

Minutes of the Postgraduate Students' Association Initial General Meeting
held on Tuesday 31 March 2020 12pm. On-line meeting via Zoom

PRESENT: Elizabeth Olsen (President), Sam Crawley (Vice President Community), Miru Samarakoon (Vice President Advocacy Bernard Tawiah (Treasurer), Will Abbiss (Communication officer), Glen Askey, Cody Rei-Anderson, Nancy Marquez, Deanna Ayupova, Salman Rushed, Michaela Harris, Gregory Williams, Sraddha Venkataraman

IN ATTENDANCE: 6 postgraduate students

APOLOGIES: Salman Rashid

MINUTES: Erella Sonnino

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

EO opened the meeting and thank all attendees for taking the time and joining us especially during these challenging times during the lock-down.

As no quorum has been met at this meeting, a count of the proxy vote has been finalised April 2020 (including votes during meeting).

2. ABOUT THE PGSA

EO provided a quick overview about the PGSA; its vision, achievements and activities. How the PGSA engage with the postgraduate student's community via promotion, advocacy, events, awards and grants and representatives. EO encourage to become a member and to volunteer either by joining the executive, becoming a representative or in general events.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS AGM MEETING

EO passed a motion to accept the minutes from the previous AGM meeting held 7th October 2019, to be accepted.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES AMENDS

WA noted corrections needed to be made to previous minute (section 6 nomination for positions new/current executive and typos).

EO motioned to accept the minutes from the previous AGM with amendment per above. All agreed.

Approved by proxy vote April 2020.

4. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

EO presented the report, and provided an extended explanation on some of the items; membership records (drop down after management data clear up), academic conference grants changes and in light of the Covid-19 pandemic, student representation (committee reps, advocacy and current vacancies), management and administration restructure (drafting specific roles, using Teams as the main communication channel etc.), and used this opportunity to acknowledge the hard work of the executive in putting efforts developing and improving communications and better systems in place especially to WA for his contribution, hard work and support.

EO also highlighted some of the on-going matters the PGSA executive working on and thanked CRA for his devoted work on the PGSA Constitution review, MS and SR on their Advocacy work around VDS and Postgraduate Student Allowance and thanked all the executive for their involvement in general.

Also mentioned the on-going the time sheet for tutors issue (a long and legal complicated process, partly due to HR system that needed to be in place), the MRA negotiation update, and explained that the university accommodation advocacy matter is still in process since the last AGM meeting, hopefully to be picked up during 2020.

Other matters raised were the Covid-19 pandemic and its effect on the students (EO thanked MS for her advocate and support) and the upcoming initiatives (Academic policy refresh, Cycle 6 Academic Audit).

EA noted the PGSA relationship with lead positions, our adaptation to the Covid-19 situation and that the PGSA's events are going on-line.

EO mentioned the success of the O Week, and upcoming events (MT3 on July and logistic in case of ongoing Covid-19 regulations, and the Victorias Awards scheduled in November).
EO concluded her report introducing the current PGSA Executive from AGM October 2019 until now.

EO moved to accept the president's report. All agreed. Quorum not met. Approved by proxy vote April 2020

5. TREASURER'S REPORT

BT gave a quick review of the financial report submitted.

EO moved to accept the Treasurer's Report. All agreed. Quorum not met. Approved by proxy vote April 2020

6. REVISION TO THE CONSTITUTION

CRA presented and explained the amended document for the PGSA's Constitution. Since no quorum is met on today's meeting, the approval of the document relies on proxy vote counting. CRA summed up the proposed changes: Life membership (increased to four per year and removal the automation of given life membership to past PGSA president), membership rolls and eligibility, electronical process and executive (formalise the process of election used on AGM meeting October 2019 co-opting executive).

EO acknowledged and thanked CRA for his hard and productive work done to the PGSA Constitution.

EO passed a motion to accept the proposed changes to the PGSA's Constitution. All agreed. Changes have been approved by proxy vote April 2020

7. EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

RECOGNITION OF OUTGOING EXEC MEMBERS

EO noted two executive members leaving the executive: WA since October 2017 and SR since June 2019. EO used this opportunity to acknowledge and appreciate their hard and dedicated work and dedication promoting the PGSA.

EO highlighted their achievements; WA for his support and knowledge and his on-going contribution in establishing a great communication system, she noted his achievements especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. And SR involvement and contribution in PGSA events, the MRA document and advocacy work. She thanked them both and noted that a letter of service, certificate and a gift voucher will be handed to them as soon as we all back to office.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

EO opened the floor for any other business.

- DEFINITION OF RESEARCH IN REA MK (postgrad student) raised question around the definition of the word research in the REA criteria as different faculties have different criteria of what is considered what a research is. And suggested to change the name from research to achievement. EO explained that the definition in the document is based on that of the FGR. And explained the decision making in given the grant as it is only one per faculty not in comparison between faculties. WA and EO clarified the idea behind the grant and MK accepted the explanation and thanked them for the clarification and the PGSA work on the grant.
- RUFUND FEES DUE TO COVID-19 PENDEMIC TC (postgrad student) thanked the executive for their work and dedication especially during these times and inquired about the fees already been paid and if there is any clarification on those. CT explained that payment will be subtending but there is no clarification for those already paid. All agreed that there is a need to have a continue dialogue with the university regarding those issues with consideration for those withdrawn and to keep following up the matter. EO and MS will raise those issues with the university and with the senior leadership on her weekly based meeting. She will stress the need for reorganising assessment's deadline, refunds, levies etc. and to urge those matters.

- **FUNDRAISING** WA discussed the need for fundraising event in the current circumstance, to which EO replied it have to wait to later stage.
- **POSTGRAD COORDINATORS** MK raised that the faculties postgrad coordinators should be the first point of contact. EO ensured to continue building relationship between them and the PGSA. She also suggested that maybe on later stage to find a way to recognise their role and work by a way of award or similar.

EO thanked those in attendance for coming, welcomed and encouraged them to continue discussion of any issues with the PGSA as well as to comment and to provide feedback on work done.

9. CLOSE OF MEETING

Meeting closed 1.26pm.