

## **Meeting 9/2025**

A meeting of the **Monash Graduate Association (MGA) Executive Committee** was held from 3:00 - 5:00pm , Wednesday, 29 October 2025 in the MGA Meeting Room, Clayton Campus and by Zoom.

## **MINUTES**

The meeting commenced at 3.03pm.

### **1. Formal matters**

#### **1.1 Acknowledgement of country**

Yiwen 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), Yidi Luan, Kalani Perera, Anusha Shrivastava, Jingrong Wang, Hard Gorakhia, Ruyu Zheng (Jojo), Rebekah McEwan, Rajdeep Jammu, Mohammed Zeehan Salehan (joined at 3.15), Akshita Sinha (joined at 3.17), Jonathan Paul (joined at 3.37)

Apologies: Vidhi Argawal, Jason Yeung and Troy Lau.

In attendance: Janice Boey, Executive Officer  
Charlie Li, HR & Finance Manager  
Ying Xu, Advocacy Manager  
Ryan Edwards, Research Manager  
Shinyi Carnibella, Marketing and Communications Manager  
Leilani Hatfield, Events Manager

#### **1.3 Consideration of the agenda**

No new items were added to the agenda

### **2. Minutes and Action sheet**

#### **2.1 Minutes of meeting September 2025 for confirmation**

##### **It was moved:**

*That the minutes of MGAEC meeting September 2025 be confirmed.*

Moved: Jingrong Wang

Seconded: Anusha Shrivastava

Carried with no objections.

#### **2.2 Action list register**

The action list register was noted.

Yiwen requested for the matter relating to the Vision Statement be tabled at the November MGAEC meeting for the Committee to consider.

### **3. Reports**

#### **3.1 President's report**

The President's report was noted.

#### **3.2 Members' reports**

Jingrong reported on the recent movie night event he organised in conjunction with the Movie Society (a MSA student club). While the event itself was enjoyable, graduate student attendance was low. He will reconsider strategies to better engage graduate students. Yiwen recommended speaking to Leilani, the Events Manager for advice on future events.

Anusha reported on her recent career event, noting high attendance and strong engagement with alumni. Attendees expressed clear value in career-focused activities. She recommended that Career Connect and the MGA collaborate to deliver similar events in the future.

#### **3.3 Staff report**

The staff report was noted.

#### **3.4 September 2025 profit and loss report**

The September P&L report was noted.

Charlie advised that the revenue line in the P&L has been updated in line with the latest student enrolment figures provided by the University. Jingrong queried as to what would happen to the unused funds. Charlie explained that any unspent funds would be transferred to the reserve account.

#### **3.5 September 2025 MGA Newsletters & Social Media Report**

The September MGA Newsletter and Social Media Report was noted.

#### **3.6 September 2025 Advocacy Report**

The September Advocacy report was noted.

#### **3.7 MGAEC meeting attendance records**

The MGAEC meeting attendance records were noted as true and accurate.

### **4. Business**

#### **4.1 Business arising**

##### **4.1.1 SSAF Funding Agreement 2026-2028**

**It is moved:**

*That the Committee approves the SSAF Funding Agreement for 2026–2028 as circulated.*

**Moved by:** Kalani Perera

**Seconded by:** Jingrong Wang

Carried with no objections

Yiwen thanked the Committee for responding to the email motion to approve the SSAF Funding Agreement for 2026–2028. She noted that the University took a collaborative approach in the funding agreement discussions with the MSO and was receptive to feedback. As a result, the MGA secured an increase in funding, which will support the expansion of services and programs for the graduate student community. She also noted that the University has withdrawn its proposal for a model constitution for the MSOs as well as the requirement for MSOs to use University-proposed auditors.

#### **4.1.2. CAPA Affiliation fees**

Yiwen advised the Committee that CAPA has declined MGA's request to extend the deadline for the fee discount application. As a result, the Committee is asked to consider whether to approve the payment of the 2025 membership fee in full, as per the original invoice.

Zeehan expressed reservations about affiliating this year, citing concern about CAPA's organisational capacity and the value proposition for the Monash graduate student body. Yidi noted the lack of future advocacy plans for graduate coursework students and given the limited staffing at CAPA, she raised concerns about the potential challenges for students managing CAPA's operations. Jingrong suggested speaking to other graduate student associations about their experience with CAPA. After further discussions, the Committee voted against affiliating with CAPA at the full invoiced amount for 2025.

#### **4.1.3 MGA HSW Committee TOR review**

The Committee expressed satisfaction with the updated MGA HSW Committee Terms of Reference.

#### **It was moved:**

That the updated MGA HSW Committee Terms of Reference be accepted.

Mover: Akshita

Seconder: Anusha

Carried with no objections.

### **4.2 General Business**

#### **4.2.1 MSDI Disestablishment**

Yiwen invited Kalani to speak to the item as she is enrolled through MSDI and impacted by this change. Kalani reported that the proposal to disestablish MSDI is currently in the consultation phase with the University. She noted that many MSDI PhD students are experiencing high levels of stress, with some taking stress or sick leave. Additionally, the MSDI PhD students are seeking MGA support to lobby for a minimum three-month extension of their candidature and scholarship.

Zeehan asked about the reasons for the proposed disestablishment and its impact on PhD students. Kalani indicated she was unclear on the University's rationale but noted that if the proposal proceeds, PhD students would be required to follow their main supervisor to a new faculty. Akshita expressed concern for affected students while acknowledging that the decision is ultimately within the University's authority.

Yiwen asked if the Committee would support a petition drafted by the Monash Environment and Sustainability Students Association (MESSA) opposing the disestablishment. The Committee voted in favour of supporting the petition.

It was also agreed that the MGA would issue a statement to support HDR students impacted by the disestablishment of MSDI.

#### **4.2.2 Graduate coursework student issues**

Jonathon and Raj raised concerns that, due to the high number of courses offered online, there are limited opportunities for in-person student interaction. They expressed interest in exploring ways the MGA could facilitate in-person connections for graduate coursework students. It was agreed that Jan and Ryan would meet separately with Jonathon and Raj to discuss potential strategies to address this issue.

Anusha reported that several students from her Student Advisory Committee raised concerns regarding placement-related financial hardship. Students highlighted expenses such as travel, uniforms, and accommodation, as well as loss of income from being unable to work regular jobs, resulting in significant financial and mental stress. It was proposed to establish a subcommittee to further investigate this matter. Anusha agreed to chair the subcommittee, and Akshita and Jingrong expressed interest in participating.

#### **4.2.3 MGA Budget for 2026**

The Committee was informed that under the new SSAF funding agreement, the MGA's funding will increase from 40% to 50% of the SSAF allocation for graduate students. This increase provides an opportunity for the MGA to expand events, programs and services to better support the graduate student community.

The Committee expressed support for the recommended areas of budget expansion and agreed to establish a subcommittee to review the MGA budget for 2026. Zeehan, Yiwen, and Akshita indicated their interest in joining the subcommittee. Jan agreed to coordinate the meeting and prepare a draft 2026 budget for the subcommittee's review.

Jan agreed to contact the MGAEC members who were absent at the meeting regarding their interest in joining the subcommittees created during this meeting.

#### **4.2.4 VCSPAF Report**

The VCSPAF report was noted.

### **5. Next meeting**

The next meeting would be held in November 2025 at a time and place to be confirmed by members' availability.

The meeting closed at 5:01pm