

Annual Report SUPRA 2009-2010



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Acknowledgement of Country

SUPRA acknowledges the traditional owners of this land, the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation and we pay our respects to them and their elders, past, present and future. If you are reading this publication you are standing on Aboriginal Land.

What is SUPRA?

Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association

SUPRA is the postgraduate student organisation at The University of Sydney and is run by postgrads for postgrads. SUPRA represents all postgraduates at Sydney University, and all postgraduates can look to SUPRA for assistance with any issues that may confront them - both academically and personally - during the course of their candidature.



Report of the Co-Presidents

Nick Irving and Rashmi Kumar

Looking back on our year as Co-presidents, we have seen a number of major changes to the organisation and the University, including major changes to the Academic Board and Senior Management of the University, the introduction of a precedent-setting professional doctoral program in Law, and the foreshadowing of major structural changes to the University in the Green Paper. At SUPRA's end, we've made major changes in our budgeting and financial management, changes to our Constitution and our internal structure. This has been a particularly active year for SUPRA, as we have had to consider a number of structural changes due to a reduction in our funding for 2010.

We must thank the Chancellor, Dr. Marie Bashir, Vice-Chancellor Dr. Michael Spence, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) Professor Derrick Armstrong, Dr. Margaret Edmond, and Simon Malcolm for their ongoing support throughout the year. We would also like to thank the Fellows of Senate for their attention to student affairs, and for making an effort to keep lines of communication open with SUPRA, especially with the abolition of the Senate/Student Associations Liaison Committee.

This last Council term has been exceptionally active and engaged on a whole range of issues, thanks to the dedication and hard work of many of SUPRA's Council. We would particularly like to thank Chihong Choi, Jason Judge, John Nowakowski, Fiona Curran, Richard Bailey, Siddhanth De, Heidi Claus, and Lian Jenvey for their contribution to the organisation over the past year. We have taken advantage of the opportunity of having such an active Council by working on a number of the internal processes of SUPRA, including our budgeting and financial management, changes to our Constitution and our internal structure to make the organisation more accountable and flexible. We have established a Budget Committee to oversee the drawing up of our annual budget and conduct quarterly reviews of expenditure to make sure that our spending remains in line with our projections. Due to the reduction of SUPRA's funding for 2010, we have had to become more careful about our spending in order to maintain the high quality of resources, representation, and services that students have come to expect from SUPRA.



The University has also experienced a number of structural changes, and there are many more on their way. At the end of last year, the Academic Board underwent a restructure, and its relationship with the new Senior Executive Group (SEG) was redefined. The SEG now sees almost everything the Board sees before the Board does, but there is no student representation, or oversight, on SEG. Despite an attempt to secure student representation on the new Course Profile Steering Committee, SUPRA was unsuccessful. This new course approval structure is particularly problematic, as courses are only seen by the Board once the Deans and DVCs have approved it. It was this approval system that saw the JD passed.

When the 2011-2015 Strategic Plan is finalised, there will be even more changes to come. SUPRA devoted a lot of time and energy to ensuring a strong postgraduate voice in the Green Paper consultation process. We advocated for more student involvement, and put on two forums publicising the process to students - one in the Arts Faculty late last year in the lead up to the Green Paper being drawn up, and a very well-attended one in Manning Bar with the SRC and USU just before Green Paper submissions closed. At the end of the process, in mid-April, we made an extensive submission to the Green Paper, taking up many issues that the University had left out of the Green Paper, including environmental sustainability, postgraduate coursework, and the overall student load composition. As the Senior Executive Group debates the collated submissions, SUPRA will continue to have a role in the crafting of the final White Paper and Strategic Plan in November.

The most serious result of these changes to the University has been the introduction of the Juris Doctor degree. This new 'Professional Doctorate' will replace the graduate-entry LLB program, and excludes graduate Law students from the many equity measures afforded to undergraduate students. The introduction of this program has set a precedent for a number of other faculties interested in converting their graduate-entry degree programs to postgraduate degrees, allowing them to charge fees in the process. So far we have seen the Faculty of Dentistry bring a proposal forward to make similar changes, and other faculties have indicated their interest in converting their grad-entry degree programs to postgraduate level. The problem is that the University has yet to take a formal position on this gradual shift towards offering professional education at postgraduate level only. Worse, many of the structural changes proposed in the Green Paper will create even more incentives for faculties to move towards this model. Obviously, this is something that SUPRA is incredibly concerned about, and has spent a considerable amount of time challenging.

2009 was in many ways SUPRA's year for supporting international students. Along with the SRC, UTS Students' Association, UNSW's SRC, and the Newcastle University Students' Association (NUSA), we re-formed the Cross-Campus Concessions Coalition (CCCC) in April last year. Since we worked with students from other universities to take a petition to the NSW parliament for the removal of discriminatory measures in the Transport Administration Act (1989) preventing international students from accessing transport concessions. We were heavily involved in 2 rallies for international students rights, and as a result, we have made lasting connections between students in higher education and students in the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector. In response to protest by international students against discrimination and exploitation, the federal government also initiated two inquiries into the circumstances of international students, to which SUPRA contributed extensive submissions.

Here is a list of the major decisions taken and achievements of SUPRA in 2009-10:

Management

- Hired a Publications Officer on a short-term contract, an additional Administration Officer and a SAAO (to fill an existing position).
- Reviewed staffing structure through the Workplace Consultative Committee (ongoing)
- Overseen the SUPRA website development process, culminating in the new site going live in March 2010.
- Renegotiation of Enterprise Agreement with staff
- Revision of Electoral Regulations
- Changes to the Constitution to strengthen the democratic processes within the organisation
- Ensured that SUPRA and the other student organisations were present from the entry-point of enrolment
- Redesign of Budgeting procedures to allow Office Bearers more autonomy and Council more oversight

Committee Attendance

- Academic Board
- Graduate Studies Committee
- Learning and Teaching Committee (until December 2009)
- Academic Standards and Policy Committee (from February 2010)
- Admissions Sub-Committee

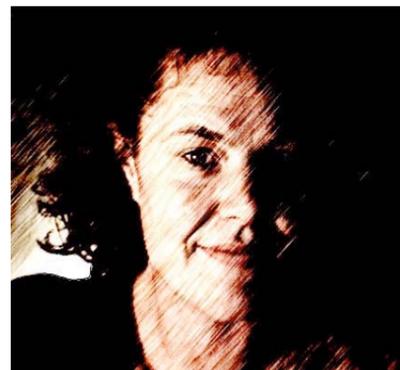
- Assessment Working Party
- Working Party to Review the Policy 'Identifying and Supporting Students at Risk' (August-September 2009)
- Working Party to Review online learning and distance course delivery
- Equity Advisory Committee
- Child Care Co-ordinating Committee
- Indigenous Education Advisory Committee
- Disability Consultative Committee
- Rural Focus Group
- Consultative Group on the Student Experience
- Senate/Student Associations Liaison Committee (one meeting before it was dismantled)
- Management/Student Associations Liaison Committee
- SEG Education Committee
- SEG Research Training Committee
- International Task Force (until ?)
- Academic Staffing Working Group 4 – Strategies to encourage the employment of PhD Students
- Emissions Reduction Working Party
- Pre-Senate meeting with Vice-Chancellor

Campaigns

- International students transport concessions
- Student income support
- Minimum Resources Policy Reviews – Government
- Baird Review of the ESOS Act
- Senate Inquiry into International Student

Welfare

- Review of Residential Tenancies Act
- NSW International Task Force Reviews – University of Sydney
- Future Student Administration Program
- Academic Board
- Review of Support Services for International Students
- Review of Indigenous Education
- Identifying and Supporting Students At Risk policy
- University Green Paper and Strategic Plan



Report of the Vice President

Lian Jenvy

Once again SUPRA has had an impressive year of supporting campaigns both on and off campus.

Of course the background of much of SUPRA's campaigning is the Rudd government's continuation of the Howard agenda from promoting war in Afghanistan, to attacks on union rights, maintaining the ban on same sex marriage and most recently Rudd's despicable refugee policy.

All of these campaigns raise issues that touch the lives of many SUPRA constituents.

Indian students and International Students campaign 2009.

SUPRA had been at the forefront of campaigning against the gross discrimination towards international students particularly the fact that international students are unable to get travel concessions.

However, the horrific attacks on Indian students in 2009 highlighted the racism and daily hardship faced by international students. These attacks were the impetus for a number of demonstrations by international students that SUPRA played an important role supporting and building.

Same Sex Marriage Rights National Year of Action

One of the key campaigns SUPRA has been actively involved in is the campaign to lift the ban on same sex marriage. This has seen the biggest demonstrations against a Rudd government policy. So far the national year of action around the issue has seen thousands march for equal marriage rights.

SUPRA support was vital for the on campus group Campus Equal Love that campaigned around the issues on the campuses across Sydney.

Refugee Rights

Most recently SUPRA has thrown its weight behind the new campaign on an old issue. Rudd has resurrected the worst aspects of the Howard government policy on refugees with its vile racism and malevolent treatment of some of the most desperate people on earth.

SUPRA has also supported Students For Palestine, Stop the Intervention Collective campaigning against the racist NT intervention, abortion rights campaigning, protests against Obama's extension of the war on Afghanistan amongst many others.

Funding Cuts to SUPRA

No report about SUPRA's activities would be complete without mentioning the university's decision to cut 7% of SUPRA's budget. The Rudd government's maintenance of the Howard government voluntary student unionism legislation has left student organizations in a very precarious position. Some organizations have folded completely. Others like SUPRA, face increased difficulties representing and campaigning for the rights of students.

In the coming period it is vital that students support SUPRA financially through becoming a supporter of SUPRA by paying a supporter fee. Details of this are available on our website.

Thankyous

Thanks to all the SUPRA councillors who contributed to SUPRA's fine campaigning effort. Thanks to all the SUPRA subscribers/supporters who attended and campaigned with SUPRA. Finally, thankyou to all my wonderful comrades in Socialist Alternative.



Report of the Treasurer

Chihong Choi

This has been a busy year to be in the position of Treasurer. Firstly, there were many issues to address regarding the financial management of the Council. Secondly, SUPRA was involved in negotiation with the University regarding our funding, which involved close analysis of our historical spending and our budget for 2010. Fortunately, we have had a very active Council this year. The executive has taken the initiative to investigate a number of management issues in depth, in order to help the Council function well both for now and into the future, by aligning the management structure to historical and current issues.

A significant number of discussions within Council, Stipend Subcommittee, and Management Committee meetings, were held to improve the current financial management practice. As a Council, we managed to come up with a new means of accounting for the resources used in the printing, which is one of our biggest expenditures in the office. Stipend policy is under investigation in order to bring it up to date, and also to help the executives better understand and coordinate the workload of Councillors. Together with the process of analysing the financial statements of the council, many accounts and line items were adjusted in order to help achieve effective reporting. The frequency of checking on the expenditures was increased to monthly, with the aim to bring spending issues to Council regularly, particularly considering that SUPRA has undergone a 7% cut in funding.

After a few months' negotiation with the university, SUPRA's funding was cut by 7%, which was attributed to the impact on the operations of the University caused by the global financial crisis. SUPRA tried every strategy, following significant discussions, to lobby the management of the University over this cut to our funding. During the process of negotiation with the University, huge diligence by the Council collectively, was put into the analysis of historical spending and the consideration of possible areas in which spending could be cut. The spending is supposed to be cut significantly; however, the Council decided to be responsible for students by keeping all our current support services, given the fact that the intake of students is still increasing. Having made this decision SUPRA will have to seek support from student donations and check our expenditure more regularly. The actual spending up to this date is consistent with the expectation and prediction made

by the Council. But the Council will seize every opportunity to ask the University for increased funding, as well as appreciating the support from our fellow postgraduate students.

As one of the four members of the executive, I went to every induction and orientation session I could attend, in 2010. From the speech at the University's orientation for international students, to our O-Week stall, to inductions at Westmead hospital, I collected both positive and negative feedback and presented it at the Council's debrief afterwards. We are looking to have even better sessions from next semester. Please let us know if you have any feedback.

Communication channels both within the Council and between the Council and postgraduate students is always one of the top items for me. We are looking evaluate a few options for keeping Councillors up to date on what is going on within Council and making it easier for us to maintain staff in cases where some one is having an emergency and has to miss a given event. This has proven to be an important issue in the past year. The email lists that we are using are difficult to manage, and are not straight forward enough, given that Councillors are not always in the office and have classes or many other commitments which makes it difficult to engage face to face communication. Other avenues, such as Facebook and Twitter were used more extensively this year in order to reach out to more postgraduates.

It has been a great year to be working as the Treasurer of our own organization. I have experienced a huge number of difficulties in doing my job due to my being an international student. But the colleagues from Council always kindly offer their help. I would like to present my most sincere appreciation to Richard Bailey, Nick Irving, John Nowakowski and Rosemary Whitecross for their support.



Report of the Secretary

John Nowakowski

The intoxicating world of SUPRA has a habit of dragging people in, and judging on the past 6 months of my time as Secretary, the experience is like none other. The role of Secretary quickly becomes like that of the backstage manager in a production – running around making sure people are wearing the right outfits, keeping the script, and ensuring alcohol has been purchased for the after party. And in the heady, drunken world of student politics, every player is just as important as the others. Even us engineers, with three alcohol references in the opening paragraph.

As Secretary, and a person with an inherent issue with a two-letter word beginning with 'n' and rhyming with 'go', I have had my finger on the proverbial pulse for much of my time. I have been heavily involved in the electoral reform and organising the AGM and Elections; I have been involved in Stipend Policy reform, and in ensuring some high standards are left for the next person to fill these shoes. It has also earned me the nickname "Policy Wonk", though I'm not sure if that's a good thing or not.

The role of Secretary is usually one which involves dedication to SUPRA, with many hours needed to put into the role with meetings, relaying information to staff, co-ordinating, filing, and generally being around to fill in when needed. It has been difficult working this with my PhD work, and I won't say that one hasn't suffered at the expense of another (my supervisor will say that, though). This job has presented new challenges, and has come at a time when things haven't always worked.

To be an effective representative of postgraduate students is challenging work, and it is only with the support of the Co-Presidents, Rashmi and Nick, our enthusiastic Treasurer, Chihong, and a wonderful set of Councillors that much of this work has been achieved. For their counsel, I need to thank Fiona, Rosemary, Kathryn, and Sid. Jason, as previous Secretary, has also been an asset and a support, helping fill my potential. And my thanks need to be extended to all the staff, for stopping me from going completely insane, reminding me about things that needed to be done, and providing support.

SUPRA is only as good as the weakest link, and is not an organisation of parts, but a whole. We can only operate with your support, your ideas for events, your contributions, and your willingness to stand behind us. We, as a Council, may not have got it right all the time, and not everyone will be happy with what we've achieved, but to be here, fighting for the rights of all students, I feel fulfilled, and hope that what we go on to work with for the next Council will continue to see Postgraduates being at forefront of the University's mind.

Report of the Acting Women's Officer

Sophia Barnes

I have been Acting Women's Officer at SUPRA since early 2010, and it's been an exciting, busy time. I was enthusiastic about getting involved in the postgraduate community in a practical way and in helping to develop and support connections within postgraduate networks, with a particular eye to providing women postgraduate students with the support they need to complete their research or coursework degrees to the best of their ability. In April I attended the bi-annual meeting of the Child-Care Co-ordinating Committee where we discussed many issues relating to the current state of child-care facilities, and brainstormed some ideas for providing the kind of care most urgently needed by postgraduate students. Unfortunately this issue was not adequately addressed in the University Green Paper in 2010, so it's important to keep urging action.

I've enjoying putting together some articles for Honi Soit about the experience of women postgraduate students at The University of Sydney, and also using these as an avenue to plug the services and support we do provide at SUPRA, and to encourage women postgraduate students to become SUPRA Subscribers. In my most recent article I included a plug for a forum that I am hoping to set up to provide a space for women postgraduate students to share any anecdotes, concerns, etc. that they are having, specific to their studying experience. I hope also to use it as a space to provide resources that might be helpful to women students – to advertise meetings, get-togethers, conferences or talks that may be of interest – as well as to provide information about services such as child care. I'm also hoping to use it as a place to solicit some responses to specific questions about women's post-graduate experiences.

I think that given how time poor many postgraduate students are, creating online resources for the women's network is really good way to get in touch and keep people feeling connected. There are some very real opportunities for using online resources to get students who otherwise wouldn't have the time to get involved in one way or another with the women's network. It's also important for all postgraduate students to be made aware of SUPRA and the support and services we provide.

Finally, I just want to thank everyone at Council for their support and helpful advice – thanks particularly to the Secretary, John Nowakowski, to Rashmi Kumar for her assistance in acclimatising me in my role as Acting Women's Officer, and to Fiona Curran.



Report of the International Officer

Chihong Choi

International students, who made up 23.7% of The University of Sydney's enrolments in 2009, have experienced what can only be described as a lack of equal rights, compared to domestic students. I would like to share some of the most important issues and problems that I have become aware of during my challenging term as International Student Officer. I'd also like to bring to your attention the improvements that have been achieved, and to outline what further improvements we can hope to achieve. I believe that we need to act collectively to achieve the university experience we want.

Serious and complex problems for international students include: the mandatory four-subject study load; problems with accommodation; social inclusion issues, and concomitant concerns for students' mental health.

1. Study load (mainly coursework):

Compared to the three-subject study load for domestic students, the default four-subject requirement for international students has been putting on a huge amount of pressure on many international students. This study requirement has been wrongly interpreted by many faculties and poorly implemented by the University. I found out this on Census Day (31st March) and kept asking to see the legislation mandating it, as well as raising it as an issue at SUPRA Council meetings. What happens is that many international students, who approach their faculties with concerns regarding the pressure they are under, are turned away and informed that the four-subject study load is compulsory. This is quite reasonable, but should be supported with more documents. Rarely was the policy communicated by faculties to students, that it is possible to reduce study load after seeking professional consultation or counselling from councillors of ISSU, or SAAO of SUPRA, or doctors.

It is provided in the National Code 2007 of Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act (standard 9) that students can enrol in less than four subjects if there are compelling and compassionate circumstances. Apart from the issue of the implementation of the policy, it is absolutely unfair that international students are subject to this requirement, and domestic students are not, given the

huge disadvantages faced by international students. How are international students able to benefit the University by performing well when they are under so much pressure? The question must be asked: why has this situation continued for so many years? It is because we did not do our job by voicing reasonable demands as students? It's us, and only us, as a cohesive community, who will be motivated to point out the flaw and demand a better solution.

2. Accommodation:

Compared to the excellent provision of accommodation for students in universities in US, universities in Australia are far behind in the competition. More than 50% of international students couldn't secure accommodation by the time semester started. Problems with accommodation have been consuming lots of time and financial resources for international students, as evidenced by the case work taken by SUPRA, and shown in other relevant reports by national wide organizations responsible for taking care of international students. Many students come to the consultations with SUPRA to find out the reasons why they perform so badly in their study. It turns out that lots of the cases are caused by accommodation issues, mainly the difficulty in getting decent and reasonable accommodation.

3. Social inclusion and mental health:

Mental health problems caused by a lack of social inclusion are not uncommon and are affecting the international student body profoundly. In 2009, 20% of the appeal cases at The University of Sydney were lodged by international students on the issue of exclusion. It is commonly agreed that many international students are poorly involved in activities on campus, or within their local community, because there are no sufficient and effective programs. It can be depressing to study in demanding programs in a University in a foreign country without help and support from local friends or communities. Not a few students are going through mental health problems, like depression, due to a lack of support in both social and study-related areas of their lives.

So, why should domestic students care about these issues? It is worth considering international students as invaluable sources of information about other cultures, who have the potential to bring huge amounts of beneficial business for Australia, in the areas of commerce and cultural exchange. A lack of social inclusion prevents the domestic students from getting to know more about, and therefore benefiting from, the cultures of students from other countries. Other

students and members of the University community need to be more patient and considerate when fellow international students are in need, for change to occur.

There are other issues regarding teaching facilities, and the treatment of international students by administration staff. The problems are too numerous to be discussed fully here. I hope to try to inform our student community, both international and domestic students, on these issues. The issue of the study load for international students has been a problem for years. No one had tried to fight against this problematic issue, let alone find out a way to solve it. 10,891 international students account for 23.7% of the University's enrolments in 2009, but we rarely see them try hard enough to get involved in the campus life and the local community. What we have seen is that we international students use our first language and spend most of the time with people from the same country, because it is easier. So many fellow international students have told me that their English is even worse than before they began studying here. Isn't that sad?

After I was involved in SUPRA for around 6 months, I was still reluctant to attend a rally jointly organized by both groups of students, because I was not trying hard enough to learn the political culture here. I was still thinking in the same way that I had when I was in my homeland. This is commonly the case for the majority of students from Asia, which is understandable. But it's the responsibility of both the University and we students to effect change.

Improvements:

As the International Student Officers of SUPRA, I have raised the issue of the mandatory four-subject study load again and again in all types of conversations, committees, meetings and departments. When I was almost prepared after collecting information from those sources, SUPRA was able to seize a good time for me to speak on issues including this one at the April Senior Executives Group Committee Education meeting. This committee then followed up with a clarification document for senior executives of the University, after having consulted with the International Office, which sent another clear instruction letter to all faculties. Based on the information and knowledge I obtained, the best solution would be the requirement for a three-subject study load, with the option to study four subjects. We should keep trying to achieve this, together.

Working for three months with the Facilities Manager of the faculty of Economics and Business, we managed to give all postgraduates automatic 24-hour access to the study centre from the most convenient gate, and set up more security facilities in Merewether Building. This was achieved after our respectful but determined communication, based on feedback regarding student needs, and with consideration for the constraints faced by the faculty. After my attempt to ask for maintenance, we are also welcome to provide information about any problematic classrooms, for which maintenance will then be arranged. So we do have the opportunity to have our reasonable demands met, if we are willing to voice our needs.

There has been an ongoing weekly soccer game started since last September, which I have been publicizing through SUPRA's eGrad. The group grew from four people at the start to 24 people currently. I never thought that it would be so successful. This group was supported by the involvement and commitments of fellow students. Together, we can create more cohesive groups. On top of the support we can get from SUPRA and the SRC, and the opportunities to represent our demands at the SEG, we also have support from ISSU and International Office in terms of information and events.

Now, fortunately, The University of Sydney is going to work on "mainstreaming" international students, through a committee on the International Student Program, and is inviting representatives to provide suggestions from the students. Most of the serious issues raised here will be researched and discussed. The University might keep on saying good things without investing, but it's our job to make sure they do invest! It's our fellow domestic students' job to support international students. It's our job as international students to voice problems and present possible solutions. Together, we can change our university experience.

So please don't hesitate to get in contact with me should you have any interest in issues facing international students. SUPRA is an independent student organization. It was established to present students' independent voices to the student community and the management of the university. So if you have any complaints regarding unfair treatments you would like to discuss with people from SUPRA or ISSU, please do not worry about voicing concerns regarding the management, because they will be happy to see you come to us and voice any reasonable demands, as these can only help them do their job.

Acknowledgements:

Without the following wonderful people's support, I would never have been able to achieve even these limited improvements for students. I would like to present my sincere gratitude to Rosemary Whitecross and Nick Irving, who spent lots of their time helping me make the decision to take up this position, and supported me in the work afterwards. Thanks to Anne Coates and Claire Pettigrew, without whom the seminars and inductions for international students would not have been possible. Last, but definitely not least, thanks to John Nowakowski, and C. Vu, who helped by sitting down and showing me every step I needed to make in organizing events, to help me conquer the disadvantages of international students. Thanks also to all my colleagues in SUPRA and other departments at The University of Sydney, and those fellow students who provide their feedback on, and support for, our events for international students.



SUPRA Councillors

2009-2010

SUPRA thanks all those who took part in the Council throughout the year:

Rashmi "Shmi" Kumar (Co-President)
Nick "Boots" Irving (Co-President)

Lian Jenvey (Vice President)
Jason Judge (Secretary & Queer Officer)
John Nowakowski (Secretary & Queer Officer)
Chihong Choi (Treasurer & International Student Officer)
Siddhanth De (Activities Co-Convenor)
Yuan Jie Shen (Activities Co-Convenor)
Bram Hertasing (Activities Co-Convenor)
Heidi Claus (Policy Convenor)
Fiona Curran (Publications Convenor)
Sophia Barnes (Publications Convenor & Women's Officer)
Kathryn Stachyra (Disabilities Officer)

Richard Bailey
Tim Dunstone
Deo Indevan
Mo Li
Kerwin Liang
Paolo Mazzi
Cipi Morgan
Corey Payne
Kayla Ren
Surya Steiyaputra
Peter Stephens
Jasmine Tan
Ming Tang
Greg Walsh
Rosemary Whitecross
Lynne Xie
Mimi Zhang
Helin Zhu

Report of the Acting Queer Officer

John Nowakowski

Throughout the 21st century, the presence of queer-identifying people has continued to rise. While Universities have traditionally been a place for exploring your sexuality as an undergraduate, many postgraduates are older, more likely to be settled, possibly working and doing University at night, and less likely to go on rampages through the Graffiti Tunnel.

Being a postgraduate can be an isolating experience. Whilst many hope for a world of collegiality and napping, the vast majority tend to experience nothing much further than their desk or classroom. Coursework students with night classes find it especially hard to engage with the university community, let alone attend queer activism rallies and activities on campus. Many Research students are tutors and lecturers for courses, meaning they can intentionally not engage to avoid seeing their students (and thus creating awkward situations). Whilst the myth of the University romance with the lecturer might seem appealing (and may happen occasionally), the truth is that the misconduct is a far more horrifying prospect.

What a depressing thought. Coursework students aren't on campus engaging and Research students avoid their undergraduate colleagues. This is obviously a problem, and things only deteriorate further when looking at queer postgraduates. SUPRA fights for rights with things like the Same-Sex Marriage rally, but no one has the answer for how to get a good queer postgraduate network happening.

Historically, this has been a problem SUPRA has seen for some time. The former SUPRA Queer Action Collective merged with the Undergraduate equivalent in 2006 to help battle falling attendance. The average queer postgrad event will attract, at best, two-dozen people. To consider that only 24 of 16,000 students are queer is naïve.

Queer postgrads are still scared. For us, the University is not just a place of education, but a place of employment, and many feel uncomfortable discussing their personal life. Many are also jaded from years of undergraduate queer politics and feel excluded at times from events targeted at younger queer members of society.

With this problem identified, we can begin to address the issue of inclusivity within both the queer network and postgraduates in general. One of the failings of any targeted approach is the concept that campaigns alone will form an alliance. Whilst it is true that there will be many students concerned for issues of social justice, and certainly marriage equality is something I believe in, these only become effective campaigns when a large number of people can be involved, and a network needs to exist, fundamentally, to build this action from. My firm belief is that through social activities, such as the now frequent "Queers for Beers", "Queer for Coffee" and "Queer Bytes" events are ways of bringing people together to start the discussion.

Collegiality throughout the university has been something each School or Faculty has tried to address in its own way, and this has helped some people access like-minded students or students with similar research. However, we do tend to be people too, and if you're looking for discussion outside the field, it can be beneficial to talk about other, even possibly slightly random, things. There is a need for networks outside of your specific community, if only for the sanity it can bring when dug deep into a hole of thesis or coursework.

Personally, I have found the buildings of these networks to be nigh on impossible. It is beyond the abilities of a single person on adequately bringing together a large number of people, and where a social network exists already (either via email or through the interblahs) that is significantly easier for all people.

In my short term as the Queer Officer, we have achieved part of this, and as I hand over to Angelus Morningstar for next year, I hope that he can continue to fight, not just for the social injustices we face, but fighting for making us feel welcome, warm, and together. I wish to thank my predecessor, Jason Judge, my undergraduate counterparts, and all of my colleagues here at Sydney University.



Report of the Acting Disabilities Officer

Kathryn Stachyra

Disability, differently-abled, mental health, physical health, emotional health, intellectual health - the list goes on. My ideal title for this position would be Disability Health and Wellness Officer as I think it is more inclusive to different understandings and perceptions regarding health. I am aware that is my perception based on my experiences and ideas regarding health.

I am so honoured to have been the first SUPRA Disability Officer over the last few months. As a student studying overseas it has been quite a daunting experience and I can only hope that I have begun to scratch the surface of what a Disability Officer could potentially achieve on campus. My experience with SUPRA began as an involvement for transport concessions for all students and evolved into becoming a member of council and finally Disability Officer. At first I saw so many possibilities that I became overwhelmed with options and almost drowned in my desire to accomplish so many tasks whilst studying full time and carrying temporary work.

My contribution thus far has been the inclusion of a duty statement for the position, a small but growing emailing list, and focusing energy on the Disability Action Plan 2006-2010 (DAP) review. The Uni has not put this item on the agenda and disability issues were barely mentioned in The Green Paper. As a result we are nearly half way through the year and the review has not begun. I have to say that the DAP Uni of Sydney currently has is inadequate compared to other schools such as Melbourne and UTS. I can only hope that the next Disability Officer will have part of their focus to shine light on this issue and push for authentic and continued student consultation and a more thoroughly thought out plan that demands accountability from the university and faculties within.

Another avenue of work I hope that the next Disability Officer is able to tackle is The Walk of Pride, which occurs annually in Newcastle and is aimed at reducing the stigma of mental health. I could write thousands of words regarding mental health: who provides the labels and the definitions of health and illness; the questions of context, oppression, consumer participation, trauma ... but again, this is supposed to be a short report!

In closing it has been an enormous privilege to be involved with SUPRA over the last year, I can only hope that I have put in at least some of what I have been able to receive.

Take care everyone.



Report on Indigenous Issues

Rashmi Kumar

Due to the position of Indigenous Officer being vacant for 2009-10, this report has been prepared by Co-President Rashmi Kumar. SUPRA as a whole prioritises the needs of Indigenous students, whether or not the position of Indigenous Officer is filled.

With fewer than 100 Indigenous postgraduate students at the University, we have been advocating strongly for more equity provisions within degree programs, scholarships, and social inclusion processes to enable more Indigenous students to attend University.

SUPRA has been involved in the University's Review of Indigenous Education in the past year, as the final report of the Review Panel was handed down and finalised. SUPRA's response to the Review was informed by input from the National Indigenous Postgraduate Association Aboriginal Corporation (NIPAAAC).

Included in the recommendations of the Review was one of SUPRA's recommendations, to increase the number of scholarships for Indigenous coursework postgraduates. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) have also collaborated to introduce new scholarships for Indigenous PhD students.

As with all University changes, these are very incremental and slow-moving. The final structural changes to the University, which will enshrine the importance of Indigenous Education in the administration of the University, are to be finalised in the upcoming Strategic Plan 2011-2015. We hope that this will bring a new DVC (Indigenous Education) into the University's administration, and render the Koori Centre a full faculty.

SUPRA has also continued its support of the campaign to end the Northern Territory Intervention. This year saw the Ampilatwatja community walk away from their community, which was 'prescribed' under the Intervention, and establish a new base on their traditional lands. SUPRA supported this walk-off by sponsoring a tent and contributing to the sinking of a bore for water.

The ongoing hardship faced by Northern Territory Aboriginal communities under the Intervention has been named a human rights violation by the UN Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Rights. There are significant effects on Indigenous peoples' access to education as a result of the Intervention, which is why student organisations have been at the forefront of the opposition.

Australia may soon see some Intervention measures, particularly punitive welfare restrictions, extended to other parts of the country, something SUPRA is keeping a close eye on.

If you are interested in being SUPRA's Indigenous Officer for 2010-11, please contact the Secretary at secretary@supra.usyd.edu.au.



Report of the Activities Convenor

Siddhanth De

I joined SUPRA with minimum previous experience in student politics beforehand, and I found it to be a fantastic opportunity to learn and grow. So much of what has happened in the last year has just made me a better, more knowledgeable person and I hope that in turn I was able to help my fellow postgraduates. The departure of our other co-convenor, Yuanjie Shen, earlier this year was unfortunate, but the show must and did, go on.

I feel like we achieved a lot on the Activities front for SUPRA over the last twelve months. Outreach to the University's satellite campuses is one of the most important things that we do, as it is important that SUPRA lets all its constituents, on the main campus and elsewhere, know that SUPRA is there to help them. As such we greatly strengthened our ties with the Sydney College of the Arts (SCA) in Rozelle with several visits as well as heading out to Camden for which the students were most appreciative. On the main campus, we were much more active, with several events over the course of the year to engage students and get them involved. We ran several barbecues, with our 2010 O-Week BBQ being a resounding success that saw a line snaking almost out to Codrington Street. We recently ran our first ever SUPRA Trivia night and this year also saw the start of SUPRA Sports, after much research into what we could feasibly do for our constituents whilst remaining under budget.

In terms of subscribers, we maintained highly successful stalls at the 2009 Verge Arts Festival on campus and during O-Week 2010, the latter of which brought in a huge number of subscribers and a fair few supporters as well. This postgraduate presence during O-Week this year was heartening to see, as it meant that postgraduate students are changing their behaviour and actively engaging with campus life more. This was further proven with the turnout at our O-Week BBQ! It is my hope that this means SUPRA can engage its constituents on a greater level in the years to come and show them that being a postgraduate student at the University of Sydney is not just about studying, and that the joys of undergraduate student life are just as available to postgraduates.

We also ran a series of Tuesday Night Talks on topics such as tenancy, immigration and women's rights to inform and educate those students who needed it most. SUPRA is

about more than just BBQs and Trivia nights and I've always felt that our first priority should be defending the rights of our constituents, and educating them is one of the first steps in doing so. Tenancy and immigration seminars are always well received, as there is a lot of confusion amongst international students as to what their rights are and what the best course of action is. Aristotle and SAAOs did a great job in helping needy students, as always. The success of those Tuesday Night Talks has led to a new series of them which start soon and will hopefully help a whole new cohort of students.

Though this council term is coming to an end, we still have things on the agenda including movie nights, elections and a start-of-semester scavenger hunt. Nothing we have done in the past twelve months or plan to do would be possible without the tireless help of several people. I would first like to thank all the admin staff in the office – Anne, Claire and Rachel – who work incessantly behind the scenes to make sure everything runs like clockwork. I would also like to thank all the SAAO's for running Tuesday night talks, helping with inductions and everything else. I would especially like to thank Adrian, who came out with us for all of our outreach excursions often when he should have been at home. Lastly I would like to thank Nick, Rashmi, John and all the other SUPRA Councillors for helping me along, always providing support and encouragement and just giving me a fantastic experience I will never forget.





Report of the Director of Student Publications

Fiona Curran

2009-2010 was a very busy period for publications in SUPRA, and I had the privilege to work with Trinity Morris during the most intense times from December to January. One of the first things that I realised was that there was a serious lack of style consistency – much as I hate to use the word, ‘branding’ – in SUPRA publications. This is largely due to factors such as urgent timeframes and multiple people working on different kind of documents. One thing that Trinity and I have succeeded in doing is creating a more representative and consistent visual brand for SUPRA, including (thanks, Trin) a Style Guide for future users, so that things will remain consistent.

It should be noted that this will not prevent SUPRA from changing the way it represents itself – in fact it would be weird if things didn’t change over time! But it will mean that future staff and Councillors working on SUPRA publications will have a clear resource to work with and modify. One of the hardest things to do is figure out how to make things look appealing and professional, and I think that we’ve succeeded in doing that.

The most substantial work I did was on the Postgraduate Survival Guide and the Counter Course Handbook. The PGSG needed a big makeover in terms of the way the document was structured, and the changes we’ve made have been designed to make it easier for students to access the information that they need. We’ve included a section for International Students; updated content on Tenancy Advice; and Index including Contact information; and, of course, information on all the changes rushed through the Academic Board in December 2009, just before the Christmas break. This document will hopefully outlast a single year – it was designed to be a comprehensive update, with the intention of reducing costs on the Publications portfolio going into the future. It’s an important, valuable resource for students, and remains the only such Guide produced within the University for postgraduates.

CCHB is in some ways a less serious publication, because it’s based on anecdotal feedback from volunteer students; that said, though, the impact is large. In this case, it’s

impact on staff and faculty across campus, more than students. This was shown to be the case when the Faculty of Nursing contacted the SUPRA Co-Presidents and myself about the bad rating they were given by a relatively small group of students. It proved a timely meeting, as we had been discussing ways to improve the CCHB – or equivalent publication – to make it more comprehensive and also more wide-reaching. With this in mind, it’s planned to break the CCHB into sections by Faculty, with data gathered, analysed, and published every Semester for a few Faculties, rather than annually for every one. This will allow a feedback process into the Faculties from the students, giving staff an opportunity to respond to student concerns and hopefully to help resolve them. It’s an exciting project that will continue to be developed over the next 12 months, though with SUPRA funding under threat from the University, nothing is really that clear.

CCHB involved subscribing to a great survey tool called zoomerang, which we’ve since used to deploy another survey on SUPRA communications, and will be used in the future to survey student satisfaction.

There were plans to produce a zine-style publication on the risograph called ‘A Students’ Guide to Poverty’, which it would be great to get underway. This project stalled due to Trinity’s resignation as well as my own recent resignation as DSP, due to my new job. However I look forward to working on this with Sophia Barnes in the future.

All in all, I think that this portfolio has been really productive since August last year. I’m pleased to say that we came in under budget for our two big publications, as well as for our sexy new Wall Planner. Really the only big stuff up from me was the suggestion that we spraypaint the showbags using a stencil. Hopefully everyone who helped with this is no longer sneezing blue and red paint! I’d like to thank John, Nick, Rashmi, and Chihong for all their help and support, as well as the stalwart members of my committee for their input. I’d especially like to thank Anne, Trinity, Claire and Rachel, who helped immeasurably; Adrian who was flat out with other things but never afraid to take more on; Caroline, Penny, and Marg who all wrote comprehensible help sections translating the opaque pseudo-business-legalese University Policy. You’re all totally awesome.



Report of the Campaigns and Policy Convenor

Heidi Claus

It’s been another hectic year for campaigning for SUPRA, and who would have thought by year three of Rudd’s government there would still be so much to be campaigning around? Excuse my sarcasm, but the current Federal and for that matter state Labor governments leave a lot to be desired when it comes to the student and human rights issues that SUPRA members care so deeply about.

SUPRA has been heavily involved in campaigns and trying to affect policy changes to make students’ lives better, both on and off campus. SUPRA council members attend meetings with many departments around the university and work closely with the Union, the SRC and the NTEU in our campaigns to defend students’ rights and conditions on campus. SUPRA contributed to discussions on the University’s Green Paper, which flags major restructuring of the University of Sydney, much of which we have serious concerns about, as do many of our subscribers, judging by the number of you who responded to SUPRA’s call for you to raise your concerns with us.

There is so much that goes on behind the scenes at SUPRA, much of which will be reported by our illustrious Co-presidents, Rashmi and Nick, but it’s SUPRA’s community profile that has really been developed this year, with our consistent and generous support and participations in campaigns around social issues like the rights of international students, indigenous rights, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) rights and refugee rights to name a few.

Some of the highlights this year included:

1. The re launching of the refugee rights campaign.

What a travesty that this campaign needs to be revived as Kevin Rudd and the Labor party channel Howard’s policies on refugees, re-opening detention centers in the middle of the desert, incarcerating people of all ages (yes, including children) in the most vile, suicide-inducing conditions, all for the “crime” of seeking asylum in Australia. SUPRA is involved in supporting the campaign and promoting the upcoming Rally for Refugee Rights on Saturday June 26th, 1pm at Sydney Town Hall.

2. The Northern Territory intervention

Rudd continues to follow in the footsteps of Howard and then some, by not only maintaining the NT Intervention, but strengthening and extending it to ruin more lives, lower health and education outcomes for Aboriginal youth, force more communities off their land so it can be mined and used for toxic waste dumps. SUPRA proudly supports struggles against racism from the top of society, that is the government and the mining bosses that are behind them, and this year have promoted rallies, forums and speak outs for Aboriginal rights and against the NT Intervention.

3. Same sex marriage and anti-homophobia campaign

The last 12 months have really seen an escalation of the campaign for marriage equality with four major protests in NSW, three of which were national mobilizations. The number of young people who support this campaign is overwhelming, with university students coming to the demonstrations, forums and speak outs that SUPRA has helped organise. The 2DayFM newsreader Geoff Field was MC at the last rally on May 15, which had a range of speakers representing trade unions, student organizations, various LGBTI organizations and The Greens. We also heard messages of support from a heavily pregnant Dannii Minogue, and actor Sir Ian McKellen who spoke in person at the Melbourne rally.

The next major rally will be on the anniversary of Howard’s (and now Rudd’s) ban on Same Sex Marriage, Saturday August 14, 1pm at Sydney Town Hall which will have comedian Wil Anderson as MC. SUPRA is a major supporter of this campaign and SUPRA council members are centrally involved in the organization behind it. For information about getting involved, please email equal.love.nsw@gmail.com

Report of the Student Advice and Advocacy Officers

SAAO team

The SAAO casework service, is central to the assistance SUPRA offers postgraduate students. Provision of individual casework is the primary role of the SAAOs. SAAOs also offer a briefing service for SUPRA Councillors who represent SUPRA on various University Committees, support SUPRA Council in drafting submissions on postgraduate issues to various University and Government bodies, provide content for SUPRA's publications, and participate in outreach activities.

Casework

Numbers of students using the SAAO service exceeded 500 in 2009. We provided more than 6000 consultations. There was in excess of 20% growth in students getting direct and individual assistance from the service as compared to 2008. We also offered over 15% more consultations; an extraordinary achievement given we do not have any additional staff. With some data still to input, the numbers of students seeking assistance from SAAOs for our top issues in 2009 were:

Academic Appeals	68 (58 in 2008)
Show Cause/Exclusion	59 (32 in 2008)
Supervision	55 (39 in 2008)
Tenancy & Accommodation	51 (21 in 2008)
Centrelink & Resource Issues	39 (30 in 2008)
Enrolment	37 (39 in 2008)
Academic Honesty & Misconduct	25 (19 in 2008)

Growth in Academic Appeal cases is more or less in line with growth in demand for the service overall. In response to student needs we have developed a new Academic Appeals brochure and a simplified description of appeal processes in SUPRA's Survival Manual. These are the only places we are aware of where easy to use flow chart information is available on the academic appeals process. Internally and in early 2010, we also established a confidential precedents database. It does not give identifying details of students, and is only for internal use by caseworkers. However it helps us to ensure our experience on previous appeal cases benefits students who use the service in future.

The significant jump in show cause/exclusion cases seems to follow from strict application of University policy on progression requirements, along with promotion of our expertise in the area. Each semester we have continued to develop and re-release an updated Show Cause and Exclusion Survival Kit on SUPRA's website. Supervision enquiries continue to be high, though we note that many students with supervision issues do not present with this problem at first, leading to an under-recording of supervision issues in our statistics. We have been pleased that feedback about issues in supervision fed through SUPRA's student representatives, appears to have played a part in getting Academic Board support for the establishment of a confidential supervision complaints process. It is not in place yet, but we hope it will be by the next SUPRA Annual Report.

Increases in Tenancy casework have followed from a tight rental market. We worked throughout the year to promote student rights in tenancy arrangements. We published multiple articles in the Honi Soit student newspaper, and in our eGrad weekly newsletter. We have assisted significant numbers of students to recoup many hundreds of dollars from landlords, both by helping students to negotiate directly with them, and when that does not work supporting students in complaints to the Consumer, Trader and Tenancy Tribunal (CTTT). We developed strong links with the Tenants Union of NSW in 2009. A member of the SAAO team regularly attends Tenancy Legal Working Party meetings that are coordinated by the Tenants Union. We also participated in a cross campus tenancy education project, and attend other Tenants Union events and training.

Centrelink casework has remained low, however we expect that to change as more Masters by Coursework degrees become eligible for Youth Allowance and Austudy. The list of eligible vocational masters degrees still represents only a small fraction of courses and student numbers. In 2012 all Masters by Coursework degrees will become eligible for payments. We note that this change follows lobbying by the Council for Australian Postgraduate Associations (CAPA), and SUPRA's work raising this issue with Government in multiple submissions over the years. The next step is to have higher degree research students gain eligibility. With only 44% of higher degree research students at the University on a scholarship according to 2006 statistics, there is clearly a need for access to Austudy and Youth Allowance for those doing research degrees.

Finally, Academic Honesty and Misconduct cases are still a relatively small proportion of our casework, however we expect that to grow in 2010. Some Faculties have already begun expanding use of plagiarism detection software, and early indications are that that will lead to big growth in our casework statistics. We are concerned about the increased policing of students. We are also concerned that the policing is sometimes accompanied by a more punitive approach to alleged academic honesty and plagiarism. Our focus in individual casework and feedback to SUPRA Council will be on calling for proper support and education for students, as opposed to an approach predicated on policing and punishment.

For cases where we cannot assist, or where students need help from other services in addition to SUPRA support, we have developed strong referral relationships. For example, we made 167 referrals to Student Services for students to receive assistance from Counselling Service, International Student Services Unit, Disability Services, Financial Assistance Office, and other support. We made 157 referrals to general University staff, 139 to central administrative services like the Student Centre and Staff and Student Equal Opportunity Unit, and 108 referrals to community services and government agencies. We have a comprehensive list of academic and welfare referrals on our website, which we update regularly and promote to students.

Briefing Service

In 2009 SAAOs provided briefing services for Council on 20 different Committees where SUPRA had representation. One of the most important roles of the briefing is to offer de-identified feedback arising out of casework. All SAAOs participate in briefing for Committees. It helps to ensure that SUPRA's student representatives have timely feedback about issues that students are facing. It helps them to be as prepared as possible to represent the entire postgraduate student body.

Policy Submissions

SAAOs worked with Councillors on several significant submissions in 2009. We assisted in preparation of a comprehensive and strong submission to the NSW Ministerial Council on International Students. SUPRA once again called for the introduction of travel concessions for international students. We made a similarly strong submission to a Federal Senate Review of International education. We participated with student representatives on

an International Students Taskforce within the University. We also made a contribution to an internal review of student services for international students, which will lead to improvements in service delivery in 2010.

Late in 2009 we put in a strong submission opposing proposed negative changes to Harassment and Discrimination Resolution procedures. We called for full implementation of the recommendations of a 2001 report from the Anti Discrimination Board, including coverage of the Colleges. We made this submission well before a media explosion brought to light fresh allegations of misconduct within the College community. We are pleased to say that our work with SUPRA Council and the SRC on these issues, was followed by some significant changes, including that Colleges are now covered by University policy.

We have already made a strong start to our work supporting SUPRA's submission writing efforts in 2010. We helped SUPRA Council prepare SUPRA's response to the Green Paper. It makes particular note of the Green Paper's failure to address issues for Masters by Coursework students, who are 75% of the postgraduate student population and comprise the majority of students using SUPRA's casework service. We expect that our feedback will play a part in getting more attention for Masters by Coursework students, by the time the Green Paper morphs into the new University Strategic Plan 2011 – 2015.

Publications

Content provided by the SAAOs was used in the 11th edition of the Survival Guide. The Guide offers advice on a wide range of academic and welfare issues. It underwent a major re-write for this edition to account for significant University policy changes. We worked hard to make articles more accessible with the introduction of flow charts and use of plain and direct language. The topics covered match with issues students have raised with SUPRA through the SAAO service.

We needed to update our tri fold brochures again, in part due to a series of policy changes in 2009 and early 2010. Updated brochures are progressively being re-released on our website. Content is provided by the SAAOs on topics such as Academic Appeals, Employment and Centrelink for Postgrads. We provide content for one of the two pages in SUPRA's section of the Honi Soit student newspaper. We have also been making regular announcements on student welfare issues in SUPRA's eGrad newsletter, that goes out to thousands of postgraduates.

Outreach and Events

In 2009, SAAOs accompanied Councillors to events at most of the major campuses away from Camperdown/Darlington. At events organised by the Activities Convenor and for inductions we were on hand to give advice to students and to promote SUPRA's professional services. We had particular success working with the Activities Convenor on our Tuesday Night Talks events, with free seminars on topics such as scholarships and tenancy being popular. SAAOs have maintained a presence at other events, such as O-Week and the inaugural Graduate Options Expo.

SAAO Staff

The restructure of the SAAO team foreshadowed in the 2009 Annual Report is complete. We continue to have 4 caseworkers providing a professional, confidential and independent service. We continue to be a multidisciplinary team with professional backgrounds in Social Work, Women's and Community Health, and Law. However a position was created for a Coordinator position and a Senior SAAO amongst the four workers. The vision was that it would help to develop a level of planning within the team, and help ensure continuity of service and supervision.

An updated SAAO Policy on service provision will shortly be released. Key commitments such as providing an initial response to enquiries within one working day, commitment to a drop in system of three days per week, commitment to privacy and confidentiality, and improved provisions around complaint resolution if a student is not satisfied with SAAO assistance, will be outlined in an accompanying brochure for those using the service. We have also completely overhauled our filing and record keeping systems, and use more secure central filing and archiving processes.

These developments are important internal measures to make sure a structure is in place to let us best support students. We have had a change in SAAO staff during 2009, so the current team would like to thank Ann Turner, David McKenzie and Penny Huisman, who all worked with us in 2009. They did excellent work and are greatly appreciated. The current team is Adrian Cardinali (Coordinator), Margaret Kirkby (Senior SAAO), Caroline Vu (SAAO) and Stephen Kilkeary (SAAO).

It has been my privilege to work with a highly motivated and professional team. The achievements of the SAAOs are due to the dedication, hard work, and professionalism of current and former workers. Thank you all.



Administration Report

Admin team

In 2009-10 the SUPRA administration team continued to provide support to SUPRA Council and staff through various roles and activities. In May 2009 the staff arrangements at SUPRA were restructured, to help with our ever-increasing workload. Some of the regular responsibilities of the administration team include:

Reception

Administration Officers are the initial point of contact for the majority of enquiries to the SUPRA office - answering and forwarding dozens of calls and emails each day, not to mention being a smiling face behind the desk. These duties also include an element of triage, as staff determine which students SUPRA is capable of assisting, and which we need to refer to other services. With increasing numbers of postgraduate students at the University, and the growing profile of SUPRA's services, we are engaging and assisting an ever-increasing number of students. This workload increase was the impetus for the creation of a full-time Administration Officer position in the restructure - a role that is currently being shared by Claire Pettigrew and Rachel Engdahl.

Event Support

SUPRA holds regular events throughout the academic year in order to connect with students; to provide information and support that is vital to postgraduates; and to help foster a sense of community amongst postgraduate students in what can be a very isolating study experience.

The administration team provides regular assistance and support in organising various SUPRA events, and 2009-10 was no exception. We helped to organise Postgrad parties; BBQs; outreach events at non-main campuses; postgraduate film nights; immigration seminars; and of course our O-week events. We have also assisted with the organising of the SUPRA Council and staff planning days, end-of-year lunch and closure, and the staff development day.

Our new neighbours, Marketing and Student Recruitment,

invited us along to the Graduate Options Expo, in September 2009. This was a great opportunity to connect with students who were planning to continue their studies at the postgraduate level, letting them know about the kind of support and services that are available to them. Beyond the day-to-day work of attending to the upkeep of the SUPRA offices and resource room; reception duties; managing the supporter/subscriber database; minute-taking; and assistance to SUPRA staff and Council, the admin team have been involved in number of projects:

SUPRA Restructure

The administration team were involved in the negotiations regarding the restructure of staffing arrangements, which resulted in the creation of an Office Coordinator position and the full-time Administration Officer position. We were also able to appoint a part-time Publications Officer on a six-month contact. It was hoped that we would be able to extend this position or make it a permanent role. Unfortunately, due to cuts in our funding from the University, we were unable to extend the role, resulting in the administration team having to reabsorb the publications workload.

Publications

With the appointment of the Publications Officer, Trinity Morris, the standard of our publications went up several notches. During her six months with us Trinity achieved an incredible amount, with the assistance of the Publications Committee Convenor, Fiona Curran. She was responsible for the production of the SUPRA's weekly double-page spread in Honi Soit, as well as SUPRA's weekly e-newsletter, eGrad; production of the 11th edition of the Postgraduate Survival Guide and the 2010 Counter Course Handbook; redesigning our brochures and fact sheets; creating an attractive 2010 wall calendar that incorporates all of the important University dates; designing numerous posters; and the creation of a SUPRA Style Guide to enable SUPRA to maintain consistency in our branding.

The administration staff assisted with providing content and editing many of these publications, including writing and editing a number of sections of the Counter Course Handbook, editing weekly Honi Soit pages, as well as sections of some of the other larger publications. Our publications continue to be amongst the most

important services SUPRA provides, remaining extremely popular with students and faculty staff alike. Up to 7000 Postgraduate Survival Guides, Counter Course Handbooks and wall calendars have been produced and distributed in the first half of 2010; and our Thesis Guide continues to be a vital resource for research students. The loss of Trinity has forced other administration staff to temporarily take-up production of publications, which has resulted in an increase to the Administration Officer position to 6 days a week. This arrangement will soon be reviewed through the Workplace Consultative Committee.

Communication Survey

During the first half of this year the administration team helped to develop a Communications Survey to gauge the efficacy of our engagement with our constituents, and to determine which mediums are most effective. The specific need for such a project at this point in time was due to the cuts in our funding by the University, which has forced us to reconsider which publications we can afford to maintain. The results of the survey have recently been received and we are currently in the process of analyzing them.

Inductions

Induction periods at the beginning of each semester are extremely busy times for the administration team, as we pack thousands of showbags ready for orientation events at the various faculties around the University. We coordinate SUPRA's attendance at these events, liaising with faculty staff in order to let new postgraduates know about the services and support SUPRA has to offer. In second semester of 2009 we participated in over 20 inductions and a number of enrolments; and in first semester 2010 we participated in over 30 inductions as well as being on-hand at enrolments to answer questions and connect with new students.

Website

One of the administration team's main projects over the past year has been the redevelopment of SUPRA's website. The new site is now live and we are working through some minor bugs to have a fully functioning site and Content Management System (CMS). This process also resulted in the creation of a new database to manage

our Subscribers/Supporters. We hope the new site is more user-friendly for our constituents.

Office Move

At the time of writing our report last year we were in the process of an office move. This has now been completed and our Student Advice and Advocacy Officers (SAAOs) have settled into their new offices upstairs in the Raglan Street Building. We followed up with the coordination of repainting, carpeting and some maintenance to the downstairs, giving the SUPRA office a fresh look. 2009-10 was an extremely busy year and we expect next year to be even busier with more students accessing our services. We would like to thank the SUPRA Council and staff for all of their hard work in 2009-10 and look forward to welcoming the new Council in July.

Legal Service Report

Ingrid van Tongeren

History and Outline of the Service

The Redfern Legal Centre branch office at the Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association ("SUPRA") is a relatively new service having only been in operation since late February 2008. The year 2009, which marked the service's first full year of operation, was characterised by a rapid increase in the demand for the service. This service which is funded by SUPRA, which in turn receives funding from the University, provides legal services to postgraduate students from any of the University's seven campuses including the affiliated campuses of the Sydney College of the Arts, The Conservatorium of Music, Orange Agricultural College and Camden Farms.

Redfern Legal Centre employs one part-time solicitor to operate the SUPRA office. Face to face appointments are available at various times throughout the day on Tuesdays and Thursdays with Thursday afternoons being dedicated to a drop in service. Students at distant campuses and students unable to attend on those days can also make telephone appointments or receive advice by email. The solicitor primarily provides advice and casework services.

Casework services are provided either through representation or through providing assistance and support to enable students to represent themselves in their matters. Deciding who to represent and who to assist is made after consideration has been given to the potential for the client to effectively and successfully manage the matter themselves with assistance from the solicitor, the other legal services available to the client, and their own resources. The aim is to allow the solicitor to spend greater time on clients who have a high degree of need and are unable to access other services for whatever reason whilst at the same time providing the most efficient and useful service to the entire postgraduate student community.

The solicitor also provides regular legal and strategic advice to the four Student Advice and Advocacy Officers ("SAAOs") employed by SUPRA who deal with a variety of issues concerning students such as academic or welfare

matters. The solicitor also maintains a close link with and provides assistance to the other staff and office bearers of SUPRA in relation to any other legal matters that may arise, for example by providing advice in the areas of Intellectual Property or Defamation Law to office bearers or those involved in preparing SUPRA publications.

The solicitor also undertakes community legal education and policy work. Community legal education aims to increase the ability of clients to avert legal problems or to solve them themselves by providing legal information, for example in the form of fact sheets or information brochures.

Policy or law reform work is work that may not be related to any one particular client but aims to achieve some systemic change in the legal system or the University in order to benefit a group of postgraduate students or all postgraduate students.

Advice and Casework

Advice and casework has been provided on the full gamut of legal issues. Overwhelmingly, the involvement of the legal service has resulted in achieving favourable outcomes for the students involved.

Intellectual Property & Other University/ Administrative/Government Matters

As the legal service remains independent of the University it can advise students on University matters and can represent students in conflicts with the University. The service provides a high percentage of advice in the area of Intellectual Property, either through the provision of independent advice to students on contracts prior to the assignment of rights to the University or in handling disputes with the University. This year the service has also advised students on a large number of other University related and administrative/government complaints and other matters.

Credit/Debt Matters & Consumer Complaints

The legal service receives a large number of enquiries about consumer contracts and credit/debt matters. Many of these enquiries relate to aggressive sales techniques or onerous credit contracts. Further a significant number of the complaints received in this area are in relation to consumer contracts with telecommunications service providers particularly in relation to mobile phones or internet services.

The legal service has been able to negotiate successful outcomes for students in a range of matters in these areas. In addition, a number of students seek advice from the solicitor regarding money owed to or by the student in relation to housing. Many students are living in situations where they are not covered by the Residential Tenancies Act and/or are not able to access the CTTT at this point in time. This is because they are either residents or are in co-tenant disputes.

The necessity for the party seeking to recover the money to take these matters to the Local Court creates unnecessary legal complexity and cost issues for the students irrespective of which side of the matter they are on. The legal service has provided advice to, and conducted negotiations on behalf of, a large number of students in relation to such matters. The service has also provided representation to students in these matters at the Local Court.

Tenancy

Due to their poor economic situations, students are often ill placed to afford rent increases and so often fall into arrears. In addition, lack of funds or the need to make the financial resources they have last as long as possible often means that they are residing in accommodation that is of a poor standard which leads to tenancy issues such as the need for repairs, compensation for breaches of the tenancy agreement and the like. The legal service has provided advice, and conducted negotiations on behalf of, a large number of students in relation to such matters. The service has also provided representation to students in difficult tenancy matters at the Consumer, Trader and Tenancy Tribunal (CTTT).

Advice on the Civil Legal System/Process in NSW/Australia
As there is a high percentage of international students in

the postgraduate student population, the service regularly provides advice in relation to local government, state and Federal government legislation and the civil legal system/processes operating in NSW and throughout the Commonwealth.

Employment

Many students are working outside the University to supplement their other income (usually parental support, scholarships or part time University employment in their departments). They are often working in positions where their conditions and entitlements are questionable and often in positions where their employment status (ie whether they are in fact an employee or sub-contractor) or the requirements and legal obligations imposed on them by virtue of their status are unknown to the student until a dispute arises, the employment ends or they find themselves being investigated by government departments such as the Tax Office.

The legal service has successfully negotiated on behalf of many students to recover wages and entitlements, assisted them to resolve concerns about working conditions, and assisted them in their dealings with government departments and in complying with their taxation or other legal obligations.

Road Traffic and Motor Vehicle Regulatory Offences
Inexperience or lack of familiarity with the road rules, coupled with having older or less well maintained vehicles due to economic constraints often means that the clients of the legal service present with penalty notices received for these offences. For the same reasons they are often less able to meet the financial burden imposed in paying a penalty notice. A significant number of clients have chosen to court elect and plead guilty. In these situations, the legal service has either represented or assisted them, either in person or by way of drafting their written pleadings. In addition, the service has successfully represented a number of students in defended hearings.

Motor Vehicle Accidents/Property Damage

A significant number of students attend the service to seek advice in relation to recovering damages and/or defending claims for damages following motor vehicle accidents. They are often young and/or inexperienced drivers or

holders of international licences who are unfamiliar with the rules and regulations in New South Wales. The financial impact of these matters can be significant for students who rely on their vehicles and earn a small income or have limited financial resources.

The service has successfully assisted a number of clients to obtain compensation for the damage done to their vehicles. In addition, the service has successfully represented a number of students and obtained orders in their favour in situations where it was necessary to both defend the matters against them and cross claim against the other parties. It has also assisted a number of students to obtain judgements in their favour and, where necessary, to successfully enforce the judgements obtained against the other party. Where the students have admitted liability but disputed the amount claimed, the legal service has also successfully negotiated to reduce the amount to be paid to an acceptable amount and/or to allow the clients to pay the sum off by instalments.

Criminal Matters

The solicitor has provided advice and representation in Local Court to a number of students mostly in relation to matters concerning possession of drugs, driving offences (mostly alcohol related offences), assault, carrying prohibited weapons, larceny (by a servant), and fraud.

Statistics

Total Number of Matters (Advices/Cases) = 504

Percentage of Matters in the main areas mentioned above

University/Administrative/Government Matters
14.3%

Intellectual Property
13.3%

Credit/Debt Matters
13.3%
Consumer Complaints
10.3%

Tenancy
9.5%

Civil Legal System/Process
7.5%

Employment
4.8%

Road Traffic & Motor Vehicle Regulatory Offences
4.6%

Motor Vehicle Accidents/Property Damage
4.4%

Criminal Matters
3.4%

Legal Education/Policy and Law Reform

The Service has provided legal information and education to a number of students in the areas of intellectual property rights, traffic offences & fines, privacy issues, consumer contracts (specifically telecommunications service provider contracts), motor vehicle accidents (property damage), tenancy, and employment. During 2009, the solicitor has also provided information and education to the SAAOs on the changes and amendments to the law in the areas of Disability Discrimination and Employment Law. The solicitor has also been involved in an advisory capacity in the policy work being undertaken by SUPRA.

What is SUPRA?

SUPRA is the representative association for postgraduate students at the University of Sydney. We provide free, confidential advice to students encountering difficulty in their studies; we sit on University committees as your representatives; and we lobby and campaign within the University for better conditions for postgraduate students. We also write submissions to Parliament concerning Higher Education, campaign in the wider community on important social matters, and promote postgraduate interests in the decision making of the executive level of the University Administration, including the Vice Chancellor.

Subscribe to SUPRA

The best way to become a SUPRA Subscriber easily, quickly and at no cost is by visiting our website at: www.supra.usyd.edu.au

Alternatively, fill in the form on this page and drop in or post to:

**SUPRA, Raglan Street Building (G10),
Darlington Campus, University of Sydney NSW 2006,**
or drop it into the SRC Bookshop on Level 3 of the Wentworth Building.

Where are we?

**SUPRA Office
Raglan Street Building (G10)
Darlington Campus
The University of Sydney
NSW 2006
T: (02) 9351 3715
E: admin@supra.usyd.edu.au
W: www.supra.usyd.edu.au**

Toll Free: 1800 249 950
(free call for anyone outside the Sydney Metro area)



By completing this form you consent to becoming a SUPRA Subscriber.

First (Given) Name: _____

Last (Family) Name: _____

Student ID: _____

Email: _____

Degree: _____

Faculty: _____ UniKey: _____
(required for secure section of website)

Study load: Full-time Part-time
Study type: Research Coursework

International Indigenous Female
Disability Queer Identifying Parent

Non-main campus Off-campus/Distance



Financial Statements 2009-2010

Support SUPRA

Do you want to ensure an ongoing independent voice for postgraduate students at the University of Sydney? Do you want to show the Government that you are against Voluntary Student Unionism? Have you used SUPRA's services and do you appreciate the value of student run organisations? Then why not become a SUPRA Supporter!

The best way to become a Supporter is to visit www.supra.usyd.edu.au/support or complete the form below.

(tick appropriate box)

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporter \$20 | Supporter \$60 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporter \$30 | Supporter \$70 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporter \$40 | Supporter \$80
(recommended) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporter \$50 | |

Payment Details

- VISA
 Mastercard

Card Number: _____

Credit Verification Number: _____
(on the back of your card find the last 3 digits)

Expiry Date: _____

Signature: _____

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE ASSOCIATION

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2009

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE ASSOCIATION

31 DECEMBER 2009

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C M PITT & CO

Chartered Accountants

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Page 1

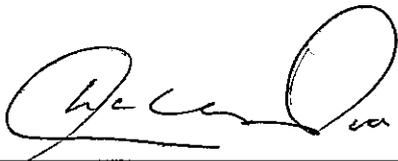
AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE ASSOCIATION (SUPRA)

As lead auditor for the audit of Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA) for the year ended 31 December 2009, I declare that to the best of my knowledge and belief, there have been:

- (i) no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements as required by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia; and
- (ii) no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

This declaration is in respect of Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA) during the period.



Charles M Pitt
C M Pitt & Co
Units 6 & 7, 2 Philip Street
STRATHFIELD NSW 2135

Dated: 15 April 2010



Chartered Accountants

Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE ASSOCIATION

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2009

	Note	2009 \$	2008 \$
<hr/>			
Revenue from ordinary activities			
University Funding		794,000	794,000
Interest received		16,623	17,915
Other revenues		375	6,605
Donations		2,826	4,497
Total Revenue		<u>813,824</u>	<u>823,017</u>
Expenditure			
Management Committee		(755,382)	(636,800)
Publications and Activities Committees		(70,802)	(51,689)
Policy and Campaigns Committee		(12,773)	(13,010)
Total Expenditure		<u>(838,957)</u>	<u>(701,499)</u>
Surplus from ordinary activities before tax		(25,133)	121,518
Surplus from ordinary activities attributed to members of the Association		<u>\$ (25,133)</u>	<u>\$ 121,518</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these accounts.

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE ASSOCIATION

Page 3

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2009

	Note	2009 \$	2008 \$
Current Assets			
Cash & cash equivalents	2	662,239	642,093
Trade & other receivables	3	3,980	5,317
Total Current Assets		<u>666,219</u>	<u>647,410</u>
Non-Current Assets			
Plant and Equipment	4	4,704	12,852
Total Non-Current Assets		<u>4,704</u>	<u>12,852</u>
Total Assets		<u>670,923</u>	<u>660,262</u>
Current Liabilities			
Trade & other payables	5	52,189	43,455
Financial Liabilities	6	-	6,529
Short Term Provisions	7	285,329	251,740
Total Current Liabilities		<u>337,518</u>	<u>301,724</u>
Total Liabilities		<u>337,518</u>	<u>301,724</u>
Net Assets		<u><u>\$ 333,405</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 358,538</u></u>
Equity			
Accumulated Funds	8	333,405	358,538
Total Equity		<u><u>\$ 333,405</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 358,538</u></u>

The accompanying notes form part of these accounts.

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE ASSOCIATION

Page 4

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2009

	Note	2009 \$	2008 \$
RETAINED EARNINGS			
Balance at the beginning of the year		358,538	237,020
Surplus attributed from operations		(25,133)	121,518
Balance at the end of the financial year		<u>\$ 333,405</u>	<u>\$ 358,538</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these accounts.

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE ASSOCIATION

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2009

	Note	2009 \$	2008 \$
Cash Flows from Operating Activities			
<i>Receipts</i>			
University Funding		794,000	794,000
Interest Received		15,842	16,329
Sundries		5,451	11,467
		<u>815,293</u>	<u>821,796</u>
<i>Payments</i>			
Payments to suppliers and employees		<u>(793,602)</u>	<u>(656,700)</u>
		<u>(793,602)</u>	<u>(656,700)</u>
Net Cash provided by / (used in) operating activities	10	<u>21,691</u>	<u>165,096</u>
Cash Flows from Investing Activities			
Purchase of Property, Plant and Equipment		<u>(1,545)</u>	<u>-</u>
Net Cash provided by/(used in) investing activities		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Net Increase in cash held		20,146	165,096
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		<u>642,093</u>	<u>476,997</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	2	<u>\$ 662,239</u>	<u>\$ 642,093</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these accounts.

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2009

NOTE 1 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The financial statements are a general purpose financial report that have been prepared in accordance with Accounting Standards, Urgent Issues Group Interpretations and other authorities pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board. The financial report was authorised for issue by the Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA) on *15 April* 2010.

They satisfy the requirements of SUPRA its constitution and the reporting requirements of SUPRA.

SUPRA is unincorporated and domiciled in Australia. The following is a summary of the material accounting policies adopted by SUPRA in the preparation of the financial report.

The accounting policies have been consistently applied unless otherwise stated. The financial report has been prepared on an accrual basis and is based on historical costs and does not take into account changing money values, or except where specifically stated current valuations of non current assets. Cost is based on the fair values of the consideration given in exchange for assets.

(a) Revenue and Going Concern

The financial report is prepared on the basis that SUPRA is a going concern. SUPRA has a Funding Agreement with the Sydney University which will ensure funding to 31 December 2010. Negotiations are continuing for ongoing funding beyond 2010.

(b) Plant and Equipment

Plant and Equipment are measured on the cost basis less depreciation and impairment losses.

The carrying amount of plant and equipment is reviewed annually to ensure it is not in excess of the recoverable amount from these assets. The recoverable amount is assessed on the basis of the expected net cash flows that will be received from the assets employment and subsequent disposal.

(c) Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated on a straight line basis so as to write off the net cost of each item of property, plant and equipment over its expected useful life. Estimates of remaining useful life are made on a regular basis for all assets, with annual reassessments for major items.

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2009

CONTINUED

The depreciation rates used for each class of depreciable assets are:

Plant and equipment 10% to 20%

(d) Receivables

Other receivables represent the amount due at balance date.

(e) Amounts Payable

These amounts represent liabilities for goods and services provided to the consolidated entity prior to the end of the financial year, which are unpaid. The amounts are unsecured and are usually paid within thirty (30) days of negotiation.

(f) Maintenance and Repairs

Maintenance, repair costs and minor renewals are charged as expenses as incurred.

(g) Employee Entitlements

Provision is made in respect of the liability for annual leave, long service leave and redundancy at balance date. Contributions are made on behalf of employee by SUPRA to the National Entitlement Security Trust (NEST) and are charged as expenses when incurred.

(h) Leases

Operating lease payments are charged to expense in the period in which they occur.

(i) Cash

For purposes of the Statement of Cash Flows, cash includes deposits at call which are readily convertible to cash on hand and which are used in the cash management function on a day-to-day basis.

(j) Goods and Service Tax (GST)

All revenue is stated net of the amount of Goods and Service Tax (GST).

(k) Comparatives

Where necessary, comparative information has been reclassified to achieve consistency in disclosure with current financial year amounts and other disclosures.

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2009

CONTINUED

(l) Critical Accounting Estimates and Judgments

SUPRA evaluates estimates and judgements incorporated into the financial report based on historical knowledge and best available current information. Estimates assume a reasonable expectation of future events and are based on current trends and economic data, obtained both externally and within the group.

(m) Impairment

SUPRA assess impairment at each reporting date by evaluating conditions specific to the asset group that may lead to impairment of assets. Where an impairment trigger exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is determined. Value-in-use calculations performed in assessing recoverable amounts incorporate a number of key estimates.

No impairment has been recognised for the year ended 31 December 2009.

(n) Adoption of New and Revised Accounting Standards

During the current year the Association adopted all of the new and revised Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations applicable to its operations which became mandatory.

The adoption of these standards has impacted the recognition, measurement and disclosure of certain transactions. The following is an explanation of the impact the adoption of these standards and interpretations has had on the financial statements of Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA).

In September 2007 the Australian Accounting Standards Board revised AASB 101 and as a result, there have been changes to the presentation and disclosure of certain information within the financial statements. Below is an overview of the key changes and the impact on the Association's financial statements.

Disclosure impact

Terminology changes - The revised version of AASB 101 contains a number of terminology changes, including the amendment of the names of the primary financial statements.

Reporting changes in equity - The revised AASB 101 requires all changes in equity arising from transactions with owners, in their capacity as owners, to be presented separately from non-owner changes in equity. Owner changes in equity are to be presented in the statement of changes in equity, with non-owner changes in equity presented in the statement of comprehensive income. The previous version of AASB 101 required that owner changes in equity and other comprehensive income be presented in the statement of changes in equity.

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2009

CONTINUED

Statement of comprehensive income - The revised AASB 101 requires all income and expenses to be presented in either one statement, the statement of comprehensive income, or two statements, a separate income statement and a statement of comprehensive income. The previous version of AASB 101 required only the presentation of a single income statement.

The Association's financial statements now contain a statement of comprehensive income.

Other comprehensive income - The revised version of AASB 101 introduces the concept of 'other comprehensive income' which comprises of income and expenses that are not recognised in profit or loss as required by other comprehensive income. The previous version of AASB 101 did not contain an equivalent concept.

(o) New Accounting Standards for Application in Future Periods

The AASB has issued new and amended accounting standards and interpretations that have mandatory application dates for future reporting periods. The Association has decided against early adoption of these standard. The changes are not expected to materially effect the Association and its reporting requirements.

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2009

	2009	2008
	\$	\$
CONTINUED		
NOTE 2 Cash & Cash Equivalents		
Cash at Bank and on Hand	166,903	205,750
Deposit with NEST	178,998	231,086
Deposits on Term	316,338	205,257
	<u>662,239</u>	<u>642,093</u>
NOTE 3 Trade & Other Receivables		
Sundry Debtors	150	2,400
Accrued Interest Receivable	2,367	1,586
Prepayments	1,463	1,331
	<u>3,980</u>	<u>5,317</u>
NOTE 4 Plant and Equipment		
Plant and Equipment at cost	118,542	116,997
Less, Accumulated Depreciation	<u>(113,838)</u>	<u>(104,145)</u>
	<u>4,704</u>	<u>12,852</u>

Movements in carrying amounts

Movements in carrying amounts for each class of property, plant & equipment between the beginning and the end of the current financial year are:

	Computer Equipment	Furniture and Fittings	Office Equipment	Total
Balance at beginning of year	-	-	12,852	12,852
Additions	-	-	1,545	1,545
Disposals	-	-	-	-
Add back of depreciation on disposal	-	-	-	-
Depreciation expense	-	-	(9,693)	(9,693)
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,704</u>	<u>4,704</u>

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE ASSOCIATION

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2009

		2009	2008
		\$	\$
CONTINUED			
NOTE 5	Trade & Other Payables		
	<i>Current</i>		
	Sundry payables and accrued expenses	<u>52,189</u>	<u>43,455</u>
NOTE 6	Financial Liabilities		
	<i>Current</i>		
	Equipment Finance	<u>-</u>	<u>6,529</u>
NOTE 7	Short Term Provisions		
	Provision for Annual Leave	32,438	12,415
	Provision for Long Service Leave	6,714	6,735
	Provision for Redundancy	<u>246,177</u>	<u>232,590</u>
		<u>285,329</u>	<u>251,740</u>
	At 31 December 2009 the total amount payable was \$285,329.		
	Funds to this amount are held on behalf of employees in the National Entitlement Security Trust (NEST).		
NOTE 8	Accumulated Funds		
	Accumulated Funds at the beginning of the financial year	358,538	237,020
	(Deficit) / Surplus	(25,133)	121,518
	Accumulated Funds at the end of the financial year	<u>333,405</u>	<u>358,538</u>
NOTE 9	Auditors Remuneration		
	Audit of financial statements	<u>9,000</u>	<u>9,000</u>
NOTE 10	Reconciliation of Net Cash Inflow from Operating Activities to Surplus/(Deficit)		
	Net Cash Inflow/(Outflow) from		
	Operating Activities	21,691	165,096
	Depreciation	(9,693)	(11,796)
	Change in Operating Assets and Liabilities		
	Increase/(Decrease) in Other Current Assets	(1,337)	1,069
	(Increase)/Decrease in Payables and Equipment Finance	(2,205)	(1,149)
	(Increase)/Decrease in Provisions	<u>(33,589)</u>	<u>(31,702)</u>
	Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	<u>(25,133)</u>	<u>121,518</u>

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2009

CONTINUED

NOTE 11 Financial Instruments

(a) Terms, Conditions & Accounting Policies

Accounts Receivable

Other small sundry sums are net of any provisions for amounts estimated to be uncollectable. Interest is not charged on outstanding amounts.

Accounts Payable

Liabilities are recognised for amounts to be paid in the future for goods or services received, whether or not billed to the University. Accounts payable are normally settled within thirty (30) days from date of invoice and no interest is incurred on these accounts.

Term Deposits & Cash Management Accounts

Term deposits and cash management accounts are stated at the lower of cost and net realisable value. At balance date these accounts had various maturity dates and the effective weighted average interest rates for the year were 4.05% (2008 - 3.15%).

(b) Credit Risk Exposures

The Association's maximum exposures to credit risk at balance date in respect of each class of financial asset is the carrying amount of those assets as indicated in the statement of financial position, net of any provision for doubtful debts.

The Association does not have a significant exposure to any individual counterparty, other than the short term money on deposit with a major commercial bank.

(c) Net Fair Values

The net market values of the Association's short-term deposits, cash management accounts, accounts receivable, accounts payable and accrued charges approximate their carrying amounts. The aggregate net fair values of financial assets and financial liabilities at balance date are stated in the accounts.

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE ASSOCIATION

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2009

CONTINUED

NOTE 12 Operating Lease Commitments	2009	2008
Non-cancellable operating leases contracted for but not capitalised in the financial statements:	\$	\$
Payable		
- no later than 1 year	-	1,814
- later than 1 year but not later than 5 years	-	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>1,814</u>

NOTE 13 Events Subsequent to Balance Date

No transactions or events of a significant nature have occurred since balance date.

NOTE 14 Related Parties

Stipends are paid to office bearers and other counsellors in accordance with SUPRA's Stipend policy.

NOTE 15 Association Details

The office of University of Sydney Postgraduate Representative Association is situated at Building G10 Raglan Street, Darlington Campus, University of Sydney NSW 2006

Permanent employees at year end were eight (8) and one (1) full time contract (2008 - 5 permanent employees and 1 full time contract).

The Association's Australian Business Number (ABN) is: 17 011 530 375.

**SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE
ASSOCIATION (SUPRA)**

STATEMENT BY THE SUPRA COUNCIL

Page 14

In accordance with a resolution of the Council of the Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA).

In our opinion:

- (a) the Statement of Comprehensive Income is drawn up so as to give a true and fair view of the deficit of the Association of the year ended 31 December 2009;
- (b) the Balance Sheet is drawn up so as to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Association as at 31 December 2009;
- (c) at the date of this Statement there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Association will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due;
- (d) as detailed in note 1 to the financial statements, the financial viability of SUPRA is dependent on the funding agreement from Sydney University, that they continue to provide financial support to SUPRA.
- (e) the extent and scale of services that would be available beyond 31 December 2010 cannot be determined.

The Accounts have been made in accordance with applicable accounting Standards at Sydney on 15 April 2010.

Rashmi Kumar
PRESIDENT

Chi Hong Choi
TREASURER

Nick Irving
PRESIDENT

C M PITT & CO

Chartered Accountants

TELEPHONE (02) 9715 1555
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INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE ASSOCIATION (SUPRA)

REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL REPORT

We have audited the financial report of Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA) for the financial year ended 31 December 2009, as set out on pages 1 to 14. The Management Committee is responsible for the preparation and presentation of the financial report. I have conducted an independent audit of this financial report in order to express an opinion on it to the members of SUPRA.

The Management Committee is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards (including the Australian Accounting Interpretations). This responsibility includes establishing and maintaining internal controls relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

AUDITOR'S RESPONSIBILITY

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. These Auditing Standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the counsellors, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.



Chartered Accountants

Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

INDEPENDENCE

In conducting our audit, we have followed applicable independence requirements of Australian professional ethical pronouncements.

AUDIT OPINION

In our opinion, the financial report presents fairly, in accordance with the Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements and the Constitution and Regulations of SUPRA as amended, the financial position of SUPRA as at 31 December 2009, and the result of its operations and cash flows for the year then ended.

INHERENT UNCERTAINTY - REGARDING CONTINUATION AS A GOING CONCERN

Without qualification to the opinion expressed above, attention is drawn to the following matter that is viewed as inherent uncertainty, regarding the continuation of the SUPRA as a going concern. SUPRA has on going negotiations Funding Agreement with the Sydney University which will ensure funding to 31 December 2010. Negotiations are continuing for ongoing funding beyond 2010 and an agreement has not yet been reached.



CHARLES M PITT
C M PITT & CO
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

Dated: 15 April 2010

**SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE
REPRESENTATIVE ASSOCIATION (SUPRA)
ABN: 17 011 530 375**

COMPILATION REPORT

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Scope

We have compiled the accompanying special purpose financial statements of University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA), which comprise the attached statement of comprehensive income for the year ended 31 December 2009. The specific purpose for which the special purpose financial statements have been prepared is to provide financial information to the board of management.

The Responsibility of the Board of Management

The board of management is solely responsible for the information contained in the special purpose financial statements and has determined that the basis of accounting adopted is appropriate to meet the needs of the board of management for the purpose of complying with the association's constitution.

Our Responsibility

On the basis of information provided by the board of management we have compiled the accompanying special purpose financial statement in accordance with the basis of accounting and APES 315: Compilation of Financial Information.

Our procedures use accounting expertise to collect, classify and summarise the financial information, which the directors provided, in compiling the financial statements. Our procedures do not include verification or validation procedures. No audit or review has been performed and accordingly no assurance is expressed.

The special purpose financial statements were compiled exclusively for the benefit of the board of management. We do not accept responsibility to any other person for the contents for the special purpose financial statements.



C M PITT & CO
Chartered Accountants
Charles M Pitt

Dated: 15 April 2010.

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE ASSOCIATION

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SCHEDULE OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2009

	2009	2008
	\$	\$
Other Revenue		
Office Sales	255	1,100
Miscellaneous	120	5,505
	<u>375</u>	<u>6,605</u>
Management Committee		
(A) Corporate Expenses (Administered by Management Committee)		
Councillor Conference Attendance (including airfares)	3,307	2,333
Cabs	32	517
Council Meeting Expenses	693	838
Legal Expenses	-	1,709
Legal Expenses - Redfern Legal Centre	62,679	52,735
President's Stipend	43,707	46,040
President's Superannuation	3,934	4,143
Vice President's Stipend	7,405	9,472
Vice President's Superannuation	666	853
Treasurer's Stipend	5,632	3,067
Treasurer's Superannuation	507	276
Secretary's Stipend	10,617	10,098
Secretary's Superannuation	956	909
Activities Convenor Stipend	686	148
Activities Convenor Superannuation	62	13
Women Officer's Stipend	1,394	1,645
Women Officer's Superannuation	125	148
Publications Officer Stipend	6,672	3,234
Publications Officer Superannuation	584	291
Policy Convenor's Stipend	10,733	-
Policy Convenor's Superannuation	966	-
Queer Officer's Stipend	4,640	306
Queer Officer's Superannuation	418	13
	<u>166,415</u>	<u>138,788</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these accounts.

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE ASSOCIATION

SCHEDULE OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2009

	2009	2008
	\$	\$
CONTINUED		
Amount brought forward	166,415	138,788
International Student Officer's Stipend	5,177	2,636
International Student Officer's Superannuation	481	237
Campaign Officer's Stipend	4,900	15,212
Campaign Officer's Superannuation	441	1,369
Miscellaneous Stipend	6,647	-
Miscellaneous Superannuation	529	-
Staff Support	928	853
Staff Recruitment	4,362	844
Staff Travel, Meals & Accomodation	1,214	2,485
Student Donation	934	-
Total Corporate	<u>192,028</u>	<u>162,424</u>
(B) Management Committee (Committee devolved items)		
Audit	9	9,000
Accountancy	40,025	33,945
Bank Charges	471	606
Donations	300	707
Insurance	7,029	5,966
Sundries	10	148
Postage	25	13
Staff Development	2,594	-
Office Amenities	2,613	1,750
Printing & Stationery	13,852	6,479
Removal Costs	1,774	-
Student Advisors' Salaries	273,978	250,298
Student Advisors' Superannuation	23,326	22,008
Relief Student Advisors' Salaries	2,942	-
Relief Student Advisors' Superannuation	265	-
Administration Salaries	107,119	71,423
Administration Superannuation	9,529	6,387
Conference Co-ordinator's Salaries	-	6,047
Conference Co-ordinator's Superannuation	-	544
Employee Entitlements	33,589	31,702
Payroll Management Systems	3,660	3,296
Telephone	730	469
IT Hardware / Leasing	904	-
Lease Equipment (Risograph)	3,005	-
Lease Equipment (Photocopier)	11,473	10,109
	<u>548,449</u>	<u>460,993</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these accounts.

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE ASSOCIATION

SCHEDULE OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2009

	2009	2008
	\$	\$
CONTINUED		
Amount brought forward	548,449	460,993
Depreciation	9,693	11,796
Repairs & Maintenance (Non IT)	236	96
Office Equipment (Non IT)	1,460	657
Consumables - Risograph	3,752	930
Total Management Committee (Committee devolved)	<u>563,354</u>	<u>474,376</u>
Total Management Committee	<u>755,382</u>	<u>636,800</u>
(C) Publications and Activities Committees		
Activities & Functions	6,247	6,225
Campaigns	7,506	2,089
Conference	-	12,943
Merchandising	7,220	8,425
O Week	1,479	-
Publications Officer Wages	10,509	-
Publications Officer superannuation	946	-
Publications - Honi	7,800	5,400
Publications - Counter Course	-	4,369
Publications - Thesis Guide	-	7,470
Publications - Survival Manual	8,373	2,199
Publications - Child Care Handbook	1,985	-
Publications - Sundry	457	-
Website development & maintenance	18,280	2,569
Total Publications and Activities Committees	<u>70,802</u>	<u>51,689</u>
(D) Policy and Campaigns Committee		
Resource & Campaign Materials	-	1,195
CAPA Affiliation fee	12,773	11,815
Total Policy and Campaigns Committee	<u>12,773</u>	<u>13,010</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these accounts.