



DISABILITIES AND CARERS COMMITTEE 2022 ANNUAL ELECTION REPORT

1. Introduction

In September, on the recommendation of the Monash University Student Association (**MSA**), the Disabilities and Carers Committee (**D&C**) engaged OGL Group to conduct their Annual Elections.

Jessica Fox was the Returning Officer for the 2022 D&C Election and is the author of this report.

This report sets out the process by which the elections were undertaken, specifically highlighting areas that required attention by the Returning Officer and electoral participants.

An overview of the results is provided, emphasising trends and other observations.

The key issues and other areas of concern experienced in the election are discussed. Finally, a set of recommendations are provided to D&C and future Returning Officers as suggestions by which the electoral process can be improved.

2. Process

Pursuant to the Regulations, notice was given on 10 October that the Annual Elections would be held from Monday 24 October to Thursday 27 October 2022 (see **Appendix 1 – Notice of Election**). The Notice of the Election was published to the MSA Election webpage and sent as an email to all undergraduate students at the Clayton campus.

In the email sent to all students (see **Appendix 2 – Notice Email to all Students**), students who identified as being a carer or having a disability were instructed to complete a Google Form with their details if they wanted to receive further updates – and a ballot, if applicable – on this election. 33 students did this.

Candidate Nominations

Nominations for the Committee opened at 9.00am on Wednesday 12 October and closed at 5.00pm on Wednesday 19 October. Nomination forms and all other election paperwork were submitted via email and Google Form at this election.

The notice of nominations received was posted on Friday 20 October (see **Appendix 3 – Notice of Nominations Received**).

After the closing of nominations, a detailed verification process was undertaken to ensure that candidates were eligible to participate in the election by virtue of their enrolment status as provided for in the Regulations.

During this process, one candidate's nomination was determined to be invalid because no nominator or seconder was provided. Two further candidates' eligibility to stand was unable to be determined as they did not appear on the electoral roll provided by the University. These candidates were notified as soon as possible and offered two opportunities to provide evidence of their enrolment and eligibility to stand. Neither candidate provided any such material thus both were ineligible to stand in the election. An Updated Notice of Nominations was sent to candidates and posted to the MSA Election webpage on Monday 24 October (see **Appendix 4 – Updated Notice of Nominations Received**) in which I declared the committee elected unopposed.

At the close of the nomination period:

- **10 nominations had been received**
 - **7 valid nominations were received**
 - **3 nominations were invalid/ineligible**

3. Issues

This section deals with specific problems which arose with the election process or logistics. It is not intended to be an exhaustive account of each issue that became necessary for the Returning Officer to consider.

Maintaining privacy while abiding by MSA Constitution

As mentioned in previous years, many participants in the D&C elections do not wish to be publicly known as identifying as having a disability or being a carer. It is the wish of the Collective to run the D&C Committee Election separately to the broader MSA Election for this reason. This is at odds with the MSA Constitution which states:

Section 38.3

Office-bearers and members of the MSC and Committees directly elected by students must be elected at the annual elections

Despite this provision, the D&C Committee election has been held separately for several years now and this model has been applied, as decided by the MSA when considering the privacy of candidates.

Disenfranchising students who are eligible to participate in the election

Further to the issue raised above, by holding the D&C Committee election separately to the general MSA Election, there is a risk of disenfranchising students who want to participate in the election but are not aware of it happening due to the reduced timeframes (see below, also) and the reduced communications.

This year, to open the election up to as many students who identify as having a disability or being a carer as possible, the Notice of Election was sent via email to all students (see Appendix 2) and requested any student who identified as having a disability or being a carer and wanted to receive more updates about the election (including a ballot, if required) to complete a Google Form. 33 students in total completed this form and were the only students to receive communications from the Returning Officer about the election from that point. Given that hundreds of students identified as having a disability or being a carer and consequently voted for the Disabilities and Carers Officer in the MSA Elections the last time this position appeared on the ballot, (299 students voted for the position in that poll), it is safe to assume that the significant portion of students who are eligible to participate in this ballot are not currently being reached.

Reduced timelines

Holding the D&C Committee election separately from the MSA Annual Elections can result in a protracted timeframe. This year, for instance, the D&C Election was held in just three weeks which meant that there was very little time to resolve issues that arose.

In the 2022 election, nominations closed on Wednesday 19 October and polls were due to open on Monday 24 October. Two candidates' eligibility was under investigation and they were given from Thursday 20 October until 10am Monday 24 October (delaying the opening of polls by an hour) to confirm their eligibility to stand in the election. Neither candidate met the deadline and, as a result, were deemed ineligible to participate in the election.

4. Recommendations

Recommendation 1 – Consider any Constitutional requirements when planning D&C elections

In running this election the governing documents of the MSA regulating this election were reviewed and there is a specific requirement in the MSA Constitution which states:

Section 38.3

Office-bearers and members of the MSC and Committees directly elected by students must be elected at the annual elections

This must be considered when setting down the provisions of the D&C Committee Election.

Holding the D&C election concurrently has the benefit of resolving each issue outlined above. For those candidates concerned with privacy, there are measures the Returning Officer can take to ensure that only students who identify as having a disability or being a carer can view the candidate statements and vote for this position.

5. Conclusion

Thanks go to all the staff involved in running the elections, including MSA and University staff who assisted in various ways throughout the election. In particular, my thanks to Elizaveta Dilanyan (and farewell!) and Josh Strauss who assisted in this election considerably.

I wish all successful candidates the very best as they undertake their responsibilities in the coming term.

Jessica Fox

Returning Officer

2022 D&C Committee Election

6. List of Appendices

Appendix 1 – Notice of Election

Appendix 2 – Notice Email to all Students

Appendix 3– Notice of Nominations Received

Appendix 4 – Updated Notice of Nominations Received



Monash Student Association (Clayton) Incorporated
2022 DISABILITIES & CARERS COMMITTEE ELECTIONS
Monday 24 October – Thursday 27 October 2022

DISABILITIES AND CARERS COMMITTEE NOTICE OF ELECTION

The following positions are to be elected at the Disabilities and Carers Committee Election

- Disabilities and Carers Committee (7 members)

This election will be conducted using optional preferential voting, and in accordance with other provisions as required under the MSA Election Regulations (eg. only students who indicate that they are disabled or a carer on their nomination form may run for Disabilities and Carers Officer).

Nominations

Nomination will be accepted using this [Google Form](#) or by completing the forms available on the MSA Elections webpage at www.msa.monash.edu/elections

Nominees also need to request to be added to the electoral roll using [this form](#). This must be completed prior to the close of nominations.

Nominations open at 9am on Wednesday 12 October and close 5pm Wednesday 19 October.

Copies of the regulations governing the election are available via the internet at www.msa.monash.edu/elections

Voting

Polling for the MSA elections will be from 9am Monday 24 October until 5pm Thursday 27 October and is open to all Monash students who identify as having a disability or being a carer. If you identify as such, please register to receive a ballot by using this [Google Form](#) before polls close on 27 October. **Only students who have provided their university email address via this form will receive a ballot.** You will be able to vote online through a voting link sent to your email. All campaigning will take place online and no in-person campaigning will be permitted on campus.

Jessica Fox

Returning Officer

10 October 2022

0417 613 866

msa.returningofficer@gmail.com

APPENDIX 2 – NOTICE EMAIL TO ALL STUDENTS

NOTICE OF ELECTION

The following positions are to be elected at the Disabilities and Carers Committee Election

- Disabilities and Carers Committee (7 members)

This election will be conducted using optional preferential voting, and in accordance with other provisions as required under the MSA Election Regulations (eg. only students who indicate that they are disabled or a carer on their nomination form may run for Disabilities and Carers Officer).

Nominations

To nominate, please complete this [Google Form](#) or complete the soft copy form available on the MSA election webpage at www.msa.monash.edu/elections

Nominations open at 9am on Wednesday 12 October and close 5pm Wednesday 19 October.

Copies of the regulations governing the election are available via the internet at

www.msa.monash.edu/elections

Voting

Polling for the MSA elections will be from 9am Monday 24 October until 5pm Thursday 27 October and is open to all Monash students who identify as having a disability or being a carer. If you identify as such, please register to receive a ballot by using this [Google Form](#) before polls close on 27 October. **Only students who have provided their university email address via this form will receive a ballot.** You will be able to vote online through a voting link sent to your email. All campaigning will take place online and no in-person campaigning will be permitted on campus.

Jessica Fox
Returning Officer

APPENDIX 3 – NOTICE OF NOMINATIONS RECEIVED



Monash Student Association (Clayton) Incorporated
2022 DISABILITIES & CARERS COMMITTEE ELECTIONS
Monday 24 October – Thursday 27 October 2022

DISABILITIES AND CARERS COMMITTEE NOTICE OF NOMINATIONS RECEIVED

All nominations received by the deadline have been listed by position below. This list is subject to checks by both myself and the University for eligibility according to student enrolment status.

If there have been any errors or omissions in transcription please let me know **as soon as possible** and I will amend.

Nominations Received for the Disabilities & Carers Committee (7 members):

First name	Surname	First name	Surname
David	Minahan	Leo	Bortolotto
Charlotte	Sutton	Margaret	Chapman
Gerardien	Afifah	Michaela	Banks
Isabel	McNamara	Basia	Mitula
Jeremy	Chrimes		

Nominations deemed ineligible:

First name	Surname	Reason for ineligibility
Alannah	Hill	No nominator or seconder provided

Jessica Fox
Returning Officer
20 October 2022
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APPENDIX 4 – UPDATED NOTICE OF NOMINATIONS RECEIVED



Monash Student Association (Clayton) Incorporated
2022 DISABILITIES & CARERS COMMITTEE ELECTIONS
Monday 24 October – Thursday 27 October 2022

DISABILITIES AND CARERS COMMITTEE UPDATED NOTICE OF NOMINATIONS RECEIVED

All nominations received by the deadline have been listed below. This list is final as all these nominations have been subjects to checks by both myself and the University for eligibility according to student enrolment status.

Nominations Received for the Disabilities & Carers Committee (7 members). **I declare this committee elected unopposed.**

First name	Surname
David	Minahan
Charlotte	Sutton
Gerardien	Afifah
Jeremy	Chrimes
Margaret	Chapman
Michaela	Banks
Basia	Mitula

The following nominations were not accepted:

First name	Surname	Reason
Alannah	Hill	No nominator or seconder provided
Isabel	McNamara	Eligibility unable to be confirmed prior to when polls were due to open
Leo	Bortolotto	Eligibility unable to be confirmed prior to when polls were due to open

Jessica Fox
Returning Officer
24 October 2022
msa.returningofficer@gmail.com