



EXECUTIVE HALF YEAR REPORT

NAME	Jacinta Gulasekharam
POSITION	Treasurer-Secretary
REPORT PERIOD	1st January – 30th June 2015
HOURS WORKED	301.45 hours (235.7 hours required)

Reporting on Priority Goals:

1. **Goal 4 Services: To provide quality, cost effective services for the benefit of members, and, where appropriate, students**
 - (a) Services is a crucial aspect of VUWSA, the Treasurer-Secretary role has numerous ways it can ensure its quality and cost-effectiveness
 - (b) Being on the Audit and Finance committee helps financial oversight of the services VUWSA provides and allows for opportunity to increase under-used cost centres for more services for students.
 - (c) Volunteering at events that are beyond my constitutional required hours (remuneration is not given for extra hours worked) helps provide a cost-effective service as it is unpaid and quality service by providing student with knowledge of how VUWSA benefits them.
 - (d) I have worked extensively with the General Manager to review the spread of the budget and implement a new spread that shows a more accurate expenditure of services during difference period of the year such as SFSW. This helps with budge setting for SFSW to see if more of the service can be provided and how to accurately spread finances cost-effectively across different centres.

2. **Goal 7 Finance: To maximise the member benefits by minimising fees or user charges through internal efficiency and non-member revenue**
 - (a) The Treasurer-Secretary has a main goal of fiscal responsibility. I have used my role to increase the efficiency and revenue expenditure of VUWSA
 - (b) Fees for joining VUWSA remain at \$0, however there is the portion allocated to VUWSA from the SSL from students.
 - (c) Budget setting for 2015 between myself, the President and the General Manager involved a lot of tweaking and searching for areas that could be

reduced. I aimed to have a \$0 budget – that is revenue equals expenditure. This ensures maximum usage of non-member revenue.

- (d) For the first time in many years, steps are being taken to set a budget for the following year before the year has commenced. 2016 budget planning is underway and I plan to work closely with the General Manager to set this in time for approval in September. This ensures efficiency with using the start of 2016 to follow the budget rather than set the budget and focus on revenue increasing projects.
- (e) I worked extensively with the Publications Committee to set the Student Media budget and decrease the recurring loss in this area of expenditure. The Committee worked together to pass a budget that reflected financial restraint.
- (f) Audit and Finance has met regularly and a new one page summary has helped highlight to committee members areas to concentrate upon.
- (g) As an ex officio member of the VUWSA trust it has been an important connection for the financial support from donation and financial strategic direction for VUWSA.
- (h) As the ERC chair ensuring payment is accepted only when required work report and hours have been completed it allows for efficient practices as it run through a separate committee to the Executive. This acts as a check and balance to ensure the VUWSA executive budget is used only when work has been complete.

Reporting on Other Goals:

1. Goal 8 Accountability: To ensure accountability to, and representation of, members

- (a) I have used my position on VUWSA to ensure accountability and representation in a variety of facets
- (b) The Work reports of the VUWSA executive are available on the website for the students to view how the Executive are fulfilling their constitutional requirements. This has involved editing and formatting processing largely with the help of the Association Secretary.
- (c) The Executive Reporting Policy has been further amended to clarify Executive requirements. This means the Executive are more aware of their constitutional requirements than before and process can be followed to ensure the Executive are performing their duties.
- (d) For the first time Publication Committee now has a Terms of Reference to clarify the requirements of financial reporting of Salient and VUWSA. This has helped the accountability of financial expense on Student Media that has not been as tight in the past. It also helped the members understanding of their representative roles.
- (e) Documents and minutes are well recorded and circulated after meetings for amendments. This ensures all members are aware of their responsibility and action points to undertake.
- (f) All committees in 2015 are meeting more regularly than before. Set meeting times and calendar invites have ensured the accountability of meeting attendance and member responsibility.

General Tasks and Initiatives

1. SFSW

Stress Free Study Week is one of VUWSA valued services. I spent 14 hours helping with this effort at the Pipitea campus (3 lunch shifts, 1 breakfast shift). We managed to successfully provide students with breakfast and hundreds with lunch during their study. It was a great initiative to be involved with knowing the small difference it makes to student's study.

2. General Tasks

The Treasurer-Secretary role is different to the other roles as it does not fit under a specific portfolio rather works on its own. I have helped the running of VUWSA processes such as minute taking, record keeping, documentation distribution and meeting participation. This work has been helped by the new Association Secretary role which has been beneficial to the operations of VUWSA. The new role also allows my position to have a greater say on committees, meetings and seek new improvements to the organisation.

3. Flu Shots

I helped with VUWSA providing information, tea, coffee and biscuits for the Flu shots held in semester one. It was a great way to get VUWSA out to the student body and

4. O-Week Signups

In O-week I helped with sign-ups at the VUWSA office, Post-graduate Orientation and in the Hub. It was great to interact with the student body and explain how VUWSA can benefit them.



Representation

1. Executive Reporting Committee

As the chair of the Executive Reporting Committee, I have ensured it has 3-5 members each week to look over fortnightly work reports and authorise Executive member's payments. I report every three weeks to the Executive to report on hours and any missed reporting periods. I have amended the current Executive Reporting Committee policy to ensure the clarity of what is expected and the remuneration process.

2. Publications Committee

As chair this committee has been meeting more frequently than previously with dates set for monthly meetings. This has been a testing committee but has managed to attain more understanding than before with my Publications Committee Terms of Reference, meeting dates and with Sam's excellent reporting. This committee helps delegate financial oversight of a large portion of the budget and scrutinise spending.

3. Audit and Finance Committee

Audit and Finance Committee has been meeting just shy of monthly to review expenditure and risks. This committee has been successful this year in overseeing budget tracking and advising the executive of any important matters. Being a member on this committee is helpful for budget setting for 2016 and keeping the Executive accountable to their respective budgets.

4. Policy Committee

The Policy Committee has been meeting more frequently than previously (4 times this year) and has made an ambitious goal of reviewing all internal policy by the end of this year. We have made significant progress with this goal by passing amendments upon the Credit card, Executive Reporting, Audit and Finance, Annual Leave, Travel policies. As the chair I am pleased to see the dedication of members and progress we have made to ensure the accountability of the Executive.

5. VUWSA Trust

I sit as an ex officio member on the VUWSA Trust with the President. This fosters the connection between the Trust and the Executive. This role helps shape the strategic direction and long term objectives of the Trust in relation to VUWSA's aims.

Strengths

1. Relationships

A key strength of my personality is my ability to build relationships with my interpersonal skills. I have a great working relationship with the VUWSA staff, executive and committee members. This has been helpful for constructive action to take place to better the organisation.

2. Meeting skills

I came to this role with previous title experience which involved meeting procedure. This has helped the effectiveness of my participation in meeting discussion by understanding how formal meetings are conducted.

3. Reliability

It is important for the Executive to have a reliable Treasurer-Secretary to perform the internal tasks proficiently. As a person this is one of my strongest attributes which helps the Executive be assured processes will be followed.

Weaknesses

1. University and other commitment balance

The commitment of studying full time, working part time and being on VUWSA keeps me extremely busy and at times over-committed. I have tried to allocate my time in the semester for dedicated VUWSA times, keep an up to date diary and make use of the holiday period. Study is my priority and it has meant some work periods I am slightly below my required hours. I have chosen to mitigate this with working from home, using the semester breaks for surplus hours and multi-tasking during the day. To counteract this weakness I will continue to take opportunity of breaks and scheduling in dedicated VUWSA time.

2. Institutional Knowledge

I was elected to VUWSA as a first year that had little institutional knowledge about VUWSA. Not having this knowledge has meant I have had to ask many questions and research aspects about VUWSA to gain a better understanding of the organisation. I have not afraid to question VUWSA's practises and purposes which fits well with the Constitutional Goal 8 of Accountability. To work on this weakness I have been proactive in seeking information and will continue to do so for the rest of the year.

Overall Rating

As a whole I have stepped up to the role and dedicated myself to the tasks VUWSA requires of me. I have taken opportunity to seek improvements within the organisation through internal policies, relationship building and meeting participation. The Treasurer-Secretary role has suited me well with my pervious title roles and Commerce background. It has helped grow me as a person and develop many skills that will prove useful in my future career. I would implore other first years to consider running for VUWSA for their second year to be a part of a wonderful team and cause that grows you as a person.