



EXECUTIVE HALF YEAR REPORT

NAME	Madeleine Ashton-Martyn
POSITION	Equity Officer
REPORT PERIOD	1 January – 30 June 2014
TOTAL WEEKS WORKED	26
HOURS WORKED	394.5

Reporting on Priority Goals:

1. Goal 3

Equity and Access: To promote equity for disadvantaged students in access to and within the University.

(a) Representative groups

This goal and the connection to representative groups are central to the Equity Officer position in supporting marginalized groups and disadvantaged students. Representative groups provide advocacy, support, and community for a number of these students. I have maintained a close relationship with representative groups at VUW, holding regular meetings with presidents and executive members in order to track and support their progress. I have attended their respective executive meetings, events, and general meetings where possible and endeavoured to be a consistent and efficient mechanism of support. I have also encouraged dialogue between representative groups in order to promote the recognition of issues of intersectionality within the university structure.

(b) Student Wellbeing Reference Group

I have been an active member of the student wellbeing reference group run by Rachel Riedel. This group functions as part of a Student Health initiative to incorporate the student voice into the overall strategy to improve the mental wellbeing of students at Victoria. Through this group I have helped coordinate the student wellbeing expo, aided the development of the Sweet As programme, and contributed to the upcoming ethical bystanding and consent campaign.

(c) Representative Group Funding

I worked alongside Welfare Vice President Rick Zwaan to develop the representative group funding system begun by Matthew Ellison in 2013.

We presented a proposal to the executive, developed an application process, and will continue to support groups in their applications.

(d) Living Wage Campaign

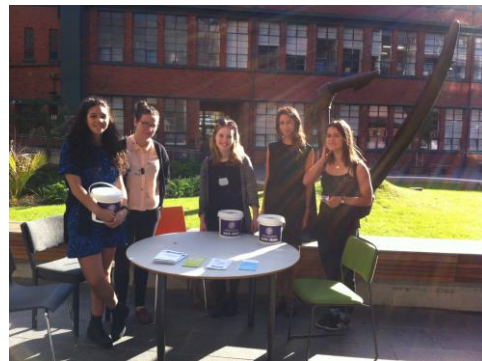
I have attended and contributed to a number of Living Wage at Victoria campaign meetings, become an administrator of the Facebook page, and supported the coordination of campaign events where possible.

2. Goal 6

Public Issues: To be the critic and conscience of the University and society, by promoting discussion and action on issues concerning students.

(a) Wellington Rape Crisis Annual Appeal

I coordinated and participated in the on campus drive for the Wellington Rape Crisis Annual Appeal, during which \$1200 was raised. This drive supported the services of Wellington Rape Crisis which functions to provide counselling services to survivors and act against rape culture in New Zealand.



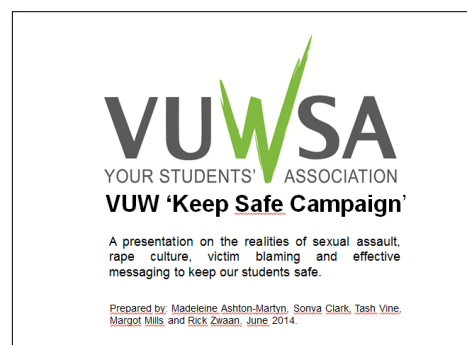
(b) Let Me Go Home Campaign

In response to the two sexual assaults that occurred on the Boyd-Wilson field pathway, I coordinated the Let Me Go Home march alongside the VUWSA Women's Group and Youth for UN Women. This campaign aimed to act against rape culture and acknowledge that the only full solution to the prevalence of sexual assault is in a dramatic cultural shift, something largely unrecognized by the university or the police in the response to these incidents. The march was incredibly successful and engaged over 300 students and sparked attention from the Wellington City Council. I have been working on the follow up in seeing the infrastructural issues addressed by students are seen to as well as promoting the idea that came from this event regarding the cultural shift required.



(c) Campus Safety Messaging

I worked with VUWSA Women's Group members Tash Vine and Margot Mills, Welfare Vice President Rick Zwaan and President Sonya Clark to produce a resource that provides guidelines to messaging related to sexual



assault. This was presented to various university staff members and will continue to be used to inform staff and students about the nature of safety messaging.

Reporting on Other Goals:

1. Goal 9

Sustainability: To recognise the needs of current and future generations by promoting sustainable lifestyles and actions to members while ensuring the sustainable operation of the Association and University members.

(a) Women's Room Refurbishment

I have helped to coordinate and work on the refurbishment of the women's room through supporting VUWSA Women's Group president Chrissy Brown, collecting supplies, and attending working bees to help painting and cleaning.



(b) Continuity and Sustainability of Representative Groups

I have worked to support representative groups to create long term plans for the longevity of their organizations due to the struggle they have historically experienced in maintaining momentum year to year and between executives.

2. Goal 5

Activities: To support sporting, social, and cultural activities for and by members and students, particularly through Clubs.

(a) Orientation Week

I spent a number of hours during O Week helping run the barbecues, attending events, helping Mali organize events, and doing member sign ups.

(b) Clubs Week

I contributed to clubs week through organizing and running the VUWSA Women's Group and VUWSA International Students' Representative Group stalls, organizing promotional materials, signing up members, and giving information about each group.



(c) Executive Weeks

Mental Health Awareness Week, Women's Week, International Week, and Pride Week are each scheduled for the second half of this year but I have supported each respective representative group through the planning stages and informed them of the various channels of VUWSA support. I will continue to do this throughout the rest of the year.

3. Goal 2

Student Support: To advocate for adequate financial support, income and welfare for students in order to remove barriers to education.

(a) Flu Shots

I helped coordinate free flu shots this year through supporting students who were getting them, helping the nurses set up stalls, and ensuring consent fliers were accessible.

(b) Stress Free Study Week

This service is an excellent support mechanism for students struggling financially during the exam period. I supported Welfare Vice President Rick Zwaan in this even through restocking each day, getting supplies, handing out food from behind stalls at Kelburn and Pipitea, helping to coordinate puppies on campus at Te Aro and Kelburn, and cleaning up at the end of the week.



General Tasks and Initiatives

1. Sweet As Programme

I supported Rachel Riedel in the formulation of this project, offering feedback and contributions to the planning stages then acted as a peer support leader for each of the four sessions. The programme was aimed at educating first year students in formulating healthy patterns of wellbeing throughout their studies through student led and directed seminars.

2. Annual Plan Development

I contributed to this, particularly the segments that were relevant to the welfare team alongside Welfare Vice President Rick Zwaan and Wellbeing and Sustainability Officer Stephanie Gregor, through participating in dialogue during executive meetings and contributing to the welfare team plan during retreat.

3. Executive Welfare

Throughout the year I have been conscious of the welfare and overall wellbeing of the VUWSA executive and tried to consistently offer emotional and practical support during stressful points in the year.

Representation

1. VUW Equity and Diversity Committee

I have attended the meetings of this committee where possible and actively contributed in order to ensure students' interests are represented and voiced.

2. Student Equity and Diversity Committee

Alongside Welfare Vice President Rick Zwaan, I have helped set up this committee, assisted in ensuring it meets regularly and that each member of the committee is satisfied with how it functions.

3. UniQ

I have attended UniQ events whenever possible including the weekly lunch space and the UniQ quiz. I meet with co-presidents Connor Thompson and Sami Poynter-Mellors regularly, and contribute to the UniQ Executive Facebook page.

4. VUWSA Women’s Group

I played a significant role in ensuring that the VUWSA Women’s Group was set up for another year including advertising and chairing the IGM. I set up training meetings between executive members and their equivalents on VUWSA. I have attended all executive meetings and supported members in coordinating the consent forum, weekly coffee dates, and a pizza night.



5. VUWSA International Students’ Representative Group

I ensured that the groundwork that was achieved last year by Matthew Ellison and Ramon Quitales was utilized in bringing this group to the IGM stage, then further to ensure a full executive was elected. I meet with president Ramon Quitales regularly and offer support whenever possible.



6. Fortnightly Executive Meetings

I have attended and actively contributed to all VUWSA executive meetings so far this year.

7. Welfare Team Meetings

I attend these meetings regularly to ensure the successful operation of the Welfare Team through giving and receiving updates on progress on priority goals.

8. NZUSA Conference

I attended this conference at the start of the year.

9. NZUSA Tertiary Women’s Focus Group

I contribute to the discussions of this group through Facebook and hope to attend the NZUSA TWFG and UCFemSoc conference later in the year as well as be involved with the production of the Women’s Guide to Voting.

Strengths

1. Dedication

I am extremely committed to contributing to the success of VUWSA as an organization, to resolving student issues, and to succeeding in my own personal goals within the Equity Officer position. I value VUWSA highly and have contributed well over my constitutionally expected hours.

2. Passion for issues of equity

I have identified as a feminist for a number of years now and the issues directly related to this role are incredibly important to me personally.

3. Relationships

My style of leadership and work within groups or collaborating between them relies heavily on my ability to formulate supportive and healthy relationships with both students and staff that I am working with.

4. Commitment

In each of my tasks I ensure that I complete them to the best of my ability and work extensively to make them successful. I am always willing to put in extra time if it means a better result.

Weaknesses

1. Life Balance

I have found it difficult to maintain a healthy balance between VUWSA, study, and home life this year which has meant that a few points have been extremely difficult for me.

2. Wellbeing

As a result of poor life balance, I have been running on a relatively low level of wellbeing due to high stress and lack of sleep. This has meant for a few low patches that were difficult to work through with very few opportunities for actual relaxing breaks.

3. Efficiency

I am still learning how to do this type of work efficiently and occasionally suffer from putting too much time and energy into tasks. I always aim to complete work to an exceptional standard but this often comes at the cost of timeliness.

Overall Rating

I still feel extremely fortunate to be able to act as a part of VUWSA despite the difficult patches and inevitable impact on my studies. I have learned so much from these past six months across a number of different fields including advocacy work, activism, student issues, politics, and event coordination. Every day I feel privileged to be meeting the incredible students that VUWSA has put me in a position to work with both those on the executive and those outside of it. I am proud of the work I have done for this organization so far and am excited to see what we can achieve over the next six months.