



Victoria University Student Union Board Meeting Report

Department & Presenter	LGBTQIA+ Ollie
Date	17/10/2022

I began my term in July 2022. Since then, I have worked with other office bearers, staff members, clubs/societies, and organizations on the following initiatives:

Pride Rooms

- Students and staff have raised concerns regarding the state of the Pride Rooms on all campuses. Since the beginning of my term:
- I have added a fridge and kitchen appliances to the Pride Room at City Tower, and ensured that it is unlocked and accessible during business hours.
- The Pride Room at Footscray Park has been moved to a much better space, M122, and I organized a working bee to help move into the new space.
- Discussions around moving the Pride Room at Footscray Nicholson into a new space are underway.
- Chandra (Welfare Officer) has been working on moving the Pride Room at St Albans into a new space.

Queernival

- Queernival took place on August 9, 2022. Between 350-450 students attended the event in person at Footscray Park campus.
- The event included live music, food trucks, circus workshops, community organization stallholders, games, activities, and giveaways.

LGBTQIA+ Student Wellbeing Survey

- Collaborated with Student Wellbeing in a fortnightly working group to prepare and launch the results from the LGBTQIA+ Student Wellbeing Survey.
- The survey can be viewed here:
<https://www.vu.edu.au/sites/default/files/lgbtqia-student-wellbeing-survey-report.pdf>
- Working with Student Wellbeing and the VU Queer Collective, we hosted a launch for the survey on Wear It Purple Day. The event took place at the VU bar and was live-streamed on VUSU social media.
- The survey highlighted the importance of focusing on intersections within the LGBTQIA+ community.
- I am continuing to work with Student Wellbeing on actions that will implement the recommendations from the survey.

Wear it Purple Day

- The launch of the LGBTQIA+ Student Wellbeing Survey took place on Wear It Purple Day.
- In the week leading up to Wear It Purple Day, I collaborated with the VU Queer Collective and Student Life to host events on 3 campuses, with activities which included tie-dying and a bake sale.

Social Events

- With the VU Queer Collective, hosted in-person social events for the LGBTQIA+ VU community including Drag Bingo at Pride of our Footscray community bar, and a brunch at Seddon Deadly Sins cafe.
- Collaborated with Tynah (Accessibility Officer) to host a Coffee & Dogs hangout as part of Belonging Week.

Workshops

- As part of Respect & Empathy Week, I hosted two online workshops facilitated by Laneway Learning. These were: Queer Self-Care and The Sex Ed You Never Had.

Accessibility

- One of the key takeaways from the LGBTQIA+ Student Wellbeing Survey was the significant proportion of LGBTQIA+ students who identified as having a disability, being neurodiverse, and/or having mental health conditions.
- I have been working with the Accessibility Officer to address the ongoing issue of inaccessibility at VU events, particularly in queer spaces and events.
- This has included ensuring there were quiet and sensory-friendly spaces at Queernival, attending and facilitating quiet spaces at other large VU events such as O-Fest, running online events such as the Respect & Empathy Week Workshops and live-streaming the Wear It Purple Day event, and improving readability of graphics and reports including in the LGBTQIA+ Student Wellbeing Survey.

General/Ongoing/Future Projects

- The gender affirming clothing swap, which was re-launched at Queernival, is up and running and can be accessed at the new Pride Room in Footscray Park (M122). Anyone is welcome to donate clothes they no longer want, and take clothes that others have donated.
- I have begun discussions around providing students with a subscription to Insight Timer, an app which allows students to access meditations, recordings, and workshops for mental health and wellbeing.
- I would like to arrange regular drop-in sessions at the Pride Rooms now that they are beginning to shape up, so students can meet other LGBTQIA+ students on-campus in a casual and low-pressure environment.
- I met with the State Director of Out For Australia, and will begin discussions with VU Employ and other departments to try and promote the LGBTQIA+ career mentoring program to students who would benefit from it.
- I have been in contact with the organizer of the Queer Book Club at Maribyrnong Library to brainstorm ways we can connect with them.
- I attended the LGBTQIA+ NUS Roundtable event to meet with LGBTQIA+ Officers from other university student unions and understand what queer departments are doing at other universities.
- I am part of the Pride Network at VU which has been working on how the Network can be more visible within VU.