

## Harm Reduction Working Group (HRWG)

### Terms of Reference

#### 1. Background and Definitions

At a meeting of the Students' Council of the University of Melbourne Student Union (UMSU), acting as the board of directors, dated 13<sup>th</sup> September 2016, the following motion was carried:

1. *The Students' Council resolves to implement [a] drug harm reduction program in the lead-up to the summer festival season, and endorses the distribution of packs of relevant information and reagent test kits at the Union House information desk.*
2. *Students Council understands the limitations surrounding this testing, and affirms that all distribution will be accompanied by a verbal discussion.*
3. *The Students' Council acknowledges the limitations of reagent kits as a test method for drug purity and adulteration, and will therefore work toward making more accurate and effective tests available.*
4. *The Students' Council therefore calls upon the University of Melbourne to explore providing access to gas chromatography facilities for this purpose.*

UMSU's position on drug-testing kits as harm reduction was reaffirmed in a meeting of the Students' Council, dated 4<sup>th</sup> April 2017, in a carried motion:

1. *That UMSU affirms its commitment to holistic, judgment-free and evidence-based approaches to drug harm reduction.*
2. *That UMSU implement a series of education sessions, available to all students at no cost, outlining steps that they can take reduce the harms associated with drug use.*
3. *That UMSU run a campaign calling for high quality pill testing facilities such as gas chromatography mass-spectrometry to be made available to the public.*
4. *That UMSU create a policy Working Group to address the issue of Harm Reduction.*

Since the issue was first discussed, there has been a wide variety of obstacles as to the implementation of a harm reduction program by way of drug-testing kits. However, UMSU's position is very clear, and a Working Group is necessary to bring this matter forward, and to establish this program and policy proper.

All UMSU Policy must be approved by Students' Council.

#### 2. Role of the Working Group

The role of the Harm Reduction Working Group (HRWG) is:

- To examine the current Harm Reduction Procedure (Appendix A) and to assess its efficacy, with a view to presenting it to the University of Melbourne ("the University")
- To amend or reform the Procedure to address last concerns of note of the University;
- To provide discussion and develop strategies for broader harm reduction programs in UMSU;
- To identify matters of concern within both UMSU's and the University's frameworks and policies that hinder harm reduction, and to amend or campaign to amend these frameworks and policies, respectively;
- To assist in the promotion of and education regarding harm reduction to students;

- To monitor and identify emerging risks related to drugs on campus, and to develop strategies in addressing them; and
- Other matters such that the HRWG may see fit.

### **3. Membership**

Membership of the HRWG shall be open to all Members of UMSU, and all Members may attend meetings of the HRWG and speak.

The following shall also be members *ex officio*:

- General Secretary (Chair)
- President
- Chief Executive Officer
- President or delegate, Students for Sensible Drug Policy Unimelb
- Welfare Officers
- Principal Lawyer or delegate, UMSU Legal Division
- Manager, UMSU Marketing and Communications Division

### **4. Term and Frequency**

Meetings of the HRWG shall occur at least monthly and shall be convened by the General Secretary. Meetings shall continue until December 1<sup>st</sup>, unless extended by motion of Students' Council. Meetings shall continue past any implementation of a harm reduction program by way of drug-testing kits.

### **5. Meetings**

Meetings shall be conducted in a manner consistent with the practices established in the Constitution and Standing Orders. The agenda of each meeting shall be guided by the Role of the Working Group. All decisions made by the Working Group shall be agreed to by consensus. All members attending shall adhere to UMSU's Acceptable Conduct policy, and shall actively participate in the group's work. All members should consider the interests and needs of all students and staff, and actively promote the outcomes desired. All decisions must be approved by a meeting of Students' Council.

### **6. Reporting and Recommendations**

The HRWG shall report regularly to Students' Council, via the General Secretary, providing updates on progress. The HRWG shall, upon completion or at the appropriate time, recommend to Council a continuing strategy for the implementation of harm reduction by way of drug-testing kits, and related materials, and for related purposes.