

Annual Report //2016

Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association

Students working for Students



Acknowledgement of Country

SUPRA would like to acknowledge and pay respect to the traditional owners of the land on which we work. It is upon their ancestral lands that the University of Sydney is built. As we share our knowledge, teaching, learning and research within the University may we also pay respect to the knowledge embedded forever within the Aboriginal Custodianship of Country.

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Thank you to all SUPRA councillors, staff and constituents who contributed photographs to this report.

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.

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Co-President (Christian)

Christian Jones (1st July 2015 - Present)



Christian Jones, Co-President 2015/16

We've had a long year together at SUPRA. We've seen the departure and arrival of staff, the University began its implementation of the 2016-20 strategic plan, the business school failed over 400 students in a single course, signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the SRC and USU, and we've received the largest increase in SSAF of any organisation at Sydney. It has been a long road, but I am happy to be leaving the organisation better than when I arrived. I have not had as long with this organisation as others on the Executive, but I feel that I have gained tremendous experience from my time here.

In the role of General Manager of the Offices of the Association, I get a lot of time to get to know the staff and it is always sad to see staff members leave. This year we lost our long-serving Administration Coordinator, Pru Wirth, to Western Sydney University. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank her for her years of service to SUPRA. However with any loss, there is a chance for renewal. We also welcomed Louise Corney to the team

as our Administration Coordinator and also Anthea Fitzgerald as an Admin and Publications Officer. I wish you both all the best in your future with this organisation. We have also gained a SAAO, Vanessa Caparas, who joined us from the Murdoch Student Guild in WA. I hope you enjoy the rest of your time here.

SUPRA started off this term gaining a substantial media presence from the BUSS5000/6000 issue, where a number of international students were failed due to changes in the course requirements and lack of support. We have had media coverage from around the world including Sydney Morning Herald, ABC, Campus Review Magazine, and over 150 Chinese newspapers flocked to publish the injustices brought on by the Business School. The media coverage on the issue even led to the Chinese Embassy in Australia to contact the University on this issue and a number of changes to the way the courses are taught and assistance provided to International Students.

Not only this, we have increased our presence in the student publication, *Honi Soit*. In this term we have been able to transform our *Honi Soit* content from two pages of quarter-page advertisements about the organisation, into a place for Staff, Council and students to publish content related to areas that they are passionate about. I encourage all future students, staff and Council to take advantage of this opportunity that you have not really had in the past. It is a great way to have your voice heard more on campus.

Over the course of the year, there has been much work completed with the Academic Board. In November 2015, the Board resolved to remove Informal Special Consideration from the Coursework Policy, which resulted in outrage among the Student members of the Board. After consultation with members of the Board and its committees, it was brought back into the Coursework policy in March, before it had time to impact on students in semester 1. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank our VP Tom Greenwell for all his hard work on this issue.

Relationship with other Student Organisations

Cooperation between the student organisations at the University of Sydney has never been better! SUPRA now has an on-going Memorandum of Understanding with the SRC and USU, which guarantees that our organisation will receive cost price services from these organisations. This has allowed us to have pages in *Honi Soit*, for a more financially viable price, and we have held our first post-VSU Postgraduate Ball in conjunction with the USU. Due to our MOU and our newfound collaborations with the USU, we were able to organise a Ball with reasonably priced tickets for Postgrads! Thank you to Alisha Aitken-Radburn, Kyol Blakeney and Chloe Smith for making the MOU a reality on campus.



Christian & USU President Alisha Aitken-Radburn @ the Postgraduate Ball

Further, our representation on the Academic Board was increased this year due to the work of the past President, Tim Scriven. SUPRA and the SRC gained two additional members of the Board each. This has led to much more discussion both among the student representatives and with the Board itself. Student members have now met consistently throughout the semester for pre-meeting discussions, we have met the Chair of the Academic Board monthly to raise concerns and to discuss a new item of business within the Chairs Report, the Student Report.

Student Services and Amenities Fee

This year, our negotiating team primarily consisted of myself, the SAAO Coordinator, Adrian and the Treasurer, Josh. We attended a number of negotiations with

the various other Student Organisations to come to an agreement; alas no such agreement was reached. Due to the lack of an agreement, our proposal was sent to a University committee for decision. Our proposal was drafted by the negotiating team, the Administration Coordinator, Louise Corney, and the Finance Manager, John Fell. Needless to say we did not get exactly what we asked for, but we did get the largest increase on the 2015 allocations. SUPRA in 2016 will be receiving \$1,375,000, an increase of \$161,000 from 2015. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all staff and exec who took the time to have their say in our submission.

To Kylee, it has been a pleasure to serve with you over the past year and I thank you for all your work during the term and for picking up the slack when I had difficulties, particularly when I was sick during oweek and inductions.

To Josh, I will look at Council meetings in your presence with contempt, for your constant attempts to block my report. But in all seriousness, thanks for watching our finances and for your assistance, particularly with SSAF.

Tom, you have been a very helpful and insightful Vice-President throughout the term. Your knowledge of both University policy and SUPRA policy has been helpful all year. I wish you all the best next term in SUPRA.

To the 2016/17 Council, I wish you all the best for your term. Keep fighting in the interests of students and don't let internal fights stop you from completing your duty to those who elected you. At times SUPRA can be a struggle, but in the end it'll all be worth the fight.



SUPRA @ the Restructure Protest 2016

Co-President (Kylee)

Kylee Hartman-Warren (14th July 2015 - Present)

First, I would like to acknowledge that this will be my last SUPRA annual report. I've been with SUPRA throughout the entirety of my study at the University of Sydney and it has been an experience that has enriched my academic study. Being a part of SUPRA and student representation, in general, has also given me a lot of freedom to work on issues I'm passionate about through trying a variety of skills. I've learned a lot about myself in my time at SUPRA, but more importantly, I have learned more about politics and I have developed a deeper respect for the importance of representation and advocacy in today's organisations, societies and governments. This ability to advocate and represent is vital to the democratic process, and I believe students need to continue standing up for each other when they face the many injustices that continue to exist. Having represented international students from all over Australia, I see how lucky University of Sydney students are to have such a strong tradition of Student Representation. However, I believe it is necessary that we do not become complacent with what we have. I hope that University of Sydney students will continue with a strong tradition of student representation and help other students who struggle to represent themselves at other universities.

This year SUPRA has seen a light of achievements. For the first time in a while, SUPRA regularly released media statements, supported students at faculty meetings and restructures, and worked diligently with USU and the Academic Board student Representatives. There have been a number of challenges this year as a university restructure left many students wondering about the future of their faculties and courses, and inequity in many areas continued to exist.

We also improved our working relationship with the SRC and the USU and I believe our ability to come together as student organisations made for a strong and active year. That said, our ability to come together was made possible by the relationship building previous Councillors created, and incoming councillors achieved through their previous work. When we came together to decide how we might collaborate, I sug-



Kylee Hartman-Warren - Co-President

gested the idea of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Christian's strong working relationships with members of the SRC and the USU helped lay the groundwork for this collective effort. We met early in the term and signed the MOU with the USU and the SRC. This MOU has brought us together to work more effectively during events and representative preparation for important meetings with senior management at the University. I think relationship building is the important lesson that came out of this experience. I have felt that SUPRA was more engaged with other student bodies this year than it has ever been in my time. However, while it is all well and good to suggest an MOU, it is much harder to succeed in carrying an MOU through without the ongoing relationships between students across student associations. To me, this year's cross-campus successes would not have been possible without the relationships many SUPRA councillors have built with their fellow student colleagues. I want to thank my Co-President Christian, the USU and the SRC for making this year's collaborations possible. I also want to thank Tom (Vice-President) for working hard to bring Academic Board student representatives together, and I am grateful for the opportunities that Kane (Secretary), Rachel (Queer Of-

ficer) and Josh (Treasurer) brought to SUPRA as they were connected with a number of student outlets we worked with over the year. Equally important, Ahmed and Fatima (Education Officers) also worked hard to expand the Education and Outreach portfolio, and in doing so, they created a place where students built relationships with each other over the course of the year. Forough (Women's Officer), Mike (Indigenous Officer), Marguerite (Disability Officer), Dhaval (International Officer), and Libby (Rural & Regional Officer) also worked hard to develop networks for students within their equity portfolios. I am grateful for Council for supporting us through the year, and volunteering at so many of our functions where students have the opportunity to connect. I am deeply appreciative of the role our Staff and SLAAO teams play in ensuring that we maintain meaningful activity at SUPRA and that we have the support to see this activity carried through.

The Year

The year began with addressing the fact that over 500 students fail across two business courses. Christian and Adrian worked diligently to help the students. Tom, the Vice-President and I also helped with preparing press releases, discussing these matters to senior executive at the University, with meeting students and with representing this issue our committees. Ahmed also met with students and discussed these issues at great lengths.

At the quarter turn, SUPRA councillors and executive participated in media training that has helped us produce more efficient external communication and higher quality press releases. As such, we have had a larger media presence than in the past and I hope this trend will continue. We have also purchased a camera for the organisation to use for events and to make videos concerning what SUPRA does. We worked as a team to see these things happen.

The half-year mark also involves the plans for O-Week. I organised the week and am a bit sentimental about it, as it was my last O-Week at the University of Sydney. Our Publications Committee, our SLAAO team, and our staff have also played a vital role. They deserve credit for launching the new Survival Guide, and the space-themed design of all publications and merchandise.

The half-year mark of our term also brought the university restructured to the forefront. We have levied concerns regarding lower staff representation on Senate. We have also maintained a strong working relationship with the Chair of the Academic Board on some issues. I ensured that SUPRA got a place at discussions regarding university culture and the university safety as sexism forms of racism have been more present on our campus this year. Students were instrumental in sharing women safety surveys on digital media and we attended meetings that consulted concerning the university's cultural strategy.

I also worked with CAPA to address strategic discussions with regards to the governments' higher education requirements for industry. I attended a stakeholder working party to address this matter in December. I attended the CAPA conference to represent SUPRA as a delegate. I hope that SUPRA maintains a strong relation with CAPA going forward, however, I also believe SUPRA should ask CAPA and any peak body hard questions with regard to spending to ensure that our money is used transparently.

From January through March we were dedicated as always to Faculty Inductions and Orientation Week. We had quite a few activities this year including our traditional BBQ, our seminar with Visa Lawyers Australia, and our SUPRA Survival Workshop. Every year, so many councillors volunteer to help, and this year students outside of SUPRA Council pitched in. While Council is busy with O-Week, staff and SLAAO's are equally busy manning the office, attending inductions and helping students on an individual basis. I'm indebted to those who pitched in as O-Week takes the dedication and work of so many people.

Finally, April saw the re-introduction of the Postgraduate Student Ball. Christian, and the Education Officers, Ahmed and Fatima were crucial in establishing the ball in the calendar, and everyone at SUPRA helped see the ball through. I helped with planning, decorations and shuttling sound equipment and we all helped promote the event to our faculties and friends. Both officers and councillors came together to plan the event, volunteer at the event, set up tables, and pack things away when needed.

I believe students will be required to maintain vigi-

lance in a few areas, including the University Restructure and Safety.

Restructure: Institutionally, and as mentioned above, students are grappling with a university-wide restructure, and from the student perspective it's unclear how the university will look in a few years time, and whether students will continue to receive the level of support they get today. With the restructure, students worry about student representation eroding as faculty amalgamation could reduce the size of committees or Academic Board. Students have also seen a decline in services: longer waits in the Student Service Centre, more time on hold when needing to get questions answered from an administrative staff, and a lack of direct contact with their own faculty administration. Finally, certain faculties exist in uncertain terrain leaving their students equally uncertain. For example, Sydney College of the Arts will likely fold into the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, but students are not certain what this will mean for their art practice, or their studio space at Rozelle Campus. Students were equally alarmed when the Senate saw its own restructure.

Safety: Women, equity groups and many other students also face challenges at university as the campus becomes more publically aware of issues regarding safety, harassment and bullying. Instances of sexual harassment, homophobia and Islamophobia was reported by students across campus and even as I write, students are protesting the lack of safety around sexual harassment cases in the Colleges. The University has dedicated time to a safety survey for women, and we hope that students will continue to pressure the University to improve safety and well being on campus.

Finalising Initiatives

As the term ends, I am finishing some of the initiatives I've started and hope to see through by the end of June. These include a public affairs policy, an O-Week manual, a digital media kit, and an online SUPRA Alumni network. I also want to make a series of recommendations to the incoming SUPRA Team to address the challenges we faced both as officers, and as students at the University of Sydney.

General Recommendations for the Next Term

- That SUPRA continue to expect a strong student representative presence at the University of Sydney, and advocate for it.
- That outgoing council take time to advise incoming council during inductions, and maintain a connection with SUPRA enough to help councillors who may need advice.
- That SUPRA maintain an MOU with other student leadership branches on SCC.
- That officers and any relevant councillors and staff receive training in the areas of media and public affairs, grievance and conflict, and basic management.
- That the next council work on a creative and 'fun' project for postgraduates, whether it be a ball or another activity you conjure up. Fun events often bring teams and students together in unexpected ways.

Conclusion

I will be forever grateful to what SUPRA has given to me over the years, and I'm honoured to have served SUPRA as a postgraduate at the University of Sydney. I deeply appreciate the SUPRA councillors and officers who have worked beside me all these years, and I am also grateful to the staff and the SLAAO team for their support, understanding and dedication to students. Most importantly, it has been an honour working with students and representing students and their issues. I want to thank the Postgraduate students at the University of Sydney for their continued support and engagement with SUPRA over the years. I look forward to seeing what the next team does and I also invite incoming and future councillors and officers to reach out to me if they ever need advice about some of the challenges we've faced.

Vice President

Thomas Greenwell (1st July 2015 - Present)



Thomas Greenwell, Vice-President

THIS term has been quite an active one. We hit the ground running and then didn't really stop. I will try to be brief and just stick to the key events.

The BUSS5000 & BUSS6000 Affair

This year started out with a massive number of students failed by the Business School. SUPRA had an enormous influx of cases of students failing units due to raised assessment standards, with no correlative corrections to teaching and learning conditions. We

took part in a member-driven campaign, with myself, Adrian and Ahmed acting as organisers and ideas-persons to assist the relatively inexperienced students running the campaign.

I think we were quite successful, and it assisted my political development as I now have a better grasp of the purpose of an organiser as someone who puts resources at disposal; gently pushes to keep the anger and energy up when it looks like the campaign might demilitarise; and uses their position to kick down doors and make management turn its head.

I was there to help students present a petition to Spence's office, set up a meeting between elected student reps from the units (with Adrian) and the Dean of Business, and also there feeding ideas for actions that could be taken. The Business School conceded a lot of ground, and has continued to do so even up until this semester where they lowered the mandatory pass mark for exams to 45 points instead of the previous 50. I would argue the campaign was successful, and I am proud to have worked with the rank and file that led the battle to achieve better conditions for students in



SUPRA @ Staff rally 2015

the Business School.

The Simple Extensions Affair

This term management tried to delete simple extensions from University policy. A mini-campaign took place, although with this one we made the error of keeping it amongst student union executives rather than building momentum on the ground. Whilst the campaign did have a petition – the first petition ever presented to the Academic Board – it was predominantly lobbying. This was our main mistake.

That said, we did win. Simple extensions were reinstated at the December 2nd meeting of Academic Board, 19-13 in our favour. The amendment was moved by myself, seconded by incoming Chair Tony Masters and subsequently turned into University policy. The new simple extensions applied to all faculties across the University – a big change from last time – and were officially passed in procedures at the March 30th meeting. The campaign was started by then SRC President Kyol Blakeney and I was pleased to see it end earlier this year.

International Student Travel Concessions

I have participated in a big relaunch of the campaign for international student concessions this term. Whilst previous efforts had resulted in frustration and failure, changing to a student driven approach has altered the campaign entirely. We have brought local member for Newtown Jenny Leong (former and beloved President of SUPRA) on board, and she has promised to ask a question and ensure a debate in parliament. University management has also joined on side, with Spence suggesting he will lobby the government on our behalf. These are significant changes to the previous campaign, and while we are a long way from winning, I regard these to be positive steps. I think we'll win, and I hope I will be on the next Council to see it through.

Wine & Cheese

The same as last time, I've presided over the Wine &

Cheese's second semester last year. They've been the biggest we've had, and with our new Footbridge Theatre location the events have gotten even better, more relaxed (sort of) and more fun.

Also of note was the Wine & Cheese & Trivia that Ahmed organised, which was really fun and easily the best Wine & Cheese we've had. I had a great deal of fun MCing the event, and I hope SUPRA holds a similar event again.

Policy

Finally, and probably the most dull of all my tasks, I've presided once again over Policy Committee and introduced a whole raft of policy changes and reforms that have tightened up SUPRA's internal functioning. Of note are the new Grievance regulations, the new Council Communications Procedures and the new insertion into the constitution for motions of censure.



Tom pops into the Staff Rally

Treasurer

Joshua Preece (1st July 2015 - Present)

Over the past year, my three main duties have encompassed the following:

- (1) Drafting an annual budget
- (2) Participating in SSAF negotiations to secure a fair allocation for SUPRA
- (3) Working with the Finance Officer to help manage SUPRA's expenditure

The 2016 Budget

At the time of writing this report, Council has not yet approved our final budget for 2016 as we have only recently received confirmation of SUPRA's 2016 SSAF Allocation.

Over the next few weeks I will be engaging in consultation with the Finance Officer, Finance Committee, the Executive (particularly the Co-Presidents), and staff to discuss our goals and priorities for 2016 and to allocate resources accordingly. I am keen to avoid another large deficit, after SUPRA incurred a deficit of \$112,508 in 2015. Regular six-figure deficits are a threat to SUPRA's sustainability but I am optimistic that a more sustainable budget can be drafted that still achieves our progressive vision.

A final 2016 budget reflecting Council's shared goals will be passed at the next Council meeting.

2016 SSAF Negotiations

Earlier this year, the student organisations (the SRC, SUSE, USU, CSG, and Student Services) that SUPRA negotiated with for our share of the 2016 contestable SSAF pool (\$1,391,780) were unable to come to an agreement on how to equitably split the funds.

Therefore, each student organisation submitted its own individual request for SSAF funds, with the final

division of funds determined by the University's SSAF Allocation Committee, under the Registrar.

I believed that this was likely to yield an outcome in SUPRA's favour given our strong argument for an increased allocation. While undergraduate enrolments are flat, postgraduate enrolments are rising, which will mean more students using our services, and needing our advocacy. Under the University's Strategic Plan, postgraduate enrolments are likely to continue to rise in the long-term.

We secured \$1.375m (\$255,057 from the contestable pool, and \$1,119,943 in base funding).

This is a great outcome, and represents an increase of \$161k from 2015. More funds means more services and advocacy for postgrads in 2016.



SUPRA SSAF Allocation 2013-16

Managing SUPRA's Expenditure

Being the treasurer of a progressive organisation is a challenging job. Every Councillor comes to SUPRA with good intentions, and good ideas. I sometimes have to speak against good ideas that are simply beyond our current resources. Our funds are precious because they are student funds. Every dollar at our disposal has to come to us from the pocket of a student, or from debt a student has incurred.



Tom & Josh at the O-week BBQ 2016

Lastly, despite its petty reputation (which is probably mostly deserved) student politics is still a vehicle for passionate individuals to do good. SUPRA does important work – I am happy to have played a small role.

SUPRA's continued financial viability is one of Council's most serious responsibilities. After all, we are only really caretakers of this organisation. We have a responsibility to ensure that postgraduates will have access to student-run services and advocacy for decades to come. I urge future SUPRA Councillors and treasurers against apathy when voting upon expenditure. Being a progressive with a bit of thrift doesn't make you a conservative. It just makes you someone who cares enough to not want to see a good organisation go broke some day. As long as there are some brave souls who don't mind being a little unpopular by questioning the utility of a spending proposal, we can keep fighting the good fight without breaking the bank.

A Personal Note

I would like to extend my warm thanks to John Fell, SUPRA's Finance Officer, for his constant advice, information, and guidance. Thank-you also to Councillors, Executive, and staff for your dedication to SUPRA over the past year. To the Co-President, Christian Jones, I will look back on my constant attempts to vote down your reports with fondness.

Despite occasional tensions, the university administration treats us well – they see our value. In 2015, Macquarie University forcibly closed the Macquarie University Postgraduate Representative Association. It's hard to imagine the same happening to SUPRA. We should be conscious of the goodwill we have.



SUPRA @ the Postgraduate Evening 2015

Secretary

Kane Hardy (1st July 2015 - Present)



Kane Hardy, Secretary 2015/16

I have been the Secretary of SUPRA since April of the previous term after having filled a vacancy left by the resignation of the previous Secretary. I was re-elected to the position of Secretary for the 2015-2016 term. I had no handover, but I have adapted very well to the tasks of the Secretary.

Throughout my time as Secretary I have taken minutes for all of the council meetings and the vast majority of the committee meetings, totalling an estimated 100,000 words. I've kept comprehensive records of these minutes on SUPRA's server and ensured they were circulated to council. This may seem super tedious and boring but it's extremely satisfying to hold a combined hard copy of all the minutes I've taken for the term as a final quantifier for my time on the executive of SUPRA.

I have successfully organised all council meetings to date, through room bookings, compilation and circulation of the council packs and notification of the meetings. I also ensured that attendance records were kept strictly to ensure maximum engagement of council at all meetings of the organisation.

As a strong believer of transparency and accountability of elected representatives, I initiated a push to have councillors minuted by name, instead of position. Throughout my time taking minutes I found it extremely uncomfortable referring to speakers as "a councillor" since it made it extremely difficult to attribute the minutes to any person, which seemed useless to me. Another objective of mine as Secretary was to ensure the gap in the records was rectified after the long vacancy in the role, which I achieved. I also wanted to ensure all minutes I had taken were available publicly to all members via the SUPRA website, but unfortunately as I write this the new website is not yet up and running. SUPRA's in camera minutes have been stored privately in both hard and electronic copies. The auditor was satisfied with the records I have kept throughout my term.



SUPRA at O-Week 2016

As well as the administrative side of the role, which is the most time-consuming, I took part in a number of other activities in the organisation. I have represented SUPRA at a variety of rallies including national days of action against hikes in university fees, staff cuts and

fee deregulation, which would see universities inaccessible to low-SES Australians and make entry even more difficult for international students who are already forced to pay exorbitant fees to attend university in Australia. I have also attended rallies to defend safe schools to protect the wellbeing of queer primary and secondary school students. I also designed flags for SUPRA to be flown proudly by councillors and subscribers at these rallies.

Design work has been particularly enjoyable for me as Secretary. As well as designing the flags, I designed a pull-up banner to be used at stall and events to promote the services that SUPRA offers subscribers. I also designed and ordered SUPRA's newest T-shirts with the slogans "Fighting for Postgrad Rights" on the front and "Building a Better University" on the back. These have proven to be very popular at various events held by SUPRA. In addition, I also designed a new banner for SAOs to take to other campuses and they conduct their outreach. Finally, I designed many posters for the organisation, including a council list poster and a poster for the 2016 AGM.



New SUPRA Banner and Flags

Lastly, I have really enjoyed preparing and hosting a variety of events for SUPRA, the most notable being the monthly Wine & Cheese event. I enjoyed contributing a significant amount of time to the events, by being the driver to shop for each event, preparing a range of platters and mingling with subscribers. These events would often consume the majority of the Thursday on which they were held, but it was very rewarding to see

the event grow more and more over time and to see postgrads able to engage with their postgraduate representative association when they otherwise wouldn't have had the opportunity.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my time as Secretary this term and I leave the position satisfied with my contribution to this amazing organisation. I look forward to handing on the position to the next enthusiastic councillor who is up to continuing this essential role within SUPRA.



SUPRA & USU Postgraduate Ball 2016

Education Officers

Fatima Rauf - 1st July 2015 - Present

Rafi Alam - 1st July 2015 - 30th September 2015

Ahmed bin Suhaib - 1 October 2015 - Present

The 2015-16 term has been an active one for the Education Portfolio. With the dreaded Restructure of the University and issues faced by equity groups, we had plenty to do. Moreover, we were actively involved in most of SUPRA's social events to ensure that the postgraduate community has plenty of opportunities to socialize, an opportunity not provided to them through students clubs and societies. During our time as Education Officers, we did our best to make sure SUPRA runs smoothly this year. With the vague duty description for education role we took it upon us to figure out what is required from this portfolio.



Ahmed speaks at the International Student Concession Forum

Portfolio Work

At the start of both semesters, we were front and center with running both Re-O Day and O week. We managed the table, helped out at the BBQ, and helped organize and promote events during the orientation. We also spoke at various faculty inductions and student welcome.

In August, we joined the Education Action Group (EAG) on campus with the National Day of Action



Ahmed bin Suhaib, Co-Education Officer (NDA). We spoke to students, distributed pamphlets and invited them to join us in protesting both the restructure of the university and the de-regulation of fees.

We've also campaigned against the restructure of the University, and collaborated with the EAG to ensure student voices are heard. Unfortunately, the restructure is going ahead despite the widespread opposition to it. We kept students updated with the progress and wrote a detailed summary of the restructure for Egrad and Honi.

A large campaign that we ran this year was to get Transport Concessions for International Students in NSW. This campaign was supported by five other student organizations including the National Union of

Students. Additionally, Jenny Leong from the Australian Greens, MP for Newtown, has also supported the campaign. So far, we've collected over 5000 signatures, organized a forum and are putting significant pressure on the NSW government. We have plans to continue this campaign until we get 10,000 signatures so the NSW government have to discuss it.

Additionally, this year, SUPRA was allocated two pages in the Counter Course handbook that is produced by the SRC each year. We asked for feedback from students as well as the SUPRA staff. At the beginning of the term, SUPRA assisted many students who failed BUSS5000 with their complaints against the Business School. We spoke to the students about their experience and got their feedback about the Business school, which we then wrote about in the Counter Course Handbook. Unfortunately, since we did not have much space, we had to restrict ourselves in terms of the information we could include. Hopefully, in the future, SUPRA can get allocated more pages or have its own Counter Course handbook so that all faculties can get included.

In February 2016, we helped the University of Sydney launch its first Research Bazaar (ResBaz). ResBaz provided postgraduates with the opportunity to learn data analysis software for free. We were part of the ResBaz organizing committee and helped out during all three days of ResBaz. We also tried to setup the hacky hour, an hour where all research students can discuss their data analysis issue, but we did not find a student who could run the hour.

Currently, we are in the process of compiling an Election Cheat Sheet for postgraduate students. We are contacting the major parties re their policies on important issues that affect students and will then compile their responses so that students have a good idea of how the different policies will affect them.

Further, in November 2015, SUPRA endorsed the climate march, and education portfolio played its part in promoting the march and recruiting students to take part in it. Besides that, we helped councillors promote campaigns that they were interested in, through EGrad and Honi.

Social Events

We have increased the number of social events that SUPRA organizes this year with an aim to reach more students. The biggest event we organized this year was the Inaugural SUPRA and USU Postgraduate Ball



SUPRA @ O-Week 2016

which was a huge success. The Ball was proposed by Co-Education Officer Fatima and both of us worked diligently to make sure that it happened. We are thankful to the USU for its support and hope that the Ball becomes an annual event that even more postgrads attend next year.

Additionally, Wine and Cheese has been held regularly this term and attendance numbers have increased as the term has progressed. To making things even more interesting, we organized a Trivia Night with the Wine and Cheese for March. We really enjoyed putting the event together and hope that all those who attended it did too. Maybe in the coming term, SUPRA will have themed trivia as well!

Other great events that were organized by co-Education officer Ahmed and Women's Officer Forough Ghanizadeh include the End of Year party at the two wolves, and the Spit Bridge to Manning Walk. Both events were well attended and postgraduates appreciated the opportunity to talk with other postgraduates across the faculties. A Coffee evening was also held so that postgrads can de-stress and discuss the issues in their faculties.

Assisting other Equity Portfolios

Ahmed also assisted both the ATSI and Queer officers with their events. He assisted the ATSI Officer to

organize two movie screenings and provided moral support.

He also worked with the Queer Officer to launch the Rainbow Campus Now Campaign, the details of which can be found in the annual report of the Queer Officer. Moreover, he took the responsibility of International Students Office when the position was vacant. In this capacity, he spoke at the International Students welcome during O-Week, represented students issues to the City of Sydney, got involved in tenancy legislation submission and spoke at ABC radio about issues faced by international students.

Administration

As executives, we worked to ensure SUPRA run smoothly this year. We also contributed to both SSAF initiatives and Tenancy Legislation Submission.

Recommendations

As mentioned by the last Education Officer, the duty statement of the Education Portfolio is too vague and does not define the role adequately. As a consequence, executive members had a difference in opinion about what sort of work should be undertaken by the Education Officers. However, we decided to focus on what we felt passionate about. However, to avoid such situations in the future, we strongly recommend the duty

statement be divided into two different roles: Education Officer and Social Officer. The former will strictly run campaigns and the latter will be responsible for all social events.

We also believe that it is crucial for Education Officers to be included in the Academic Board meetings and some of its committees. It is unreasonable to launch campaigns without giving Education Officers the chance to contribute to university policies through the Academic Board.

Thus, we believe that there is plenty of work for the future education officers. We encourage our successor(s) to work on SUPRA's own version of the Counter Course Handbook, to do more outreach with postgraduates of various faculties and campuses to ensure all their concerns are being heard and to relaunch the Postgraduate Education Action Collective. The collective is a great way to unite all postgraduate representatives in dealing with common postgraduates related issues.

Finally we would like to thank SUPRA SAAO, Admin, Executive, Councillors and last but certainly not least, the subscribers. Your support has allowed us to achieve what we did this term. We are very proud to have been the Education Officers and hope that similar support is extended to our successor(s).



SUPRA & USU Postgraduate Ball 2016

Director of Student Publications

Myriarm Song (1st July 2015 - 7th September 2015)

Christian Jones (7th September 2015 - Present)



Christian & the 88th SRC President, Chloe Smith

I took on the role of Director of Student Publications in September of 2015 and have realised that it is one big role to take on along with the Co-Presidency. I was thrown in the deep end with this role, taking on various projects in the term including: Honi Soit, new website, Survival Guide, Calendar and in my final days, the Thesis Guide and Annual Report.

Honi Soit is a very time consuming role to take on, with creating a calendar for the semester, contacting people to create content, following up on people to create content, liaising with Publications staff to com-

plete the layout of the content. I found this a little overwhelming in the second semester with the production of the calendar and Survival Guide happening at the same time. I enlisted the help of Treasurer, Josh Preece to aid in this while I was working on the Survival Guide. This was a huge bearing off my shoulders in this busy period of the year. We managed to have a heap of content in this semester produced by the SAAO team and by Councillors, particularly the Equity OBs. I feel we have taken Honi from a few undecipherable pages in the 2014/15 term to postgrad pages flourishing with new content (most of the time). Thank you to the Admin team for putting up with my late content every week.

In 2016, SUPRA will be getting a new website! The site is not currently live, however content is being updated and placed onto the site as we have this meeting. The Admin team has been given training to be able to change parts of our website without going through a third party anymore. I look forward to seeing the finished product in the near future. Along with the website, we are also upgrading our eGrad newsletter, which will also happen in the very near future.

The Postgrad Pages

PRESENTED BY  SUPRA

New Honi Soit Pages Title

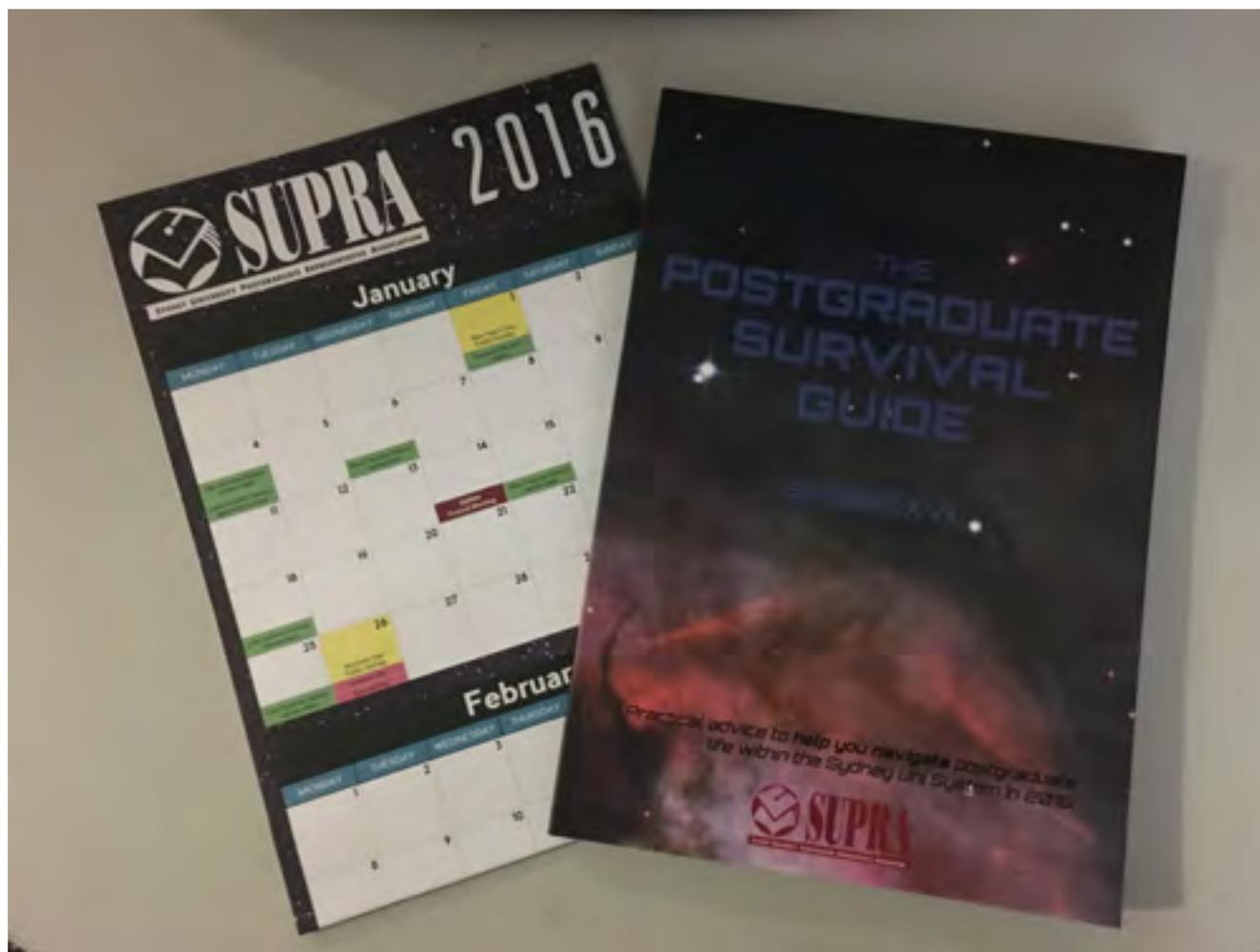
The Survival Guide took many, many hours of my time in the October – December period, requiring meetings of the team to decide on the direction of the guide and team, updating the content, collecting content, including images and text, from various sources in Council and Staff. For the first time, the Survival Guide included 2 pages for the University of Sydney Union. This was the first instance where the USU has been able to advertise themselves in this Guide. At the same time as the Survival Guide was being produced, our 2016 Calendar was produced by another member of the Publications team. This too, included USU annual events for Postgrads to know about what is happening on campus. I hope this close collaboration with the USU continues into the future.

Although there has only been one meeting for updating the Thesis Guide, this will be a project that will be mainly taken on by the next DSP. This will be a good opportunity for SUPRA to start our movement into online content, with the development of the new web-

site, this will be possible.

The final publication I'd like to mention is this one. The Annual Report has been a long endeavour over the past month. Collecting reports, writing my own report, having a crack at using InDesign for the first time. So you can be the judge on whether I have done a good job with this publication.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the whole Admin team for all their assistance in making SUPRA's publications a reality this year. I'd also like to thank them to putting up with my late article submissions to Honi, eGrad, Survival Guide. So to Amity, Anthea, Rachel, and Louise, thank you on behalf of the 2015/16 Council for making time for me.



2016 Survival Guide and Calendar

Women's Officer

Forough Ghanizadeh (1st July 2015 - 13th April 2016)



Forough @ SUPRA BBQ at the Australian Technology Park

Written by Co-Education Officer Ahmed Suhaib

and Kylee Hartman-Warren, acting Women's Officer since May 2016

Disclaimer: We are writing this report so the AGM knows the work that was done this year by SUPRA's Women Officer Ghanizadeh. This report was compiled from monthly women's officer report presented to council during the council meetings.

This year Women's officer organized regular get together like bi-weekly coffee, cake and Chat, Trivia night, and Women's Drinks. These events helped in building a network of postgraduate women identifying students. Women officer also helped with SUPRA events like O-week, end of year party, end of semester party, Spit Bridge to Manly Walk, and Wine and Cheese.

Women Officer also worked on improving Childcare facilities available for postgraduate parents. This work included conducting a survey, presenting it at the

childcare committee meeting, and making a handbook on childcare services for postgraduate student. The childcare committee meeting discussed the possibility of increasing the number of childcare centres at the university, and a progress report would be given at the beginning of 2016. The handbook is still work in progress and needs to be continued by the next women officer. The Women's officer was also part of the seminar on effect of childcare on children's cognitive skills.

PhD parent's workshop project was established with the aim of improving academic experience of parents raising children while doing their studies. For this project Women's officer communicated with postgraduate parents on challenges they face and how to address them with the university. The workshop was attended by 40 students in October. It provided resources for postgraduate parents, increase university understanding of challenges faced by postgraduate parents, and provide tips for incoming student parents. The event report was published in eGrad and Honi Soit. Women officer also planned to address these issues in the survival guide.

Women Officer also worked on organizing movie screenings like the movie on abortion vessel campaign. The documentary was followed by a discussion session and was a successful event. To continue working on this issue women officer attended abortion campaign seminar to discuss the current situation and the work that is still required.



Kylee Hartman-Warren, Acting Womens Officer

This year women officer was part of Student Consultative Committee meetings where she raise issues facing international students, and IPRS holders. Women officer communicated with USU and university management to solve issues faced by postgraduate women collective. Women officer also represented postgraduate women at external events like Women's Equal pay Contingent Dinner, Liverpool Women's Health Centre 40th Anniversary, Role of Immigrant Women in Con-

temporary Australia and Damned Whores and God's Police. These events dealt with issues women faced at university and outside and resources available to them. Lastly, Women Officer initiated the discussion around International Student travel concession. The discussion started with NSW government taking away IPRS holders travel concession, and in order to get it back SUPRA should also advocate travel concession for all international students. This discussion developed into campaign for international student travel concession and is currently worked on by current SUPRA executives. Women officer also helped with establishing the supervisor of the year award with other research councillors.

When Forough left the role, Kylee was appointed to see out the rest of the term. Kylee worked with the Education Officer on initiatives regarding the issue of rape on college campus. She began overseeing the social media account, and coordinated the Women's Election. In light of this year's activity, we recommend that election meeting agendas be a part of the announcement of Equity Elections, and that the election of a Returning Officer be a standing item on those agendas.

We also want to thank Forough for her dedication and hard work towards SUPRA and the Postgraduate Women's Community over the past few years. We wish her the best in her study.



Forough @ SUPRA Manly Walk

Queer Officer

Rachel Evans (1st July 2015 - Present)

The campus specific work undertaken by myself and other postgraduates and undergraduates has been the Rainbow Campus Campaign – which is aiming to get Sydney University to commit to provide:

marched in Mardi Gras then gutted Safe Schools, so this rally, while small, was passionate. The grassroots campaign is all the more important to encourage given we may have a plebiscite over the issue where we will need to swing into a YES campaign with great gusto.



Presenting the Rainbow Campus Rubric to Management

1. Accessible LGBTQIA+ Space on each campus. 2. Commit portion of Student Services Amenities Fees to LGBTQIA+ services. 3. Comprehensive LGBTQIA+ staff training.

4. Give Transgender students their names back. 5. Sign on to Marriage Equality Now. 6. “We all need to pee”: Gender Neutral Bathrooms. The six steps were formulated with various trans rights, youth and Ally Network (Rainbow staff) groups. We petitioned, we Rainbow Campus launched then we met with the administration who gave us a short shrift and we are planning the next steps of the fight. We are not going to desist!

SUPRA helped with queer refugee campaigning through supporting the No Pride In Detention float in Mardi Gras and assisting through promotion and publicity the mass Uniting Church meeting about queer refugee rights. Queers also cohered an inspiring Queer Block for the refugee rights Palm Sunday march. I worked with the 78ers on #LetthemStay photoshoots.

Through my involvement with the Palm Sunday committee – representing SUPRA and Queer rights organizations, I helped raise the student and queer flag of support. Because queers suffer discrimination, when we discover others suffering under the yolk of oppression, we empathize and readily give solidarity. ‘No one is free until everyone is free’ is a slogan of the Stonewall, 78er movements.

Just after o-week SUPRA helped organize ‘Queer Beers’

I have helped organize Marriage Equality rallies in the CBD throughout the year with various groups and individuals – one after the Irish and US victories and one more recently outside Malcolm Turnbolls office. The LGBTQIA+ community was incensed Turnbull



Rainbow Campus Launch Marches to the VCs Office

with Postgraduate and Undergraduate queer students and allies, which worked really well in getting people

familiar with each other and prepared for the rainbow and assorted human rights and anti-corporate battles ahead.

I wrote SUPRA articles in Honi Soit, New Matilda, samesame about queer refugees, marriage equality, Safe Schools and the Rainbow Campus campaign.

I assisted refugee and education campaigns and photoshoots on campus, attended National Tertiary Education meetings and Ally Network meetings. I attended Queer Collaborations in 2015 and the Education Conference as well, and spent a lot of time at Redfern Tent Embassy in this period, developing links between the queer rights and Aboriginal rights struggles.

I visited Bolivia and met with Indigenous leaders, student, feminist and queer activists, and was able to kiss the cheek of revolutionary president Evo Morales and noted activist and Vice President Alvaro Linera Garcia. I assisted SUPRA in o-week, in a number of Wine and Cheese's, in a great screening of 'Pride' for o-week and helped with the International Student Fair Go, concession card campaign, attended lots of rallies and held



the SUPRA flag high.

The latest queer rights battle to erupt has been the Defend Safe Schools fight which SUPRA has assisted, painting a great banner and working on the wording of, and printing lovely bright rainbow petitions calling for the reinstatement of the anti-bullying, LGBTIQ+ pride program in primary and highschools.

I look forward to continuing the queer rights work of SUPRA in the next year.



Rainbow Campus Launch 2016

Disability Officer

Marguerite Biasatti (1st July 2015 - Present)

It is with much enthusiasm, that I review the past year in my role as Disability Officer.

On being elected in the role, there was much deliberation about the role and how the needs of postgraduate students who identify to having a disability could be best met, as the position had been vacant and there was nil position description for the role.

Fortunately, as I was a postgraduate student who identifies as having a disability and had experienced the application processes in the registration with Disability Services, I had a solid starting point to explore how best to support postgraduate students who identify with a disability. Moreover, my career in Australian Universities in Student Support Services and current enrolment in the Doctor of Social Work program had provided key experience in working with senior university staff and systems to advocate for postgraduate students.

Key aims and summary of campaign

As there was no benchmark to define both the role and past practices of Disability Officer at SUPRA, my work plan and campaign for the year, focused on practicalities and support.

The key aims were to:

- identify what support services and policies guided student support provision for postgraduate students' who identified as having a disability.
- to make transparent university support service policies that aimed to meet the needs of students who identify as having a disability.

In order to achieve these aims, a range of strategies were employed.

Firstly, I needed to obtain an accurate picture of what services were provided by whom to support postgraduate students who identify as having a disability. In order to obtain this information, I completed the following:

- Reviewed university policy and documents that aim to provide support, such as, 'Disability Services' and accompanying application.
- Obtained statistics.
- Explored who were the key stakeholders in service provision.

Secondly, it was considered central that the SUPRA Disability Officer participated in key meetings to raise awareness and advocate the needs of postgraduates who identify as having a disability. This was achieved by:

- Consistent communication and the introduction of myself and role to Disability Services, attended key meetings, such as, the Disability Action Plan Consultative Committee.
- Organised SUPRA stall at Disability Awareness Week in September 2015 with positive feedback from students. For example, one student reported at the SUPRA stall: 'Thank you for making us visible.'
- Worked with Indigenous Equity Officer in regard to air conditioning problems in the Assistive Technology Lab in the Fisher Library.
- Promoted the importance of team work at SUPRA. I participated in the Orientation Week stalls, postgraduate student inductions for both academic semesters for international students and those who reside at International House and importantly, provided consultation and support for staff at SUPRA.
- Attended CAPA: the Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations Incorporated. I participated in the Disability Officer meetings to advocate the needs and concerns of University of Sydney students' and provided a report to SUPRA Council about the conference.

Thirdly, it was important and vital that support and the provision of accurate information was provided to postgraduate students. This was achieved by:

- timely responses to students who emailed.
- The provision of a new 'Coffee Break' program for all postgraduates who identify as having a disability.

Fourthly, on having obtained the practical information of service provision for students who identify as having a disability, it was important to also be aware of wider national social policy that may influence support for postgraduate students' who identify as having a disability. In order to obtain a 'bigger picture', I completed the following.

- Organised a visit to the Australian Human Rights Commission.
- I obtained and reviewed the report on the National Inquiry into Employment Discrimination Against Older Australians and Australians with Disability and the domestic legal framework of the Disability Discrimination Act 1992.

Reports of the unemployment rate for people with disability is nearly twice that for people without disability (6:2016) and 45% of people with disability live on or near the poverty line (8:2016) have potential future implications for postgraduate students who identify with a disability.

- I was invited to provide feedback on the Exposure Draft of the Disability Access and Other Measures) bill of 2016 by the University Disability Action Plan Consultative Committee.

Achievements, reflections and strategies for the future

On review, I have achieved all aims to obtain up to date knowledge of what services are provided for students who identify with a disability. On starting the position, it took many unexpected communications with key stake holders' in service provision which are in constant change, to make the role visible.

As reported, the first substantial issue is that postgraduate students need to formally register with the University's Disability Services. The Disability Service does provide support in regard to the establishment of academic plans and adjustments with associated alternative formats for assessments, physical access and modifications and assistive technology. For those with learning challenges, particularly the requirement of medical specialist or psychological test completion is costly. Significantly, what has been unveiled in my research and advocacy is that for research postgraduates the accommodations are less clear and require ongoing communication and clarification. For example, the

provision of professional transcriptions of research data vs student typing up data and the provision of dust free rooms for those with asthma/allergies. In order for the groundwork I have attained to prosper, it is recommended and indeed vital that the forthcoming Disability officer

- Capitalise on relationships build up in 2015/6.
- Obtain from Disability Support Services, clarity on their application process and advocate the use of G.P's in lieu of specialists to complete applications to reduce cost and stress to students.
- Advocate postgraduate student participation in the design of applications and utility of faculty based support.
- Continue 'Coffee Break' program.

It has been a brilliant year working with the SUPRA team and I wish all postgraduates the best in their university experience at the University of Sydney.

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Officer

Michael Butler (1st July 2015 - Present)



Mike Butler, Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Officer

To quote Dickens this past year has been the best of times and the worst of times for indigenous representation at SUPRA.

I say it was also the best of times as the portfolio has significantly grown very much in keeping with awareness of indigenous issues both in the student and greater community. Between August - December, the SUPRA Indigenous portfolio significantly financially supported the Redfern Tent Embassy which successfully fought to keep Aboriginal housing on Eveleigh Street ("the Block"), and a number of non-indigenous postgraduates from both Australian and international contributed to that fight.

Thanks to a council motion we were able to, for the first time in its history, have SUPRA officially recognise January 26th as Invasion Day, which is significant progress for postgraduate relations.

This culminated in us "reclaiming" Australia on January 26 by boat on Sydney Harbour (apparently it is against the law to land a boat at Barangaroo - wish Circular Quay had that in 1788) as well as laying wreaths of remembrance on behalf of the universities postgraduates in solidarity with the indigenous people of Australia who mourn on this day for their loss.

We were also able to put on a series of indigenous film screenings to educate the postgraduate community on aboriginal issues. These to date have been particularly successful and the most recent had the honour of bringing two-time Nobel peace prize nominee and West Papuan independence leader Benny Wenda to the University.

A significant event for the portfolio was also bringing awareness about the Frontier Wars which described the series of conflicts between white and indigenous people as Australia was opened up. During the Anzac Day commemorations we posted this message on the front lawns of the University.

We have also created good relations with the universities indigenous "block" students. These students come from remote locations for one week out of the month for health studies and have largely been forgotten and are particularly isolated on campus. The portfolio is actively addressing that and giving them the voice they deserve, despite council regulations which effectively preclude them from even voting in their equity groups. We have increased the knowledge and Indigenous learning network significantly over the year including working with the VC Shane Houston's office. We have also significantly increased our cooperation with the National indigenous Postgraduate Students group

NATSIPA and in March 2016 was elected as the National men's indigenous representative.

We also supported Grandmothers Against Forced Removals thanks to an initiative by Queer equity officer Rachel Evans to the tune of \$1500.

In many ways the Indigenous portfolio is unique to the others. While we only have small numbers compared to the equity groups, that doesn't make us less important, it makes us more important.

Indigenous students and knowledge and understanding of indigenous issues is woefully low at this university. Even non-indigenous postgraduates studying indigenous studies are big on bluster and outrage but lack genuine compassion and understanding so often needed in the complexity of indigenous issues. Will disappointing, it is a reality that has to be faced and also shows the great opportunities for progress on these issues. It's for this reason I have great optimism that things are improving and I hope the following year continues on the work that's been done.



SUPRA's Monthly Wine & Cheese 2015

International Officer

Nayeem Faisal Shaikh (1st July 2015 - 20th January 2016)

Dhaval Sanath Shukla (24th March 2016 - Present)



Dhaval Shukla, International Officer

It's been only five weeks since I joined SUPRA as the International Students Officer (on March 24th, 2016). In this short period of time, I first had to learn the ins and outs of the role in order to create a base that I could start from and also make up for the lost time (since this position was vacant for 2 months and no or negligible work had been done in this period). The first thing that I tried to do after joining this role at SUPRA was to engage with the postgrad international student community at the University of Sydney. I made a 3 stage plan to do so and the first stage was to try to change the way in which the USYD INTERNATIONAL POSTGRADS Facebook group was managed by the previous officer and creating an environment where students feel free to connect with us as well as other international students.

Next stage of this three stage process was to organize events (Like pizza party, wine and cheese etc.) and promote them in SUPRA page (Facebook), USYD INTERNATIONAL POSTGRADS group (Facebook) as well as eGrad so that international students can come to those events and socialize with other postgrads

students (both local as well as international students). An international students' pizza party was recently organized in collaboration with SRC, which gave the international students (Postgrad) an opportunity to socialize with their undergrad counterparts. We (both at SUPRA and SRC) were overwhelmed with the response that we got, for we registered an attendance of 103 students.

The third and final stage of this process would be to make up a 5 student's (international) group who would act as my advisors and bring up the issues that they would want me to work on. Also, would be included in this stage is to change the SUPRA website (make it more user friendly) as well as suggest a proposal of building a mobile application for SUPRA.

There are a lot more campaigns and events planned for international students, for example 1. International students' travel concession forum 2. International students' employment issues 3. International students visa information session, etc. and I would work very hard to make sure that international students have a pleasant experience while they are studying at this university.



International Students Pizza Party, 2016

Rural & Regional Officer

Douglas King (1st September 2015 - 8th February 2016)

Elizabeth Millar (24th March 2016 - Present)



Elizabeth Millar, Rural & Regional Officer

I was elected onto council late March for two terms, taking over from previous Rural and Regional officer Douglas King. Moving from South Australia this year to undertake my masters, I am very pleased to have the opportunity to represent rural and regional postgraduate students at the University of Sydney.

I have taken up the R&R Officership at the conclusion of a progressive year, for both the portfolio and for SUPRA. Although my time at SUPRA has been short to date, I am aware that the organisation has gone from strength to strength. This is positive for all the offices that contribute to the makeup of SUPRA. I believe the past 2015- 2016 council term has set a solid foundation for the R&R portfolio to reform and to expand.

During recent years the R&R position has been in low gear, and at times dormant. Douglas was the R&R Officer for the majority of the past council term, contrib-

uting to the majority of the work. Douglas was the first in years to occupy the position. This was perhaps the greatest achievement for the portfolio during the past term. Douglas has secured key information regarding actual numbers of R&R postgrads. As of 2015, there are 780 postgrads from the country and 3,980 postgrads that study at external campuses. This is vital information that defines the need for both country and external postgrads to have representation. These groups of students are susceptible to not receiving the same services and opportunity as those on main campuses.

Much of Douglas's work that he undertook was non-portfolio related. This is a key indicator for me, as clearly the needs and demands of 'rural and regional' postgrads are changing, as the university has changed. Work was performed for students at external campuses. Camden Farm was in need of particular attention. Douglas visited Camden campus, attending a BBQ in August last year. From this visit issues with Accommodation Services were identified, also the poor condition of amenities and services at the campus. Consultation with the Learning Centre regarding external students access to academic support achieved success- such access was secured.

All of Douglas' contributions to the portfolio, from awakening it from a long sleep to doing the ground-work- identifying the rural and regional students who are in need of support, make for a solid grounding for future reform. His main focus on consultation with postgrads on non-metropolitan campuses has hailed a sense of rejuvenation at the close of the 2015- 2016 council term. I intend to gain momentum into a new term, strengthening the portfolio; ultimately so post-graduates as far flung as the Whitsundays, Narrabri and Goulburn, may benefit fully from the support of SUPRA.

SUPRA Council

As at 31st May 2016

General Councillors

Syed Atif

Joseph Callingham

Fawn Cha

Gareth Charles

Tavenisa Diri

Rashmi Dixit

Angelica Fernandez

Kieran Latty

Lily Matchett

Edward McMahon

Carlos Monteverde

Aaron Moye

Alexandra Nixon

Nick Rowbotham

Anna Sanders-Robinson

Melanie Stevenson

Executive & Office Bearers

Co-Presidents

Christian Jones

Kylee Hartman-Warren

Vice-President

Thomas Greenwell

Co-Education Officers

Fatima Rauf

Ahmed Suhaib

Women's Officer (acting)

Kylee Hartman-Warren

ATSI Officer

Michael Butler

Disability Officer

Maguerite Biasatti

Secretary

Kane Hardy

Treasurer

Joshua Preece

Director of Student

Publications

Christian Jones

Queer Officer

Rachel Evans

International Officer

Dhaval Sanath Shukla

Rural & Regional Officer

Elizabeth Millar

SUPRA Staff

As at 31st May 2016

Student Advice and Advocacy Officer (SAAO) & Legal Team

Adrian CARDINALI	SAAO Coordinator
Margaret KIRKBY	Senior SAAO
Francine SEETO	SAAO
Hank WHAN	SAAO
Hayley STONE (Maternity Leave)	SAAO
Vanessa CAPARAS	SAAO

Ingrid VAN TONGEREN Solicitor Redfern Legal Centre

Administration Team

John FELL	Finance Manager
Louise CORNEY	Administration Coordinator
Amity LYNCH	Administration & Publications Officer
Anthea FITZGERALD	Administration & Publications Officer

Publications and Administration Team

Pru Wirth - Administration Coordinator to 7th January 2016

Rachel Engdahl - Acting Administration Coordinator July 2015 - November 2015

Louise Corney - Administration Coordinator from 5th January 2016

Amity Lynch | Anthea Fitzgerald

2016 has seen many changes and challenges for the Publications/Admin team. We've said good bye to staff leaving and welcome to staff entering and we've seen another year of steady growth in the SUPRA case work intake and community.

SUPRA seen considerable growth in the services delivered by the SAAOs and postgraduate community engagement lead by Council. This work is under-pinned by the publications and administration team.

The intake rates for the SAAO team continues to grow. The admin team is the first point of contact for students in need be it in person, by phone or by email. Our workload has seen a dramatic increase in reception and administrative tasks which has impacted on our capacity to devote resources to publications. As a result, SUPRA was able to present an effective case to the Student Services and Amenities Fees (SSAF) negotiations to increase funding to SUPRA and our team.

The SAAO team continues to be very busy and council has been active in 2016, with well-attended, regular events for Postgrads. The admin team provide professional support to the advice and advocacy service and to SUPRA council, and have an ever-growing workload. Assisting students, booking appointments, data entry and management, compiling e-grad, filing, archiving and record keeping, assisting with events, making room bookings, organising catering, ensuring IT and maintenance requests are lodged and filled and

staffing the reception desk are all daily tasks performed by admin that keep the organisation running on a basic level. The Administration team has twice-yearly planning mornings, and tie this in with council and advocacy planning.

As well as this the day to day tasks we have had multiple projects to manage.

Inductions and Training

The 2015 council induction was well attended. The admin Coordinator of the time, Pru Wirth, provided an informative schedule including several speakers. The current Admin Coordinator, Louise Corney, is collaborating with Co-president Kylee Hartman-Wareen to develop the schedule for the incoming Council that will reflect issues that have come up through out the year such as how the Safe Spaces policy is best enacted in the work place.

Louise has been studied courses in Project Management and Indesign and Amity as furthered her training in Indesign and also taken a course in the use of digital resources and social media called Digital for Managers.

Anthea, Amity and Louise are receiving ongoing training from Phill Byrnes in Wordpress which is the platform for the new SUPRA website due in the second half of 2016.

Faculty Inductions

SUPRA attends the semester 1 and 2 faculty inductions. The admin team have built relationships with administrative staff across the university over a number of years, to ensure communication about inductions comes to SUPRA, and that we are invited to as many as possible. We produced material, organised induction packs and coordinated the attendance of SAAO's and councillors to ensure SUPRA was represented at each induction. Semester 2, 2015 and semester 1, 2016 inductions were a success and we have just started to receive the invitations for semester 2, 2016 inductions.

Publications

The administration and publications officers have worked hard to ensure SUPRA's publication continue to be of a high standard, and have made several improvements to our annual publications, and the publications production process.

Louise project managed the 2016 Survival Guide until moving into the Admin Coordinator role at the beginning of 2016. Anthea picked up the reins and produced a fantastic publication that would help any person new to The University of Sydney.

Amity project managed the 2016 SUPRA wall Calendar, with great results. The calendar has again been very popular with students. The Publications Admin Officers also published eGrad (SUPRA's e-news letter) each week during term time and fortnightly during holiday periods.

The admin and publications officers have continue liaising with the SAAO team about a range of brochures, have done countless posters, flyers and info sheets for students as well as a number of advertisements for SUPRA's Honi pages. We are looking forward to updating the Thesis Guide with new content from the advocacy team and presenting it in both print and web publications.

Website

SUPRA's website acts as one of the main contact points for students in need. While it is need of improvement, admin staff field several student enquiries coming through the website each day. SUPRA has a new

website which will be going live in the second half of 2016. The Admin Pubs team has been working steadily to have an accurate and visually appealing website that is easy to navigate. It will function as a first point of contact for students in need and provide a quick information on common concerns such as student appeals and special consideration. The website will be easy to update and maintain. This will help keep the website dynamic and also save money in the long run as most website updates will be able to be done in house.

Casework data entry and Data base

The admin team have been assisting the SAAO team with data entry. Rachel Engdahl has been of great assistance with this project. SUPRA has also engaged Phil Byrne to build a new casework database to ensure records are kept into the future and that accurate statistics can be generated from our database. The admin team have been working closely with Phill Byrne to develop this database, and ensure it is user friendly.

Elections

The admin team provided administrative support for the SUPRA elections. This task has been a big learning curve for the new Louise in her new role as the Admin Coordinator. Aside from the results of the election a major issue that has come out of this experience is that the Electoral Regulations need a significant overhaul.

Comings and Goings

Louise Corney replaced Louise Thatcher as a Publications Admin Officer in June 2015. In August Pru took 4 months leave and her position as Admin Coordinator was filled by Rachel Engdahl who did a spectacular job in a complex work environment. Shortly after her return, Pru resigned and after a rigorous selection process, Louise Corney was appointed to the role in January 2016. Louise's appointment to the role created a vacancy for a Publications Admin Officer role which was filled by Anthea in February.

Pru has made an invaluable contribution to SUPRA and her shoes will be hard to fill. Pru has worked at SUPRA in both the Publications Admin Officer role and as Admin Coordinator. The culture she has created at SUPRA is one of professionalism and support which

we plan to continue.

Moving forward

We are looking forward to inducting the new SUPRA council, commencing work on our major publications and launching our new website. We look forward to reviewing the roles in our team with a view to hiring more staff and/or increasing the hours of the current staff. This plan underpinned SUPRA's SSAF application and we look forward to making the most of it. We enjoy dealing with students accessing SUPRA's services each day and will continue to ensure students in needs are prioritised and feel SUPRA is a place that will help them.

SAAO Team

Margaret Kirkby
Francine Seeto

Hank Whan
Hayley Stone
Adrian Cardinali

Heather Mabry
Vanessa Caparas

SUPRA employs 5 full time advocacy staff to provide a free, professional, independent and confidential case-work service for postgraduate students. The service is run on a particular kind of multidisciplinary model, and over the years has employed lawyers, psychologists, social workers, welfare workers, activists who have trained up to be professional advocates, and community and women's health workers. The experience and different professional backgrounds of workers over a long period are embodied in the high quality and sophisticated advocacy support we offer students. The advocacy service works closely with SUPRA's Legal Service, and to all intents and purposes, functions as a single integrated provider for students, deepening the multidisciplinary character of SUPRA's offerings.

Built on the above foundation, our model of delivering advocacy recognises the wide diversity of the postgraduate population, and respects and celebrates the inherent strengths and abilities of postgraduate students, by fostering and supporting the ability to self-advocate. Within the limits of what is reasonably possible, we have a focus on quality of casework rather than churning through raw quantity of cases. As you will see below, our statistics are rapidly growing and demand for our services is very strong and we are widely accessible, so we are not claiming low statistics per se. We have developed, and will continue to develop resources to address growing demand and take pressure off individual workers. However even there the material is student rights-focussed and aimed at fostering strengths. Our casework itself is characterised by genuinely and respectfully listening to our students and their stories and needs, and then tailoring our responses and support.

Having this model of genuinely independent and professional quality, service is also delivered in the context of a commitment to justice and fairness for students. Over time we have progressively included demonstrated social justice commitment requirements in job

selection criteria, and expanded selection criteria to encourage linguistic and cultural diversity and competence, on top of the disciplinary variations. We are constantly working and developing our practice, and meet monthly to discuss cases and workshop issues. We are very proud of the services provided, and feel students and the University have a right to feel this as well. As an important side note, all of the above more than fulfils the University's various requirements under relevant Student Services and Amenities Fee legislation and related Guidelines, and we do note that we receive highly positive feedback from within the University community about the quality of our work.

Postgraduate study can be a great joy and rightly inspires strong commitment and high levels of intellectual and emotional investment. Related to such commitment and investment, and along with the demographics of a postgraduate population juggling the personal and professional demands of modern living, is a very wide range of personal and academic challenges. Given such challenges, the model of multidisciplinary advocacy we have developed at SUPRA is best practice for our target population, though it is one that is living and evolving and changing with the postgraduate population. It was a pleasure to serve the postgraduate community in 2015, and below is a summary of key achievements for the year.

Achievements of 2015

SUPRA's funding agreement for 2015 re-committed the advice and advocacy service to producing outcomes in six areas. These were: i) provision of individual advice and advocacy; ii) provision of a briefing service for SUPRA student representatives; iii) provision of content for SUPRA publications; iv) submission writing as appropriate; v) participation in SUPRA outreach activities; and vi) support for SUPRA networks' equity activities. Outcomes in each area are summarised below.

i) Individual Advice and Advocacy Service

Our funding agreement committed the advice and advocacy service to meet individual demand for case-work services. We predicted a modest increase in cases in 2015 and re-committed to extending our work at the satellite campuses of the University. We have met our commitments and done so in a context where we had what can reasonably be described as an explosion in demand. In 2015 we assisted students with 902 cases. This has grown progressively from 438 cases in 2008, to 541 in 2009, 610 in 2010, 605 in 2011, 585 in 2012, 623 in 2013, and 650 in 2014. The growth in cases in 2015 represents a 38.7% increase year on year, and was met without additional resources. We do note that this is not sustainable, and was only possible by being more restrictive in criteria we apply for going to meetings for appeal and plagiarism hearings and similar. We note that as of May 2016, we are projecting similar numbers for 2016 as compared to 2015 and possibly even further growth. For 2016, we worked with our administration colleagues and SUPRA's Office Bearers to develop a plan for increased self help resources and online support that will progressively become available through the year. Clearly, however, there will be a need to invest further resources in future.

Of the students who used our service in 2015, and where we have this information recorded, 56.3% were international students and 43.7% domestic students. International students are consistently recognised as an area where additional support is appropriate and needed. Given this SUPRA is proud of the over-representation of this population in our statistics, and the high level and quality of support we provide. Our coursework and research student access rate is respectively 80.2% and 19.8% of cases recorded. On the cases where we have this information, 87.2% of student cases were full time as opposed to 12.8% part time. Our part time access rates are stubbornly low and we do recog-

nise a need to investigate and appropriately address this issue in 2016. Of those cases where we have binary gender recorded, 38.8% were male and 61.2% female. This figure is also broadly in line with University statistics for postgraduates. However, we do also note that we have pressed the University in the past to begin using non-binary gender categories and will do so again in future. Our own systems are being presently updated, and though they are not online as yet, as we had expected, they will be shortly, and we will have capacity for expanded gender categories. At present we have a high proportion of cases where no gender is assigned, partly because of a will to be gender flexible and inclusive.

The six most common types of cases in 2015 were as follows, with historic figures so you can see trends. Please note that we do not have our special consideration figures at the time of preparing this annual

	Academic Appeals	Show Cause & Exclusion	Academic Honesty & Plagiarism	Tenancy	Supervision	Course Fees
2015	177	96	83	82	41	31
2014	90	75	49	79	41	14
2013	107	57	47	41	42	19
2012	85	23	38	57	39	16
2011	96	56	30	42	52	16

SUPRA's top queries for 2015

report, however, we have a reasonable belief that these would slot into our top seven queries if they were available.

As brief commentary on some of the items above, starting with academic appeals, the 2015 increase does stand out and is partly accounted for by a spike in complaints from the Business School. We note that there were substantial and strong concerns about quality of language preparation from the Centre for English Teaching prior to commencement of award programs. Afterwards, in the programs themselves, students raised teaching quality issues, cultural sensitivity shortcomings, problems with program structure, and failures to offer genuine, supportive feedback, that were setting students up to fail. Students argued en masse that this led to some startlingly high fail rates in certain subjects, and students appealed against results en masse. We note that as an organization, SUPRA

got involved in the media defending students, after internal attempts did not get far enough and after there were negative comments made by the University, and about the students, in the media. The line the advocacy team consistently ran overall, and that was reflected publically, was that shortcomings had to be addressed and students had to be supported better. We acknowledge that the Business School and the University generally have gone some way to making improvements and they should be complimented for that, though we do see a great deal more to do. Over a period of time and through casework and events, we spoke with and listened to hundreds of students about their complaints over a period of months. To those students who showed their faith in us and trusted SUPRA with your stories and that we would assist, we say thank you. We also say that in turn we worked very hard with and for you, and in collaboration with your elected student representatives to make things better. For more information on this matter, there is plenty of media that can be found by searching for BUSS5000 and BUSS6000 subject codes.

Show Cause and Exclusion case numbers are steadily increasing, though we do note that a combination of increased students, more strictness in the research student area, and some over-zealousness in the way progression rules are adjusted and applied in certain areas, means we suspect those numbers will grow further in 2016. We would call on the University to take increased care in application of show cause and exclusion powers, particularly given how big a decision it is to exclude a student and that in general, and that the University's support services and facilities and increased supervision, do not seem to be keeping pace with the increased demands placed on students and student number growth. Academic Honesty and Plagiarism cases have spiked and we expect that the roll out of large-scale policy changes in 2016 will mean further increases. SUPRA promotes high quality practice and integrity in academic conduct and referencing as can be seen in our publications. However in 2015, too many of our cases were students with relatively minor matters, where students clearly did not have the skills and base capacity to paraphrase and reference and synthesise, to the standard that the University rightly expects. This must be turned around through quality support and education. We would also urge the University to focus on its own culture at all levels, at

the same time as attempting to instill an academically rigorous and honest culture in students.

A comment seems warranted on academic misconduct and the jump in cases from a small base. Unfortunately, that increase looks set to continue on from early trends we are seeing in 2016. A striking cultural comment to make here, for research students in particular, is that the University has moved so far in the direction of encouraging fast and voluminous publication, that care needs to be taken that that is tempered back with an even stronger emphasis on quality and creativity and bravery in research. Without in any way suggesting that pumping out publications or chapters or the like too fast is at all an adequate excuse for referencing failings, there is a need to not lose sight of the best of the University's values in the drive for volume and research metrics. Moving on, we know the University is concerned about the numbers of special consideration applications, and here we would make a plea for reasonable empathy for students who face considerably more assessment requirements than their forebears, work more and may have greater housing and financial stress, and who have less opportunity for direct and supportive relations with staff, that at other times might ease the need to ever need extensions and similar. These are all issues we have seen and helped students over during the course of 2015.

Finally, commentary on tenancy is deserved, given this is a consistently high area of intake and one where we consistently help clients get much better quality outcomes than they could ever achieve without support from a professional service. Those included in our statistics in 2015 had thousands of dollars in unfairly kept bond returned, seemingly intractable repair and condition and similar disputes resolved, and precarious housing situations salvaged or at least improved because of our support. There has been a related increase in the amount of work done by us to support students at the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) over a range of cases. Obviously a great deal more can be said about our casework in all areas and the certain insights it can offer. However, perhaps the most important note here is to acknowledge the extraordinary work and affirm the team of advocacy staff who do this work day in and day out through the year, and thank the administration and support staff and members of Council who contribute in all the many ways you do,

and in your separate roles.

ii) Briefing Services

Our funding agreement required the advice and advocacy service to provide briefing and support services for SUPRA student representatives. In 2015, there were 11 University committees where briefing support services were provided to the relevant postgraduate student representatives. The committees were: Student Consultative Committee; Academic Board; Graduate Studies Committee; Academic Standards and Policy Committee; SEG Education Committee; SEG Indigenous Strategy and Services Committee; SEG Research Training Committee; SEG Workplace Health and Safety Committee; Mental Wellbeing Working Party; SEG Disability Action Plan Committee; HDR Thesis and Progression Working Party. For the Mental Wellbeing Working Party and the Progression Working Party, members of the advocacy team were participant committee members as well as briefing student Council representatives.

The briefing service assists SUPRA's student representatives to prepare well and participate fully in committees. It also supports a measure of continuity in representation from year to year, and from elected Council to elected Council. In a University context where policy and program development is an ongoing process that spans longer than the terms of office of many elected student representatives, the institutional stability provided by briefings increases the quality of SUPRA's work over time. The briefing service gives a direct means for experience from SUPRA's casework to inform SUPRA representation. Information fed up from our cases gives the University real time and quality feedback on pressing issues for postgraduate students at any given moment. It may be uncomfortable at times to receive unvarnished information and feedback that students feel more able to deliver to us than the University direct, but it is ultimately a great asset to the University as well as postgraduate students specifically. A detailed internal policy that is updated from time to time governs the operation of the briefing service.

Highlights from 2015 include work across the team in supporting policy development and feedback on Special Consideration and Simple Extension matters, via the Academic Standard and Policy Committee,

the Academic Board, and the various side groups and meetings. We flag that we do have ongoing concerns about implementation and the need for further policy and procedure reform to take into account some of the issues mentioned above. Our work in supporting student representatives on Graduate Studies Committee and in relevant related meetings and submissions, assisted in strengthening and refining supportive measures for students in supervision policies as they were revised. We note that as part of the process we pushed, with our student representatives, for substantially increased training and support for supervisors, and for mandatory professional development requirements. We did not quite get all the way on this matter, but are pleased to see moves in that direction.

The work on the APR Working Party ensured that important and student-supportive measures were included in revised policy and procedure, with the caveat that if you read our Honi Soit contributions last year you will see where we express reservations about implementation, and the importance of not using tightened processes to punish and control students. On SEG Education, there was detailed support for representatives as Learning and Teaching Policy was revised, with a note that we will be assisting to ensure related procedures are appropriate as they are developed in 2016. The Healthy Universities Working Party is one where an active role was played in directly raising the complexity and intensity of postgraduate study, and keeping that at the forefront in policy work. On the SEG Research Training front, we provided close review and input on supervision policies as they made their way through that committee as well, and briefing support emphasised student needs there as well as observing a substantial number of meetings. Finally, for Academic Board, we undertook consistent and comprehensive background and briefing support for all the large issues of 2015, assisting fulsome participation in policy debates across the University, during a period of large scale change and where the student voice was as important, if not more important, than ever.

Our role in all of the above areas was supportive of our student representatives and their effectiveness, and gives them a unique base of expertise to draw upon.

iii) SUPRA Publications

Our funding agreement committed the advice and advocacy service to produce content for professional standard publications. During 2015 we updated substantial parts of the content for SUPRA's 17th edition of the Postgraduate Survival Guide, released in February 2016. The portion of the content produced by the advice and advocacy service for this 150-page publication covers the main welfare and academic issues that postgraduate students come across. It is comprehensive and still more up to date than most of the other information sources at the University, given the large scale of policy reform in 2015. Separately, we put on hold a forecast revision and republishing of the Thesis Guide, waiting for the policy landscape to settle more. Now that changes to examination, supervision, intellectual property, progress and progression, and related policy have either gone through or will soon be finalised, we will be releasing a new edition of the Thesis Guide in 2016. Consultation with the student body will commence in June, and together with the professional publications staff at SUPRA and our student Council, an up to date version will be out by the end of the year. This Guide has been out and updated since the 1970s.

On top of these major publications, the advice and advocacy service contributes to SUPRA's eGrad newsletter, with short announcements and information on topics of interest and importance for postgraduate students. We publish a brochure on disability rights and a new general brochure on our services has been produced in 2015. The new brochure helps to make us even more accessible to postgraduates through clear and quality information. We have produced a housing guide in response to demand, and with the help of our Legal Service arranged to have it translated in Mandarin. Further updates and re-publication of short brochures or guides on academic appeals, plagiarism, and a show cause and exclusion survival kit are being re-prepared as this report is being written. Finally, we prepared various contributions on issues of policy to the Honi Soit student newspaper through the year. We ran a series on under-covered but serious issues for postgraduates, with the aim of providing information supportive and empowering for postgraduate students. We covered casual worker exploitation, abortion rights for international students, and bullying issues amongst articles on other student topics.

iv) **Submission Writing**

Our funding agreement commits the advice and advocacy service to support SUPRA Council representatives in preparing submissions for University and relevant external government and non-government bodies. Internal to the University, the advice and advocacy service was involved in responding to various policy matters. We worked with our members of Council to prepare a detailed submission to the Graduate Studies Committee in response to various proposed supervision policy changes. We were involved at various levels in preparing submission responses to the University's strategic plan. There were submissions over Special Consideration and Simple Extensions where we assisted and supported our Council. External to the University a submission was prepared in response to the 2016 statutory review of NSW tenancy laws, helping to give unique voice to the safety and security issues of postgraduate students. Survey work was completed on supervisory bullying on campus, that was translated into a paper on supervisory bullying presented at a national conference on the Gold Coast.

v) **Outreach activities**

Our funding agreement committed the advice and advocacy service to build greater awareness of services through outreach activities. Given Cumberland campus is home to the single largest postgraduate population outside of the Darlington and Camperdown campuses, we devoted one day per fortnight of staff time to be available at the Cumberland library. Students rights workshops were offered across Lidcombe, SCA and the Conservatorium by members of our team. We attended most of the orientation sessions provided by most Faculties, and gave out rights information and guides.

vi) **Postgraduate Network and Equity Group Support**

Our funding agreement committed the advice and advocacy service to support representative participation and equity group activities. The Women's Officer was supported in film night activities on abortion rights matters, and was assisted in an ongoing campaign to address international travel concession issues. The ultimate outcome of that work is ongoing collaboration between our team, the International Officer, Women's Officer, Education Officer, President and Vice Presi-

dent, to drive a broad-based multi-campus campaign to put international travel concessions back on the public agenda. The campaign is ongoing in 2016. We worked with our Indigenous Officer to raise concerns about bursary and stipend support issues. Our Queer Officer was active in 2015 over campaigns across the spectrum and we supported them on an ad hoc and as needs basis. Our Disability Officer received support from our team in Disability Awareness Week work. In all cases, the nexus between the work of SUPRA's equity officers and the advocacy team is a strong and productive one, much to the benefit of our advocacy services and those networks.

The advocacy team for 2015 consisted of Vanessa Caparas, Margaret Kirkby, Heather Mabry, Francine Seeto, Hayley Stone, Hank Whan, and myself. When I started writing this report I began putting names against everything that everyone had done, though that became impossible. I would inevitably miss an activity or an achievement out, given so much was done in 2015. I would also inevitably not be able to properly capture who did precisely which work on which project, given so much of it was collaborative. For every item mentioned above there is one, two and sometimes more members of the team devoting time, energy, enthusiasm, and deep commitment to fairness and quality of service with and for students. It was an extraordinary effort last year and I thank you all for your work, and hope I will be forgiven if I have missed something. On behalf of the whole team, I also thank the students who used our casework service and for whom it was a pleasure and a privilege to assist. We also thank our administration, finance, and publications colleagues, who go well above and beyond on so many fronts. And we thank Council members who have shown ongoing support for the advocacy service. It was a pleasure to work with and for you all, and to serve the postgraduate community.

Prepared by Adrian Cardinali, Advocacy Coordinator

Legal Service

Ingrid van Tongeren

Overview

The RLC branch office at the Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA) has been in operation since 2008. The service is funded by SUPRA, which in turn receives funding from the University from the Student Services & Amenities Fee (“SSAF”) for the service. It provides legal services to postgraduate students from any of the University’s seven campuses.

The SUPRA legal service employs one full time solicitor. Face to face appointments are available at various times during the week with Thursday afternoons being dedicated to a drop in service. Students at distant campuses and students unable to attend the SUPRA offices 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 five 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/Council Members 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, information brochures or contributions to SUPRA publications. Policy work is work that may not be related to any one particular client but aims to achieve some systemic change in the legal system, the University or the community in order to benefit a group of postgraduate students or all postgraduate students.

Casework & Advice

Demand for the legal service has continued to grow each year. In 2015 the Legal Service advised on 891 matters and provided assistance to 403 new student clients. Of these, 37 were taken on as major cases whilst 366 were able to be assisted with their matter through the provision of advice and minor casework services. Cases involve acting for and representing a student client for the duration of a matter which can be for some time. Providing advice and minor casework services also involve providing the student with the legal advice and assistance necessary to deal with their matter but where this only involves some minor follow up work that can be completed over a short period of time. During 2015, 42% of the student clients of the legal service were international students and 58% were domestic students. For those who specified gender, 56% of student clients were female, with 44% being male. Further, 70% of student clients were course work students, with 30% being higher degree by research students. In addition, 21% were students from campuses of the University other than the main Camperdown/Darlington campus.

All faculties of the University were represented as follows: - Business School 20%, Medicine 14%, Engineering & Information Technology 8%, Science 8%, Law 8%, Arts & Social Sciences 8%, Education &

Social Work 7%, Sydney College of the Arts 5%, Health Sciences 5%, Architecture, Design & Planning 3%, Dentistry 3%, Pharmacy 3%, Veterinary Science, the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, Nursing & Midwifery, and Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources being 2% each.

The main areas in which legal assistance was provided in 2015 relate to the following areas of law: - University, Government, & Administrative Matters (19%), General Civil Matters not Listed Separately (19%), Intellectual Property (16%), Credit and Debt (9%), Consumer (8%), Employment (8%), and Motor vehicle accidents – property damage (7%), Road traffic and motor regulatory offences (5%) with the remaining 9% being accounted for across the full range of other legal areas in which advice was given.

University 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 overwhelming majority of university matters have concerned the area of Intellectual Property, either through the provision of independent advice on contracts prior to the assignment of rights or in handling disputes with the University.

Consumer and Credit/Debt Matters

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. 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. The necessity for the student 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 pro-

vided representation to students in these matters at the Local Court.

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 (i.e., 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.

Motor vehicle accidents

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 judgments in their favour and, where necessary, to successfully enforce the judgments 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.

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. Overwhelmingly, the involvement of the legal service has resulted in achieving very favourable outcomes for the students. In addition, the service has successfully represented a number of students in defended hearings.

Community Legal Education

The legal service has provided community legal information and education sessions to a number of students in the areas of intellectual property, traffic offences & fines, consumer contracts (specifically telecommunications service provider contracts), motor vehicle accidents (property damage), tenancy, privacy law, and employment.

In addition, the service has produced a range of legal facts sheets in areas of special interest to postgraduate students, specifically in the areas of intellectual property, fines, consumer law, contracts (specifically telecommunications service provider contracts), and privacy.

During the period, we contributed the Legal Section of the 2015 Postgraduate Survival Guide. This included legal information on matters of interest to the postgraduate student population including Intellectual Property, Contracts, Privacy, Consumer Law, Tenancy, and Fines. We also contributed updates to the previously written Intellectual Property Law Section of the 2014 Thesis Guide.

Policy Work

The Legal service has been involved in an advisory capacity in the SUPRA work in these areas. Specifically, the service has contributed to both external

submissions written by the SUPRA staff and Council members on matters relevant to postgraduate students and international postgraduate students, and to internal policy submissions written by SUPRA staff and Council members in relation to a variety of proposed changes to University Policy and Rules. Briefing/Advice services to Council Members and equity groups on legal issues or questions that arose for Councillors in the course of their duties were also provided.

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

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015

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

31 DECEMBER 2015

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Chartered Accountants

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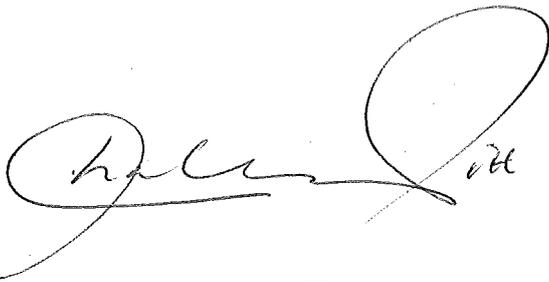
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DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE BY CM PITT & CO TO THE COUNCILLORS OF THE SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE ASSOCIATION (SUPRA)

As lead auditor for the audit of Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA) for the year ended 31 December 2015, I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, there have been:

1. No contraventions of the auditor independence requirements of the *Corporations Act 2001* in relation to the audit; and
2. No contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.



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

Dated: 12 February 2016.



Chartered Accountants

Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE ASSOCIATION
STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

Page 2

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015

	Note	2015 \$	2014 \$
University Funding		1,214,030	1,148,000
Interest received		15,770	18,436
Employment Expenditure	6A	(1,092,785)	(947,881)
Administration Expenditure		(206,548)	(195,262)
Activities & Functions		(31,726)	(24,384)
Publications		(11,249)	(12,387)
Deficit before income tax		<u>(112,508)</u>	<u>(13,479)</u>
Income tax expense		-	-
Deficit after income tax for the year		<u>(112,508)</u>	<u>(13,479)</u>
Other comprehensive income for the year		-	-
Total (deficit) for the year attributed to members of the Association		<u><u>(112,508)</u></u>	<u><u>(13,479)</u></u>

The accompanying notes form part of these accounts.

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE ASSOCIATION

Page 3

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2015

	Note	2015 \$	2014 \$
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash & cash equivalents	2	548,083	597,601
Trade & other receivables	3	<u>5,790</u>	<u>6,809</u>
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		<u>553,873</u>	<u>604,410</u>
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Furniture, plant and equipment	4	<u>-</u>	<u>1,977</u>
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		<u>-</u>	<u>1,977</u>
TOTAL ASSETS		<u>553,873</u>	<u>606,387</u>
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade & other payables	5	98,452	88,499
Employee benefits	6B	<u>40,053</u>	<u>35,666</u>
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>138,505</u>	<u>124,165</u>
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Employee benefits	6B	<u>362,971</u>	<u>317,316</u>
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>362,971</u>	<u>317,316</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES		<u>501,476</u>	<u>441,481</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>52,397</u>	<u>164,905</u>
EQUITY			
Retained Earnings	7	<u>52,397</u>	<u>164,905</u>
TOTAL EQUITY		<u>52,397</u>	<u>164,905</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these accounts.

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE ASSOCIATION

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015

	Note	2015 \$	2014 \$
RETAINED EARNINGS			
Balance at the beginning of the year		164,905	178,384
(Deficit) attributed from operations		(112,508)	(13,479)
Balance at the end of the financial year	7	<u>52,397</u>	<u>164,905</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these accounts.

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE ASSOCIATION

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015

	Note	2015 \$	2014 \$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
<i>Receipts</i>			
University Funding		1,214,030	1,148,000
Interest Received		<u>16,778</u>	<u>19,139</u>
		<u>1,230,808</u>	<u>1,167,139</u>
<i>Payments</i>			
Payments to suppliers and employees		<u>(1,280,326)</u>	<u>(1,067,960)</u>
		<u>(1,280,326)</u>	<u>(1,067,960)</u>
Net Cash provided by / (used in) operating activities	9	<u>(49,518)</u>	<u>99,179</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Purchase of Property, plant and equipment		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Net Cash provided by/(used in) investing activities		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
(Decrease)/ Increase in cash held		(49,518)	99,179
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		<u>597,601</u>	<u>498,422</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	2	<u>548,083</u>	<u>597,601</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these accounts.

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015

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 1 February 2016.

Compliance with Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements

The financial statements of Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA) comply with Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements as issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB).

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) Economic Dependence

The financial report is prepared on the basis that SUPRA is a going concern. SUPRA is dependent on the allocation of funds from the Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) by the University of Sydney. The University of Sydney provides SUPRA with premises, utilities and computers, in order to conduct its operations. No dollar value has been attributed to these services.

(b) Furniture, Plant and Equipment

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

The carrying amount of furniture, 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 2015

CONTINUED

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

Furniture, 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 Benefits

(i) Wages, salaries and annual leave

Liabilities for wages, salaries and annual leave expected to be settled within 12 months of the reporting date are recognised in respect of employees' services up to the reporting date and are measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liabilities are settled.

(ii) Long service leave

Employee benefits for long service leave payable no later than one year have been recognised with respect to the employee period to service and leave taken up to the reporting date and are measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liabilities are settled. There have been no changes to the method used to calculate the liability.

(iii) Termination benefits

Termination benefits are payable when employment is terminated before the normal retirement date, or when an employee accepts voluntary redundancy in exchange for these benefits.

SUPRA recognises a liability for the payment of termination to staff in accordance with enterprise agreement 2011. There has been no decision to terminate staff. The provision has been created with respect to uncertainty of continuing funding by Government of the Student and Administration Service Fee. (refer note 1(a)). A decrease in funding would impact on the scale of services provided and the staff employed. The sum set aside is 80 % of the measured amount at the reporting date.

(iv) National Entitlement Security Trust (NEST)

SUPRA have contributed to the National Entitlement Security Trust (NEST) towards future liability to pay employee benefits and the account is specific for this purpose. (refer note 2 and 6)

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015

CONTINUED

- (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.
- (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 2015.
- (n) **New and amended standards adopted by the Association**
None of the new standards and amendments to standards that are mandatory for the first time for the financial year beginning 1 January 2015 affected any of the amounts recognised in the current period or any prior period and are not likely to affect future periods.

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE ASSOCIATION

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NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015

	2015 \$	2014 \$
CONTINUED		
NOTE 2 Cash & Cash Equivalents		
Cash at Bank and on Hand	110,480	173,388
Deposit with NEST	224,419	218,820
Term Deposits	213,184	205,393
	<u>548,083</u>	<u>597,601</u>
NOTE 3 Trade & Other Receivables		
Sundry Debtors	500	500
Accrued Interest Receivable	3,032	4,041
Prepayments	2,258	2,268
	<u>5,790</u>	<u>6,809</u>
NOTE 4 Furniture, plant and equipment		
Furniture, plant and equipment at cost	121,422	121,422
Less, Accumulated Depreciation	<u>(121,422)</u>	<u>(119,445)</u>
	<u>-</u>	<u>1,977</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
Opening Balance	-	1,977	-	1,977
Additions	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-
Depreciation expense	-	(1,977)	-	(1,977)
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

NOTE 5 Trade & Other Payables

Current

Sundry payables and accrued expenses	<u>98,452</u>	<u>88,499</u>
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NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015

	2014	2013
	\$	\$
CONTINUED		
NOTE 6A Employee Remeuneration		
Salaries & Stipends	916,754	777,762
Superannuation	89,094	75,833
Employee benefit provisions	50,042	64,318
Payroll Management Systems	4,401	4,113
Payroll Tax	8,556	3,864
Staff Development and Training	8,476	10,263
Staff Support & supervision	5,319	2,884
Staff Travel, Meals & Accommodation	3,740	3,453
Workers Compensation Insurance	5,926	5,336
Sundries	476	57
	<u>1,092,785</u>	<u>947,881</u>
 NOTE 6B Employee benefits liabilities		
Current		
Provision for Annual Leave	40,053	35,666
Non Current		
Provision for Long Service Leave	67,578	20,933
Provision for Redundancy	295,392	296,383
	<u>362,971</u>	<u>317,316</u>
<p>At 31 December 2015 the total amount provided for a future liability was \$403,024. Funds to extents of \$213,184 are held on behalf of employees in the National Entitlement Security Trust (NEST).</p>		
 NOTE 7 Retained Funds		
Retained Funds at the beginning of the year	164,905	178,384
(Deficit)	(112,508)	(13,479)
Retained Funds at the end of the year	<u>52,397</u>	<u>164,905</u>
 NOTE 8 Auditors Remuneration		
Audit of financial statements	7,500	7,500
 NOTE 9 Reconciliation of Net Cash Inflow from Operating Activities to Surplus/(Deficit)		
Net Cash Inflow/(Outflow) from operating activities	(49,518)	99,179
Depreciation	(1,977)	(250)
Change in Operating Assets and Liabilities		
Increase/(Decrease) in Other Current Assets	(1,019)	(841)
(Increase)/Decrease in Trade and other payables	(9,952)	(47,249)
(Increase)/Decrease in Employee Benefits	(50,042)	(64,318)
(Deficit) for the year	<u>(112,508)</u>	<u>(13,479)</u>

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015

CONTINUED

NOTE 10 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 3.2% (2014 -2.88%).

(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

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NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015

CONTINUED

NOTE 11 Lease

SUPRA have a new lease agreement with Camnet Pty Ltd from August 2015.

Minimum operating lease payments are as follows:

	within 1 yr	1 - 5 yrs
31-Dec-15	\$14,247	\$51,053

Lease expenses during the financial year was \$ 13,017. (2014 - \$ 9,404)

NOTE 12 Events Subsequent to Balance Date

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

NOTE 13 Related Parties

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

NOTE 14 Association Details

The office of University of Sydney Postgraduate Representative Association is situated at Level 2, Holme Building (A09), The University of Sydney NSW 2006.

Permanent employees at year end were nine (9) (2014 - 9)

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

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

STATEMENT BY THE SUPRA COUNCIL

Page 13

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 2015;
- (b) the Statement of Financial Position is drawn up so as to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Association as at 31 December 2015;
- (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 allocation of funds from the Students Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) by the University of Sydney.
- (e) the extent and scale of services that would be available beyond 31 December 2015 are dependent on funds allocated from the SSAF.

The Accounts have been made in accordance with applicable accounting Standards at Sydney on 1 February 2016.



**KYLEE HARTMAN
CO PRESIDENT**



**CHRISTIAN JONES
CO PRESIDENT**

C M PITT & CO

Chartered Accountants

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FACSIMILE (02) 9715 1566

CHARLES M PITT B.BUS FCA

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STRATHFIELD NSW 2135
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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), which comprises the balance sheet as at 31 December 2015 and the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes and the statement by members of the committee.

Council's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The Council of the Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA) is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view 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.

Audit Opinion

In our opinion, the financial report of Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA), is in accordance with Constitution and Regulations of SUPRA, including:

- i. Giving a true and fair view of the association's financial position as at 31 December 2015 and Of its performance for year ended on that date; and
- ii. Complying with Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Requirements (including the Australian Accounting Interpretations).



Charles M Pitt
C M PITT & CO
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

ICCA Membership No. 20180
Registered Company Auditor No. 2944
Unit 6 & 7, 2 Philip Street Strathfield

Date:

10 February 2016

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015

	Note	2015 \$	2014 \$
Income			
University Funding		1,214,030	1,148,000
Interest received		15,770	18,436
Total Income		<u>1,229,800</u>	<u>1,166,436</u>
Expenses			
Employment Expenses			
<i>Salaries and Wages</i>			
Administration Salaries		258,703	230,789
Administration Superannuation		26,042	23,710
Relief Student Advisors' Salaries		14,354	8,571
Relief Student Advisors' Superannuation		1,359	814
Student Advisors' Salaries		474,842	375,061
Student Advisors' Superannuation		45,842	36,057
<i>Total salaries and wages</i>		<u>821,143</u>	<u>675,001</u>
<i>Stipends</i>			
Disabilities Officer's Stipend		-	3,750
Disabilities Officer's Superannuation		-	275
International Student Officer's Stipend		5,982	5,727
International Student Officer's Superannuation		568	533
Indigenous Officer's Stipend		4,331	2,268
Indigenous Officer's Superannuation		411	215
Education Officer's Stipend		20,950	27,621
Education Officer's Superannuation		1,990	2,592
Rural Officer's Stipend		2,374	-
Rural Officer's Superannuation		226	-
President's Stipend		47,485	46,119
President's Superannuation		4,511	4,328
Student Publication Director's Stipend		11,036	8,590
Student Publication Director's Superannuation		1,048	807
Amount brought forward to page 17		<u>100,913</u>	<u>102,825</u>

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE ASSOCIATION

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015

	Note	2015	2014
		\$	\$
Amount carried forward		100,913	102,825
Queer Officer's Stipend		4,283	507
Queer Officer's Superannuation		407	47
Secretary's Stipend		17,376	17,586
Secretary's Superannuation		1,563	1,651
Treasurer's Stipend		17,028	15,217
Treasurer's Superannuation		1,618	1,429
Vice President's Stipend		24,471	27,469
Vice President's Superannuation		2,223	2,578
Miscellaneous Stipend		355	-
Miscellaneous Superannuation		34	-
Women Officer's Stipend		13,184	8,489
Women Officer's Superannuation		1,252	796
<i>Total Stipends</i>		<u>184,706</u>	<u>178,593</u>
<i>Other Employment Expenses</i>			
Employee Benefits		50,042	64,318
Payroll Management Systems		4,401	4,113
Payroll Tax		8,556	3,864
Staff Development and Training		7,692	10,263
Staff Recruitment		785	-
Staff Support & supervision		5,319	2,884
Staff Travel, Meals & Accommodation		3,740	3,453
Workers Compensation Insurance		5,926	5,336
Sundries		476	57
		<u>86,936</u>	<u>94,287</u>
Total Employment Expenditure		<u>1,092,785</u>	<u>947,881</u>

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015

	Note	2015 \$	2014 \$
<i>Administration Expenses</i>			
Audit	8	7,500	7,500
Bank Charges		1,015	283
CAPA Affiliation fee		25,549	23,562
Professional Development		1,770	-
Computer Expenses		3,749	2,030
Depreciation		1,977	250
Insurance		4,132	4,254
Lease Equipment (Photocopier)		14,184	15,560
Legal Expenses		2,438	-
Legal Expenses - Redfern Legal Centre		124,258	121,465
Merchandising		3,484	11,072
Office Amenities		1,493	1,275
Office Equipment (Non IT)		3,311	77
Postage & Courier		87	54
Printing & Stationery		8,398	6,468
Removal Costs		347	-
Subscription		818	300
Sundry		74	135
Telephone		-	101
Website Development		1,963	875
		206,548	195,262
<i>Activities & Functions</i>			
Activities & Functions		9,273	8,903
Campaigns		10,601	6,487
Council Meeting Expenses		3,068	4,586
Councillor Conference Attendance (including airfares)		3,796	1,546
O Week		4,988	2,861
		31,726	24,384

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE ASSOCIATION

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STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015

	Note	2015 \$	2014 \$
<i>Publications</i>			
Calender		2,298	3,627
Information brochures / books		-	600
Sundry		91	60
Survival Guide		8,860	8,100
		<u>11,249</u>	<u>12,387</u>
Total Expenditure		<u>1,342,308</u>	<u>1,179,914</u>
Deficit from ordinary activities		<u>(112,508)</u>	<u>(13,479)</u>