

Meeting opened at 12:35pm on 7th August 2023

UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

A. Attendance

<u>Title</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Proxy</u>
President	Sebastian Schultz	
Treasurer:	Sidratul Ahmed	
Secretary:	Natasha Tiong	
Education (Public Affairs):	Ann Maria Sabu	Absent
Education (Academic Affairs):	Paris Enten	Absent
Activities:	Claris Yee	Absent
CLA:	Fleur Timmins	
Welfare:	Stuart Gibson	
Indigenous:	John Sopar	
Environment & Social Justice:	Louis Walmsley	
Women's:	Vicky Kwong	Megan Kong
Queer:	Annabelle Lamb	
Disabilities & Carers:	Isabella R-H	
People of Colour:	Desna Ramjee	
Res Community Department:	Katya Spiller	
MUISS:	Bhumija Sakpal	
MAPS:	Vick Arjuna	Masum bin Khalil
Clubs & Societies:	Arjun Girish	
Radio Monash:	Madeleine Willshire	
General Representative:	Isabelle Cummane	Absent
General Representative:	Pranami Gamage	Rohan Kalanje
General Representative:	Sadman Arafat	
General Representative:	Tippi Morgan	Absent
General Representative:	Mahzarin Katrak	
Observers:	Tehseen Huq Allyssa	

Beck Riches
Sam Allan
Luka Kerm

B. Acknowledgment of traditional owners of land

This MSC acknowledges and pays respect to the Bunurong peoples of the Kulin nations as the original and ongoing owners and custodians of this land. The MSA commits itself to actively fight alongside Indigenous peoples for reconciliation and justice for all Indigenous Australians.

C. Confirmation of Agenda Order

Confirmed

D. Confirmation of Previous Minutes

Motion #1:
 This MSC confirms [Minutes 7/23](#) to be the true and accurate recording of the proceedings.
Moved: Arjun Girish **Seconded:** Sidratul Ahmed
For: 18
Against:
Abstentions:
MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

E. Office Bearer and Divisional Reports

Ed Ac
Ed Pub
ESJ
D&C
Indigenous
POC
Welfare
Women's
Residential Communities

Queer
MUISS
C&S
Radmon
MAPS

Motion #2:
 This MSC accepts all submitted Office Bearer and Divisional Reports en bloc.
Moved: Madeleine Willshire **Seconded:** Sidratul Ahmed
For: 18
Against:
Abstentions:
MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Luka Kerm sought clarification from the Education Office Bearers regarding their work with respect to the Special Consideration changes. Luka expressed their concerns with the delivery of the news to the student community as a ‘welcomed change’ that is celebrated by the MSA, notwithstanding the university’s decision to shorten the short extension period to 2 days.

Sidratul Ahmed addressed Luka’s concerns in the absence of the Education officers. Having been involved in the consultation and negotiation process, he clarified that the MSA did not welcome the changes in their entirety. Acknowledgement is given to the centralisation of the process which removed prior issues with consistency in the granting of short extensions. It is however noted that the shortening of the short extension period is not welcomed.

Natasha Tiong noted in the chat that Allyssa had questions regarding the Education officers’ report and the special considerations process. Allyssa was advised to speak to their concerns at a later motion on special considerations. The chair, Sebastian Schultz, made a note of this.

F. Financial Motion

Motion #3:
 This MSC moves to accept the [MSA Financial Statement](#) for the month of June.
Moved: Sidratul Ahmed **Seconded:** Natasha Tiong
For: 18
Against:
Abstentions:
MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Luka Kerm, acknowledged his lack of expert understanding with respect to finance, but noted the deficit that MSA is currently experiencing.

G. Election Regulations

Preamble:

In addition to the extensive list of prohibited conduct provided under Reg 42.4, students and/or campaigners should not vote on behalf of someone else by way of physically using their electronic device. Should a person require assistance with voting, the student and/or campaigner should provide verbal instructions to guide the person through the digital voting platform. This ensures every student's freedom of choice and prevents forceful or coercive voting.

A complete explanation for all changes is set out [here](#).

Motion #4:

Amending directives:

That this MSC inserts the following clause, Reg 42.4.29, in the Election Regulations, as conduct that is specifically prohibited.

42.4.29. Voting digitally on behalf of or for someone else, with the use of their electronic device.

Moved: Natasha Tiong **Seconded:** Sidratul Ahmed

For: 18

Against:

Abstentions:

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Preamble

The Disabilities & Carers department should move away from the use of the terminology 'collective' as a reference to the autonomous community of students with disabilities or those who are carers. This places the regulations in line with the requirement that the nomination of any student who has indicated that they are disabled or a carer on their nomination form shall be allowed to run for the Disabilities and Carers Officer role. This also ensures consistency with the autonomous status of the Disabilities and Carers department, where the election of its committee members is held autonomously and separately to the election of the Officer roles.

Motion #5:

Amending directives:

That this MSC amends Regs 11.4 and 12.2.3 in the Election Regulations to remove the inclusion of the 'Disabilities and Carers Collective'.

11.4 Only students who indicate that they are disabled or a carer on their nomination form may run for Disabilities and Carers Officer.

12.2.3 Nominators and seconders of candidates for Disabilities and Carers Officer must indicate that they are disabled or a carer on the nomination form.

Moved: Isabella R-H

Seconded: Natasha Tiong

For: 18

Against:

Abstentions:

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Preamble:

The blocking of doors, lifts, stairways or other thoroughfares presents not only a safety hazard, but it also hinders student access to buildings and facilities. This is particularly so, with physical polling booths located within the Campus Centre where there is ordinarily a large presence of campaigners. Students with disabilities are disproportionately affected. Ensuring a clear passageway for students is not only limited to those who use mobility devices such as wheelchairs or crutches, but also those with invisible disabilities that may require the use of thoroughfares, lifts, stairs who do not use mobility aids. This allows them to get to their destination without disproportionate and unreasonable impediment.

Motion #6:

Amending directives:

That this MSC inserts the following clause, Reg 42.4.30, to the Election Regulation, as conduct specifically prohibited.

42.4.30. Blocking doors, lifts, stairways and the pathway of students with disabilities, whether or not they utilise mobility devices.

Moved: Isabella R-H

Seconded: Natasha Tiong

For: 18

Against:

Abstentions:

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Sam Allan expressed their concerns with the vagueness of 'thoroughfares' and how it would contravene one's democratic right to approach students to campaign for the purposes of eliciting votes. It is also mentioned how 'blocking' could simply entail standing in the way of students for a considerable amount of time.

Isabella R-H addressed Sam's queries and is of the opinion that it is not undemocratic as the above motion would apply to all campaigners and voters equally. She emphasised on the phrase 'blocking thoroughfares' which excludes conduct such as standing in areas of motion. It is defined as conduct by campaigners which purport to impede students from going their way. She clarified that the above regulation is drafted in response to student complaints from previous years, who have been subject to physical and mental consequences as a result of having their path forcefully blocked by campaigners.

Luka Kerm mentioned that such vague restrictions purport to favour the incumbents, by reducing others' capacity in campaigning. Luka echoed the concerns of Sam and suggests that this regulation should not be accepted.

Beck Riches reiterated the concerns and characterised the regulation as undemocratic as it could be used to benefit the incumbents and restrict campaigners from talking to students about politics. Its potential liberal interpretation is of a concern.

Preamble:

Despite the significance of in-person campaigning during election week, it also creates a concerning source of inaccessibility for many students with disabilities. For these students, navigating through Campus Centre and other campaigning areas on campus can be traumatic and both physically and mentally draining. Consequences of this can include panic attacks, dissociation, and the draining of energy to study or to safely commute home. A further difficulty is that Disability Support Services and the D&C lounge are located upstairs in the Campus Centre. Students seeking to access these safe spaces will often have to choose between not accessing them during election week, or, risk the above consequences in trying to reach those spaces. Students should not have to give up their right to rest in a safe space. This issue can be mitigated by having such students with disabilities, who would not like to be approached to wear a visible badge that communicates this message. This informs campaigners that the badge wearer should not be approached, unless the wearer approaches and speak to the campaigners first. It is understood that this may present the unwanted consequence of these badges being misused, thus affecting the electoral process and the ability of campaigners to campaign during election week. For this reason, the distribution of such badges will be done at the MSA D&C lounge and D&C Office. The

Officers will ensure that certain processes are in place to monitor the distribution, to avoid the concern of its misuse.

Motion #7:

Amending directives:

That this MSC inserts following into the Election Regulations and the numbering to be adjusted as required.

23. Do not approach badge

23.1. There must be a badge students with disabilities can wear should they require the accommodation of not being approached by campaigners during election week due to the detrimental physical, mental and emotional consequences suffered.

23.2. The badge must be designed in such a way that it will be visible to campaigners from a reasonable distance, i.e use of bright colours.

23.3 The Returning Officer must approve the design prior to distribution.

23.4. The badges will be made available at the Disabilities and Carers lounge and office.

That this MSC inserts the following clause, Reg 42.4.31, to the Election Regulations, as conduct specifically prohibited.

42.4.31. Approaching a student who wears a 'Do Not Approach' badge per Reg 23 for campaigning purposes, unless that student first approaches and speaks to the campaigner themselves.

Moved: Isabella R-H

Seconded: Natasha Tiong

For: 18

Against:

Abstentions:

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Preamble

Accessibility must be maintained and ensured during the MSA elections, in making provisions for students with accessibility issues.

Motion #8:

Amending directives:

That this MSC inserts the following clause to Reg 31 of the Election Regulations.

32.3. The digital ballot must be accessible to all students. This requires the Returning Officer to consider the following, but not limited to:

32.3.1 the ballot's compatibility with screen readers.

Moved: Isabella R-H **Seconded:** Natasha Tiong
For: 18
Against:
Abstentions:
MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

H. 2023 Election

Motion #9:
This MSC sets the dates for polling (online voting) for the 2023 MSA Annual Elections to be from October 9-12:
Polling times:
Monday 9th: All day, starting at 0900
Tuesday 10th: All day
Wednesday 11th: All day
Thursday 12th: All day, ending at 1700
Moved: Natasha Tiong **Seconded:** Sidratul Ahmed
For: 18
Against:
Abstentions:
MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Luka Kerm queried whether the time requirements in the Election Regulations, which are described in terms of weeks, are inclusive of the mid-semester break.

Natasha Tiong responded (incorrectly) that the weeks would be inclusive of the mid-semester break. It is now noted in the minutes that it is NOT inclusive. Therefore what this means is that for the 9-week requirement of the appointment of the Returning Officer from the date of the election - this would be calculated backwards, 9 weeks from the 9th of October, which is 7th August. She also noted that the election dates have been pushed to Week 11 of the Semester to ensure compliance with the time requirements specified in the Regulations with respect to the appointments of the RO and the Electoral Tribunal.

Motion #10:
This MSC sets the dates for on-campus polling booths to be open during the 2023 MSA Annual Elections:
Polling times:

Monday 9th October: 10am - 4pm

Tuesday 10th October: 10am - 4pm

Wednesday 11th October: 10am - 4pm

Thursday 12th October: 10am - 4pm

Moved: Natasha Tiong **Seconded:** Sidratul Ahmed

For: 18

Against:

Abstentions:

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Annabelle Lamb requested that the minutes include 'October' in the dates listed in the motion to avoid confusion. This is noted in the minutes and the motion takes the form as displayed above.

Motion #11:

This MSC appoints the OGL Group to fulfil the role of Returning Officer for the 2023 MSA Elections.

Moved: Natasha Tiong **Seconded:** Madeleine Willshire

For: 18

Against:

Abstentions:

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Motion #12:

This MSC appoints Andrew Saunders of the Victorian Bar to fulfil the role of Electoral Tribunal for the 2023 MSA Elections.

Moved: Natasha Tiong **Seconded:** Madeleine Willshire

For: 18

Against:

Abstentions:

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

I. Development of a MSA Sustainability Framework

Preamble:

The notion of sustainability was popularised by the 1987 Brundtland commission report, which proposed the following definition of sustainable development; development that

“meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” (p.11/3). The needs proposed in the report were outlined as social, environmental, and economic. However, as sustainability has grown as a concept it has come to encompass other needs including cultural and political.

The flourishing of sustainability in academia, business and the government can be felt here at Monash, with the Monash Sustainable Development Institute spearheading many sustainability initiatives including the Climateworks Centre, the Master of Environment and Sustainability, and the Net Zero Precincts.

However, sustainability as a concept has also been exploited to maintain the status quo through greenwashing, a practice whereby organisations utilise deception to convince communities that their practices are environmentally and socially responsible. Monash University’s sustainability agenda is often seen as greenwashing when contrasted to its partnership with fossil-fuel giant Woodside Energy.

To combat greenwashing, ensure transparent and accountable operations, and guide sustainability initiatives, organisations frequently implement Sustainability Frameworks. These Frameworks provide a set of definitions, objectives, strategies, and guidelines, by which organisations can address sustainability.

Motion #13:

This MSC endorses the development of a Sustainability Framework for the Monash Student Association, which will serve as a guiding document for its associated departments.

The Sustainability Framework will outline the relevant pillars of sustainability (Environmental, Social, Economic, Cultural and Political), and assign pillars to each relevant department. All departments will be consulted regarding the pillars relevant to them, and will have the opportunity to provide suggestions.

The finalised Sustainability Framework is subject to endorsement through a subsequent motion in a future MSC.

Moved: Louis Walmsley **Seconded:** John Sopar

For: 18

Against:

Abstentions:

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Allyssa stated that the topics of sustainability and greenwashing cannot be addressed by a defining framework. It is expressed that the university, aware of the implications of their decision-making with regards to research etc, will not be swayed by a framework.

Beck Riches expressed that the University would not respond to the guidelines in the Framework. They are of the opinion that the MSA fails to properly fight against and call out the university for their appalling connections.

Luka Kerm stated that the MSA has been contributory to the university's greenwashing practices. Some instances include the Sustainability Food Fair event that took place concurrently with the NTEU strike or the lack of attendance in the MSA's contingent to the National Day of Climate Action. Luka called for a more hostile response towards the senior staff, such as hosting protests on campus etc.

Louis Walmsley acknowledged the concerns voiced and expressed his appreciation. He clarified that the framework, in its preliminary and early stage, does not seek to address the university specifically. It is rather the aim of the framework to provide sustainability guidelines for the MSA departments, particularly when hosting events. In exercising their capacity in running the ESJ Department, the relevant office bearers seek to address climate change through inclusive and engaging events with the student community, as opposed to a hostile approach.

Luka Kerm noted his disappointment in the lack of effectiveness of the framework in addressing climate change. It is noted that the university, in being a considerable contributor to climate change, should be targeted as opposed to MSA Departments.

Allyssa reiterated that the University is the target, especially with their ties in weapons companies and the research on nuclear submarines. Allyssa noted that an acquaintance of theirs drafted an agenda submission, that called for the MSC to host a contingent to the National Day of Action for Welfare, not Warfare. Allyssa expressed their disappointment in the MSA for neglecting the submission.

Sidratul Ahmed noted in the chat that the MSC had previously passed a motion condemning the University's relations to the research on nuclear submissions in MSC 6.

Beck Riches was of the opinion that student events fail to address the issue of climate change, as it contradicts an activist's strategy.

Sam Allan agreed with the views expressed. Sam sought clarification for the absence of a MSA contingent at the National Day of Action for Welfare, not Warfare if it was allegedly passed at an earlier MSC.

Sidratul Ahmed responded to the above, clarifying that the earlier motion was drafted and passed prior to the organising of the national day of action.

J. Motion regarding Special Consideration changes

Preamble:

Monash University introduced a new regime of Special Considerations as students entered the new semester. Some changes were welcomed, such as the procedural consolidation of both short and long extensions to initiate a uniformed approach to all applications.

Previously, the granting of short extensions, which were given at the discretion of CEs, gave rise to apparent inconsistencies across units and faculties. The first application for short extension is now granted automatically, and the second application for another 2-day extension requires simply a reasoning without supporting documentation.

Simultaneously, our consultations with the university staff caused us confusion and disappointment, particularly in the shortening of the short extension period to 2 days from 5 days. The MSA and particular student representatives have strongly fought back against this change and sought evidence to support such justification. The MSA has also sought support from faculty student representatives and several faculty deans, only to receive a firm stance on the 2-day change from the University in response. The MSA will continue to remain vigilant of the potential challenges these changes pose to non-DSS and DSS-registered students alike.

Motion #14:

This MSC opposes the University in bringing about the detrimental changes to special consideration, particularly the change to a 2-day short extension, despite having heard testimonials and evidence from student representatives.

This MSC applauds the efforts of the various student representatives within the MSA and the different faculties, in pushing strongly against the concerned changes and providing their support for the

The MSA remains committed to challenging these changes and voicing the personal experiences of affected students.

Moved: Sidratul Ahmed **Seconded:** Arjun Girish

For: 18

Against:

Abstentions:

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Allyssa noted that it is evident from the reports that the negotiations with the university with respect to special considerations fail to produce an outcome. It is suggested that negotiations should not be the appropriate strategy when seeking an outcome from the university.

Luka agreed with Allyssa's views. They described MSA's strategy as 'naive' and should instead instigate a campaign against the university through leafleting.

Sidratul Ahmed first addressed Allyssa's question about the existence of any positive outcomes. One of such is the provision of a 2-day grace period for the submission of supporting documentation. He acknowledged that mere consultations with the university are not sufficient, and more can be done such as publicising the issue through the media.

Sebastian Schultz temporarily vacated the chair to speak to the motion. Sidratul Ahmed, the Deputy Chair assumed the Chair. Sebastian articulated that as his role as President, he is ordinarily the representative spokesperson in meetings with senior university staff. Sebastian acknowledged the efforts the MSA has put in this fight which necessarily entails more than 'sitting down' in rooms and in fact significant and hostile pushback from the university. He noted that in the midst of this discussion, it is not to be overlooked that the MSA is on the same page as its members are fundamentally students affected by these changes as well.

Sebastian assumed the Chair.

Luka responded seeking clarification on what the MSA has done apart from attending meetings. They noted MSA's capacity to put up posters, set up stalls, have students sign petitions, host protests amongst other recommendations.

Beck Riches expressed their disappointment in MSA's strategy, which involves discussing with university management.

Allyssa put forward that hostility from the university is inevitable as their interests do not sit consistently with the interests of students.

K. General Business

Meeting closed at 1:24pm

