

General Secretary

Duration	12-month term
Hours	Minimum 10 hours a week, 52 weeks a year
Location	PARSA Office, Melville Hall
Compensation*	Traditionally receives honoraria payment

About PARSA

The ANU Postgraduate and Research Students' Association is the officially recognized body representing all postgraduate students enrolled at Australian National University. It works to the following vision: to be an inclusive, diverse, and representative community of postgraduate students who advocate for students as well as enrich the student experience for all.

Role Description: General Secretary

This is a critical, time-intensive role, primarily responsible for developing strategies to increase participation in PARSA activities, elections, and campaigns, particularly among hard-to-reach and traditionally under-represented sections of our membership. The General Secretary has primary responsibility for helping ensure PARSA is a representative organization through ensuring strong engagement with members.

The successful candidate will need to hold regular office hours and be available to members, officers, and PARSA and University staff for Association-related business for 10 or more hours per week during term-time, exam periods and semester breaks.

Role Description: PRC and Executive Team

The Postgraduate Representative Council (PRC) is PARSA's governance body, and is comprised of 31 elected postgraduate students – four executive-team members, eight portfolio officers, two representatives of each college, and five general representatives. It meets every four weeks, at which council members can raise issues, and make decisions on behalf of the organisation. These meetings typically last two hours.

The Executive of the PRC is made up of the President (Chair), Vice President, Treasurer and General Secretary, and any other PRC members selected by the President. Executive Team members provide greater management oversight of the financial, legal and strategic activity of the organisation than that of non-Executive Team members, and contribute to the decision-making of the organisation on an operational level.**

Executive Team meetings are chaired by the President and attended by the Executive team, the General Manager, and any other staff or officers the President invites to attend. It typically convenes weekly, but at minimum a week or two before each PRC meeting, and when necessary. These meetings usually run for two hours, with an additional 1-2 hours required to prepare and read papers ahead of the meeting.

Attendance at PRC and executive meetings is mandatory.

* The PARSA Constitution provides for payment of honoraria to the President and, at the President's discretion, to officers of the PRC. Currently PARSA policy for payment of honoraria was agreed at the [September 26, 2016 PRC meeting](#). Honoraria is provided to officers for going above and beyond their volunteer duties with the Association and is not a legal entitlement of holding office. PRC members who receive honoraria do so in accordance with decisions of the President and PRC under the PARSA constitution and pursuant to honoraria powers in the Constitution. Contact PARSA General Manager Mike Heffron at mike.heffron@anu.edu.au for details on honoraria payments.

** The Executive is a committee of the PRC. The full PRC holds the Executive team members accountable for their decisions at PRC meetings, as does the membership at the Annual General Meeting. Each member of the PRC is collectively responsible for any decision made by the Executive Team and their fellow Board members.

General Secretary responsibilities

- Work closely with the Advocacy and Engagement Officer, and Communication, Marketing and Event's Co-ordinator, to develop and implement measurable strategies to increase member participation in PARSA-sponsored and endorsed initiatives.
- Provide oversight of PARSA's democracy outreach, and develop and implement a measurable strategy for significantly increase turnout in PARSA by-elections, AGM/OGMs, and General Elections.
- Act as a PARSA representative on the funding panels of the Student Extracurricular and Enrichment Fund and Clubs and Societies Committee.
- Provide oversight PARSA's representatives on ANU and other stakeholder committees, and develop and implement a measurable strategy for significantly increase attendance, and impact, of committee members representing PARSA.

Officer responsibilities – applies to all Executive team and Portfolio Officers

- Work closely with the other Officers on Students' Association campaigns. Some of these may relate to Officers' objectives, but many are often reactive, depending on issues that arise throughout the year.
- Contribute to and influence University strategies through participation in ANU committees, PARSA campaigns, organisational working groups, and informal networking, to ensure that student interests are effectively represented.
- Uphold and advance the reputation of the organisation, attending and speaking at official ANU and other relevant stakeholder events and ceremonies as appropriate (e.g. O-Week talks, graduation).
- Support and promote PARSA activities which support the goals of the Strategic Plan (to be shortly published), including but not limited to O-Week and Welcome Week, elections outreach, face-to-face and social media engagement, membership engagement and feedback, and Students' Association-led events.
- Provide regular reports on efforts to improve the lives of members, and provide opportunities to be held accountable for the progress of this work, at Executive Meetings, Postgraduate Representative Council meetings (PRC), the Annual General Meeting (AGM), and other events as necessary.
- Act as the first point of contact for students with questions or concerns, signposting students to the Students' Association's council members or staff, where appropriate.

PRC Responsibilities – applies to all 31 Council Members

- Exercise good governance by carrying out duties with reasonable care and diligence, in good faith and in the best interests of the Association.
- Become familiar with the [Constitution](#), [relevant legislation](#), organisational policies and [SSAF guidelines](#) ahead of taking office, and ensure, with the support of staff, that both the entire Association and individual members of the PRC complies with these regulations.
- Provide the organisation with leadership, contribute to the development of the Students' Association's mission and values, and help promote and raise the profile of the organisation.
- Play a key role in developing the organisation's strategy, and review and agree to major changes that would significantly alter the organisation's direction.
- Monitor and assess the organisation's work in relation to the agreed strategy and budget, and agree alternative action to remedy shortfalls, if required.
- Maintain a robust overview of the principle risks facing the Students' Association, and take action to mitigate these risk when required.

Executive Responsibilities – applies to the President, Vice-President, General Secretary, Treasurer

- Provide greater operational oversight to the organisation than the PRC, particularly involving legal issues, and those related to strategic direction, finance and risk management.
- Ensure that the directives of the Council, and those approved at general meetings, are implemented.

Key relationships

- **PARSA:** Executive Team, PRC, General Manager; Advocacy and Engagement Officer; other staff
- **Members:** Postgraduate Students
- **University:** Vice Chancellor, Deputy Vice Chancellor (University Experience); Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic); Dean of Students, Head of Division of Student Life, Senior University Management and ANU staff at all levels.
- **External Organisations:** ANUSA, counterparts at other students' associations, Council of Australian Postgraduate Association (CAPA); Council of International Students' Associations; National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU); national, local and student media; and public officials

Training

- Training and support will be provided by the Students' Association staff, the outgoing Vice President, and external stakeholders, to ensure that you are fully equipped for the role.
- Newly elected Executive Officers are required to attend the two-day Executive Changeover and Induction Residential, a one full-day SSAF budget planning session, the two-day PRC induction retreat, and financial and governance training provided by the University. These will all take place in the six-week handover period (August 20-October 1).
- The Vice President will work closely with the General Manager and Advocacy and Engagement Officer, who will provide guidance, assistance and support immediately following the declaration of polls on both everyday procedural matters and wider finance, strategic, operations and public affairs issues.
- Additional training and ongoing support is provided throughout the academic year.