



MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Student Representative Committee (SRC) held at 6:00pm on Thursday 28 January 2021 via Zoom.

PRESENT:

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Susannah Lynch-Vaughan (Chair) | Jayden Whaites-Fruitrich |
| Shlomie Bension | Hannah Reeve |
| Neenah Gray | Daniel Roberts |
| Jarod Cunningham | Isabelle White |
| Georgia Weeden | Alex Cullen |
| Alexander Hablutzal | Emily Ward |
| Jade Quisumbing | |

APOLOGIES:

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| Liz Vrazas | Laura Middleton |
| Marlene Khouzam | |

ABSENT:

| | |
|--------------|------------|
| Angus Webber | Anna Cheng |
| Ateka Rajabi | Jane Tran |

IN ATTENDANCE: Professor Mariella Herberstein – Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic
Kylie Ebert – Director, Student Life
Lilia Draganov – Senior Manager, Student Life
Kimberly La – Project Officer, SRC

SECRETARIAT: Xuan Luu – Education Officer, Student Life

1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Chair opened the meeting at 6:08pm by inviting Jayden Whaites-Fruitrich to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands and pay respects to Elders past, present, and emerging.

Action:

Shlomie Bension to facilitate the Acknowledgement of Country at the next SRC meeting on Monday 1 March 2021 (Week 2 of Session 1, 2021).

2. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed members and noted apologies from the SRC members outlined above.

The Chair noted that in addition to SRC members, the following people were in attendance:

- Professor Mariella Herberstein – Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic
- Kylie Ebert – Director, Student Life
- Lilia Draganov – Senior Manager, Student Life
- Kimberly La – Project Officer, SRC

3. ARRANGEMENT OF AGENDA

3.1 Disclosure of conflicts of interest

The Chair called for members to disclose any conflicts of interest in relation to the items on this meeting's agenda. No conflicts of interest were declared.

3.2 Adoption of unstarred items

Resolution SRC 21/01

The Student Representation Committee resolved to adopt unstarred items as a whole.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

4.1 The Minutes of the previous meeting held Thursday 3 December 2020 were provided.

Resolution SRC 21/02

The minutes of the SRC meeting held Thursday 3 December 2020 were confirmed and approved as a true and accurate record of proceedings. Moved by Jayden Whaites-Fruitrich, seconded by Neenah Gray. All in favour.

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

5.1 Summary of Outstanding Action Items

The Committee noted updates on the following items:

| Actions from previous meetings | Comments/status |
|---|---|
| Acknowledgement of Country for SRC Meeting 1 in 2021 Xuan to e-mail all members to call for interest in providing the Acknowledgement of Country at the next SRC meeting, which will be held on Thursday 28 January 2021. | Completed. |
| Distribution of 2020 SRC survey findings and report Xuan Luu to circulate the findings and report from the 2020 SRC Survey for members' consideration and discussion at the first meeting of the SRC for 2021. | Completed. |
| Work readiness and professional development programming for Macquarie students Maria Koutsouklakis to lead the SRC proposal on this programming. | Maria has resigned from the position of Postgraduate Students' Representative on the SRC, given coursework requirements and timetabling considerations. No update required. |

| Actions from previous meetings | Comments/status |
|--|---|
| <p>SSAF, Budget and Finance Sub-Committee Jarod Cunningham will follow up on additional grants offline with Alex Cullen and Xuan Luu.</p> | <p>Outstanding grants for the relevant period were addressed by the SRC Treasurer via circular resolution.</p> |
| <p>Question Time – SSSP – SRC Meeting 9 in 2020 Kylie Ebert to follow up offline with the SRC after the Thursday 3 December 2020 meeting to provide further information relating to the SSSP Report as discussed.</p> | <p><i>Update from Kylie:</i></p> <p>The SSSP continued in Session 3, 2020, with reduced loan offerings and emergency support offerings. There was a provision for Student Wellbeing staff to make an assessment on a student’s SSSP application even if that student wasn’t enrolled for Session, 2020. There was significantly reduced demand.</p> <p>A paper is currently going to the University Executive Group for approval in relation to a review of the SSSP for 2021. The priority at the moment is balancing ongoing needs of students, capacity to refer students to outside support services as needed, and supporting students in managing any repayment agreements in the case of loans provided.</p> <p>Jayden Whaites-Fruitrich commended the Student Life team and the University on its support for students. Kylie noted that the SSSP has earned Macquarie University a higher education sector award for best support of international students.</p> |
| <p>Question Time – SSAF Allocations – SRC Meeting 9 in 2020 Kylie Ebert to follow up offline with Alex C. after this meeting to provide further information relating to SSAF for 2021.</p> | <p><i>Update from Alex Cullen:</i></p> <p>Feedback and complaints have been received from one particular student cohort – online students – in relation to the impact of SSAF requirements for students who are wholly studying online. There were concerns raised in relation to the consultation process on this institutional decision. Students would like to see a business case for this decision based on financial modelling.</p> <p>Alex Cullen has also written to the DVC(A) and the VC in relation to the 2021 SRC budget, given over \$100,000 remains from the 2020 SRC budget. It was determined that rollover of the remaining funds to 2021 would not be possible, but a review of the SRC budget will take place at mid-year to gauge any need for additional SRC funding – this depends on how the SRC uses its funding across the period of Session 1, 2021, and how the SRC can demonstrate a need for additional funding for the second half of the year.</p> |

6. UPDATE FROM SRC TREASURER

6.1 November 2020 SRC and PG Grant Expenditure Reports

As of the end of November 2020, over \$100,000 of the 2020 SRC budget was remaining. Alex has not seen the December 2020 report yet, so there is further clarity needed about the end-of-year state of the budget. Alex noted regret in relation to the budget rollover to 2021 not being possible.

There is no information yet on specifically how much will be allocated to the SRC budget for 2021. Kylie is hoping to retain the SRC budget for 2021 based on the proposed budget and program of work as circulated and endorsed in late 2020. There are broader operating budget considerations for the University.

Professor Herberstein commented that 2020 was largely a non-event given the impact of COVID-19 upon the student experience. The offer of a mid-year review and needs assessment in relation to further SRC funding is a genuine one.

Alex Cullen commented that the SRC should be more proactive, rather than just reactive, in its planning and expenditure for different initiatives, projects, and events for Session, 202021 in particular.

Resolution SRC 21/03

The Student Representation Committee resolved to note the SRC and PG Grant Expenditure Reports for the November 2020 period. Moved by Jayden Whaites-Fruitrich, seconded by Alex Cullen. All in favour.

7. UPDATE FROM SRC SPOKESPERSON/S

Two pieces of correspondence to the University Executive have already been noted by Alex Cullen. In relation to recent correspondence about the possibility of fee reductions for international students who are studying overseas, the SRC Spokesperson/s will follow up with the DVC(A).

8. REPORT FROM UNIVERSITY COUNCIL

The University Council has not met since the previous meeting of the SRC.

9. REPORT FROM STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE (SEC)

The Student Experience Committee has not met since the previous meeting of the SRC.

Jayden Whaites-Fruitrich noted that the SRC Executive have met with the VC to discuss budget concerns, as well as how the University will manage return to campus given ongoing COVID-19 concerns. This was a constructive meeting.

10. AGENDA ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

10.1 SRC support for O-Week

Kimberly La provided a verbal update on this motion, further to the attachments provided as part of the agenda pack for this meeting. The \$5,000 amount is fine. There will be no freebies during O-Week given COVIDsafe considerations. SRC-branded things can be provided in bags along with other goodies (e.g., water bottles).

SRC-banded pens are expensive at approximately \$5,000 for 4,000 pens. Sticky notes are much cheaper at approximately \$2,000 for 4,000 items. There will be 4,000 bags available for students. The remainder of the funding will go towards prizes for O-Week, which may include options such as a Ubar voucher, Mac Shop voucher, Masterclass vouchers, etc.

O-Week will be spanning two weeks (Weeks 0 and 1, Session 1, 2021).

Kylie clarified that Macquarie University is in a unique position for O-Week, as many other universities in the Sydney region are not proceeding with on-campus activities for their respective O-Week events. Hard work has gone into establishing COVIDsafe arrangements and plans. This is supported by the DVC(A) and the VC. There is particularly strong interest among student groups to engage with the intended Student Groups Showcase.

Jayden Whaites-Fruitrich asked for clarification in relation to whether the SRC can host a book fair on campus during O-Week activities. Lilia and Kylie confirmed this would be possible with COVIDsafe planning required.

Action:

Jayden Whaites-Fruitrich to work with Lilia Draganov and other members of the Student Life team to make COVIDsafe arrangements for the SRC Book Fair during O-Week in Session 1, 2021.

The meeting was not quorate at this stage. Therefore, Item 10.1 will be moved out-of-meeting for circular review and resolution.

10.2 Audit and confirmation of current SRC membership

Xuan requested any SRC members who had completed studies at the end of 2020 to write to the SRC Secretariat inbox and confirm this. This will assist the Office of Student Life in identifying and filling any casual vacancies that may arise as a result.

The Student Representation Committee noted the need for audit and confirmation of current SRC membership.

11. UPDATE FROM SUBCOMMITTEES

11.1 Equity and Diversity (E&D) Subcommittee

Neenah provided an update that there is not much occurring on the equity and diversity front, however this may change as we head closer to Session 1, 2021. Neenah highlighted at a community level the success of recent Invasion Day rallies and promoted a recently published article in Grapeshot.

11.2 Infrastructure Subcommittee

There has not been a meeting on this.

Jayden Whaites-Fruitrich has met with Moe Shakourof from the Ubar team to discuss new spaces opening and how the SRC can contribute funding towards this (e.g., activations, charge bars, a pool table, etc.). Some of this has been handled by Property, and the new spaces look fantastic. Moe will return to the SRC with any additional opportunities for contribution.

11.3 Marketing and Communication Subcommittee

No update.

11.4 Student Elections Subcommittee

No update. The Subcommittee members are waiting on the outcome of the Review of the SRC Constitution and Associated Instruments, which will inform the scope and activities of the Subcommittee for 2021.

11.5 Student Services and Amenities fee (SSAF), SRC Budget and Finance Subcommittee

No update.

11.5.1 November/December 2020 Grant Applications

Alex Cullen spoke to some items as part of these grant requests. Alex would like to suggest some grants are deferred, given the need for Student Engagement assistance with clearer COVIDsafe assessment of proposed activities. More clarification on approvals and permissions is needed.

Jayden Whaites-Fruitrich reminded SRC members that the SRC Treasurer has delegation to approve expenditures under \$3,000 as necessary, without the need for circular resolution.

The meeting was not quorate at this stage. Therefore, Item 11.5.1 will be moved out-of-meeting for circular review and resolution.

12. QUESTION TIME

- 12.1 Question from Jarod Cunningham: “Who do we ask for more information about how the Central Courtyard facilities will work? What facilities will it have? How will it support student clubs?”

Professor Herberstein clarified that the ground floor / basement space will be the Graduation Hall. There will be lots of food outlets on the next floor up, along with the Ubar and a space looking out over the lake. Higher floors will include teaching and learning spaces, as well as informal spaces for students.

Kylie Ebert noted that the teaching and learning spaces are prioritised specifically for formal learning activities. Outdoor spaces for student groups are being confirmed shortly process-wise, including considerations of COVIDsafe practices. Once this is all confirmed, Lilia Draganov and her team (Student Engagement) will communicate with all student groups.

Kylie suggested the SRC may consider supporting student performances, given there is a stage and performance area, in order to activate the space in a COVIDsafe way.

The new accommodation building has been handed over to the Accommodation Services team by Property. Everything is on track for the Ubar to open on Monday 15 January 2021, coinciding with the start of O-Week.

- 12.2 Question from Alex Cullen: “We have received feedback from international students who are stuck overseas and studying. They’re expressing a desire for fee reductions, noting the challenges of being overseas and therefore unable to access the full facilities and resources that would normally be afforded to them in response to full tuition payments.”

Professor Herberstein confirmed that the University has received several of these types of requests from overseas students. With these, it is important to distinguish between emergency and non-emergency support needs. The principle held by the University is that the quality of courses does not necessarily change whether studying online or face-to-face. Professor Herberstein encouraged any enquiries to be forwarded to dvca@mq.edu.au.

Action:

SRC Spokesperson/s to forward any such enquiries from overseas students to dvca@mq.edu.au for review and further response as needed.

- 12.3 Question from Alex Cullen: “During the last Student Experience Committee meeting, the group noted that the University will be looking at auditing accounts – including the SRC accounts.”

Kylie Ebert confirmed that because the SRC accounts are University accounts, the Finance team prepares these in line with the institution’s end-of-year requirements. The Audit Office of NSW sets reporting timelines, with submissions due mid-February 2021. The Audit Office of NSW release findings from the audit, to then inform release of the University’s 2020 Annual Report in April 2021. Internal audit processes are needed, particularly in relation to the Student Success Support Package (SSSP).

Kylie acknowledged that while an internal audit of the SRC accounts has not taken place, if the SRC demonstrate appetite for this, then this can be discussed further with the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and other stakeholders.

13. OTHER BUSINESS

13.1 SRC-Ubar partnership for Session 1, 2021

Jayden Whaites-Fruitrich mentioned that Moe Shakourof (Ubar Manager) has proposed that the SRC partner with Ubar on student events for Session 1, 2021. They are currently working on a calendar of events, potentially for discussion at the next SRC meeting in early March.

13.2 Resignation of External Chairperson

Susannah Lynch-Vaughan has this week resigned as External Chairperson of the SRC. Life is hectic at the moment and something had to give. Susannah expressed profound apologies that it had to be this position as External Chairperson. Susannah commended all SRC members for their inspirational efforts. Thanks and warm wishes were expressed by SRC members present.

14. MEETING CLOSE

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7:22 pm.

15. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Student Representative Committee will be held on Monday 1 March 2021. Agenda items are due by Friday 19 February 2021.

CONFIRMED as a true and accurate record.



Jayden Whaites-Fruitrich
Assistant Chairperson

22/04/2021