

Everything you need to know about being President of the Cat Video Appreciation Graduate Society (CVAGS).

This document is for the President of the Cat Video Appreciation Graduate Society. It should be updated a month before the AGM to ensure a smooth handover. This document provides space for the outgoing President to pass on any top tips, knowledge gained and words of wisdom. There is a separate document for the whole Executive Committee which outlines more of the day-to-day governance of the group.

Congratulations and welcome!

Congratulations on your new role! This is a really fun group and you will love running it. It might seem silly but it provides opportunities for relaxation and joy to a lot of students and is a great place to make friends.

Try not to worry about being too busy and remember that your studies are important too! Work with the Committee – delegation is important – and have fun.

What it means to be President

As President, you'll lead the ship and keep the Group on track. You're there to support and guide the other Committee members, but not do their work for them. You'll chair meetings and share the 'President's Cat Video of the Week' on the Facebook Group. This year, I've worked closely with the Events Officer to create some outward facing events to engage with students who need a break from studies and offer a relaxing, wellbeing cat-video-based break.

I'd recommend meeting early to make a plan for the year and ensure everyone is on the same page.

Be ready for people to look for you to make decisions and don't be afraid to keep meetings short and keep people on topic!

Make sure you think about what you want to achieve during the year – this is your year!!!

Last year

Key highlights of the year

- Recruiting 20 new members at our Welcome Purrrr-ty
- Visiting Maneki Neko Cat Rescue as part of a Wellbeing Event – we got to play with so many cats and raise awareness of an important issue. We raised \$400 for them at our next fundraiser.
- Establishing the monthly Watch-A-Thon at GSA, where we watch cat videos and eat pizza.

Key challenges of the year

- Managing the different requirements of students from different faculties – they were all free at different times and it was difficult to get everyone together.
- Not doing other people's jobs! It was really hard for me to not try and manage the finances or the Facebook page, even though there are people who do that already.
- Some members wanted to change the group to be the Cat and Dog Video Appreciation Society. This caused some friction between members. We held an SGM to discuss the issue and held a vote. While the vote decided that we would keep our focus on cats, we agreed that once a month we'd have a special 'other animal videos' day in our Facebook group.

Three things I wish I knew when I started

- You will never run out of cat videos – do not worry!
- Planning and organisation are your friends.
- There is so much help out there, don't feel like you need to do it on your own. I've worked really closely with GSA and they have really supported me through our growth!

Key dates

AGM: March

Handover: Two weeks after AGM

Fundraisers: Twice a semester – I'd recommend one near the beginning and one half way through

Monthly Watch-A-Thon: We held this on the last Sunday of every month 1pm – 4pm. But you can change this!

Meetings

The Committee meets twice a semester. There needs to be 5 days' notice for meetings. Our quorum (the minimum number of members that need to be present to run a meeting) is 15 people.

I'd recommend holding the meetings before a social event, as it's easier to get people to attend. At the beginning of semester, get the committee's general availability to avoid clashes!

You'll lead the meetings, so just make sure there's some content on the agenda and work through it. Keep people on track and I'd recommend always starting with an applicable cat video!

Elections

We only have four roles on committee, so elections are pretty straightforward. We hold elections at our AGM. You need to make sure there's a Returning Officer, who isn't running for any roles, who will ensure the elections are fair. Start advertising for the roles a month or so ahead – and suggest to people they should run! The best way to recruit is to tell people they'll be great and to show how easy it all is 😊

If only one person is running, have everyone close their eyes and vote by show of hands (the Returning Officer can count!) If more than one person is running, use a ballot or you can do a preference vote. Decide with the Returning Officer ahead of time and make sure people know before the AGM!

Affiliations

GSA

Working with GSA has been great. I'd really recommend the Grad Group workshops training – it's a great opportunity to meet other Presidents and work through leadership issues.

Make sure that all events are registered with them at least two weeks in advance, because it's important for our funding.

Chris on Reception is really lovely and helped so much setting up our regular events.

Events

Watch-A-Thons

This was new this year. We planned it by:

- Asking members what type of activities they'd like, when they would like them to take place and for dietary and access requirements
- Talking to GSA about their event requirements and what they offer in the building
- Booking a venue
- Setting a budget
- Organising catering
- Assessing the risk
- Setting up a Facebook event and emailing all our members
- Designing posters and putting them up around campus
- Sourcing videos and putting them together
- Arriving early to set up
- Doing a review after each event and getting feedback.

Fundraisers

This was mostly managed by the Events team – so I'll make sure the Event Officer outlines this in his handover.

Other important details

We've stored everything in the Google Drive so have a good read through. Definitely check through the list of Best Places to Get Cat Videos.

All the Log In Details are on the 'Back Office' spreadsheet in the Google Drive.