

Position Overview

Student Council Member

Created: 19 April 2018

Reports to: Council of the Association

Time commitment: Minimum of twelve hours per month

Compensation: Honoraria as set by Council, currently \$8,000 per annum

Position purpose

GSA is an incorporated association established to provide enrolled graduate students at the University of Melbourne with representation, programs, events and support throughout their studies with a focus on developing the skills necessary to thrive after their graduation.

GSA Councillors are actually Not-For-Profit Directors. They are liable for the actions of the organisation, including its small team of permanent and casual staff. In addition to defining GSA's strategy, they are also responsible for the organisation's finances, governance and risks. Councillors are obligated to ensure organisational compliance with SSAF funding agreements, tax, privacy and various regulatory bodies, such as the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission and Consumer Affairs Victoria.

The purpose of this position overview is to outline the roles and responsibilities of Council as Directors, Committee Representatives and Working Group leaders and members. The Council are subject to the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act (2012)*, the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act (2012)* (Cth) (henceforth "the Acts") and Councillors individually are bound by Directors' duties.

Main tasks

In governing GSA, Council must:

- Emphasise strategic issues rather than administrative detail
- Act in the best interests of GSA's constituents as a whole, preferring proactivity and future-focus
- Encourage diversity of opinions and reconcile those views into a clear strategic direction
- Develop collective responsibility for all aspects of the Council's performance
- Empower management to lead GSA's operational activities (and, where reasonable, delegating governance activities to committees to progress its agenda and inviting expert participation into its processes)
- Lead GSA's representative and campaigns functions in collaboration with management
- Strive for continuous improvement in Council and individual Councillor effectiveness
- Continuously evaluate and improve Council's governance and culture

Governance focus

- Empower management to progress student interests and welfare
- Develop strategic initiatives, annual business plans and budgets

- Guide the development of GSA's reputation, capabilities and performance
- Ensure compliance with the Acts and regulatory requirements
- Oversee governance responsibilities (finance, risk, legal, strategy, culture, etc.)
- Continuously improve governance overall

Representation focus

- Identify and prioritise initiatives for student representation and campaigns
- Actively engage with GSA members and non-member constituents
- Manage key student-centric stakeholder relationships (i.e. CAPA, Study Melbourne and University representation-related relationships)
- Participate in GSA events and communications in collaboration with GSA staff
- Represent graduate students through University committees, working groups and special interest groups
- Oversee the governance and funding of GSA-affiliated Grad Groups

Ethics

Council is responsible for:

- Ensuring all parties involved with GSA adhere to the GSA Code of Conduct (GOVPOL-7.0 Code of Conduct) and facilitate processes to address non-compliance
- Managing conflicts of interest
- Monitoring the effectiveness of the system of accountability for unethical practices

Compliance and risk management

- Council will identify the principal risks faced by GSA and ensure that appropriate systems are in place to remove or mitigate those risks.
- Council will approve, review, ratify and monitor:
 - GSA's Risk Framework, including systems of compliance that govern GSA's operations
 - The written policies and procedures governing compliance, risk oversight and management

Roles and responsibilities

Councillors are expected to commit a minimum of 12 hours per month to their GSA responsibilities. This would be sufficient to read Council Meeting papers, attend a Council meeting and participate in activities related to the Councillor role. Examples of such activities include having a conversation with team members or attending an event or informal meeting convened to address a specific issue.

Councillors will need to commit additional hours to their GSA activities if they are elected from within Council to an Office Bearer role, participate in a University committee or GSA subcommittee, or become actively involved in GSA campaigns.

Beyond the specific requirements of the Constitution, key roles within GSA Council are briefly outlined below. Please reference the individual Office Bearer Position Descriptions for further details.

President:

- Elected leader and spokesperson for the Council
- Chair of the Council and Executive Committee, which is responsible for leading the effective development and implementation of strategies related to the organisation's finances, governance and risks
- Develops and builds on key relationships internally and externally, including management and Chancellery

Vice President:

- Elected leader and backfill for the Council President
- Supports the President in relationship development and management with key stakeholders
- Other duties may be delegated to the Vice President by the Council

General Secretary:

- Ensures accurate records are maintained, including minutes and agendas
- Monitors organisational compliance with governance obligations, both internal and external
- Notifies the registrar of any changes to the governance of GSA

Education and Research Officer:

- Responsible for coordinating matters of academic concern and support services for research higher degree services
- Provides members with information of academic concern
- Recommends educational policy
- Takes an active role in University committees relevant to education, academic and research matters

Activities Officer

- Responsible for advancing the Council's vision to create a unique program of events and activities, with a focus on providing relief from the high standards, expectations and stresses that are common amongst graduate students at the University of Melbourne.
- Contributes to the development of the events and activities program and provides oversight to ensure these programs, run by the GSA staff, meet organisational objectives
- Acts as Council's representative at GSA activities

Family Officer

- Acts as Council's representative voice in advancing the interests of graduate students with children (GSWC), specifically in relation to advocacy and involving students with children in GSA's services, communications and events.

- Oversees GSA's information for graduates with families, advising on communication needs or writing and preparing relevant articles
- Acts as the advocate for the GSWC cohort and GSA's representative on GSWC-relevant University committees and student representative groups

International Officer

- Acts as Council's representative voice in advancing the interests of international graduate students in terms of advocacy, GSA support, communications and events
- Liaises with graduate students, student groups and University bodies regarding the formation of policies and advocacy for international graduate students
- Oversees GSA's information for international graduate students, identifying communication needs relevant to the international student cohort or writing and preparing relevant articles

LGBTIQ Officer

- Acts as Council's representative voice in advancing the interests of LGBTIQ graduate students, in relation to advocacy, GSA support, communications and events
- Act as the representative of GSA on LGBTIQ-relevant University committees and student representative groups, and advocate for LGBTIQ graduate students
- Oversees GSA's information for graduate students who are LGBTIQ, identifying communication needs or writing and preparing relevant articles

Women's Officer

- Acts as Council's representative voice in advancing the interests of women students, in relation to advocacy efforts, GSA support, communications and events for women
- Oversees GSA's information for women students, identifying communication needs relevant to women or writing and preparing relevant articles
- Liaising with graduate students, student groups and University bodies regarding the formation of policies and advocacy for women graduate students

Reporting

All Office Bearers must ensure that a thorough written report is tabled at each Council Meeting. The report is not limited to but must include details about the following:

- Meeting attendance (including any University Committee or Working Group meetings) and an overview of any relevant matters
- Important items of correspondence with external partners and stakeholders
- Major actions or projects being undertaken
- Any other representative activities

University Committee engagement

If nominated to sit on a University Committee, council members will be expected to:

- Attend and participate at all meetings
- Convey any matters of concern from Council to the committee

- Represent graduate student and GSA priorities to the best of their ability
- Report any relevant information to Council and GSA's Representation staff

Working Group engagement

If nominated to sit on a Working Group, council members will be expected to:

- Attend and participate at all meetings
- Encourage and demonstrate effective collaboration with a focus on delivering outcomes
- Report to Council and allocated manager (see individual Office Bearer Position Descriptions) on progress of KPI delivery, as well as any relevant information from meetings

At its discretion, Council may establish or remove Working Groups, being either standing (ongoing) or project based, with members drawn from GSA's membership. If establishing a new Working Group, Council must select a Chair, and a Deputy Chair where necessary, which will be accountable for KPI delivery.

Induction

Each Office Bearer will be responsible for the induction of their incoming successor. This will include ensuring that the incoming Office Bearer is aware of the following:

- How to carry out the specific duties of the role
- Policies and sections of the Constitution which pertain to Office Bearers
- Any operational or strategic plans set by Council

General expectations

- As soon as practicable after being elected or appointed to the Council, each Councillor must become familiar with relevant governance policies, director's duties and Acts.
- Councillors, especially those elected to serve as Office Bearers, will be expected to work with GSA staff members and should familiarise themselves with the Staff and Councillors Working Together Policy.
- While representing GSA, regardless of whether they are on or off the premises of the University of Melbourne, Councillors are expected to:
 - Model appropriate behaviours in accordance with the GSA Governance Charter, Code of Conduct, and other behavioural guidelines, as well as uphold these policies with all Council members
 - Exercise their powers and discharge their duties with reasonable care and diligence
 - Contribute a minimum of twelve hours per month to their GSA responsibilities
 - Attend and participate at all Council meetings
 - Act in the best interest of graduate students and GSA
- If a Councillor does not adequately fulfil their duties, as determined by Council, they will forfeit their Honoraria payments. As stated in the Governance Charter, the Council reserves the right to suspend or cancel payments associated with student representative and governance duties.

Please note: This job description serves to illustrate the scope and responsibilities of the post and is not intended to be an exhaustive list of duties. You will be expected to perform other job related tasks requested by Council and as necessitated by the development of this role and the development of the Association. Nothing in the position detracts from the fiduciary and other governance duties you owe the Association as a Councillor.

Related Documents

Council Charter

Code of Conduct

Delegation schedule

Expense Reimbursements Procedure

Travel Policy and Procedure

GSA Enterprise Agreement 2017

University of Melbourne Student Conduct Policy (MPF1324)

GSA Staff and Councillors Working Together Policy

Record of Review

Date	Reason for Review	Created/Revised by
19 April 2018	Reviewed all Position Descriptions after strategic systems initiative	Leadership team / Council
15 January 2019	Further simplified language and clarity	Communications