

MGA welcomes the final report of the Victorian Legislative Assembly Economy and Infrastructure Committee's Inquiry into Enhancing Victorian University Governance, released in July 2026. The report's recommendations represent a significant step forward for graduate student representation at Monash and across Victoria.

MGA made a formal submission to the Inquiry in February 2026, arguing that graduate students are fundamentally different from undergraduates and require their own representation on university councils. Graduate students have different financial circumstances, governance priorities and relationships with their universities, and this diversity cannot be meaningfully represented by an undergraduate student on a university council. We argued for designated graduate student representatives and the inquiry agreed. Finding 33 of the report states that "one single student representative on Council cannot provide diversity of perspectives because one student is unable to represent the perspectives of the varying cohorts." Recommendation 16 follows from this directly, calling on the Victorian Government to amend the enabling Acts of all Victorian universities to require a minimum of two elected student members across various qualification levels on Council.

The report also explicitly cited MGA's submission on the distinctions between graduate coursework and research students, acknowledging MGA's recommendation for three dedicated student council positions, including one for graduate coursework students and one for graduate research students. While the Committee stopped short of mandating a third seat at this time, it noted its agreement with the principle behind MGA's position and did not rule out further reform. The Committee indicated it will review the impacts of legislative changes after three years, leaving the door open to the three-seat model MGA proposed.

MGA is proud to have contributed meaningfully to this inquiry. Graduate students deserve a genuine voice in the institutions that govern them. We will continue to advocate for the full implementation of the Committee's recommendations, and for the Victorian Government to go further in recognising the distinct needs of graduate coursework and research students in university governance structures.

Monash Graduate Association