

Cyrus Yam

International Students' Representative 1st Quarter Report 2023

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## **PART ONE: EXECUTIVE OFFICER POSITION DESCRIPTION DUTIES**

### **15.1 Promote via publications, promotions and campaigns, an environment within the Association and on campus which is supportive of cultural diversity**

Since I was back in Dunedin, there were a lot of things I can do better on in person. I had met with the Study Dunedin Advisory Group.

### **15.2 Organize and run events of specific interest and relevance to international students**

I am now currently organizing the International Cultural Expo with the Events Team and are now currently waiting for several other potential stakeholders to confirm their status on if they want to support the event or not, which includes several high schools and the DCC. I am also letting OISA plan out events for our local international student population freely since I am not the best on that field.

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

#### **15.3.1 Otago International Students' Association**

I had attended most meetings in this quarter apart from a few clashing with important events I have to attend in the community as the ISR.

### **15.4 Chair monthly meetings of the Otago International Students' Association, 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**

I have co-chaired the meetings with the Co-President (Tiara Das) for OISA as usual. Meeting times are facilitated to the best of every member's availability as the previous quarter report has stated. The Secretary (Fonie Ka) has been diligent in taking meeting minutes, circulating agendas prepared by the Chair, and ensuring members are well informed of the meeting date and time. Other members have also contributed their thoughts and updates to these meetings and added any agenda items of concern.

### **15.5 Take direction from the Otago International Students' Association, 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**

OISA executives have been active in ensuring that we are there for the students

by putting on events for international students for them to feel less isolated and find friends if they so wish. We know that we cannot force people to know one another, thus we had elected to provide opportunities for them to do that instead. I have given them free reign on planning the events and they can report to me if they notice or find any issues regarding to the university experience which requires a higher level of intervention.

**15.6 Work on issues specific to international students at the University of Otago, including, but not limited to:**

**15.6.1 Academic issues within the University**

I am continuing to work with the Internationalisation Committee on potential and ongoing academic issues, expressing opinions and interests in a student perspective.

**15.6.2 Social and welfare related issues within the University and the wider community**

I have been actively working with the IO, OISA and other organizations to provide useful information for new international students that are arriving or planning to be in Dunedin for their studies.

More social and welfare issues details have been covered under section 15.2.

**15.7 Maintain a good working relationship to the Association Student Support Centre Manager and Advocates so that the opportunity to share information about academic and welfare issues of relevance to international students is available**

I am currently working on a list of potential and visible issues from an international student's perspective to relay to Student Support, alongside some recommendations to publicize the services the Student Support Centre has, making international students more aware of their presence and that it is OK to ask for help when needed.

**15.8 Maintain a good working relationship with the International Office of the University, sharing information and ideas with them when appropriate**

I am continuing the good working relationship with the IO by scheduling OISA and IO meetings. I am also meeting with Jason Cushen (International Director) monthly for catchups.

**15.9 Work in conjunction with the Finance and Strategy Officer and the Clubs Development Officer and the Clubs and Societies Representative to ensure the affiliation and support of international student groups**

I am working with Emily Fau-Goodwin (Finance and Strategy Officer) so that anything that involves international students or organizations would require me present. Because the Clubs and Societies Representative is stepping down and a change of

personnel is in place, there will be some new meetings in the future, and I will ensure that a healthy work relationship would be established between us.

**15.10 Maintain a good working relationship with the Administrative Vice-President, proactively bringing issues relevant to international students to their attention and meeting with them on a weekly basis**

I have met with Imogen Macalister (Administrative Vice President) and had set up a bi-weekly regular meeting time with her. I have also upheld a good working relationship asking regularly whether there is anything I can help with but also bringing issues that are relevant to the International Students to her for further discussion. If there are an issues or concerns from my end of the spectrum, I will contact her throughout my term.

**15.11 Sit on the New Zealand International Students' Association (NZISA) as a member and maintain and fulfil the terms of Memorandum of Understanding held between Association and NZISA**

During this quarter, I have attended meetings as a Rep Council Representative and expressed concerns and issues that are relevant in Otago which might also affect the wider international student population.

**15.12 Perform the general duties of all Executive Officers**

I have performed the general duties expected of me as an OUSA Executive, details of which will be under "Part 2: General Duties of All Executive Members".

**15.13 Where practical, work not less than ten hours per week**

I am confident that I have worked an average equivalent to no less than hours per week.

**PART TWO: GENERAL DUTIES OF ALL EXECUTIVE MEMBERS**

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

I am currently 6 months into my term and my term will terminate in 6 months' time.

**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;**

I had expressed interest and had confirmed that I would speak in semester two orientation through Zoom with two OISA Executives present during the orientation as well. I will offer assistance on Re:Ori as needed.

**3.2.2 Assisting with elections and referenda where appropriate, including, but not limited to advertising the election and collecting votes.**

N/A

**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 was present at all Executive meetings either in person or virtually.

**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 any spending proposals, keeping track of their spending and ensuring they do not exceed budgeted expenditure;**

See section 15.9 for details.

**3.4.2 Educate themselves on needs and experiences relevant to historically marginalized demographic groups including intersectionality and promote and encourage all demographics to participate, where relevant, in clubs, societies, committees and OUSA events**

I still have not been brought to attention about any targeted comments for the time being, which is very excellent. I will continue to be on the lookout for any targeted comments that appears.

**3.4.3 Prioritize sustainability and minimization of environmental impacts in all aspects of their role and keep up to date with environmental issues;**

OISA and I have promoted Drop For Good to ensure these items are finding a home, and I had expressed concerns about the sheer amount of drink bottles that appear in the OUSA Lost & Found.

**3.4.4 Every quarter undertake five hours of voluntary service which contributes to the local community**

I have undertaken the minimum five hours of voluntary service contributing to the All Saints Fruit & Veges Program.

**3.4.5 Regularly check and respond to all correspondence received.**

I have regularly checked and responded to all correspondence I have received in a timely manner. I have also been actively checking the OISA Facebook Messenger for any student concerns and responding urgently to any Cultural Club matters in the Cultural Club Execs Messenger chat.

**PART THREE: ATTENDANCE AND INVOLVEMENT IN OUSA AND UNIVERSITY COMMITTEES**

- OUSA Executive
- Otago Tertiary Chaplaincy Trust
- Otago Internationalisation Committee
- Otago Distance Learning Advisory Board
- Otago Summer School Operational Group

- Otago IT Governance Board
- Otago Health Science Internationalisation Committee
- Study Dunedin Advisory Board
- Library Services Committee

## **PART FOUR: GOALS AND YOUR PROGRESS**

### **Goal 1: Encourage cultural exchange and cultural diversity in Otago**

One pathway to helping this cause would be creating and holding events that encourages local and international students to talk with each other and help foster relations. From what I know, the interactions between international students and local students might not always be great, resulting in some international students being in their own bubble and not have the full Otago experience. The Otago experience, to me, is not only the university and studying, but more about what else Otago has to offer except studying. Interacting with the locals is considered very important to me since this would truly offer a way to truly experience the New Zealand culture. I will continue to encourage and push for events that help serve the goal to offer international students an easier and fun path of experiencing Ōtepoti and Aotearoa.

I am working towards this goal by expanding the planned scope of the International Cultural Expo, wanting to provide an excellent pathway for cultural clubs to express their own cultures to everyone, thus encouraging cultural exchange between locals and international students.

### **Goal 2: Establish awareness of present student support systems**

There are a lot of support for international students provided by the university, OUSA, and other different organisations. Despite there being a lot of support present, not everyone would know about there being support present that can help with the specific matter that you are stuck with. To my knowledge, quite a few international student would refrain from finding support simply because they are not used to finding help. Even if they want to find help, there are not enough advertisement for international student support that exists. Some students always say, "Give us more support!", but I think the most important thing is to let everyone know about the support that is already there, then we can build on that and provide more that was not covered by the current systems.

Currently I am discovering more effective ways to increase awareness, which is sort of working by social media posts and the International Office's Blackboard, but a lot more work needs to be done to continue to improve the situaation.

## **PART FIVE: GENERAL**

No updates for the time being.