

## Meeting 04/2023

A meeting of the **Monash Graduate Association (MGA) Executive Committee** was held from 2.00pm – 4.00pm, Monday 29 May 2023, in the MGA meeting room, MGA Caulfield office, C2, Caulfield campus and by zoom.

## MINUTES

### 1. Formal matters

#### 1.1 Acknowledgement of country

The MGAEC acknowledged and paid respect to the people of the Kulin nations as the original and ongoing owners and custodians of this unceded land.

#### 1.2 Attendance

Present: Radhik Rammohan (Chair), Saham Hettiarachchi, Phil Cairns, Anumanth Senthilkumar, Maria Lammerding, Ummatul Siddique.

Apologies: Michael Lim, Lily Wen, Annie Roys, Maggie Gendy, Jenny Reeder (Executive Officer).

In attendance: Janice Boey, Student Engagement Manager  
Ryan Edwards, Research Officer  
Maggie Scott, Copywriter  
Jessica Fimmel, HR and Finance Manager  
James Breheny, Advocate

#### 1.3 Consideration of the agenda

No items were added.

### 2. Minutes and Action sheet

#### 2.1 Minutes of meetings 03/2023 for confirmation

It was moved:

*That the minutes of MGAEC meeting April 03/2023 be confirmed.*

Moved: Saham Hettiarachchi

Seconded: Anumanth Senthilkumar

Carried.

#### 2.2 Action sheet

Noted. Anumanth requested that the responsibility for item 02/2023, 4.2.6 *Change MIISON TOR to remove representative function* be reassigned to Radhik, as the President. Anumanth proposed that Radhik and the Senior Advocate work together to detail the change, and Anumanth would take the proposal to MIISON.

### 3. Reports

### **3.1 President's report**

Noted.

### **3.2 Members' reports**

Noted.

### **3.3 Staff report**

Noted.

### **3.4 April 2023 profit and loss report**

Noted.

### **3.5 MGAEC meeting attendance records**

Noted.

## **4. Business**

### **4.1 Business arising**

#### **4.1.1 Bank Australia accounts**

It was noted that one member had not confirmed her identity with Bank Australia, effectively preventing the MGA from transferring the bank accounts. Given this was the last month before the committee changed over, the committee directed Radhik to contact Serra D'mello to instruct her that she had one week to complete her identity verification with Bank Australia or the committee would request her resignation in order to effect the bank transfer in time.

#### **4.1.2 Revised 2023 budget**

A number of adjustments to various line items had been made to the 2023 budget to ensure allocations more accurately reflected actual expenditure. Committee members were advised that further adjustments would be made once mid-year enrolment numbers (and the corresponding SSAF income) were known.

It was moved:

*That the adjustments to the 2023 budget, as set out in Attachment 4.1.2, be accepted.*

Moved: Maria Lammerding

Seconded: Sarah May

Carried.

#### **4.1.3 OHS policy**

The OHS policy had been amended to reflect the current practice in terms of oversight of OHS compliance. It was explained that the delegated responsibility was moved from the MGAEC to the EO, given the EO had line of sight over the organisation's practices and activities, whereas the MGAEC members did not. A suite of OHS procedures which would sit under the OHS policy had been developed and would be available soon.

It was moved:

*That the OHS policy amendments as shown in the tracked change Attachment 4.1.3, be accepted.*

Moved: Maria Lammerding  
Seconded: Ummatul Siddique  
Carried.

#### **4.1.4 Audited report for 2022**

Noted.

#### **4.1.5 AGM minutes**

Noted.

#### **4.1.6 MGA sustainability week feedback**

The MGA ran a survey during Sustainability Week to collect feedback from participants. The survey indicated that the new structure of sustainability week had been very well received. Maria thanked the Events team for their work in delivering the sustainability fair to all four campuses. Radhik commented on the significant number of undergraduates who had attended, and noted that the undergraduate student association MSA-Clayton charged the MGA for graduate students who attended their events, and that MGA should consider doing the same.

### **4.2 General Business**

#### **4.2.1 HDR Faculty reviews**

The MGA had been invited to take part in a number of Faculty HDR reviews being conducted by external panels. Two submissions for Science and Pharmacy were attached, as examples of the type of information being provided to external Faculty reviews, drawn from MGA's research and advocacy data-bases. It was explained that the MGA was not notified when the faculty reviews were taking place; it was only when individual faculties invited the MGA to participate, either by submission or interview, that staff were aware the reviews were underway. The MGA submissions presented data from MGA surveys and advocacy casework. The review panels also interviewed groups of students to obtain feedback on the student experience.

Radhik suggested that the MGAEC should continue to lobby for increased stipends through avenues such as these reviews.

#### **4.2.2 MGAEC elections**

A number of students at the AGM had requested that the number of votes received by each candidate in the MGAEC elections be made public. The committee acknowledged that this request could not be applied to the recently conducted elections, which having commenced, had to be run under the regulations as they stood at the beginning of the election process. However, the MGAEC considered the opportunity to change this aspect of the regulations, noting that any approved change could be applied to the 2024 elections.

It was noted that making the number of votes public came with some complications which would need to be addressed if the committee were to direct the RO to do this, in summary:

- The final number of votes received did not determine the final ranking because of the applied Faculty and gender restrictions, so the restriction applications would need to also be disclosed;
- The applied gender restriction would need to be shown without making public any candidate's gender as this information was collected only for the purposes of applying this restriction;
- As a result of the overlay faculty and gender restrictions, some candidates with a higher number of votes may be eliminated over candidates with a lower number of votes, which may cause confusion.

The committee discussed the matter at length. Several members disagreed with the release of votes, and suggested that comments by a few students should not necessarily result in a change to the regulations which had served the MGA well for many years.

It was proposed that a subcommittee be established to review the MGA Election regulations, including a review of the candidates' campaign publicity rules, in time for any changes approved to be applied to the 2024 elections.

**5. Membership matters**

No business.

- 6. Next meeting** – It was agreed that the next meeting would be held in June at a date and time tbc by incoming committee members.

The meeting concluded at 3.45pm.