

Meeting 7/2025

A meeting of the **Monash Graduate Association (MGA) Executive Committee** was held from 3:00 - 5:00pm , Tuesday, 23 September 2025 in the MGA Meeting Room, Caulfield Campus and by Zoom.

MINUTES

The meeting commenced at 3:05pm.

1. Formal matters

Meeting Proceedings

As both the President and Vice-President were unavailable to chair part or all of the MGAEC September meeting, Troy Lau was elected as Chair of the meeting by a simple majority of the members in attendance, in accordance with Section 24 of the MGA Constitution.

1.1 Acknowledgement of country

Troy 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: Troy Lau (Chair), Yidi Luan, Jonathan Paul, Kalani Perera, Jason Yeung, Anusha Shrivastava, Jingrong Wang, Hard Gorakhia, Akshita Sinha, Ruyu Zheng (Jojo) (attended at 3.35) and Mohammed Zeehan Salehan (attended at 4:01).

Apologies: Rajdeep Jammu, Yiwen Yuan and Vidhi Argawal

Observers: Rebekah McEwan - Student

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 August 2025 for confirmation

It was moved:

That the minutes of MGAEC meeting August 2025 be confirmed.

Moved: Yidi Luan
Seconded: Jonathan Paul
Carried with no objections.

2.2 Action list register

The action list register was noted.

3. Reports

3.1 President's report

The President's report was noted.

3.2 Members' reports

Troy invited members to speak to their report. Jonathon reported that the LGBTIA+ survey is progressing well with over 60 responses to date. Similarly, the Pool Pride Night hosted with the University was a success and well attended by students.

Kalani provided an update on initiatives supporting HDR students, including mental wellness and sport events, outdoor activities, and opportunities for networking and research discussion. Kalani also noted HDR student concerns regarding the proposed dismantling of Monash Sustainable Development Institute MSDI and its members being transferred to various faculties. It was agreed that the MGA Advocacy team is available to support individual students with their concerns. Kalani to organise a meeting with Jan to further discuss this matter.

Anusha reported on a couple of recent career events that she organised for graduate students with Monash Career Connect, noting their popularity, and raised issues around student placement poverty. She also provided an update on Monash intercampus international organisation network (MIISON), noting that a new Chair will need to be determined. The Chair of MIISON will chair future MIISON meetings and have a seat at the VCSPAF.

3.3 Staff report

The staff report was noted.

3.4 August 2025 profit and loss report

The August P&L report was noted.

Charlie provided a brief update noting that 100% of the MGA 2025 SSAF funding has been received. As per the P&L, the revenue has increased in line with the higher enrollment of graduate student numbers at Monash.

3.5 August 2025 MGA Newsletters & Social Media Report

The MGA Newsletter and Social Media Report was noted.

Shinyi reported that the MGA Zoo Trip received over 800 clicks last year, and the Career Connect event received over 1,000 clicks, highlighting their importance to students. Students are actively sharing events via social media, demonstrating strong word-of-mouth promotion. Sports events also remain very popular, with high levels of engagement and participation. She also reported that after months of working with Monash e-Solutions, the MGA logo and MGA Reward logo are now on the M-Pass (Monash student ID card).

3.6 August 2025 Advocacy Report

The August Advocacy report was noted.

Ying noted that the Academic Progress (APC) season took place across August and September, and the advocates have been busy supporting students through this process.

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 Negotiations

Janice provided an update to the Committee on the ongoing negotiations with the University regarding SSAF funding. She reported that negotiations are continuing and noted that the University has indicated its intention to increase SSAF funding to MSOs for 2026, which would represent a significant positive outcome for all student associations.

The Committee acknowledged that the final draft of the agreement must be reviewed to ensure the MGA is satisfied with all terms before proceeding with execution of the agreement.

4.1.2. CAPA Presentation

Jesse Gardner-Russell, President of CAPA, presented to the Committee on the organisation's structure and operations. He outlined CAPA's role in representation and advocacy on behalf of student associations. Additionally, Jesse provided a brief summary of CAPA's work to date, highlighting key initiatives and achievements undertaken by the organisation.

Jonathan raised a query regarding CAPA's staffing arrangements, asking whether CAPA currently has employed staff. He further questioned how CAPA intends to operate effectively without dedicated staff support to assist with its activities.

Jesse responded to Jonathan's query, advising that if funding permits, CAPA does intend to employ one staff member. However, he noted that currently the majority of the work is undertaken by the Executives members of CAPA.

4.1.3 CAPA Affiliation Fees

The Committee commenced discussion regarding the MGA's potential financial reaffiliation with CAPA for 2025. Troy noted that the affiliation fees for CAPA for 2025 exceed \$45,000.

The Committee acknowledged that both Yiwen and Vidhi were absent from the meeting, and that both members have had further engagement with CAPA. Given their absence, the Committee agreed to defer the decision to allow for a more comprehensive discussion when all members are present.

Jonathan proposed creating a Google document where Committee members can compile additional questions for CAPA to respond to. Janice supported this proposal and agreed to action the creation of the document. Janice suggested for Vidhi to reach out to CAPA to extend the deadline for the application of the fee discount to allow sufficient time for the Committee's consideration.

4.2 General Business

4.2.1 Updated Budget for 2025

Prior to the commencement of this discussion, Troy invited Rebekah to wait in the Zoom waiting room as discussion relating to the MGA budget is confidential.

Janice addressed the proposed budget amendments, explaining that it is standard practice to adjust budget forecasts mid-year in response to actual income received.

Charlie provided a detailed line-by-line explanation of the budget amendments. Key changes include:

Revenue increase: As previously discussed in the meeting, revenue has increased due to higher student enrolment numbers.

Salary costs increase: Additional salary costs resulting from the recruitment of a Graduate Research and Policy Officer, a position that had been put on hold in late 2024.

Student events funding increase: Enhanced funding allocation for student events across major campuses and off-campus locations.

Welfare programs expansion: Increased funding for additional welfare programs, including the introduction of a specialist carers' program aimed at assisting graduate students who are parents and require assistance with the cost of childcare or school holiday programs during the Victorian school holidays in December/January.

MGA merchandise and rewards program: Increased funding for MGA merchandise and the rewards program for delivery in 2026.

Anusha enquired whether additional funding could be allocated to hosting further pop-up grocer events for students. Janice explained that while some additional funding would be allocated to planned pop-up grocer events, there is limited capacity to run additional events due to staff capacity constraints and limited timing, noting that only two months remain in the calendar year when students are on campus. She further explained that rather than increasing the number of well attended events, different types of programs have been planned with the additional funding, including a MYKI travel giveaway, expansion of the MGA Zoo trip and Phillip Island trip, and additional Coles vouchers for HDR students. This approach would enable the MGA to reach a wider and more diverse graduate student population.

Zeihan requested that a sub-committee be established to discuss the 2026 budget in detail Janice agreed that this would be beneficial and undertook to organise a session with the Committee.

It is moved:

That the following budget adjustments are approved.

Moved: Akshita Sinha
Seconded: Jonathan Paul.
Carried with no objections.

4.2.2 MGA HSW Committee TOR review

Due to time constraints, the Committee agreed to defer this item to the October meeting.

4.2.3 Graduate coursework online units outreach

Due to time constraints, the Committee agreed to move this item to the October MGAEC meeting.

4.2.4 SOTY & LOTY Review Panel

Due to time constraints, Janice advised that she would call for expressions of interest for this item via email. She noted that the item does not require Committee approval.

4.2.5 MSO Student Leaders Conference

Due to time constraints, Janice advised that she would call for expressions of interest for this item via email. She noted that the item does not require Committee approval.

5. Membership

5.1 Resignation of General Member

Troy advised the Committee that Sarmanth Patel has resigned from the MGAEC due to work and study commitments. The Committee wished Sarmanth good luck with his future endeavors.

5.2 Co-Option

The MGA received one eligible application for co-option to the vacant Indigenous Students' Officer position. Rebekah spoke to her application and answered questions from the Committee.

A blind election was conducted and the Committee undertook a vote. Rebekah was declared elected by an absolute majority to the MGAEC as the Indigenous Students' Officer. She was congratulated by the Committee.

6. Next meeting

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

The meeting closed at 5:01pm