

Meeting 7/2025

A meeting of the **Monash Graduate Association (MGA) Executive Committee** was held from 3:00 - 4.55pm , Monday, 25 August 2025 in the MGA Meeting Room, Clayton Campus and by Zoom.

MINUTES

The meeting commenced at 3:05pm.

1. Formal matters

1.1 Acknowledgement of country

The MGAEC President 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 (left at 3:55), Troy Lau, Rajdeep Singh Jammu (Raj), Vidhi Agarwal, Jonathan Paul, Kalani Perera, Jason Yeung, Anusha Shrivastava, Jingrong Wang, Hard Gorakhia, Ruyu Zheng and Mohammed Zeehan Salehan (attended at 3:15).

Apologies: Akshita Sinha

In attendance: Janice Boey, Executive Officer
Charlie Li, HR & Finance Manager
Ying Xu, Advocacy Manager
Ryan Edwards, Research Manager

1.3 Consideration of the agenda

The following items were added to the agenda:
4.2.6 Vacancy on the University Education Committee

2. Minutes and Action sheet

2.1 Minutes of meeting July 2025 for confirmation

It was moved:

That the minutes of MGAEC meeting July 2025 be confirmed.

Moved: Kalani Perera
Seconded: Vidhi Agarwal
Carried with no objections.

2.2 Action list register

The Action list register was noted. Yiwen reported that she has heard back from the CAPA President and will coordinate a time for him to attend the September MGAEC meeting to provide an update on behalf of CAPA. Raj advised that he plans to meet with Ryan to discuss the issue of online and pre-recorded lectures.

3. Reports

3.1 President's report

The President's report was noted.

3.2 Members' reports

The President invited members to speak to their report. Troy shared insights from the VC-SPAF meeting, where he spoke about various matters including the election of the new MGAEC committee and the University communication strategy related to the Iran-Israel conflict. Jonathan shared details about a recent queer Zumba event that he organised at Caulfield, which had a turnout of around ten participants. He also noted working with Leilani to bring together an event for Wear It Purple Day. Anusha spoke about coordinating two events with Career Connect that would be targeted at international graduate students. Jingrong highlighted that the Clayton Peninsula shuttle bus currently operates only until 6:10 p.m., which is problematic for students with late classes. The Executive Officer suggested raising this matter with BPD but emphasised the need for data to justify any requests for extended hours.

3.3 Staff report

The staff report was noted.

3.4 July 2025 profit and loss report

The July P&L report was noted.

3.5 July 2025 MGA Newsletters & Social Media Report

The report was noted.

3.6 July 2025 Advocacy Report

The July Advocacy report was noted. Ying mentioned a slight decrease in migration support appointments in July, due to the migration agent taking leave during the period.

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 MGAEC Retreat 2025

The MGAEC Retreat 2025 was noted. Yiwen advised the Committee that all the resources from the retreat were available in the Google drive including the presentation slides, the governing workshop documents, photos and the discussions from the group work.

4.12. SSAF Funding negotiations

Yiwen updated the Committee on SSAF funding negotiations and the recent meeting she and the Executive Officer had with the University representatives. She highlighted the importance for the MSOs to protect organisational independence. Other key matters discussed with the University included request for an increase in the SSAF allocation for all MSOs, the supplementary funding agreements, the challenges for MGA to have a model Constitution and governance training requirements. A follow-up meeting has been scheduled to progress these discussions.

4.1.3 CAPA Update

Vidhi and Kalani attended the recent CAPA SCM meeting and provided the Committee with the following updates: CAPA is operating with a small budget surplus and has resolved its ABN registration issue - changing from "unincorporated" to "incorporated" status; nine government submissions have been completed, and 18 media pieces generated; CAPA is advocating for PhD stipend increases; and is working to establish a new independent national representative body for international students. Affiliation fees are to be sent soon to affiliates, and the invoice is expected to be based on 2023 enrollment numbers (cost: \$1.65 per head).

Janice explained that the previous committee was reluctant to pay the full CAPA affiliation fee due to concerns over the organisation's governance and mismanagement of funds, though they recognised that the current CAPA committee was trying to overcome these issues. As a result, the MGA only paid \$10,000 to CAPA for 2024.

Ryan Edwards recommended a measured approach to engaging with CAPA, noting the organisation's complex history and ongoing governance challenges. He expressed concern that CAPA sometimes highlights achievements that may not directly stem from its efforts or have clear relevance to graduate students—for example, referencing a beer tax campaign. While he remains hopeful about CAPA's potential for positive development, he retains some reservations about how the organisation currently presents its role and impact.

4.2 General Business

4.2.1 Funding to MONSU Caulfield

Janice explained that the MGA had a Funding Agreement with Monash University, under which the MGA agreed to provide some graduate SSAF funding to the undergraduate campus-based associations. This recognised that some graduate students can and do access the activities and resources offered by the undergraduate associations on each campus.

In the last few years, the MGA had negotiated directly with MONSU-Caulfield to agree to an amount to be transferred based on the number of graduate students on that campus. The same approach is applied for MONSU Peninsula. For 2025, because the Caulfield graduate cohort numbers had increased since 2024, MONSU Caulfield had asked for an increase from last year's funding. Zeehan inquired about the allocation of the budget and the types of events funded. The Committee was keen to understand the range of offerings provided by MONSU Caulfield that is open to all students. After

some discussion, the committee voted and agreed to provide a \$40,000 grant to MONSU-Caulfield for 2025 in recognition of their work supporting graduate students.

4.2.2 Academic misconduct delays

Ying explained that the current academic misconduct process can take several months to resolve, which may affect students' course progression and, in turn, their wellbeing and mental health. The Advocacy team has prepared a draft letter of recommendation, proposing greater flexibility with enrolments for impacted students and highlighting procedural concerns. Jonathan asked whether it was possible to quantify the impact of these outcomes for the University, such as loss of revenue due to student discontinuation. Ying noted that the MGA does not have access to this data and that the University is best placed to further investigate the full extent of such impacts. No further comments were raised, and the letter will be finalised by the end of the week and sent to the DVCE Education Portfolio for consideration.

4.2.3 Events Report

The Events Report for Semester 1, 2025 was noted.

4.2.4 Community Food Relief Victorian Government grant

Yiwen explained that Leilani has led a joint application with other MSOs for Victorian Government funding to support food relief. If successful, the project will be implemented in Semester 1, 2026 across the four major Australian campuses, with grant outcomes expected in September or October 2025. The Committee thanked Leilani for her effort on this project.

4.2.5 MGA Vision Statement

The Committee expressed interest in collaboratively drafting an MGA vision statement but, due to current time constraints, agreed to defer the matter for consideration at a later date.

4.2.6 Vacancy on the University Education Committee.

Yiwen advised the Committee that Akshita was unable to take up the student representative role on the University Education Committee (UEC) due to personal circumstances, leaving the position vacant. Expressions of interest were called, and Vidhi nominated for the role. With no other nominations received, Vidhi was appointed as the graduate student representative on the UEC. Ryan will contact Vidhi to provide a briefing on the role.

5. Membership

5.1 Indigenous Students' Officer Vacancy

The Committee expressed interest in co-opting an Indigenous student into the Indigenous Students' Officer role on the MGAEC. Along with promoting the vacancy through MGA communication channels, Janice will also contact the William Cooper Institute and other networks to assist in filling the position.

6. Next meeting

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

The meeting closed at 4.55pm