

Stella McCurdy
Residential Representative
Second Quarter Report 2024
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Part One: Duties of the Residential Representative

17.1. Promote via publications, promotions and campaigns, an environment within the OUSA and on campus which is supportive of University of Otago student flatting culture, education, community, and Residential Colleges.

OUSA Student Support delivered flatting talks and magazines throughout the colleges this quarter. There are some exciting plans to deliver “drop-in” sessions on campus in Sem 2, that provide extra information and support to students around flatting. Since the flatting talks at halls themselves are only delivered once, this provides an extra opportunity for students to get information and ask questions that they might not have felt comfortable asking in their talks.

We are going to run these sessions in the Link and hand out magazines and flyers with relevant information. We opted to run these sessions in the second semester instead of the first, as we want to encourage students to not focus on flat-hunting in the first semester – because really, why are we flat hunting in May?

17.2. In conjunction with relevant Association departments, Executive Officers and committees, create educational material relevant to flatting.

See above! Flatting magazines! I also wrote a piece in the Critic this quarter on flatting advice for freshers. I'd love to do another one of these in Q3.

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

17.3.1. Residential Committee;

Technically in existence but non-functioning. See 17.4.

17.3.2. Colleges Committee; and

Technically in existence but non-functioning. See 17.5.

17.3.3. Subwarden Committee.

Technically in existence but non-functioning. See 17.6

17.4. Chair monthly meetings of the Residential Committee, ensuring 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.

No meetings held. There was a lot of confusion when I came into this role on what these committees looked like. I went back through my handover document and I never received any information on them, and I had been verbally told that these were no longer running and I didn't need to worry too much about them. However, I should have confirmed this as I'm aware it sits under my duties now, and I will be working with the rest of the Exec going forward to see what this looks like in the future so there is more clarity for both myself, and the future Residential Rep.

17.5. Chair monthly meetings of the Colleges Committee, ensuring 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.

No meetings held. See the same reason as written above. Also, I was under the impression that the PSC and EPT (mentioned in part 3 of report) fell under this section. Apparently, this is not the case – that's my bad!

17.6. Chair monthly meetings of the Subwarden Committee, ensuring 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.

No meetings held. See above. I understand that there is an existing Subwarden committee run externally from OUSA, but I was not invited to join this committee. I will follow up on this.

17.7 Take direction from the Residential Committee, and by extension the Colleges Committee and Subwarden Committee, on all matters relevant to Residential Colleges, University Flats, the Locals Programme, student flatting and student locals within the University and the community.

I take direction from my two college committees I sit on and work closely with Student Support to inform my work that I do. I also take direction from Ruben, the head warden of colleges, who I speak with twice a month.

I need to sort out the Residential/Subwarden committees.

17.8 Via, or in consultation with the Student Support Centre, maintain a good working relationship with the Campus and Collegiate Life Services of the University, sharing information and ideas with them when appropriate.

I have met with Student Support Dwaine a few times this Q2 to discuss ideas and information and corresponded with Sophie over email – unfortunately I have not had a chance to meet with Sophie yet. In the past, there has been differences in opinions between Student Support and the Exec – this was made clear to me when I entered the role. However, I have found that the relationship we have established is overwhelmingly positive. At least on a personal level, Dwaine and I are consistently on the same page and have shared thoughts on things. I hope to continue this!

I am on several of James Lindsay's committees, so we speak regularly. All is smooth – no issues to report on this front. He has a very busy schedule, so this dynamic works well for us.

17.9 Maintain a good working relationship with the Proctors' Office and Campus Watch bringing to them issues of students within the wider community.

I have not needed to meet with the Proctor this quarter, as I have not felt a need to. I feel comfortable to speak with the Proctor if any such issues arise, but to be honest I feel this is best done through the President.

17.10 Maintain a good working relationship with the heads and deputies of Residential Colleges and University Flats, and the head of the Locals Programme and their student representatives.

My key working relationships relating to the Residential Colleges are with Ruben Katigbak (Senior Warden of Colleges) and James Lindsay (Director, Campus and Collegiate Life

Services) are both positive! I still need to establish a relationship with the Locals Programme.

17.11 Maintain a good working relationship with the Administrative Vice-President, proactively bringing issues relevant to Residential Colleges, University Flats, Locals Programme and the Otago Student Community to their attention and meeting with them on a weekly basis.

I maintain a good working relationship with the Admin VP Emily. We had several catchups throughout the quarter, although sporadic due to my absence. I suspect our catchups will be more frequent as we enter semester 2.

17.12 Perform the general duties of all Executive Officers.

I have performed the general duties of all Executive officers to the best of my abilities.

17.13 Where practical, work not less than ten hours per week, from January 1 until December 31.

In Q1, I believe I worked 9.75 hours per week on average. This quarter has been a bit choppy, and I have done a poor job at keeping track of all my hours due to illness and emergencies. I don't have a good record of my hours worked this quarter, but I would say that it's a bit below 10 on average due to circumstances outlined in Part Four. This will be improved in Q3.

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.

Roger that!

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;

I wrote the OUSA ANZAC Address and delivered it at the remembrance ceremony. I also helped Emma, Tara, and Amber film TikToks for the OUSA TikTok page to increase engagement with the student body.

3.2.2 Assisting with elections and referenda where appropriate.

I promoted the Sem 1 OUSA referendum in my personal sphere.

3.3 It is expected that Executive Officers attend Executive meetings.

I have attended all meetings except for a couple - I have sent in apologies for those I've missed.

3.4 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 most required informal and formal OUSA meetings in Q2. For those where I could not, I sent my apologies in advance.

3.5 All Executive officers shall:

3.5.1 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.

N/A – no use so far this year.

3.5.2 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.

I have personally promoted and educated myself on the new Otago Students for Justice in Palestine society. Unfortunately, due to being out of town I haven't been able to attend any of their meetings, but I will be attending meetings in Q3.

3.5.3 Act in accordance with and uphold Te Tiriti o Waitangi while exercising their duties;

I feel as if I have achieved this.

3.5.4 Where reasonable, attend events hosted by clubs related to historically marginalized demographic groups;

Due to being out of town, I have unfortunately not achieved this. However, view 3.5.2 for my existing actions. I will look to remedy this in Q3.

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

I haven't exactly done this, but I haven't avoided it either – it's not like I'm out here burning trash on campus, or anything like that... I feel I'm being sustainable – I walk to all my meetings instead of driving down the hill, if that counts?

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

I am the secretary of Otago Geological Students' Association (OSGS) and have served approximately eight hours on this committee in Q2. I also helped for two hours at Open Day for the Geology department – for a total of ten hours this quarter.

3.5.7 Regularly check and respond to all communications.

I regularly check the exec group chat as well as my OUSA email and respond to both promptly.

Part Three: Attendance and involvement in OUSA and University Committees

I am a member of the following OUSA, University, and external committees:

- OUSA Executive. I have either been present or sent apologies to all meetings.
- University Combined Colleges Project Steering Committee (PSC). I have attended all meetings.
- Combined Colleges Executive Planning Team (EPT). I have attended all meetings.

- Library Services Committee. We have met once in Q2 and are meeting again sometime in August.
- Waste Management Committee (I was not invited to any meetings in Q2)
- Technically I also sit on the three committees from 17.3 that need to be re-formed ASAP.

Outside of my Residential Representative role on OUSA, I also sit as the Secretary in the Otago Students' Geological Society and manage the OSGS email, social media page, and take minutes for all meetings.

Part Four: Goals

1. Establish a positive and trusting relationship between OUSA and the residential college wardens.

The relationship between OUSA and the college wardens has always been a slightly tricky one. Different colleges have different ideas of what they want this relationship to look like – many prefer to keep to themselves. I have spoken individually with a few colleges this quarter about what they want: e.g. puppy days, however, not all the colleges I have spoken to.

I speak with Ruben (senior college warden) in meetings regularly. Up until now, this arrangement has been fine, but I may have more contacts with him in Q3, which will definitely be my busiest quarter by far!

I have a good relationship with James Lindsay as mentioned earlier.

I have established a relationship with Dwaine from Student Support.

2. Establish the OUSA Life Members Newsletter

While our first newsletter isn't out yet, there has been some progress here. Donna and myself met with Lizzy at the start of Q2 to get some ideas and plans running.

Action plan made at the end of Q1 with progress notes:

- Establish a complete list of contact information for living Life Members.

I have done this! I have a complete spreadsheet with as much information as I can find online. It has Facebook information and email addresses of all living Life Members. There may be a few gaps, but it's as complete as I could realistically make it.

- Produce some draft concepts and share them with marketing.

I have some draft concepts, but I have not shared them with marketing yet.

- Meet regularly with Donna Jones and Lizzy Lukeman to discuss updates and new ideas.

I have not met with Donna and Lizzy as much as I would have liked. I will arrange this at the start of Q3.

- Involve the OUSA Exec, crowdsource opinions

I feel the OUSA Exec is aware and informed of all that I want to achieve here. I will be interviewing Stella (Academic) soon for the first newsletter.

- Contact Life Members online

Coming soon! This will take place in early Q3. I am meeting with Ingrid and Donna within the next week to align our plans with marketing. We will be contacting via Facebook and emails on record.

3. Continue the positive working relationship with Edinburgh Realty and Cutlers and maintain the relationship of good faith.

This quarter, I have met with representatives from Edinburgh Realty and Cutlers and passed on relevant information to Dwaine at Student Support. All is going well. I am going to move this goal into my “smaller goals” category, as I feel this relationship does not need heavy maintenance anymore as it is positive at this stage. However, I will still be meeting with them in Q3 – the fact that it isn’t one of my key focuses does not mean it has lost its relevance. I will still be giving this attention consistently.

I am going to replace this goal with a shared goal between myself and Liam White (Political Rep) that will be a keystone project for Q3:

Liam and I have had a video meeting this quarter to discuss how we could possibly work together going forward on a shared goal around the state of flatting in Otago. We have both produced independent brainstorm documents about how this campaign could be structured and are planning to chat in the next couple weeks to combine ideas. This will likely start with a working group and a survey.

A key focus of mine is comparing the state of flatting between the different Universities of NZ. What makes Dunedin so special (for good, and for bad)?

Progress on smaller goals:

- Ongoing relationship is still strong with Auckland University’s Students for Fair Rent campaign. As the group’s focus has mostly been with rent strikes this quarter, we haven’t done much work together as Otago isn’t partaking in rent strikes. I regularly check in with Kalana from SFR and have got Liam (Pols) in contact with the group too. The group is moving forward with plans for rent reform: more to come on this, all is going smooth.
- I have not been able to get into the colleges to discuss mental health yet this semester. I will prioritise this in Q3.
- I wasn’t able to get ahold of the 2024 subwarden contracts unfortunately.

Part Five: General

This has been a hard quarter for me in my personal life, and has taught me a lot about what it means to balance work and university responsibilities (such as OUSA!) during difficult times. I have been out of Dunedin for the vast majority of the quarter due to an emergency, followed by being very sick for three weeks and not being able to come to campus. I unfortunately

acknowledge that I have not achieved all of my targets this quarter because of this. I take responsibility for this, and I'm confident that I have an action plan to remedy this quarter's shortcomings in Q3 and Q4.

I'd also like to take a moment to acknowledge and thank my fellow exec members, as well as Donna Jones for their continuous support and kindness this semester/quarter. I could not have done this without you, and I am so grateful to each of you who have reached out to me personally and made tough times a little bit easier.

Thank you, Donna, for reaching out regularly and genuinely caring for me.

Thank you, Keegan and Emily, for being patient with me and accommodating my tricky circumstances.

Thank you, Tara, for being one of my best friends in the world and being my #1 cheerleader. Also, thanks for the coffee and ice cream breaks! You give me so much motivation to be the best I can be.

Thank you to the entire 2024 Exec for being awesome humans. You're an incredible group of people and it's been wonderful getting to know you all this year.

It's hard to acknowledge when I know my work has not been at its best, especially when this is such a public position. However, I think it's important that I am transparent about this, as everyone should know there is no shame in needing extra support and being imperfect at times. Much aroha to all.

Thank you if you've read this far! Here's to a better Q3.

Stella (the Residential one)