

Keegan Wells

Postgraduate Representative

2nd Quarter Report 2023

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Executive Summary:

I have been doing quite a bit of stuff, mainly focusing on staff cuts and everything around the university announcements in the past quarter. It's all feeling a bit reactionary, which is never good, especially in politics. I would love to be able to support and help in any way that I can in relation to the cuts, but outside of being a listening ear or having post grad happy hour. OPA is love, OPA is life. I would love to continue working on better myself and exec through this job. Also I still think our time could be better spent hence the further informality as well as the shortness. But I will say the self-reflection is somewhat nice.

Part One: Executive Officer Position Description Duties

11.1. Promote via publications, promotions and campaigns, an environment within the Association and on campus which is supportive of postgraduate students.

The OPA is up and running! Additionally, I've been supportive of 3-minute thesis which is coming up for postgrads.

11.2. Work with the University and the Student Support Centre to implement the Association's policy on Postgraduate Student Representatives.

I still don't know what this means. But if someone knows what policy this is let me know because I can't find it anywhere.

11.3. Be one of the Association's representatives on the University of Otago Senate.

I have attended every senate meeting.

11.4. Be a member of appropriate committees of the Association, including, but not limited to:

11.4.1. Otago Postgraduate Association; and;

I chair OPA!

1.4.2. Academic Committee.

Yep, I've been at these meetings.

11.5. Chair monthly meetings of the Otago Postgraduate 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.

Our agenda hits the group chat before the monthly meetings at the end of each month.

11.6. Take direction from the Otago Postgraduate Association on all matters relevant to postgraduate members.

Yep! No one has really given me feedback except for more events, which are coming up.

11.7. Be the Association's representative on the Board of Graduate Studies.

Yep, I've been to all of meetings.

11.8. Maintain a good working relationship with relevant OUSA staff, ensuring that information is shared on issues of relevance to postgraduate students.

I've informed the committee of what I've been up to for the last weeks and think my bond with the other OUSA staff is great. Shell, thank for you for the lunch always.

11.9. Facilitate a variety of student representation on postgraduate related University Committees.

Yep, to the best of my ability.

11.10. Maintain a good working relationship with the Director of Graduate Research School and endeavor to meet with them on a regular basis.

Dave Baxter and I have met once to discuss matters relating to post-graduate students.

11.11. Maintain links with and assist affiliated Postgraduate bodies.

I am trying to be as approachable as possible and show up to represent students when necessary.

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

Imogen and I have our weekly meetings on Monday's when neither of us are sick so a few have been skipped but we work very well together.

11.13. Sit on the Otago Postgraduate Association as an ex-officio member and maintain and fulfil the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding held between the Association and the Otago Postgraduate Association.

Yes I have been doing this! I love OPA and the upcoming events we have planned.

11.14. Perform the general duties of all Executive Officers.

I have been helping OUSA exec as much as possible. Whether it be with the protest, sign making for the protest, winter energy payments, student feedback, etc.

11.15. Where practical, work not less than ten hours per week.

I've been consistently hitting 10-hour weeks if not more.

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 that same year.

That sound just splendid to me.

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 and other activities during Summer School, Orientation and Re-Orientation; and;

Tent city, O-week, and the other first semester ones went great. Looking forward to Re-O week!

3.2.2. Assisting with elections and referenda where appropriate.

I attended the Bi-election debate, AGM and assisted Imogen in making posters. I even motioned something at the AGM but was too late in putting it forward.

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.

Yep I am at every meeting and other events.

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;

The strategy document just was circulated around, and I have given comment on it. I have not seen the exact budget, but I trust Emily with anything and everything.

3.4.2. 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;

Yep! Especially in post-grad there are a lot of cultures represented which is very special and shows a diverse research output but also a need to be represented. Moreover, I am working on more scholarships dedicated specifically to Māori and Pacifica students.

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

Done.

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

I am the President of a non-profit and did around 30 hours this quarterly.

3.4.5. Regularly check and respond to all communications.

I am still very active within the group chat and respond to all communications in a timely and reasonably fashion.

Part Three: Attendance and involvement in OUSA and University Committees

How do I spend my week you ask? On all of these boards. –

- Graduate Research Committee
- Graduate Research Student Liaison Committee
- Board of Graduate Studies
- Human Ethics Committee
- Divisional Board Meeting and Divisional Leadership Groups (Humanities)
- Graduate Student Committee (Humanities)
- Air travel project steering committee
- Academic committee
- Graduate Research Student Liaison Committee (GRSLC)

Part Four: Goals and your Progress

My goals:

- Student bar (in discussion as of currently – location scouting & budget reviewing)

Student bar is not going as well as we thought. We kind of need a goldilocks location which is hard, as the name alludes to. We have motioned to not kill starters until we have a time of death certificate from the Starters landlord. While it won't bring it back, we can sure hope it will give everyone a better piece of mind.

- Make OUSA Exec more accessible and less corporate

I think the new strategic direction put together with large thanks to Emily and Quintin, will help with this a lot. When I haven't been in other meetings or studying, I have tried to make most of the table sessions to help make it more accessible.

- Have a stronger post-grad student community.

Post grad happy hour will be starting the second Saturday back!! Auahi ora from 4 pm onwards yeooo! I think it will be a great opportunity to have everyone be together. Moreover, working alongside OPA exec we have an event for every month coming up. These events will be anything from writing days to meat raffles, to a ball. It's a going to be off the hook.

Part Five: General

I think it would be near sighted to ignore the fact that since the writing of the last report, the university has introduced voluntary, moving to involuntary redundancies within the academic staff. This affects post-grad students deeply. Students will be losing their supervisors, their departments, and have unknown weight on their future. I can listen to anyone and am here for a chat ALWAYS. I also want to put it out there that if post grads have issues that are shared between other departments (i.e: small departments getting cut), it's best to unite those voices and bring them forward together. So as they gut departments that mean so much to so many people and the greater professional world, lets bring our voices together and make some waves.

Kia kaha <3