

Meeting 2/2026

A meeting of the **Monash Graduate Association (MGA) Executive Committee** was held from 4:05-5.25pm on Thursday 26 March 2026 in the MGA Meeting Room, Clayton Campus and by Zoom.

MINUTES

The meeting commenced at 4:05pm

1. Formal matters

1.1 Acknowledgement of country

The Chair acknowledged and paid respect to the people of the Kulin nations as the original and ongoing owners and custodians of this unceded land.

1.2 Attendance & Apologies

Present: Yiwen Yuan (Chair) Kalani Perera, Jingrong Wang, Jason Yeung, Troy Lau (joined 4.30pm), Rajdeep Singh Jammu, Jonathan Paul, Janhanvi Moze (joined at 4.27), Chatarina Hanny Teja.

Apologies: Vidhi Agarwal, Hard Gorakhia, Rebekah McEwan, Akshita Sinha, Mohammed Zeehan Salehan

In attendance: Janice Boey, Executive Officer
Ryan Edwards, Research Manager
Ying Xu, Advocacy Manager
Jack Kennedy, Campaigns Officer

1.3 Consideration of the agenda

The Chair called for any additional items to be added to the agenda. No further items were raised.

2. Minutes and Action sheet

2.1 Minutes of the February 2026 meeting for confirmation

It was moved:

That the minutes of the MGAEC meeting February 2026 be confirmed.

Moved: Chatarina Hanny Teja

Seconded: Jingrong Wang

(In favour:9 , Abstain: 0, Against: 0)

The motion is carried.

2.2 Action list register

Yiwen proposed reallocating the HDR Stipend Increase Campaign to Ryan and the research team, noting their subject-matter expertise and current staff capacity to progress the work. Yiwen also requested that a further poll be circulated to the Executive Committee to gauge interest in forming a subcommittee to develop the MGA Vision Statement, with Jan to action the poll.

3. Reports

3.1 President's report

Yiwen reported that the next VCSPAF meeting will be held on Thursday, 23 April, noting that this meeting is an opportunity for MSOs to meet with the Vice-Chancellor to discuss student matters. The President also met with Jack (the MGA's new Campaign's Officer) to discuss upcoming campaigns, including the HDR stipend campaign and the PTV campaign. The President attended the GRC meeting, where the MGA recommendation to extend paid parental leave was approved by the University.

3.2 Members' reports

The MGAEC member reports were noted.

3.3 Staff Activity report

The Staff report was noted.

3.4 January & February 2026 Profit and Loss report

The January and February 2026 Profit and Loss report was presented and noted. Charlie advised that the report was straightforward and confirmed that the MGA has received the first 50% instalment of SSAF funding.

3.5 February 2026 MGA Newsletters & Social Media Report

The MGA Newsletter and Social Media Report was noted.

3.6 February 2026 Advocacy Report

The February 2026 Advocacy Report was noted.

3.7 MGAEC meeting attendance records

The MGAEC meeting attendance records were noted.

4. Business

4.1 Business arising

4.1.1 SSAF Funding 2026

The Committee considered the update on SSAF revenue projections, noting early Semester 1 data indicating a decline in international postgraduate enrolments and the potential implications for revenue. It was acknowledged that Semester 2 enrolments may offset the current shortfall and that projections remain indicative at this stage. The Committee endorsed the approach to maintain the current 2026 budget settings, with ongoing monitoring of enrolment trends and revenue projections. Jingrong noted that residual funding from the previous year is available to provide a level of flexibility if required.

4.1.2 485 Visa Price increase submission

Yiwen invited Ryan to speak to this item. Ryan acknowledged Nina for her work on the submission. He noted that while some other organisations, including the Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations (CAPA), have recommended exempting PhD students from the price increase, a broader approach targeting exemptions for industries with workforce shortages would be more representative of the graduate student cohort and their contribution to addressing skills gaps in Australia. Chatarina queried whether the issue should be promoted through the newsletter to gather additional student input; Ryan advised that, given the short turnaround and limited additional input required, broader promotion was not necessary and that seeking input from the Executive Committee would be sufficient. Jonathan agreed to contribute his personal experience to support the submission.

4.1.3 MGAEC Election 2026/27

Yiwen reminded Committee members that those wishing to nominate for the next term must submit their nominations by the due date. The Executive Officer reminded that the current Committee will continue to serve until the end of June 2026.

4.2.1 Orientation Report Semester 1, 2026

The Orientation Report for Semester 1, 2026 was presented and noted.

4.2.2 MSO contribution on AHEGS

The Committee considered the University's proposal to recognise MSO leadership contributions through inclusion on students' Australian Higher Education Graduation Statements (AHEGS). The Committee endorsed the proposal. Jonathan expressed strong interest to explore extending recognition beyond MGAEC members to include volunteers and student leaders who contribute significant time to the organisation.

4.2.3 New signatory for PPA Bank Account

Approval was required for the new incoming PPA Treasurer and Vice President to access the PPA bank account.

It is moved:

That the signatories to the PPA Westpac Bank Account be:

Position	Current Incumbent	Type
PPA Treasurer	Yannee Liu	Student
PPA Vice President	Thomas Pirotta	Student
Executive Officer	Janice Boey	Staff
HR & Finance Manager	Charlie Li	Staff

Mover: Troy Lau

Seconded: Jonathon Pau;

(In favour: 9, Abstain: 0, Against: 0)

The motion is carried.

4.2.4 MGA debit card for new events staff

Yiwen advised that the following new staff members require an MGA debit card due to the operational needs of their roles, which involve frequent payments for goods and services. Charlie noted that the use of MGA debit cards is governed by established financial regulations, with appropriate controls and reconciliation processes in place.

It is moved:

That three additional MGA staff position be a holder of an MGA Debit card linked to MGA bank account as follows:

Position	Current Incumbent	Type
Events Officer (HDR)	Liam Allan	Staff
Events Officer (Cross Campus Events)	Asia Fortuna	Staff
Office Coordinator	Anushi Siriwardana	Staff

Moved: Chatarina Hanny Teja

Seconded: Kalani Perera

(In favour: 9, Abstain: 0, Against: 0)

The motion is carried.

4.2.5 PTV campaign submission to VCSPAF

Yiwen invited Jack to speak to this item. Jack introduced himself, noting he had recently completed a Master's degree and is familiar with the graduate student experience. He also highlighted his previous work experience, including with the Greens, where he worked on cost of living issues, aligning with key advocacy areas for the MGA. Jack outlined his intention to strengthen MGA's advocacy efforts and increase student participation in campaigns.

Jack provided an update on the PTV campaign, noting it is a longstanding issue for graduate students in Victoria and particularly timely given the upcoming state election. He advised that a petition has been initiated through the Victorian State Parliament, with a target of 10,000 signatures to trigger a parliamentary debate. He also plans to prepare a formal submission, engage with local councils, and encourage Executive Committee members to be involved in the campaign. It was further proposed to raise the matter at VCSPAF, seek University support including a formal statement, and consider establishing a subcommittee to progress the campaign.

Jonathan noted that, at the recent Academic Board, the University is keen to introduce new initiatives quickly to address cost of living pressures, including making travel between campuses better and advised that it would be timely to bring the campaign to the University's

attention. Jingrong added that the campaign is particularly timely given the increase in fuel prices.

The following Committee members expressed interest in joining the subcommittee: Jingrong, Kalani, Chatarina and Yiwen. Jan also suggested circulating an expression of interest (EOI) email to Committee members who were not present at the meeting to seek their interest.

4.2.6 HDR Paid Partner Parental Leave submission

Yiwen reported that the submission was presented at the Graduate Research Committee (GRC) meeting yesterday. The GRC approved the first two recommendations for immediate implementation: increasing partner leave to 10 working days (2 weeks), and to increase primary carer leave to 100 working days (20 weeks) as they are now legally required to do. Ryan noted that overall the University was very supportive of the submission and is keen to further explore the remaining recommendations in the submission relating to flexible leave sharing arrangements and a broader review of partner leave to potentially exceed industry standards.

4.2.7 Q3 Honoraria payment

Yiwen reminded Committee members to send their engagement checklist to the Vice President prior to the end of the month for payment of the Q3 Honoraria payment.

4.2.8 Intercampus shuttle bus advocacy

The Committee considered the proposal for MGA to participate in a joint submission with other MSOs addressing intercampus shuttle bus issues. The MGAEC endorsed MGA's involvement in this coordinated advocacy initiative and expressed support for continuing this advocacy work in collaboration with the other MSOs, including student consultation efforts.

5. Next meeting

The next meeting would be held in April 2026 at a time and place to be confirmed by members' availability.

The meeting closed at 5.25pm