

PARSA Postgraduate Representative Council (PRC)

PRC meeting #6

Date: 13th May

Time: 12pm

Location: Online and in the PARSA Boardroom

1.0 Meeting Open

Opened at 12:17pm

1.1 Acknowledgement of Country

1.2 Attendance and apologies

Attending: Delephene Fraser (Vice President), Eleanor Cooper (General Secretary), Gunjan Dixit (HDR Officer), Tristan Yip (Coursework Officer), Sharrada Segeran (Equity Officer), Sonia Jeena (International Officer), Zhangcheng Qiang (CECS Officer, HDR), , Nancy Zhang (Women's Officer), Harshita Bhatia (Wellbeing Officer), Kat Stewart (Queer Officer), Gurisha Gupta (Social Officer), Preksha Panchamia (Environmental Officer), Ruonan Chen (CASS Officer, HDR), Akrti Tyagi (CAP Officer, Coursework), Siddarth Mittal (CBE Officer, Coursework), Jiayi Shen (CECS Officer, Coursework), Lajawn Moon Myat (COL Officer, Coursework), Yalan Chen (CASS Officer, Coursework), Oass Yaduvanshi (COS Office, Coursework)

Observing: Jane Brownbill (Operations Manager)

Apologies: Harshita Bhatia (Wellbeing Officer), Shukla Promite, Jhana de Silva (Parents and Carers Officer), Shukla Promite (CoS Officer, HDR), Upasana Pathak (CHM Officer, Coursework)

1.3. Conflict of Interest

Members are asked to review the Register of Interests and notify the President if these need to be updated.

Members should declare conflicts of interest as they arise throughout the meeting.

1.4 Call for other business



1.5 Minutes from previous meeting

Motion: To approve the minutes from the previous meeting (19th April) as a true and correct representation of events.

Proposer: Tristan Yip

Secunder: Kat Stewart

Motion passed, two abstentions

Tristan: Wishes to have future minutes and agendas include reports as an appendix rather than at the beginning

2.0 Items for discussion

2.0.1 Welcome and introduction of new College Representatives

Tristan: PARSA now has several new college representatives. For those who could attend this meeting, we will do a round of introductions and welcome Oass, Yalan and Moon, the new members of the PRC.

Motion: To note the appointment of Lajawn Moon Myat (COL Representative), Yalan Chen (CASS Representative) and Oass Yaduvanshi (COS Representative)

Proposed: Eleanor Cooper

Seconded: Sharrada Segeran

Motion passed unanimously

2.0.2 Potential Merger of the Student Associations

Tristan: We've been approached by ANUSA as to the possibility of merging the two associations into one union, some time in the future. There have been a few meetings about this over the past week with both exec teams but it would be great if we could have a broader discussion with interested PRC members and get everyone's thoughts

Christian: I appreciate the opportunity to speak to you all about ANUSA's position is on a potential merger. Essentially, a week ago we took this proposal to our SRC, which received unanimous support.

The reason we proposed this merging of the unions is that PARSA and ANUSA often work along the same lines, and we have a similar relationship to the university. ANUSA was



concerned to see an ANU representative within the new structure for PARSA. We wanted to offer an alternative solution with a single union for all 20,000 odd students. We have similar structures and events, as well as very similar service provision from our staff teams. However, our funding from the University could be stronger with pooled resources.

There is also an ability for staff teams to be more flexible if they combined. Ultimately our main concern is that we do work on the same lines and often even co-run campaigns, and it would work better if we could be a single student association. ANUSA has approached the university, which has broadly been positive so far, though unconfirmed.

What we're putting to the PRC is to continue these conversations, possibly including a joint PRC/SRC meeting next week. We also do want a broader student discussion where all students can have their say, and the wider student body decision will be respected.

Jane: If we went ahead, there would be a huge amount of work, and this discussion would have to be put to the members, ideally through a referendum.

Sonia: There is a possibility that we would get more funding, but we have to bear in mind that this is only a possibility so we can't move forward on that assumption. The other aspect that she wants to remain sceptical about is the presence of the ANU representative on PARSA's advisory council vs. the idea that there would be no ANU representative on the hypothetical merged union.

Ruonan: Last year, PARSA did fall apart over some issues. We hopefully won't fall apart over this issue – we don't have the time for that.

Sharrada: Wanted clarification on the ANU rep on the advisory committee.

Sonia: The new constitution includes an advisory committee attached to the PRC which includes an ANU representative, at the (strong) request of the ANU itself after the governance dispute last year. They won't have any deciding power.

Preksha: There will definitely be some advantages with a united association, with no conflicts from similar events, and we can still have undergrad-specific and postgrad-specific events.

Ruonan: I'm not for the larger organisation – big organisations move far more slowly, and need a larger burden of transparency. When universities have one student union, it can make sense; many of us will have experienced that. Further, undergrads and postgrads do have different needs in some ways, especially HDR and research students. While the current system does ok advocating for each set of needs, a united association would spend a huge amount of time working out how to keep this balance. Currently, we have more specialised knowledge as to the needs of postgrads and can keep this if we don't go ahead with a merger.

Kat: ANUSA is quite bureaucratic already with departmental structures; they don't want that kind of structure to encompass postgrads too.

Siddarth: A merged association would just be huge, and deliberations would take a while.

Oass: I don't see a huge number of benefits aside from streamlined advocacy, and the potential increase in funding.

Sonia: Representation is important and we can't ensure postgrad representation in the future if we are merged.

Akriti: There is a precedent that PARSA left – there has to be a reason for that.

Preksha: instead of a merger, we could have regular meetings with both associations to work more closely together.

Eleanor: There still is potential to work more closely together

Kat: Doesn't think that we do want to look at a merger.

Sharrada: Doesn't agree with a full merger, as any election with postgraduates and undergraduates will have a significant outnumbering. Instead, working together on advocacy campaigns is a better use of effort. We could look at working more closely there, and if that won't fly with ANUSA then we should walk away.

Gunjan: The concern is that it looks more like an acquisition rather than a merger, and that HDR representation in particular would likely go down.

Kat: Another option would be to form a working group that people could elect to join if they wished to.

Zhangcheng: An issue to bear in mind is that there is also communication costs right now for staff and students wishing to contact both PARSA and ANUSA. We could definitely do something about that communication burden without merging, though.

Gurisha: From a social officer point of view, there is potentially more onus on a postgraduate association to provide social events, while undergraduates tend to have more social opportunities already through residential halls and clubs.

Jiayi: Has a question around the merger – if we were missing representatives (for example postgrad coursework COS), would the responsibility for that fall to undergrad coursework or postgrad HDR?

Tristan: That would be for further discussion pending structures.

Yalan: There is already some confusion as ANUSA's name implies it already covers all students. Additionally, it's more important to collaborate than merge, in the first instance.

Sonia: Would like to have a motion about whether we want to go ahead with the merger discussions or not.

Sharrada: On the note of the advocacy council, we do need a structure if we are to propose this to ANUSA. Called for ideas about structures.

Sonia : ANUSA department are autonomous ,they wouldn't be comfortable with the merger of just Departments.

Eleanor: Would we like to have a meeting with the SRC early next week on the possibility of working more closely together? A show of hands, please.

Motion: To not go ahead with a full merger of ANUSA and PARSA for the time being.

Proposer: Sonia Jeena

Secunder: Gunjan Dixit

For: 16

Against: 3

Abstentions: 0

Motion passed

2.0.3 Updated Gratuity Table

Eleanor: The gratuity table needs to be updated now that we have finalised numbers of College Reps. There was a small issue with the calculation of the gratuity table last PRC, with a mismatch of the Social Officer's hours. The old table said the role had 10 hours while the role is 5 hours per week, with according gratuity.

Motion: To approve the below gratuity table to reflect new representatives

Proposer: Eleanor

Secunder: Kat

For: 12

Abstentions: 7

Motion passed

Gratuity Amounts – Gratuity Regulation 2022 (V.03)

Position	Annual Gratuity	Hours	Monthly Gratuity
President (exec)	\$45,500	0	0



Vice President (exec)	\$20,800	20	\$1733.33
General Secretary (exec)	\$20,800	20	\$1733.33
Equity Officer (exec)	\$18,200	14	\$1516.67
Coursework Officer	\$18,200	14	\$1516.67
Higher Degree Research (HDR) Officer	\$18,200	14	\$1516.67
Women's Officer	\$ 10,400	10	\$866.67
Wellbeing Officer	\$10,400	10	\$866.67
International Officer	\$ 10,400	10	\$866.67
Governance (SJ)			\$400
ANU Council (SJ)			\$300
Social Officer	\$ 5,200	5	\$433.33
Disabilities Officer	\$5,200	5	\$433.33
First Nation Officer	\$5,200	5	\$433.33
Queer Officer	\$5,200	5	\$433.33
Parent's and Carer's Officer	\$5,200	5	\$433.33
Environmental Officer	\$5,200	5	\$433.33
College Representatives	\$9,600 There will be 7 Representatives	Up to 5 hours per month	\$100

2.0.4 Other business

Jane presented the new Constitution and supporting documents including policies on appointments and delegations.

The PRC will be taking these policies along with the Constitution to the upcoming AGM for wider comment and approval.

2.0.5 Meeting closed