



## EXECUTIVE HALF YEAR REPORT

NAME	Rory McCourt
POSITION	President
REPORT PERIOD	1 January – 30 June 2013
TOTAL WEEKS WORKED	24
HOURS WORKED	1324.5 of 1040 Required Hours


(a) Goal 1 - Education Quality: To ensure that the University provides the best teaching and learning, research opportunities, assessment and training to students.

### **(a) Supporting and improving a vibrant, New Zealand-leading academic student representation system:**

We're proud of VUWSA's Class Representative and Faculty Delegate system that works to ensure representation for every student from the classroom to the Academic Boardroom.

Highlights for Trimester 1 2013 are:

- Over 650 individual class representatives appointed who represent 95% of classes taught.
- Increasing numbers of postgraduate classes



Using the Student Voice  
to Improve Quality

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NATIONAL CENTRE FOR  
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EXCELLENCE

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and programmes with representatives.

- Trainings are generally well attended with over 77% of Class Representatives trained in Trimester 1
- 100% representation in Architecture and Design
- 99% Representation in Commerce and Science Faculties
- Release of the Ako Aotearoa/ NZUSA [Voice Report](#) which praises VUWSA's class representative system
- Associated Student Voice [Good Practice Guidelines](#), including reference to
- Associated [Reflective Questions](#) for institutions, which are expected to be included in the Academic Quality Agency's auditing process
- Standardising Class Rep elections through the production and release of [a short clip](#)



### **(b) Working to Improve Student Representation and Consultation:**

One of the key focuses for VUWSA in 2013 has been our work to highlight the lack of accountability and democracy in the hastily-established Student Forum. The Forum took over key Association responsibilities in representation and consultation, and threatened VUWSA's role as the prime representative body for students at Victoria. In early Trimester 1, the Executive made the decision to withdraw from the Forum. We were joined by Ngāi Tauira and the Pasifika Students' Council in our opposition to the Forum, and the

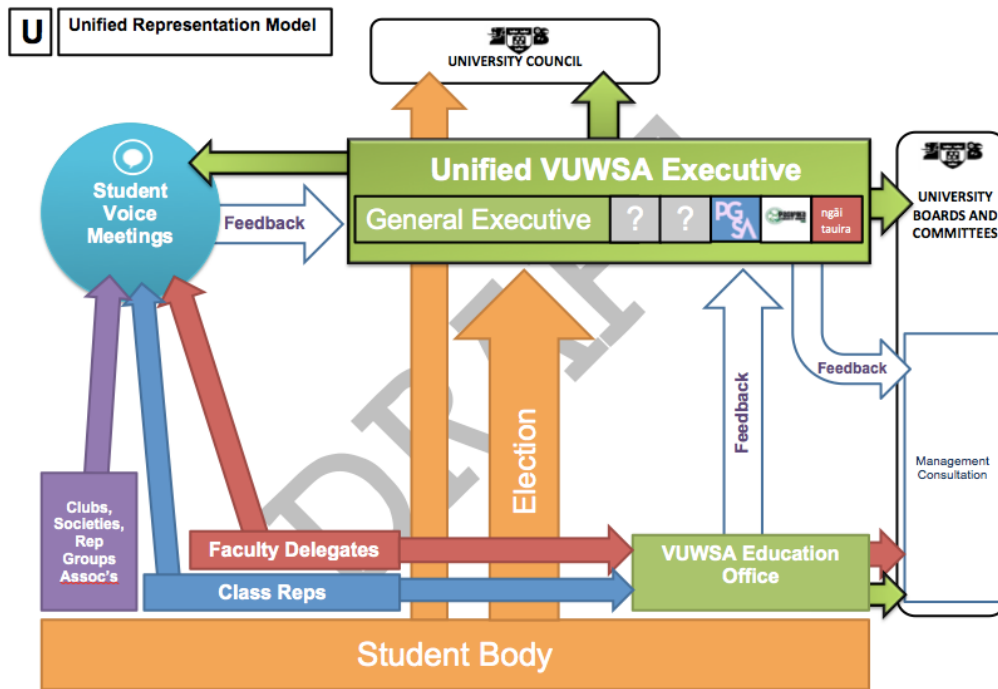
body failed to meet in Trimester 1.

VUWSA has since been invited to attend various University boards and committees: making an important and constructive contribution.

The Review, negotiated at University Council in late 2011, began in mid-Trimester 1 and VUWSA has fully engaged with the process. David Alsop, the independent chair of the Oversight Group and the Student Working Group, has acted with fairness and patience to guide VUWSA, the PGSA, the PSC, NT and CanDo toward some joint goals in student voice.

Practically; this work has meant hours of meetings, researching, writing and negotiating. I have also attempted to keep my peers informed through [Salient](#). Undoubtedly, this issue has been the most time consuming focus of Trimester 1.

We have in Trimester 1 consulted with various student representatives to define what we believe will create an accountable, effective and diverse student representation system and I look forward to the next few months of taking our plan for student voice to students, management and Council. Returning VUWSA to the heart of student voice at Vic will not only right a wrong, the evidence shows it will once again deliver increasing quality at Victoria, and secure for all students a real, accountable say at this place.



**(b) Authentically representing students on Academic Board, Academic Committee, the Teaching and Learning Committee, the Library Information Services Committee and others:**

I've been proud to work alongside Sonya Clark, Gemma Swan, our Faculty Delegates and other student representatives to examine, scrutinize and improve various proposals that have come through the above boards and committees. I have ensured that I have done the required reading and had the necessary conversations to best

represent students and examine issues from multiple perspectives. Through this work I have gained a greater understanding of the goals and needs of the University, academic staff, various student groups, the community and Government.

Specific issues of note that we have been working on are:

- Progression of the 90-point and 60-point Masters programmes through Academic Committee and Academic Board, and reduction in the role for Honours. We have, ofcourse, raised at every stage the equity implications of the change under the Government's current student allowance restrictions which prevent Masters students from drawing student allowance
- The Grading Changes: Introduction of a C-, and bringing our grading scale into line with other New Zealand Universities. I've been working with Sonya Clark and Jay Chhana to establish the impacts for students and for Trimester 2 we will be launching a consultation piece as the issue heads to Academic Board.
- Teaching Excellence: VUWSA has long advocated for awards and other mechanisms that recognise great teaching at Victoria, which will ultimately support higher quality academic provision. I have been making this case at the Teaching and Learning Committee as we examine the Ako Aotearoa teaching excellence awards nationally and how Victoria can select the highest quality candidates for that, while also supporting good practice on campus.

### **(c) Building on our positive relationship with the University Academic Office:**

The great relationship forged between VUWSA and the University Academic Office through David Crabbe and Bridie Hood has continued this year.

- Regular meetings ahead of Academic Committee and Academic Board to discuss the issues and seek clarifications
- Positive hand over from David Crabbe to Acting Associate Vice-Chancellor (Academic) Peter Thirkel

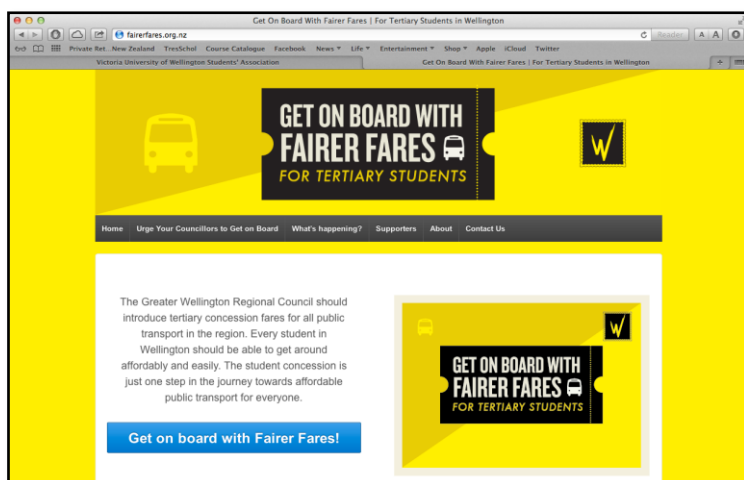
- Attendance by AVC(A) at Class Rep trainings
- Continued partnership in Class Rep certificates, Faculty Delegate recognition and recognition ceremonies



b) Goal 2 - Student Support: To advocate for adequate financial support, income and welfare for students in order to remove barriers to education.

**(a) Fairer Fares:**

I have worked in tandem with Wellbeing and Sustainability Officer Rick Zwaan on what was VUWSA's largest campaign in many years. We advocated for an extension of the child concession on public transport in the Wellington Region of 50%. The campaign consisted of:



- A [website](#) with submission tool to email Greater Wellington Regional Councillors
- Advertisements in *Salient* and a full poster of all campuses
- The first student [event](#) in the Hub: with over



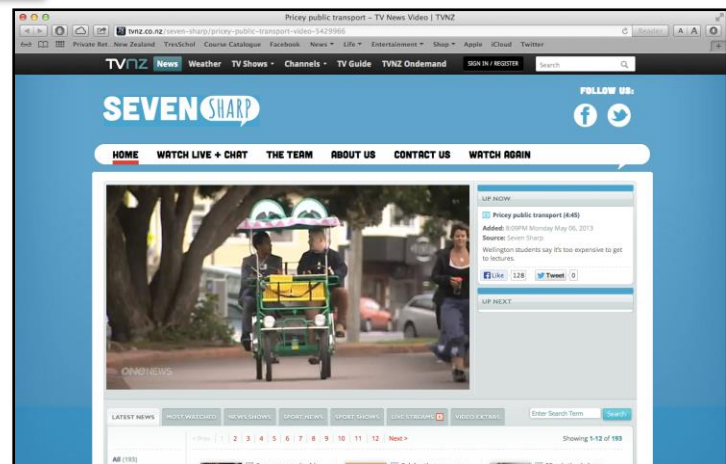
200 students and Councillors for and against tertiary concessions

- Several articles in the *Dominion Post* about the issue including [this feature](#) which VUWSA helped to coordinate

- A [SevenSharp story](#) about the campaign



- Meeting repeatedly with Greater Wellington Regional Councillors



**(b) Budget 2013:**

The [further restrictions](#) to student allowances contained in Budget 2013 by age resulted in student condemnation, and mixed views on the new policy to stop student defaulters at the border from across students' associations.

VUWSA responded by [calling](#) Budget 2014 ‘a missed opportunity’ and opted to criticise the sum of the Government’s changes over its term in office, rather than what the media portrayed as relatively small changes this year.

We held a Budget Brunch with NZUSA to talk through the changes with an expert panel including former Tertiary Education Union President Sandra Grey, industry insider Max Kerr and economist Keith Rankin from Unitec. Other students’ associations and students were invited and the quality of the discussion was high, allowing us to gain some insights into where exactly the Government’s vision would take the tertiary sector and how we can play a meaningful role in putting students at the centre of any vision, and specifically the next Tertiary Education Strategy 2014-2017.



**(c) Supporting Strong, Effective Welfare Services on Campus:**

As a student representative on the Advisory Committee on the Student Services Levy (ACSSL), I have continued the work myself and Bridie began last year on the Strategic Review of Services that would examine the mix of services offered at Victoria and whether they met student expectations of a New Zealand university in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, or whether there were some services that ought to be included (or not).

As Co-Chair of ACSSL, I have had an opportunity to work in



partnership with VUW to ensure a strong student voice in setting of the 2014 Levy, and various service changes like the crèche and the physiotherapy service.

This committee is also responsible for ensuring value for money in the spending of the \$676 student levy within these services and other levy spend (such as student engagement, the Student Forum).

**(d) Foodbank to Student Pantry:**

I made a pledge in early Trimester 1 to look at the VUWSA Foodbank and examine whether there were any prohibitive barriers to student engaging with the service and whether VUWSA could be a leader in rebranding the service as a community or student 'pantry'.

Some initial conversations have begun with staff to head towards this. This work will continue in Trimester 2.

**(e) Supporting higher wages and fewer required working hours for students:**

Following the Executive's decision to join the Living Wage campaign in 2012, I have been working with the Wellbeing and Sustainability Officer and the Vice-President (Welfare) to determine VUWSA's role as a community group in the campaign. We have been active in [talking](#) about time poverty and the time pressures on students that make working above 15 hours harmful to their studies, including in this *Stuff* [article](#). The Living Wage Coalition has also been a space for VUWSA to gain allies around Wellington in the community sector to look at other welfare issues like public transport and housing.

**(f) Supporting Student Job Search:**

As President, I have been liaising with our member representatives on the SJS board to contribute Victoria students' vision for the development and growth of SJS: most specifically recognising its true strength does not lie in graduate placements, but in the short and mid-term work the service is best known for.

We know that students value SJS and the service it provides. Thousands of them receive direct benefit every year. 2013 is no different. Below is the year to dates for student job placements at Victoria:

Year To Date - VUWSA			
From:	1/01/2013	1/01/2012	%
To:	31/07/2013	31/07/2012	Change
Placed	2,267	2,344	-3
\$ Dollars	\$6,281,605	\$4,981,610	26
Worker Weeks	13,247	10,277	29
New Enrols	2,531	2,735	-7
Avg. \$ per place	\$2,771	\$2,125	30

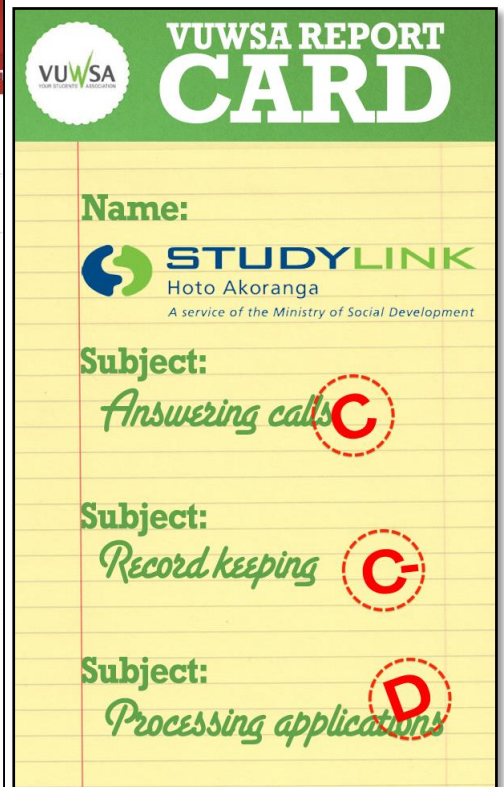
**(g) General Assistance (Service Delivery):**

- Flu shots
- Stress-Free Study-Week (Planning)
- Foodbank parcels
- Bus Tickets
- Lost Property

**(h) Advocating for an Improved Studylink:**

Every year students have issues with an inadequate Studylink that fails to cope with demand in February-April. 2013 was particularly bad, with cases of non-actions (eg paperwork not going from place to place, or required callbacks) reaching an historical high.

In Trimester 1, over 300,000 student calls were dropped. I conveyed student frustration in this [television piece](#). We also produced a Report Card based on Studylink's performance.



Later in Trimester 1, the National Manager for Studylink got in touch with us through NZUSA and had conversations about how to improve the service. I'm confident that our advocacy in this area will lead to better resourcing, planning and service quality for 2014. Wins for students!

**(i) Advocating for Housing Standards:**

Students have continuously said cold, damp and expensive flats impact on their ability to study and live healthy lives in Wellington. We have been [vocal](#) in highlighting the issue, and will look at advocating for something similar to the Otago University Students' Association-Dunedin City Council local bill to empower the Wellington City Council to introduce minimum housing standards, from Trimester 2.

c) Goal 3- Equity and Access: To promote equity for disadvantaged students in access to and within the University.

**(a) Building a Great Relationship with the Pasifika Students' Council:**

I am the strong belief that promoting equity for disadvantaged students and those from backgrounds not strongly supported

currently within the University requires building strong, positive and sustainable relationships with their student leaders.

I'm proud of the time and effort our Exec has put in to growing and developing our relationship with the Pasifika Students' Council, including regular meetings, shared meals, reciprocal attendance at events and solidarity on key issues. Kevin Fagalilo, Ane Kisina, Fabie Masoe and Kura Moeka'a serve Pasifika



students incredibly well, and we have been enthusiastic to support their leadership of the PSC and the various associations that make it up.

This relationship has allowed us to have the equity issues for Pasifika students identified and advocacy led from their own community, with VUWSA as a very active support to back up whatever initiatives have fallen out. One of the projects I am keen to pursue to have ready for Trimester 1 2014 is cultural training for tutors, and a greater emphasis for staff so that Pasifika cultural particularities can be appreciated and understood by those who grade our students.

I attended Pasifika Orientation on most days of NSO Week, and regularly attend events hosted by the Council.



In Trimester 1, I also opened conversations between the PSC and *Salient* to have a space for their content weekly in the magazine.

Finally, the VUWSA Executive has this year acknowledged the opportunities we have for coordinating a wide range of Pasifika student reps on various boards and committees: including allowing unique perspectives to come through bodies like Academic Board. In Trimester 2 we will continue to embrace these opportunities.

**(b) Supporting the Re-Establishment of CanDo –the Representative Group for Students’ with Disabilities:**

Along with former Vice-President (Welfare) Simon Tapp, I have been working with Lucy Croft and her team to bring together the foundations for the re-establishment of CanDo, which has waxed and waned in activity through the years. Rachel Anderson-Smith, the VUW Manager of Disability Services, has been absolutely instrumental in supporting the group to be reformed in a way consistent with best practice student voice –independent, accountable and connected to a body such as VUWSA. Trimester 1 has mostly been about getting the basics right in terms of regular meetings, forming relationships and integrating into wider conversations like the Student Representation and Consultation Review.

As President, I work regularly outside of CanDo to follow up accessibility issues, including elevators that are unusable and blocked rampways etc. VUWSA’s oversight role on ACSSL is also a tool for ensuring all services, not just Disability Services, are responding adequately to the diverse needs of our student population.

Trimester 2 will be mostly focussed on building the base for CanDo,

and ensuring VUWSA will continue our support in creating a sustainable Rep Group for 2014 and beyond. The Equity and Diversity policy is an opportunity for CanDo and students with disabilities generally to influence VUW policy and practice.

**(c) Supporting UniQ and the Women's Group:**

These two Groups are slightly more established, and have significant ties to VUWSA. My work with them this year has involved coordination between their Executive and the resources we have available to organise students in their communities. Matthew Ellison, our Equity Officer, has done a fantastic job of carving out the role as a coordinating position, and I have attempted where appropriate to support him.

Trimester 2 will hold Pride Week and Women's Week, and I thoroughly look forward to ensuring our Executive provides full support to what are two very well known and appreciated weeks.

**(d) Building on our Relationship with Ngāi Taurira –our Treaty Partner:**

While 2012 was a difficult year for VUWSA, I am sure it was doubly difficult for Ngāi Taurira, who received a massive funding drop and little satisfaction from the University in the wake of late 2011 financial misappropriation.

Picking up from Joanna Morgan and Bridie Hood's relationship, and then with the transition to Hine Parata-Walker's 2013 Executive; I believe we have massively grown our relationship with NT.

This has included providing a briefing role to NT with regards to the Representation and Consultation Review, providing advice and support for the incoming Exec and conveying the perspectives of Māori students on boards like Academic Committee when NT reps aren't present.

One of the more thorny issues for Trimester 2 will be developing sustainable funding arrangements for NT from the University. We have supported NT's resistance to be categorised as a 'club' and I intend to do some work with the University to develop a better funding framework than the Sponsorship Panel, which remains inappropriate for any representative group, let alone the Māori Students' Association.

d) Goal 4 - Services: To provide quality, cost effective services for the benefit of members, and, where appropriate, students.

**(a) Introduction of the VUWSA Membership Card:**

I have been proud to lead the introduction of VUWSA's first membership card in decades (our first, in the 1960s, became the official library cards, and then eventually the Victoria Student ID). The Membership Card was envisaged as a branding tool for VUWSA in a voluntary environment, a way to offer members deals and discounts to save them money, and as a way to develop our membership database.

I am sure the Card has helped to lift our membership to over 75% of campus.

In Trimester 2 serious conversations will occur about the level of investment the Executive is willing to commit to this project, and whether they wish to explore commercialisation as a possible funding stream in the future.



**(b) Securing increases to VUWSA's contracts for 2013:**

The result of the Education (Freedom of Association) Amendment Act has been to challenge VUWSA's ability to provide a range of services to students independent of service agreements with the University. The SLAs for 2012 were inadequate to cover VUWSA's expenses, and in some contracted areas significant losses existed. This meant VUWSA (and the VUWSA Trust) were effectively subsidising them. My role in Trimester 1 was to negotiate increases in these areas.

I successfully negotiated, with the General Manager, a doubling of the funding associated with Lost Property and Bus Ticket services from VUW for 2013.

### **(c) Securing Improved Contract Process for 2014:**

In Trimester 1, I approached VUW about our SLAs and whether they were interested in having a conversation about the sustainability of VUWSA and the level of prescriptiveness and reporting they required from services contracted to us. We also expressed a desire to tie off funding decisions in the year previous to operation, so that VUWSA could set its budgets with some certainty.

These points have been acknowledged and I hope to leave a more workable framework than the one I inherited from the initial year of VSM.

### **(d) Improving VUWSA's Services:**

Changes like those discussed above to services such as the Food Bank have been happening throughout my time in Trimester 1. While changing the way some services are delivered takes time, the Executive has approved the recruitment of a Welfare Organiser to ensure greater outreach to non-Kelburn campuses, and more consistent organisation of peak welfare events such as Stress-Free Study-Week (SFSW).

Rick Zwaan has sent out an evaluation form to VUW Service Managers for feedback on the Trimester 1 SFSW, and we look forward to receiving responses and seeing how we can deliver a more effective, coordinated week.

We are also improving the Lost Property Service through more proactive contact to students who have wallets, cellular phones and other high value items handed in.

e) Goal 5 - Activities: To support sporting, social and cultural activities for and by members and students, particularly through Clubs.

### **(a) Overseeing OWEEK 2013:**

OWEEK 2013 was a success in terms of the metrics that we've set for the last couple of years: minimizing risk, minimising losses, lifting attendance and diversifying events. On all of these, Orientation proved to be of great value to VUWSA.



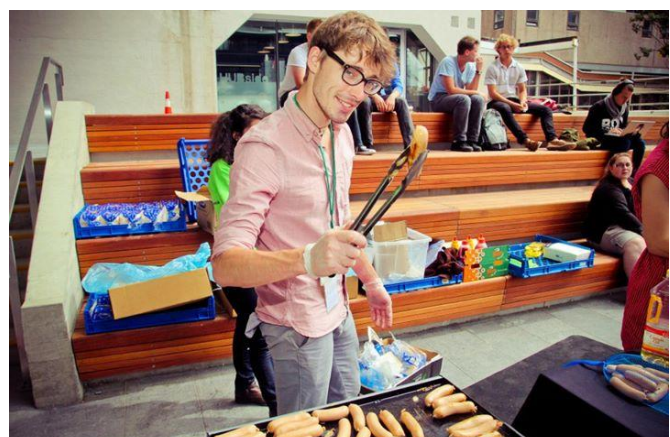
The Toga Party was sold out even earlier than the previous year, and patronage for the other social events such as they hypnotist was high.

In terms of diversification, Karorientation and Sounds in the Sun both proved to be successful with thousands of students engaged with barbeques, and ZM promotions such as the rugby bouncy castle and prize wheels.

We had more volunteers than ever before, and their good management has meant many continue to be involved with VUWSA. I thanked some of them [here](#).

While the signing of the Orientation contract was ahead of 2012/13, it was still slow enough to prevent as much planning as we would have preferred. We also had implementation issues, such as the lack of consultation that occurred around ticket numbers for the Toga Party, or the use of a breathalyser in a particular way. I communicated some of these concerns to students through *Salient*.

We've raised the contract timeframes and these other issues with the University and they have acted with good faith to try and resolve those with us. My sincere hope for 2014 is that we have good frameworks in place, and enough time to make OWEEK successful according to the vision and goals that fall out of the planning exercise currently underway.



While the 2012 President and Executive had the responsibility of providing Exec input into the schedule for Orientation 2013, I played a significant role in overseeing and delivering the programme, as well as representing VUWSA:

- Spoke at the Civic Welcome for new students at Kelburn Park
- Presented to various Orientation programmes:
  - Mature Students
  - Pasifika
  - NZ School of Music
- Helped to organise and run the VUWSA day activities at Karori and Kelburn
- Stickered over 1000 membership cards
- Attended all OWEEK Social Events, including:
  - Comedy Night
  - Hypnotist Evening
  - Neon Toga Party
  - Homebrew live music event



### **(b) Clubs, Societies and Rep Groups Support –an ongoing conversation:**

With the completion of the Lumin Report for the Joint Student Union Board (JSUB) in mid-2012, and the decision by the University to shift responsibility for Clubs to Recreation Services; VUWSA has yet to fully determine what role we will play in the support of clubs.

The main reason for this has been waiting to see what level of support the University gives them, particularly around sustainability, governance and advocacy. These three areas would be VUWSA's strength, and something the University is not well placed to provide.

In the interim, VUWSA continues to provide support with lockers, and full support to Rep Groups. More thinking must be done with regards to Societies. As discussed earlier, we hope the new funding framework puts VUWSA at the heart and allows us to coordinate the funding, support and sustainable development of Societies, Rep Groups and eventually –clubs. My work has been to begin to have those conversations with VUW and open our options for returning to this space in the future.

We work in partnership with societies such as Studio and the Law Society on different issues and events. The Vic Engineering Club is set to help host the E-Sports tournament for Trimester 2.

**(b) Student Representative and Partner on the Sponsorship Panel:**

Along with Ramon Quitales, I am one of the VUWSA Student Representatives on the VUW Sponsorship, which has many of the functions VUWSA used to have under pre-VSM. I worked in Trimester 1 to ensure that fair and consistent payments have been made to clubs, individuals and larger organisations. As discussed earlier, this fund has proven entirely inappropriate to fund associations, Rep Groups and even Societies. Trimester 2 will be about fixing this for 2014.

**(c) Joint Student Union Board Member:**

JSUB provides the budgeting, oversight, and joint governance of Recreation Services and the Student Union Building: two areas that regularly support club and other student activities. I have kept a close eye on the transition of clubs under Rec Services from this committee, and ensured that groups who decline to register still maintain their access to spaces and their freedom to associate.

JSUB also provides an opportunity for me to make practical suggestions for improving the student experience in these areas, which I've readily taken up!

**(d) VUWSA Autumn Market**

I supported the Autumn Market organised by Vice-President (Engagement) Mica Moore at the Hunter Lounge in May, including assisting with setup the night beforehand.

f) 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) Marriage Equality Campaign and Submission:**

Following the VUWSA Referendum on Marriage Equality in October 2012, which resulted in 84.3% support and 15.7% opposition (n total=2826), VUWSA submitted to the Government Administration Committee in support of Louisa Wall's private member's bill.

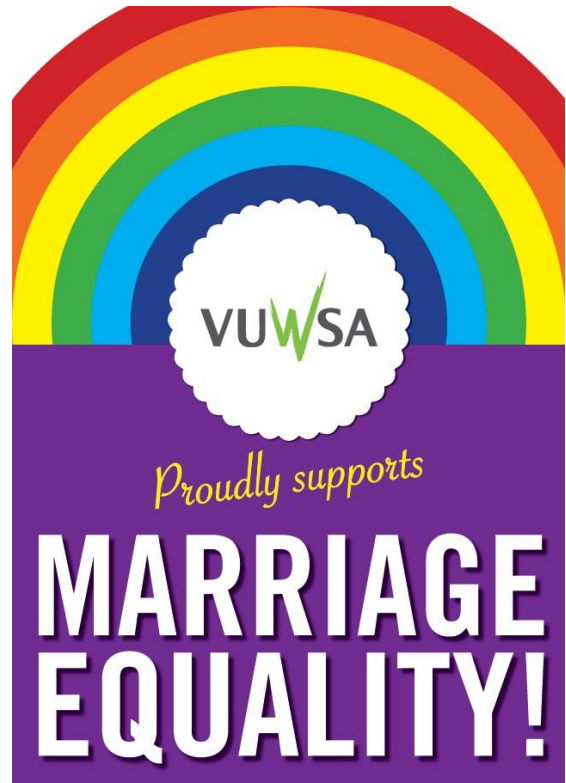
Our support continued this year as the bill came up for its third reading, including a postering campaign and Facebook images. I coordinated this initiative.

**(b) Partnership Schools Submission:**

In February, I submitted with then Education Officer Gemma Swan on the Education Amendment Bill (2012) which seeks to allow the introduction of Charter Schools, and the employ of unregistered teachers. We raised concerns held by teaching students that their employment standards would drop as a result of the legislation, and that many of them felt the more deregulated market would increase the risk of exploitation of beginning teachers.

**(c) Hördur Torfason Discussion Event:**

In March, VUWSA hosted Icelandic democracy activist Hördur Torfason during his New Zealand tour. Rooms SU217/218 were packed, and students had a lively discussion with the guest, including challenging his conception of democracy and citizenry.



We hope to continue the discussion series and incite debate on campus.

**(d) Advocacy on Tertiary Education and Student Support:**

As linked to throughout this document, one of my strengths has been communicating repeatedly VUWSA's vision for education and student support through the mainstream media. I provided comment on the following issues in Trimester 1:

- Student loans
- Student allowances
- Studylink
- The PBRF
- Cost of Transport
- Quality of Housing
- Student employment and market incomes
- Student migration

g) Goal 7 - Finance: To maximise the member benefits by minimising fees or user charges through internal efficiency and non-member revenue.

**(a) Service Level Agreements:**

As discussed above, I have worked hard to secure increases to VUWSA's contracts for 2013. I successfully negotiated, with the General Manager, a doubling of the funding associated with Lost Property and Bus Ticket services from VUW for 2013. I also approached VUW about our SLAs and whether they were interested in having a conversation about the sustainability of VUWSA and the level of prescriptiveness and reporting they required from services contracted to us.

These points have been acknowledged and I hope to have our deficit reduced for 2014 through increased non-member revenue.

**(b) Securing Member Engagement Funding:**

The collapse of the Student Forum led to a question about the funding for rep groups and VUWSA had attracted due to our participation. VUW have extended the former Student Forum pool to NT, the PSC and VUWSA for Member Engagement

purposes, which will undoubtedly aid us in delivering the quality of accountability, transparency and democracy members expect.

h) Goal 8 - Accountability: To ensure accountability to, and representation of, members

**(a) Executive Reporting Committee:**

I have continued the ERC, and it is working well to scrutinise the work of the Executive and provide the pastoral care necessary to have a good, healthy team. I have attended 90% of ERC meetings.

The Executive member whose report is being approved/rejected does not vote on their own report.

**(b) Fortnightly Work Reports:**

I have consistently produced work reports that clearly outline all of the people I've been meeting with, recent tasks, events and correspondence. This way members can hold me to account and challenge what influence from persons or groups on me they think is inappropriate.

**(c) Improving Consultation for Authentic Representation:**

The publication of the NZUSA-Ako Aotearoa Student Voice Report has allowed us to examine our own practices and question whether they are best practice. I have begun having conversations with Sonya Clark and Jay Chhana about what changes we need to make to be an accountable, authentic voice for students. The planned Grading Changes consultation appears to exemplify what normal practice should look like.

**(d) Improving Gender Representation and Diversity at VUWSA:**

With only of the Executive 30% female, no non-Pakeha and a similarly troubling demographic problem within our Class Rep cohorts in some faculties; VUWSA must do better to attract and support great women and candidates of colour.

I have already begun meeting with interested women in becoming candidates, and I will consider advocating for constitutional measures to move our Association Executive to look more like the student body and provide the representation

and perspectives any representative organisation ought to have.

Sonya Clark and I will also be introducing a strategy for lifting Class Rep and other student representative diversity levels, due for implementation in Trimester 1 of 2014.

i) 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) Fairer Fares:

One of the main arguments we talked about for Fairer Fares was around the reduction of carbon emissions greater public transport usage would create. It also provided us with a great opportunity to work with Generation Zero, 350 Aotearoa, Carbon Neutral Campus and others.

### (b) Environment Week:

I supported Environment Week by attending the following events and sharing them on VUWSA's Facebook page.

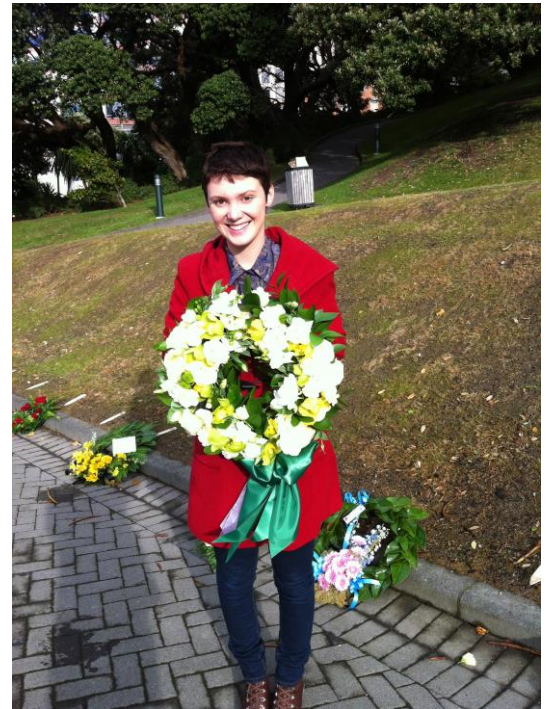
#### Assorted General Tasks and Initiatives

1. Attended numerous NZUSA meetings, conference and sector council meetings
2. Kept in regular contact with peers across the country for information sharing, advice, help and support
3. Presented at the VUW 'Ideas to Action' conference on student collective identities
4. Attend all VUW graduation ceremonies during May
5. Laid ANZAC Day wreath with Vice-President (Academic) Sonya Clark
6. Attended the AUSA Ball 2013



## Representation

1. Academic Board (in attendance)
2. Academic Committee
3. Advisory Committee on the Student Services Levy (Co-chair)
4. Joint Student Union Board (JSUB)
5. Equity and Diversity Committee
6. Teaching and Learning Committee
7. VUW Sponsorship Panel
8. Hub Oversight Group
9. VUW Representation Working Party
10. VUW Student Wellbeing Committee
11. VUWSA Executive
12. VUWSA Publications Committee
13. VUWSA Audit and Finance Committee
14. VUWSA Executive Reporting Committee
15. VUWSA Trust
16. NZUSA University Sector Council
17. Advisory role to the constituent member representatives on the Student Job Search Board
18. Regular meetings with the Vice-Chancellor Professor Pat Walsh
19. Regular meetings with the Director Student Academic Services Pam Thorburn
20. Regular meetings with the Associate Director (Campus Operations) Rainsforth Dix
21. Regular meetings with Pasifika Students' Council leadership
22. Regular meetings with the Ngai Taurira Tumuaki Joanna Morgan/Hine Parata-Walker
23. Regular meetings with the Postgraduate Students' Association President Neal Barber
24. Meeting with the Assistant Vice





- Chancellor (Academic) Penny Boumelha
25. Frequent Meetings with Greater Wellington Regional Councillors
  26. Regular Meetings with Wellington City Council Mayor Celia Wade-Brown
  27. Regular Meetings for Academic Board and Academic Committee with David Crabbe
  28. Regular attendance at Living Wage Coalition Wellington Meetings
  29. Regular meetings with Alistair Shaw, Director of NZUSA
  30. Regular meetings with Daniel Haines and Francisco Hernandez (AUSA and OUSA)
  31. Weekly meetings with Mark Maguire, General Manager of the Association
  32. Weekly meetings with Vice-Presidents
  33. Monthly meetings with Executive officers
  34. Regular meetings with University Councilors
  35. VUWSA Observer on Faculty Boards (varies)
  36. VUW Student Representation and Consultation Review Student Working Party
  37. VUW Student Representation and Consultation Review Oversight Group
  38. Frequent meetings with University Council Student Representative David Alsop
  39. Regular meetings with the Chancellor, Ian McKinnon
  40. Regular meetings with Karen Davis (Associate Director, Campus Services)

## **Strengths**

1. Courage
  - When I leave VUWSA, I'm going to be really proud that I had the courage to tackle the impact the Student Forum was having, and was set to have on the future of independent student voice at Vic. It's been really, really hard. Some relationships have suffered because of it. But my view is this: if those relationships cannot tolerate a demonstration of the value we hold most dear: do they truly understand VUWSA and what we see our role as. It comes down to those core principles that we were no longer willing to compromise and we took a stand. It might not have been the easy option: but it was the right one.

2. Dedication
  - For a second year I've given my all to VUWSA, putting in countless dozens of hours of overtime, weekends and evenings. I knew coming into this role would mean putting my life on hold for a year to get the most out of it.
3. Strategic Focus
  - I've brought a focus on the longer-term, beginning to generate the conversations about VUWSA's existence as an incorporated society and being upfront about the challenges we face to continue to be an independent student voice.
4. Passion
  - My dedication comes from a deep passion for helping students, and a belief that education can change lives and make New Zealand a fairer, better place. This passion has fueled my relentless drive to improve VUWSA and Victoria.
5. Empathy/Responsiveness
  - I've managed to be a President who understands the needs, personal and professional, of my Executive team; and those of students more widely, and responded accordingly. I think my leadership has brought a warm, frankness that allows for more openness.
6. Openness
  - I have increased the information that the Executive receives, and brought them in to important conversations that previous Executives were not encouraged to join.
7. Positivity
  - Because otherwise I would have quit by now.

## **Weaknesses**

1. Work-life balance
  - Finding time for non-VUWSA is the hardest thing in the world, but by exploring methods to increase my productivity: I hope to claw back time from my role. 60+ hour weeks are not sustainable.
2. Communication
  - Ensuring all relevant people, groups and media have the information they need is a monumental challenge. I

think this is definitely an area for improvement. You can have email on 5 devices, but it doesn't mean you'll get better at instant replies.

### 3. Organisation

- I am not naturally well-organised, but I was hoping this was an area I could improve in during my time as President. I think that has been the case, but I am still failing to adequately prepare the Exec for meetings.

## **Overall Rating**

If 2012 was the time to find how finances would work in a post-VSM environment: then 2013 is certainly about how student voice will work. It has been absolutely full-on with the Rep Review, but we have been incredibly more visible than 2012 with the Fairer Fares campaign, various events and outreach. The introduction of the Membership Card and amending the restrictions on Orientation are two achievements I'm really proud of. The impact of the latter perhaps won't be felt until OWEEK 2014, but it is huge.

I made a real commitment this year, as did the Exec, to be more active on campus and rebuild the VUWSA brand. Navel gazing might make us feel good, but students measure our success on how good OWEEK is, how often we visit their satellite campus and whether we're talking about the issues that affect their every day lives. On those measurements, we're making really good progress and the remainder of 2013 is a chance to solidify and expand VUWSA as a valuable, engaging student association in a post-VSM environment.

I think I've certainly been doing my bit to achieve that. But most of our success goes down to an exemplary Executive whose passion, commitment and competence shows the future for VUWSA is bright.