

## Referendum Questions

Yes/No

1. **Should the Otago University Students' Association Annual Audited Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2017 be received and accepted?**

**Explanatory:** Each year OUSA has its financial statements audited and published. This is a legal requirement. It also allows all students to see where their money has gone and what assets students hold.

**Pro:** Adopting this ensures that OUSA is legally compliant.

**Con:** Declining this prevents OUSA from operating in a legally compliant manner.

2. **Should the Otago University Students' Association Annual Report for 2017 be received and accepted?**

**Explanatory:** The OUSA President has to write an annual report outlining how the Association has functioned with them at the helm. It is a Constitutional requirement. Last year's OUSA President was Hugh Baird.

**Pro:** Receiving and accepting this report would acknowledge the work done by the previous Executive and offer retrospective clarity for the 2017 year.

**Con:** Declining this report prevents OUSA from having a cohesive summary of the 2017 year.

3. **Should PricewaterhouseCoopers be appointed as Auditors for the Otago University Students' Association for 2018?**

**Explanatory:** PwC have proved to be excellent auditors asking testing questions.

**Pro:** The advantage of supporting this question is that PwC can continue to audit our accounts utilising their vast historic knowledge of OUSA.

**Con:** The disadvantage of this is that a fresh perspective is prevented from auditing our accounts.

4. **Should Anderson Lloyd be appointed as Honorary Solicitors for the Otago University Students' Association for 2018?**

**Explanatory:** Anderson Lloyd provides excellent advice about our legal advice needs. This informal advice is free, and a discount applies when formal legal advice is needed. The key contact at Anderson Lloyd is an OUSA Life Member.

**Pro:** The advantage of this is that OUSA continues to receive cost effective professional advice from a solicitor who knows the Association well.

**Con:** The disadvantage of this is that there is no tender process conducted.

## 5. Should the following amendments to the Constitution be accepted?

Section 34.2 of the Constitution be amended to delete the word “academic”

**Explanatory:** Each Executive member presents a report at the conclusion of each quarter. Quarterly dates are set by the Executive at the start of the year and no longer tied to academic quarters set by the University.

**Pro:** This would update with current practice.

**Con:** Dates could be set arbitrarily.

Section 34.5 of the Constitution be amended to read “The Te Roopū Māori Representative will present a report to the Executive each quarter.”

**Explanatory:** The Te Roopū Māori Representative currently presents a report each quarter consistent with their Association’s Constitution. The OUSA Constitution has not been updated to include this change.

**Pro:** This would update with current practice.

**Con:** Extra work for the Representative.

Add a section 6.2(e) that reads: “To remedy breaches of the Rules, in accordance with these Rules”

**Explanatory:** The Student Body has the power to remedy breaches of the Rules as per section 16.

**Pro:** Would enable consistency in the Constitution.

**Con:** Adds to an already lengthy Constitution.

Delete section 10.14

**Explanatory:** This section is null and void. It gave power to the Executive to modify the levy in the first year voluntary student membership (VSM) came into force.

**Pro:** Would keep the Constitution up to date.

**Con:** Would remove the Constitutional record of changes that were made under VSM.

Add a section 11.4 that reads: "All active policies must be made publically available on the Association website" and change section numbers accordingly.

**Explanatory:** Currently, policies do not have to be made publically available.

**Pro:** This would increase transparency and accountability of the Association to its members.

**Con:** Some policies may not be appropriate to be made public.

Delete from section 21.2: "...generally provided that no Student General Meeting shall be held on a Friday"

**Explanatory:** Student General Meetings are to be held on days where the University holds formal classes. Formal classes rarely used to be held on Fridays. Many formal classes are now held on Fridays.

**Pro:** This would update the Rules to be consistent with current University timetabling practice and increase efficiency of OUSA.

**Con:** Unclear whether this would decrease member participation with SGMs being held on a Friday.

Sub-sections 19.10 (c) and (d), and 6.3 (e) and (f) be removed, and that the OUSA Executive be empowered to appoint honorary solicitors and auditors without putting it to referendum.

**Explanatory:** The Student Body currently has to appoint the Association's honorary solicitors and auditors.

**Pro:** Would increase efficiency by allowing the Executive to make decisions on internal processes.

**Con:** Takes authority away from the Student Body in approving these appointments.

Should all binary gender terms used throughout the Constitution be replaced with gender-neutral terms?

**Explanatory:** Binary gender terms are currently used throughout the Constitution.

**Pro:** Would advance OUSA's inclusivity.

**Con:** Time-consuming administrative task.

**6 Should the Association Secretary, Donna Jones, be re-appointed for a fixed-term of four (4) years?**

**Explanatory:** Donna Jones has served as the Association Secretary for 27 years, and is an undoubtedly invaluable member of the Association. Her vast institutional knowledge along with her ever-helpful attitude is essential to the health of the Association.

**Pro:** Donna's lengthy tenure at OUSA and impressive understanding of the Association makes her a great asset to the Executive.

**Con:** Expensive and time-consuming process to appoint a new secretary.

## **7 Should OUSA support the establishment of an on-campus Marae?**

**Explanatory:** Otago is one the only Universities in New Zealand that does not have an on-campus Marae. It would be a place to hold gatherings, ceremonies and allow a range of students to experience Māori culture and customs on campus.

**Pro:** Would provide Māori students with a place of cultural significance on campus and a place for all students to learn about Māori culture and customs.

**Con:** Maybe difficult to find suitable location.

## **8 Should OUSA's SLA funding be independent of Te Roopū Maori's funding?**

**Explanatory:** The SLA (Service Level Agreement) is a contractual agreement between the University and OUSA to provide student services. Currently, operational funding for Te Roopū Māori is included along with the SLA.

**Pro:** Would give Te Roopū Māori the ability to negotiate directly with the University for their funding.

**Con:** Te Roopū Māori may have less bargaining power than if OUSA negotiates on their behalf.

## **9 Should OUSA run a campaign against bullying?**

**Explanatory:** Bullying is a prevalent issue on campus particularly amongst minority groups.

**Pro:** An effective campaign may contribute to behavioural awareness and a decrease in bullying.

**Con:** Sufficient resources would be required to run such a campaign at the expense of other campaigns or projects.

## **10 Should OUSA directly ask the Education Minister, "Will you wipe all student loan debt by 2025?"**

**Explanatory:** Student debt is currently at \$16 billion.

**Pro:** This would put pressure on the Education Minister to wipe student debt which would reduce the financial stresses students and graduates face.

**Con:** There are many other student issues that may require more attention than student debt that OUSA could focus its lobbying attention to.

**11 Should OUSA advocate for the University to implement a composting system on campus?**

**Explanatory:** There is no system for sustainably disposing food waste on campus.

**Pro:** Could increase the likeliness for a more sustainable food waste system.

**Con:** Expensive to implement.

**12 Should OUSA support science and health based education on safe student drug use?**

**Explanatory:** There is little educational information openly available to students about drugs and how to minimise drug harm and abuse.

**Pro:** This may reduce drug related harm and ensure student safety when encountering illegal substances.

**Con:** OUSA could be seen as endorsing drug use.

**13 Should OUSA officially endorse a change from the current Misuse of Drugs Act of 1975 in favour of a health-based approach?**

**Explanatory:** The Misuse of Drugs Act 1975 is the New Zealand law that regulated drugs.

**Pro:** Could see a reduction in penalties for low-level drug offences.

**Con:** Could see an increase in drug use.

**14 Should OUSA officially endorse the complete legalisation of marijuana in New Zealand?**

**Explanatory:** Currently the possession of marijuana is illegal in New Zealand.

**Pro:** Would remove low level drug crimes from the criminal justice system.

**Con:** Could see an increase in drug abuse and health related issues.

**15 Should OUSA amend its current policy to prohibit election tickets to be formed (groups of two or more candidates running alongside and endorsing one another's campaigns) for Executive elections?**

**Explanatory:** Currently, during OUSA elections, some candidates run on tickets. This is where a group of people share the same policy promises and branding etc. to increase visibility in the hopes of a more successful outcome.

**Pro:** Currently, those running individually may be disadvantaged. Removing tickets may reduce the imbalance of capabilities between individuals and groups with more people-power.

**Con:** People who are unlikely to run in the OUSA elections may feel more less comfortable running individually rather than with a group. There may be less transparency to voters regarding which candidates are working together.

**16 Should OUSA explore options to minimise drug-related harm?**

**Explanatory:** OUSA currently does not have any drug-related harm minimisation strategies.

**Pro:** This may result in a reduction of drug-related harm in the student area.

**Con:** Could be seen as endorsing drug use.

**17 Should OUSA set up a subsidiary company to invest in flats in the North Dunedin area as a way to diversify revenue streams?**

**Explanatory:** In 2016, OUSA considered purchasing student flats. OUSA would effectively become a property manager of student flats.

**Pro:** Would diversify OUSA's revenue streams and set the standard of flat ownership in North Dunedin. May result in better flatting standards in the student area.

**Con:** Could undermine OUSA's advocacy on flatting issues and is a high risk investment.

**18 Should OUSA support a soft plastic recycling scheme on campus?**

**Explanatory:** There is currently no soft plastic recycling scheme on campus.

**Pro:** Would reduce the amount of soft plastics going to landfill and instead recycled.

**Con:** May encourage and increase the use of soft plastics on campus rather than discouraging the use of soft plastics altogether.

**19 Should OUSA support the sale of alcohol in the Union food court and Union Common Room areas?**

**Explanatory:** There is currently no option to purchase alcohol at these venues. The University is exploring options to include the sale of alcohol at these venues in the future.

**Pro:** May increase social culture on campus and decrease drinking in residential areas. This would bring alcohol consumption into a licensed premises.

**Con:** This could exacerbate student drinking culture.

**20 Should OUSA formally support and lobby the University to provide recordings for all lectures?**

**Explanatory:** Currently, there is no expectation to provide lecture recordings for all University papers.

**Pro:** Missing lectures won't adversely affect students. It may be easier to study for exams by being able to re-watch lectures.

**Con:** Students may perceive that there is little benefit and incentive for being physically present at lectures.

**21 Should OUSA lobby the University to fund flu vaccinations for all students?**

**Explanatory:** OUSA has been coordinating free flu vaccinations for the last two years to prove to the University that there is demand for the service. The University has not committed to funding flu jabs in the future.

**Pro:** Likely decrease in influenza in the student population. More productivity and less sickness.

**Con:** May be a significant cost to the University.

**22 Should OUSA commit to continuing the free breakfast through 2019?**

**Explanatory:** OUSA currently provides free breakfasts during winter and University exam times.

**Pro:** Mitigates stress for students.

**Con:** Students' money is spent on this programme which could be spent on other projects.

**23 Should OUSA expand the Hyde Street Party to increase capacity?**

**Explanatory:** Currently, Hyde Street party allows 3600 students to participate.

**Pro:** More students would be able to be admitted into the party.

**Con:** The party will be more vulnerable to incidents. OUSA may not have the capacity to host the event and cost would increase. External stakeholders may not be willing to be involved.

**24 Should OUSA lobby the University and Private residential colleges to offer discounted rent to Residential Assistants, so that their pay will entirely cover accommodation costs?**

**Explanatory:** Currently, Residential Assistants' accommodation costs are not discounted, nor are they covered by their pay.

**Pro:** RAs will be adequately reimbursed for their services. May encourage more students to apply for being a RA.

**Con:** May be a significant cost for the University.

**25 Should OUSA support and lobby for the repeal of the voluntary student membership of students' associations implemented by the Education (Freedom of Association) Amendments Act 2011?**

**Explanatory:** In 2011, the Government implemented voluntary student membership (VSM) of students' associations. Because of this, it is voluntary to be a member of OUSA on an opt-out basis. OUSA gets most of its operational funding from the compulsory student services fee via the University, who decide how much money OUSA gets each year.

**Pro:** Students' money will go directly to OUSA rather than to OUSA via the University as a result of repealing the Act. OUSA will be fully independent from the University and will be able to adequately fund its services each year and effectively advocate for students.

**Con:** The Government has not committed to any such promise. May affect the relationship between the University and OUSA.

**26 Should OUSA include a Pacific representative on the Executive?**

**Explanatory:** OUSA had a Pacific representation on the Executive until 2011. OUSA currently has a Māori representative Ex-officio on the Executive – the President of the Māori Students' Association (Tumuaki Te Roopū Māori).

**Pro:** Will ensure Pacific representation within OUSA.

**Con:** May set a precedent for other minority groups to desire individual representation in OUSA.