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Welfare and Equity Representative
3rd Quarter Report
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PART ONE: EXECUTIVE OFFICER POSITION DESCRIPTION DUTIES

10. Duties of the Welfare and Equity Representative

10.1 Assume all the powers and duties of the President in the absence of the President, the Administration Vice-President, the Finance and Strategy Officer and the Academic Representative.

I have not been required to assume the powers and duties of the President.

10.2 Work to address issues affecting marginalized communities of students at the University of Otago, in areas including, but not limited to:

10.2.1 Academic Issues at the University of Otago; and;

I keep up to date with the Academic Representative's work, and with current events regarding the tertiary sector.

10.2.2 Social and welfare related issues within the University of Otago and the wider community.

I have communicated with UniQ about issues within the university.

I have worked with Thursdays in Black to put together the What I Was Wearing exhibition and attended Executive meetings.

I have kept up to date with updates from the TRM and UOPISA Presidents' work and the work of their communities. The lunch event with the Vice-Chancellor was also a good opportunity to learn about the perspective of other student organisations with advocacy-focused and support functions.

10.3 Be a member of appropriate internal committees of the Association, including, but not limited to:

10.3.1 Standing Committee of the Executive;

I have attended all meetings of the Standing Committee where possible.

10.3.2 Residential Committee; and;

I have not been notified of any ResComm meetings during this quarter.

10.3.3 Welfare and Equity Committee.

I have attended all meetings, as chair, of the Welfare and Equity Committee this quarter.

10.4 Chair monthly meetings of the Welfare and Equity Committee, ensuring that all committee members are advised of meeting times, that the agenda is prepared and circulated beforehand and ensuring that the standing orders of the committee are adhered to.

Meetings have not been monthly due to commitments of those on the committee. However, the most recent meeting in particular was very productive.

I have used Outlook calendar invites to organise the meetings, and agendas are sent out prior to the meeting.

10.5 Take direction from the Welfare and Equity Committee on all welfare matters relevant to the Association and its members.

I update all members of the committee on what I am working on where possible, and get feedback from all members as to what they would like to see happen.

10.6 As relevant, specifically consult with representative members of the Welfare and Equity Committee to provide feedback or information to the Association or the University of Otago, on issues.

I structure the meetings around various projects or areas that I am working on and ask for feedback on each issue. For each topic/issue, I give everyone the opportunity to give their perspective based on lived experience.

10.7 Where reasonable, ensure that as many different representatives of student welfare issues are present on the Welfare and Equity Committee as possible.

I believe that there is good representation on the Committee across cultural groups, gender, areas of study, and other factors.

10.8 Where appropriate, brief the President on national and local tertiary sector welfare issues and representing the welfare interests of students on local body committees and boards.

I get in contact with Melissa when relevant issues arise, and am contacted by her in similar situations.

10.9 Actively inform the student body of issues relating to their welfare, via publications, promotions and campaigns.

I aim to use my Critic columns to keep students updated as much as possible, and give input into the weekly Executive posts as avenues to keep students updated.

10.10 Maintain a good working relationship with relevant Association staff, including the Student Support Centre Manager, Queer Support Coordinator and Advocates.

I have a good working relationship with Sage from Student Support. We sit on two committees together, and I regularly reach out when I need to point a student towards specific support.

I also have gotten to know Rachel Shaw, the new Queer Support Coordinator. We have attended UniQ meetings to check in with how queer support at the

University is going as a whole, and I am currently working with her on ways for maintenance of the Queer Space to be more efficient.

10.10.1 Meet with the Student Support Centre Manager on a weekly basis, where possible, and liaise with them on relevant welfare issues as they arise.

We have not seen weekly meetings as necessary but are in regular contact about student welfare and relevant issues. I feel comfortable reaching out whenever issues pop up.

10.11 In consultation with the Student Support Centre Manager, maintain a good working relationship with community organisations and groups that may provide services to the benefit of student welfare.

I have reached out to Student Support on multiple occasions when working with groups such as UniQ, ODSA, and Thursdays in Black. This has been very helpful for accessing resources, support, and practical assistance for these groups.

10.12 Maintain a good working relationship with the 'Are You OK?' coordinator to ensure, where reasonable, Executive assistance is available.

This has not come up during this quarter, but if Are You Ok needs assistance, I pass this on to the Executive via the group chat.

10.13 Facilitate in conjunction with the relevant committee chair a variety of student representation on welfare and equity related University Committees and on OUSA Sub-committees.

I sit on and advocate for students through the Ethical Behaviour Advisory Committee, EBAC's working group, the Equity Advisory Board, the Pūtea Tautoko Board, the Student Health Clinical Governance Board, and the Working Party to consider inclusion of a disability priority group into Te Kauae Parāroa policy.

I keep up to date with the minutes of the Otago Chaplaincy Board, as the meeting clashes with another.

I am an ex-officio member of the Otago Disabled Students' Association and Thursdays in Black, and work closely with both groups. This is some of my favourite work that I do in this role.

10.14 Maintain a good working relationship with the University, particularly with:

10.14.1 The Director of Student Services;

We have a good working relationship and sit on committees together, allowing me to keep up to date with relevant issues. I feel comfortable in reaching out when needed.

10.14.2 The Manager of Student Health and Mental Health Clinician Leads

In particular, I have worked with Margaret Charles through Student Health's student feedback sessions and Richard Mooney (Mental Health Clinician Lead). Margaret and I have done work to investigate the best pathways for

communication between Student Health and students, and I have had various meetings with Richard to discuss student perception of and feedback on the mental health services.

10.14.3 Disability Information Services;

I have a good relationship with DIS, and reach out to Melissa when needed or I have updates to give.

10.14.4 UniQ;

I have attended two UniQ Executive meetings during this quarter, and have worked to resolve issues brought up at these meetings. UniQ also has a representative on the Welfare and Equity Committee.

10.14.5 Te Whare Tāwharau;

I do not regularly meet with Te Whare Tāwharau but we have a good working relationship.

10.14.6 Thursdays in Black;

I am an ex-officio member of the Thursdays in Black executive and attend executive meetings wherever possible. I also worked with the Executive on their What I Was Wearing exhibition during Diversity Week which was a successful event.

10.14.7 Chaplaincy Board; and;

Unfortunately I have a regular clash with these meetings, but make sure to keep up to date on meeting minutes and ask for clarification where necessary. I have the benefit of being on other committees with Paul Trebilco so have opportunities to ask questions in person when necessary.

10.14.8 Any other Welfare and Equity related organisations.

I am an ex-officio member of the Otago Disabled Students' Association, and work with them regularly. I attend weekly meetings regularly, and will be helping with the upcoming movie night at Te Oraka.

10.15 Liaise with the Clubs and Societies Representative to assist those affiliated clubs that have a focus on student Welfare and Equity.

I often liaise with Tulsi when questions come up during my work with ODSA and TiB. We have discussed a potential project with TiB also.

10.16 Be available via cell phone at all practical times.

I keep my phone on me whenever possible, and follow up any missed calls by text.

10.17 Perform the general duties of all Executive Officers.

This is discussed in Part Two of the report.

10.18 Where practical, work not less than twenty hours per week.

I believe I have done this whenever possible. Particularly during Diversity Week planning, I worked a mixture of above and below 20 hours which I believe has averaged out to 20 hours.

PART TWO: GENERAL DUTIES OF ALL EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

3.1 The appointed term for all Executive Officers shall commence from the 1st of January and will terminate on the 31st of December of that same year.

3.2 Where reasonable, all Executive Officers are expected to assist as volunteers for OUSA events and functions, including, but not limited to:

3.2.1 Assisting at the OUSA Tent City marquee and other activities during Summer School, Orientation and Re-Orientation; and;
N/A

3.2.2 Assisting with elections and referenda where appropriate, including but not limited to advertising the election and collecting votes.
I have been keeping up to date with preparations for the upcoming OUSA elections and have volunteered time to assist with this.

3.3 Where reasonable, all Executive Officers are to be available for Executive meetings, national conferences, national and local campaigns, Executive training sessions and Executive planning sessions.

I have attended all Executive Meetings I have been available for and sent apologies when I could not. I have also attended the Emergency Meetings during this quarter, and planning workshops with the Sustainability Office.

3.4 All Executive Officers shall:

3.4.1 Keep up to date with the Finance and Strategy Officer's Executive budget, bringing to the finance and strategy officer any spending proposals, keeping track of their spending and ensuring they do not exceed budgeted expenditure.

This has only come up during Diversity Week preparations. I consulted with the Finance and Strategy Officer on the budget, and kept her updated with changes.

3.4.2 All Executive Officers are to educate themselves on needs and experiences relevant to historically marginalised demographic groups including intersectionality and promote and encourage all demographics to participate, where relevant, in clubs, societies, committees and OUSA events.

I prioritise keeping up to date with current events affecting diverse groups, mostly through R1 News, the Spinoff, and RNZ News.

Day-to-day, I prioritise drawing on lived experience which I am fortunate enough to do alongside the diverse representation on WelCom, ODSA, the Executive itself, and other groups.

3.4.3 Prioritise sustainability and minimisation of environmental impacts in all aspects of their role and keep up to date with environmental issues;

This has been more at the forefront of my work this quarter, in the form of the Diversity Week Sensory Rooms. I made sure to figure out what equipment OUSA and OUSA Events already had, and then looked at what equipment could be borrowed and/or re-used before looking at buying new resources. I would like to give a huge ‘thank you’ to the Botany Department who provided 12 native shrubs for the Sensory Rooms and helped to transport them to Union Hall. Studholme College’s Deputy Warden Rachel Carson was also kind enough to agree to lending me the College’s Christmas tree.

3.4.4 All Executive Officers shall every quarter undertake five hours of voluntary service which contributes to the local community.

This requirement has been satisfied by my volunteering for the University’s Animal Law Association. This quarter, we ran ‘Animal Law August’ which raised over \$240 for SAFE, and over \$100 for the SPCA!

3.4.5 Regularly check and respond to all communications.

Email notifications are sent to my phone, so I receive emails as soon as they arrive and try to respond ASAP. For messages that cannot be dealt with immediately, I aim to catch up on communications at the end of the day.

PART THREE: ATTENDANCE AND INVOLVEMENT IN OUSA AND UNIVERSITY COMMITTEES

Internally, I am part of the and the Welfare and Equity Committee, and have attended Policy Committee when required for projects. I believe I have attended all meetings of these this quarter and have been chair for all Welfare and Equity Committee meetings.

Externally, I am a member of the Otago Tertiary Chaplaincy Trust Board, the Equity Advisory Committee, the Ethical Behaviour Committee, the Clinical Governance Board at Student Health, Putea Tautoko Governance and the Healthy Campus Working Group.

I aim to shed light on the student experience whenever relevant at these meetings and use reporting meetings to give feedback from a student perspective on university updates.

PART FOUR: GOALS AND YOUR PROGRESS

These goals have been adapted slightly and/or taken on a different form since my last report, due to the frustrations of relevant groups declining projects as mentioned in previous reports.

1. Work with Student Health and other relevant bodies to increase access to mental health support and promote early intervention.

I have worked with Richard Mooney on responding to the student perception of mental health services, particularly in light of the OUSA Referendum. I have also been working alongside Margaret Charles and Student Health’s focus groups to improve the communication between SH and students.

Unfortunately, as Emergency Psychiatric Services declined to collaborate on a more streamlined process for students earlier in the year, I have been looking into other avenues to achieve the essence of this goal. This has lead to a focus on internal University processes as an area to create more efficient

processes and therefore more accessible services.

2. Work towards equitable representation of tauira Māori and Pacific students within residential Sub-Warden teams to ensure safe and valuable experiences for first-year students.

I did not hear back from my follow-up email to CACLs about hiring policies, a process which has already been undertaken for the 2023 Sub-Wardens. Therefore, I have utilised being on committees with relevant University staff to give feedback and advocate for students. Most recently, I was able to give feedback on the Sub-Warden training program as someone that had undergone the training.

Accordingly, I have shifted my focus to the work being done to increase genuine cultural representation in course admission processes.

3. Streamline support processes for students with learning disabilities and other long-term health conditions

In particular, I have been working on the mismatch between DIS support and the experience of disabled Postgraduate students who do not receive the same (or an adequate) level of support compared to undergraduate students. I have been fortunate enough to draw on lived experience from students, and hope that improvements can be made for these students.

PART FIVE: GENERAL

- Attended what was supposed to be the OUSA AGM
- Attended the student travel workshop with the Sustainability Office
- Initiated a political submission with Awhi that will materialise during Q 4
- Gave feedback for submissions
- Supported ODSA with event preparations
- Wrote Critic Columns