MGAEC 2021/2022 Elections – Returning Officer report

1.   Nominations and Results

Campus-Tagged Representatives

Table 1: Candidates and elected members for campus-tagged representatives for the MGAEC. There is one position for each campus.

Clayton campus nominations (6)	Caulfield campus nominations (2)
Jayasurya Jayachandran	Yifei Miao
Smriti Vinayak Bhat	**Arjun Sanjeev (elected by ballot)**
Ashvini Laxman Tamgadge	
Deven Kumar	
Elnaz Mokhtari (elected by ballot)	

Peninsula campus nominations (0)	Parkville campus nomination (1)
No nominations	**David Nash (elected unopposed)**

General Representatives (elected by ballot)

Table 2: Candidates and elected members for general representatives for the MGAEC. There were 22 nominations for 11 positions. HDR = Higher Degree Research, CW = Coursework.

Nominees	Elected Candidates	Faculty, enrolment
Divya Sethi	**Caitlyn Neale**	*Law, CW*
Anushka Massey	**Deven Kumar**	*IT, CW*
Anushka Chakraborty	**Elliot Anderson**	*MNHS, HDR*
Kedar Krishnan	**Karyn Low**	*MNHS, CW*
Smriti Vinayak Bhat	**Madhuni Herath**	*MNHS, HDR*
Ashvini Laxman Tamgadge	**Merve Hannah O'Keefe**	*Arts, CW*
Mohammed Faizan	**Nathalie Farah**	*Science, HDR*
Jayasurya Jayachandran	**Pranay Prathivadi**	*IT, CW*
Farheen Siddiqui	**Priyanka Nathani**	*BusEco, CW*
Annie Kyi Lin Thant	**Sam Miles**	*Arts, HDR*
Koushal Hirawat	**Yingheng Tan**	*BusEco, CW*

Voting numbers

1,738 votes were cast in the 2021 MGAEC elections.

2. Outreach and promotion

- Global email
  - For the campus-tagged election, every graduate student enrolled at the relevant campus was sent an email with a link to vote. Those who did not vote after the initial email were sent a follow-up invitation to vote later in the week, and a further final reminder if they still had not voted.
  - For the general representative election, every graduate student enrolled at an Australian campus was sent an email with a link to vote. The same reminder/follow-up system as the campus-tagged election applied to this election as well.
  - Graduate students who did not wish to receive subsequent communication regarding voting were given the option to unsubscribe from the mailing list.

- MGA Newsletter
  - Both elections were promoted through the MGA fortnightly newsletter.

- Digital screens across campus (Clayton and Caulfield)
  - At the campuses where the MGA has digital screens, the relevant elections were advertised throughout the voting period.

- Voting stations (Clayton and Caulfield)
  - At the campuses where we retain a permanent staffing presence, we intermittingly ran voting stations. These consisted of iPads being made available to students to enable them to log in and vote on site.

- MGA social media
  - Both elections were promoted through MGA social media channels, including Instagram and Facebook.

3. Items of note - 2021/2022 MGAEC Elections

- It must be noted that this year's election took place in the midst of a global pandemic, with campus attendance severely reduced and many international students unable to enter Australia. Even so, voting numbers were low. If voting numbers as an overall percentage of the electorate continues to trend down, the MGA may wish to explore alternative options for conducting the elections.

- As with previous years, there were some issues with electronic signatures and nominees following the instructions within the nomination form. Monash's Student Enrolment and Business Services unit also had issues with students using their preferred names, instead of the names with which they enrolled. We should consider amending the form – see notes within 2022/23 nomination form.

- Once again, the importance of writing a clear, thoughtful and informative nominee statement needs to be highlighted to future nominees. This is often all the electorate have to go by when they are making their voting decision, and the standard of statements (information, clarity, spelling and grammar etc.) varied enormously.

- There were no rejected ballots.

- One incomplete nomination was rejected after the student failed to respond to requests from the Returning Officer to complete the form in time.

- One complaint was received regarding receipt of the global email. The student was advised that they could unsubscribe and provided instructions on how to do so, and no further communication was received.

- It should be noted that, as with previous years, Monash's Student Enrolment and Business Services unit helped out with data and background checks in a very supportive and timely way. It was greatly appreciated.