



## Victoria University Student Union Board Meeting Report

<b>Department &amp; Presenter</b>	President - Kate Benesovsky
<b>Date</b>	19/10/2022

ITEM
<p>2022 has been a year of renewal for VUSU. The team has been through lockdowns and online university (1B1-1B2) and running 2x significant festivals in the second semester. I have loved every moment of Presidency this year, and have been able to support the 2021/22 team in reaching even higher goals than last year.</p> <p><b>Major initiatives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Respect &amp; Empathy Week</b>            In September, I orchestrated, with Chandra (VP Welfare) VUSU's second Respect &amp; Empathy Week. We visited 3x campuses (St Albans, Footscray Park, and City Tower) and provided education and support to students regarding sexual education, assault &amp; safety on campus, and mental health. The following activities and initiatives were undertaken:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Respect Fest: Major festivals at all higher education campuses with stalls supporting students. Handed out condoms, sexual education, and sustainable period product initiatives. Stalls included:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Self-defence pop-up classes</li> <li>■ ANMF (St Albans)</li> <li>■ Food options</li> <li>■ Student Wellbeing/Student Life pop-ups</li> <li>■ Learning Hubs</li> <li>■ Relevant Clubs (VU ISA, VU Paramedicine Club, Dictum Society)</li> <li>■ External Stakeholders (GenWest, RAHU, GenZine)</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ GenWest: Exploring Sexual Pleasure Workshop</li> <li>○ LGBTQIA+ Self Care &amp; Sexual Education</li> <li>○ Running of Be A Better Human &amp; It's My Bits Campaigns: Gave out information and merchandise of BaBH and IMB campaign educating students on initiatives. Encouraged them to involve themselves in the optional consent training online, connect with Respect &amp; Responsibility, and where to go if they need support</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Belonging Week</b>            With autonomous office bearers, I developed and undertook VUSU's first 'Belonging Week' in August, during the first week back of Semester 2. The aim was to provide students with education on various</li> </ul>

communities and cultures while supporting those who belonged to specific autonomous groups. All autonomous office bearers ran at least one event as below

- Accessibility: Online Trivia & Coffee and Dogs catchup
  - Cultural Diversity: Rakshabandan Stall (Indian celebration of family and love)
  - LGBTQIA+: Carnival
  - Womens: Pilates for Female identifying students
  - ISA: ISA's Got Talent Competition
- Various relief support  
There have been various types of support that have been run this year, to support students. These include - Placement relief support & Flood Relief Essential Support. Chandra, the VP Welfare Officer orchestrated the placement relief vouchers for over 30 students, which has been brilliant.  
Recently (October), I coordinated the VUSU Flood Relief Essential Support initiative which involved providing financial (vouchers) and physical essentials to students that have suffered as a result of the Victorian Floods. We are still finalising the outcome, but have received a positive response from staff and students.

### **Regulation & Constitutional Changes**

Overall there were various regulation and constitutional changes made this last term. They are listed below

- Office Bearer Regulations  
At last year's AGM, Raza and myself presented the Office Bearer Regulations so that OBs could have minimum standards to be held to, as they are paid their honorarium through SSAF. These regulations have been crucial this year in setting minimum standards, and ensuring OBs are kept on task and within legal requirements this year.
- Constitutional Changes  
Additionally at the 2021 AGM, I presented changes to the Office Bearer Regulations, which were influential in ensuring OBs, and the VUSU Board maintains standards in line with the legal requirements of the ACCC and VU. We have used these changes to remove specific people who were not meeting requirements, and to hold students to account
- Election Regulations  
These were also edited this year to ensure that the 2022 Elections could be held in an accessible format (online).

### **Affiliated bodies**

This year we have had two affiliated bodies - VU International Student Association and the Dictum Society. With Raza, I have supported both intensively over the last 12 months.

- Dictum Society  
This year I've supported Dictum with their affiliation and office bearers. Jakob, the original Dictum President graduated mid-year, so I have facilitated the ability for the society to remain affiliated and elect a new President (Mei). I have also ensured that Mei and Dictum by extension have been involved in major VUSU events, and VUSU have supported them through SSAF funding, affiliation and administration
- VU International Students Association (VU ISA)  
Earlier this year, VU ISA's affiliated lapsed after an incomplete AGM and the resignation of the President. With assistance from Raza, I managed to source International Students and support them in running the IGM to reaffiliate the association to VUSU (April). Since then, I've supported Yashii and ISA in running events, administration and governing documents. Affiliating ISA was very important to VUSU, and VU, so it has been brilliant to have them involved within VUSU in 2022.

### **Administration**

Throughout this year I have ensured that VUSU maintains on top of all SSAF and other reporting. Additionally, we have made edits to the administrative function of VUSU to ensure streamlining of record keeping.

These changes include

- Creation of shared drive, with key accessible information to all office bearers
- Editing layouts of motions, reports & file naming to ensure records can be easily accessed and found within drives
- Relayouting of physical offices including Footscray Park, City Tower, St Albans & Footscray Nicholson to sure that OBs have relevant space to efficiently work.

### **Advisory Boards & Strategic Plans**

This year I have represented VUSU and VU students on the following advisory boards;

- Transition to Second Year
- Student Welcome Steering Group (Orientation related)
- Employability Steering Committee
- Cultural Inclusion Network
- Students as Partners
- SSAF Consultative Committee (SEI grants distribution)
- Student Advisory Reference Group
- Student Leadership Reference Group
- Student Retention Strategy Steering Group
- SSAF Expenditure & Quarterly Outcomes
- COVID-focus group

Additionally I have worked on the following plans

- Student Accessibility Action Plan 2021 - 2023
- Student Mental Health Plan - launched in mid-year 2022. Assisted in creating a strategic plan for the future of student mental health, with targeted outcomes

I would like to personally thank everyone single person that was involved in VUSU this year as an office bearer, staff or board member, or even volunteer. Student Unions are crucial in this time of change within tertiary education, and without these people, VUSU would not have managed to be as successful in 2022.

I am so proud of what has been achieved this term, most of which was by Office bearers, not myself or Raza! This year I've taken more of a facilitation than an active role in the creation of initiatives and events, which has allowed me to truly focus on the inner administrative functions of the union. I have loved watching and assisting the office bearers to reach their goals, so many of which I would never have dreamed of!

Congratulations again to the incoming team for 2022/23 I know that next year will be even bigger. As sad as I am to leave the union after 2 years of Presidency and roles, I know that I am leaving VUSU in a better place than it was founded, with great hands for the future.

Yours in solidarity,  
Kate Benesovsky