all OBs are treated fairly and given fair notice of their requirements.

It was agreed that the current requirements for financial reporting were ineffectual, they were often not included and when they are included are often inconsistent and difficult to scrutinise regardless. It was suggested the requirement be changed to reporting of funding *approved* rather than *spent* as this allows scrutiny to occur before the money has already been spent and makes it easy for OBs to simply transfer the approvals from committee minutes – therefore encouraging greater compliance.

Goldie suggested adopting MSA 8.6, James suggested MSA 8.7 too. MSA 8.9, 8.10, 8.11 and 8.5.5 were also seen as good clauses to adopt.

### **Casual Vacancies (Clauses 6, 7 & 8)**

James questioned why this was in these regulations as the Constitution outlines the rules for Casual Vacancies and by duplicating them there is a risk of confusion, as has occurred already this year. While regulations can expand on the constitution, it needs to be clear that the Constitution takes precedence and also contains rules for these circumstances. Clauses need to be crosschecked with the current constitution as these regulations have not been updated to comply with any constitutional reforms in the past decade.

James also raised a need for these areas to be examined by a constitutional working group as they are ultimately governed by the constitution.

8.5 and 8.6 proved particularly confusing when appointments were made this year and need to be rewritten and cleared up.

James raised concern with 8.7 as it doesn't account for the possibility of both President and Gen Sec being vacant.

8.10 should be removed as it is open to abuse, especially for autonomous offices (and the staffing sub-committee no longer exists).

### **Farrago and Publications (Clauses 9 & 10)**

Its questionable if this clause should even be included in these regulations or if they should be in the Newspaper Policy. It will be included in the Newspaper Policy Working Group process and feedback will be sought from the media officers.

Clause 10 is similarly questionable. 10.3 and Appendix A should be removed, 10.5 should be cross-checked with the constitution and feedback should be sought from the Communications and Marketing Division.

### **Other changes**

James and Goldie agreed 11.2.1 should be removed.

References to staff should be removed from clause 12 in consultation with the general manager as it should be covered in separate staff policy. 12.4 should be crosschecked with the electoral regs and expanded to cover campaigning over the entire year, not just the UMSU election period. This would close a current loophole that allows UMSU OBs to abuse their positions to promote their tickets during their terms but before the election period.

Clause 13 is covered by the constitution and is not necessary, so should be removed to reduce the potential for confusion.

MSA 10.2 and 10.5 regarding expectations of reps to be available to students should be adopted by UMSU, as well as a clause outlining recourse if the regulations are breached, in line with Constitutional provisions.

**Meeting closed at 2:00 PM**