

Meeting time: Opened at 05:12 PM on 03/05/2024

Meeting location: In the Banquet Hall at the Campus Centre of Monash University and Zoom (Hybrid)

Meeting Minutes

A. Attendance

<u>Title</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Proxy</u>
President:	Chloe Ward	
Secretary:	Zareh Kozanian	
Treasurer:	Joshua Walters (Chair)	
Education (Academic Affairs):	Naomi Drego	
Education (Public Affairs):	Nafiz Ibrahim	
Activities:	Fatima Iqbal (Apology)	
CLA:	Haider Shah	
Welfare:	Teagan Hayward	
Indigenous:	Marlley McNamara (Absent)	
Environment & Social Justice:	Sophie Allen	
Women's:	Zoe Binns	
Queer:	Madeline Curkovic	
Disabilities & Carers:	Charlotte Sutton	
People of Colour:	Anshuman Das	
Residential Community:	Aylin Vahabova	
MUISS:	Vedant Gadhavi	
MAPS:	Stuart Gibson	
Clubs & Societies:	Paul Halliday	
Radio Monash:	Georgie McColm	Sarah Stancombe
General Representative:	Jay Davis	
General Representative:	Dilhan Simsek	
General Representative:	Beck Riches	
General Representative:	Stella Robinson (Apology)	

General Representative: Diyara Jaswar (Apology)

Observers: Angus Duske
Mandy Li
Malak Ababneh
Kristy Dodson-Geary
Lana Abdelhalim
Asma Illyas
Zain Chady
Mohamed Orabi
Mohamed Mohamed
Sebastian
Coulston-Williams
Zain Choudry
Azan Asif
Prina Ranchhod
Kay Chan
Aishwariya Veera

[Discussion during MSC:](#)

Chloe Ward passes the chair to Joshua Walters for the entirety of this MSC as she is not feeling well and wishes to participate in the discussion of the agenda items.

B. Acknowledgment of Traditional Owners of Land

This MSC acknowledges and pays respect to the Bunurong peoples of the Kulin nations as the original and ongoing owners and custodians of this land. The MSA commits itself to actively fight alongside Indigenous peoples for reconciliation and justice for all Indigenous Australians.

C. Confirmation of Agenda Order

Confirmed

D. Confirmation of Previous Minutes

Motion #1:

This MSC confirms [Minutes 3/24](#) to be the true and accurate recording of the proceedings.

Moved: Zareh Kozanian

Seconded: Joshua Walters Chloe Ward

In Favour: 17

Against: 0

Abstentions: 1

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

[Discussion during MSC:](#)

The mover of the motion, Zareh Kozanian, waives his right of speaking.

The seconder of the motion, Chloe Ward, waives her right of speaking.

E. Office Bearer and Divisional Reports

Office Bearer and Divisional Reports	Submission Compliance
President	Report Submitted on time
Secretary	Report Submitted on time
MUISS	Wed, May 1, 2:26 PM (Late Submission)
Creative and Live Arts	Thu, May 2, 4:38 PM (Late Submission)
MAPS	Thu, May 2, 2:36 PM (Late Submission)
Clubs & Societies	Fri, May 3, 10:01 AM (Late Submission)
Treasurer	No Submission Received
Activities	No Submission Received
Radio Monash	No Submission Received

Motion #2:

This MSC accepts the reports submitted by the President and the Secretary en bloc, as attached at the end of this document.

This MSC also accepts the late reports submitted by MUISS, Creative and Live Arts, Clubs and Societies, and MAPS en bloc, as attached at the end of this document

Moved: Zareh Kozanian **Seconded:** Dilhan Simsek

In Favour: 16

Against: 0

Abstentions: 1

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Discussion during MSC:

The mover of the motion, Zareh Kozanian, waives his right of speaking.

The seconder of the motion, Dilhan Simsek, waives his right of speaking.

F. Academic Board Report

Motion #3:

This MSC accepts the Academic Board Report submitted, as attached at the end of this document.

Moved: Dilhan Simsek

Seconded: Zareh Kozanian

In Favour: 16

Against: 0

Abstentions: 1

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Discussion during MSC:

The mover of the motion, Zareh Kozanian, waives his right of speaking.

The seconder of the motion, Dilhan Simsek, speaks to the motion giving a quick update on the academic board advocacy that's happening from the student reps which includes himself and Demitri Kaminis which are the undergraduate student members on the academic board. He highlights that there hasn't been an academic board report to council for a couple of years now. So he is glad to finally have the formality reintroduced. He explained the role of the academic board for all the attendees. He mentions that Demitiri's and his agenda is in line with what the MSA has been looking to do. He informs the board that one of the upcoming initiatives includes the late submission marking penalty adjustment. For every day late that students submit an assignment, they're faced with a 10% penalty. Demitri and he did a lot of work with benchmarking compared to other universities across the country, finding that Monash University is among three of the 37 who have a 10% per day penalty and all the rest have less than 10%. So with consultation with the faculty deans and the deputy vice-chancellor of education, they are hopefully making some good legroom and have a couple of points to announce in the coming months. He also requests the council to refer to the report in the appendix for further information.

G. Public Transport Concession & Pricing

Preamble:

The MSA has been working hard to alleviate the increasing cost of living pressures students have been experiencing. Part of this work includes expanding existing welfare initiatives and creating new ones.

Often, public transport is inaccessible, can add time to your journey and at times is unaffordable. To support students who are experiencing financial hardship, the MSA executive in partnership with PTV has developed a Travel Pass Program. Travel passess provide students with 7-days of free travel which can be used on any PTV service.

Victoria is the only state in Australia that does not give travel concession fares on public transport to all full time graduate and undergraduate students.

The MSA supports graduate students in lobbying for systemic change which will have a direct positive impact on our student community. We will continue to work with graduate students at Monash and across the state to campaign for Victorian public transport concession fares for the graduate student cohort.

Motion #4:

This MSC;

- 1) Asks that the MSA write to all other University Student Unions in Victoria offering to cosign a letter to the Minister for Public Transport urging that they provide travel concession fares to all students, including graduate full-time and part-time students;
- 2) Acknowledges the work of the MSA to alleviate the financial burden of public transport to students who are experiencing financial hardship through the MSA Travel Pass Program;
- 3) Recognises public transport as a public good just like roads, schools and parks.

Moved: Dilhan Simsek

Seconded: Vedant Gadhavi

In Favour: 18

Against: 0

Abstentions: 0

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Discussion during MSC:

The mover of the motion, Dilhan Simsek, speaks to the motion and highlights that past motion called for free public transport, where the council resolved in favour of it. He demonstrates that this motion supports graduate students and part-time students as well who don't currently have concession fares on public transport. As the preamble mentioned, Victoria is the only jurisdiction and state which has that and expanding it in Victoria is crucial. He mentions that international students struggle with their tuition fees, often away from their families for an extended period of time. The burden of public transport shouldn't be something that causes students to go without a meal at night or other sacrifices. It's important that the MSC do support graduate students in this campaign to ensure that they have more accessible access to public transport and recognising public transport as a public good, just like roads, schools and parks. He elaborates that it is a great step forward in acknowledging that public transport is public and it should be public.

The seconder of the motion, Vedant Gadhavi, waives his right of speaking.

Stuart Gibson speaks to the motion and showcases his support to the motion. He highlights that part-time students are often neglected and they don't have access to concessions when

it comes to public transport. He agrees that it is a key issue and is glad that the MSC might resolve to support this.

H. Islamophobia and Racism on Campus

Preamble:

Muslims face institutional discrimination, barriers and violations of their human rights and dignity. Divisive rhetoric and misrepresentations are further stigmatising our minority communities. We must continue to condemn inflammatory discourse, safeguard religious freedom and promote mutual respect and understanding. Digital platforms must take a stand against hateful content and protect users from harassment.

Recent stabbing incidents in Sydney, have highlighted disparities in the public and police responses of such events. This stark difference has highlighted obvious double standards within our country, our police force and our judicial processes.

The horrific misogynistic attack at a Bondi Junction shopping centre targeting women was swiftly classified as a men's mental health issue, while the stabbing of a Christian bishop at a Sydney church was immediately labelled as a terrorist act, despite both incidents involving acts of violence motivated by ideology.

The differing treatments of these violent incidents contribute to a perception of bias and racism within our society and the judicial system, undermining trust and confidence in law enforcement among various ethnic and religious groups.

This inconsistency is further exacerbated by the handling of a recent case where an individual left a suspected bomb with a political message outside a home, yet this has not been labelled terrorism. Such disparities in response create a perception of a double standard in law enforcement and judicial processes.

There is a need for transparency and accountability within the judicial system to ensure that all communities are treated fairly and without prejudice, and to prevent the marginalisation of ethnic and religious groups.

Allegations of terrorism should be investigated thoroughly and objectively, with a focus on evidence-based assessments rather than assumptions based on race, religion, or ethnicity.

Motion #5:

This MSC

- 1) Mourns and grieves the loss of life due to recent acts of terror in Sydney;
- 2) Commits itself to taking measures to address racial and religious profiling within our campus community;
- 3) Acknowledges the harmful impact of racist biases on community relations and social cohesion at universities;

4) Directs the People of Color Office Bearers in collaboration with key stakeholders to conduct a review into racism on campus to be presented by MSC 10/24 with key recommendations to the University.

Moved: Dilhan Simsek

Seconded: ~~Tooba Javed~~ Anshuman Das

In Favour: 18

Against: 0

Abstentions: 0

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Discussion during MSC:

The mover of the motion, Dilhan Simsek, speaks to the motion elaborating that council members were in shock and in horror of the stabbings in Sydney, particularly at Bondi Junction Shopping Centre. However, being a Muslim in Australia, he shared his insight that he viewed on Twitter and saw reports of the stabber being a Muslim jihadist, a terrorist, and it took the police until the next morning before it was identified that they were a white man. Suddenly those allegations of terrorism were dropped and it was classed as mental health issues. He shared that this has an impact on our community and it is quite hurtful. He mentions that it is important that the MSA and Monash University take a good look at itself and acknowledge that there are issues that exist in our educational environment and he highlights that the fourth point in the motion directs the POC office bearers to conduct a review into racism on campus, similar to that done at UMSU, at the University of Melbourne, he notes that they've conducted three already, and it's come out with quite shocking findings. He demonstrates that it is important for the MSC to look into what the issue is and talk about it, but he highlights the extreme need of data to back up what's really happening. He asks the MSC members to vote in favour of the motion.

The seconder of the motion, Anshuman Das, waives his right of speaking.

Malak speaks to the motion expressing that she thinks this motion is really important. Specifically, since October 7th and the genocide occurring in Palestine, there has been an uptick in racism and Islamophobia. She believes it is the responsibility of the student union and the university to protect marginalised students. Recently, at the Gaza Solidarity encampments, there was a Zionist attack on the encampments at 1 or 2 a.m. The security guards initially did nothing to protect the students who were there. Law enforcement was called, and their very first question was whether the Zionist attackers were Arab. This exposes the horrific racism of the police force. The implication was that if the attackers had been Arab, the police would have been more than happy to profile them and move them off. But they weren't; they were white, and it took the police a very long time to remove them. It wasn't classified as any kind of act of terror as it would have been if the attackers had been people of colour. Instead, the police refused to take their names, denied there was any evidence of property destruction while standing right next to the wrecked gazebo, and instead questioned all of the students at the encampment, asking for their IDs and proof that

they were students. This is a clear example of law enforcement alienating and racially profiling students. Malak re-emphasises the importance of the motion.

I. MARS and MUIS Statement and Demands

Preamble:

Both the Monash Arab Society (MARS) and Monash University Islamic Society (MUIS) have requested that the MSC present and discuss their statement and demands for Monash University. The statement is as follows:

In recent times, the Monash Islamic Society and Monash Arab Society have been at the forefront of discussions within the university administration, addressing the concerning stance of Monash University regarding the Palestinian cause amidst a of severe ethnic cleansing and genocide. We vehemently urge Monash University to re-evaluate its position urgently and unequivocally, demanding that it acknowledges the gravity of the Israeli government's war crimes and takes concrete steps and stand in solidarity with the oppressed Palestinian people.

The past few months, members of the Monash Islamic Society and Monash Arab Society have been actively engaging in dialogue with Monash University, voicing our concerns and advocating for Palestine, and Palestinians on campus. A central and integral issue of concern is Monash University's conspicuous silence and failure to acknowledge the plight of Palestinians, particularly amidst the grave massacres occurring.

Despite our concerted efforts and appeals, Monash University has so far refrained from addressing these legitimate concerns raised by these societies and students. These concerns extend beyond mere symbolic gestures; they encapsulate the urgent need for the institution to recognize the real and immediate safety threats faced by Palestinian students and pro-Palestine advocates, and to safeguard their fundamental right to free speech, expression and right to peacefully protest within the university community.

Considering Monash University's persistent indifference and inaction, it becomes imperative for us, as representatives of the Monash Islamic Society and Monash Arab Society, to assert our demands through a formal motion sent to the MSA Executives to be raised at the next MSC. This motion seeks to amplify our voices, articulate these important grievances, and set clear expectations from the institution to uphold principles of justice, solidarity, and academic freedom.

Therefore, with unwavering resolve and a commitment to justice, this motion addresses the pressing concerns of the Monash Islamic and Arab Society regarding Monash University's stance on Palestine and to advocate for meaningful change within our university community.

The demands of MARS and MUIS include:

- 1. Monash University must immediately cut all ties with the state of Israel, including partnerships with institutions such as Tel Aviv University and any exchange programs.*

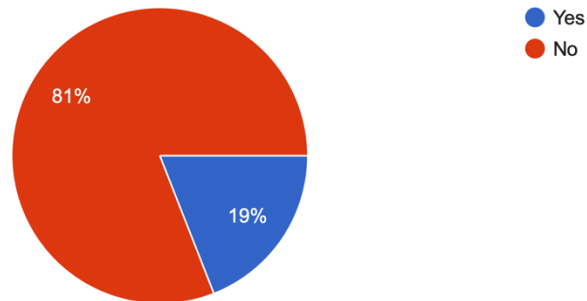
2. *Monash University must disclose any existing ties it has with the state of Israel and weapon manufacturers.*
3. *Monash University must release a new statement promptly, unequivocally recognizing the ongoing genocide in Gaza, denouncing the actions of the occupying Israeli government, and referring to Palestine by name. Additionally, Monash University must openly condemn and recognize the ongoing genocide in Gaza and the actions of the Israeli government, acknowledging it as a settler apartheid state as recognized by many human rights organizations and the UN.*
4. *Monash University must refrain from adopting or adapting the IHRA (International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance) definition of anti-Semitism. This definition has been widely criticized for its potential to suppress legitimate criticism of the Israeli government's policies and actions, which could undermine academic freedom and freedom of speech within the university community ultimately harming Palestinians and Pro-Palestinian advocates.*
5. *Monash University must actively listen to and address safety concerns raised by all students including the Arabs, particularly Palestinians, and Muslims within the university community, taking tangible actions to ensure their safety and well-being.*
6. *Monash University should provide comprehensive support services for students and staff affected by the ongoing genocide, considering there are Palestinians who are witnessing this genocide and may face academic challenges as a result, and may require more support.*
7. *Monash University must uphold their commitment to human rights and cancel the scheduled memorial on May 13 for Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) soldiers. This action is necessary as it would be insensitive and inappropriate, considering the war crimes and massacres they have committed, as well as the breaches of several international laws recognized by the UN, human rights organizations, and the International Court of Justice (ICJ). Additionally, holding such a memorial compromises the safety of Palestinians, other Arabs, and Muslims on campus.*

Survey run by MARS and MUIS

Addressing Safety concerns:

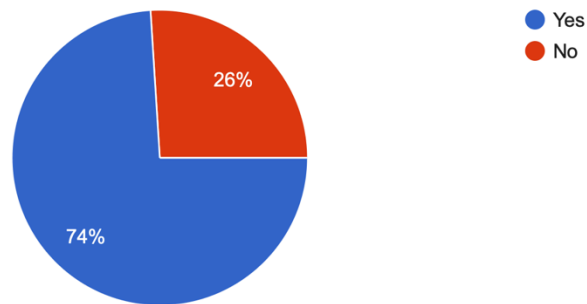
Do you feel safe on campus to wear/when wearing pro-Palestine items (e.g., kuffiye, hoodies, shirts, necklaces) or any indications of such?

105 responses



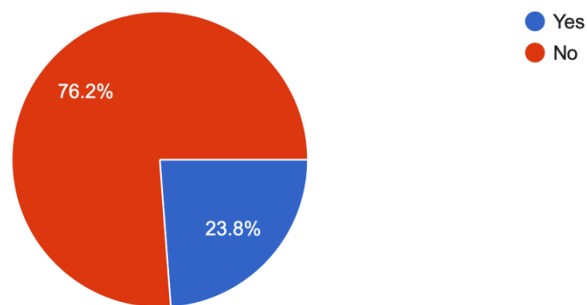
Do you feel there is a rise in Islamophobia on campus?

100 responses



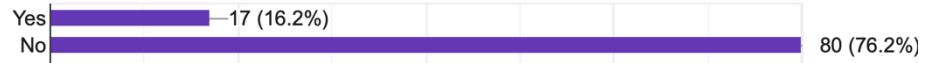
Do you feel safe expressing and discussing pro-Palestine views on campus (e.g. classes or amongst your peers)?

105 responses

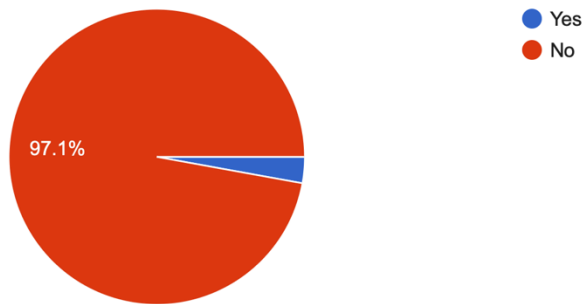


On Monash's stance and actions:

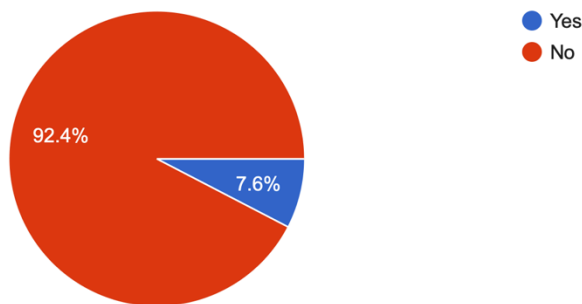
Do you believe that Monash University actively promotes inclusivity and diversity for Arab and Muslim individuals? Furthermore, do you personally ...luded in these efforts? Please elaborate you wish
105 responses



Do you feel satisfied by Monash's response to what is occurring in Palestine?
105 responses



Do you feel satisfied by how Monash is handling the Arab/Muslim communities' concerns ?
105 responses



Quotes from the survey:

“The email sent out by the Monash University addressing the "conflict" was abhorrently insensitive to all the muslim students. They invalidated our concerns and are not doing anything to protect us. There is no action against the comments and harassment by some zionists in the comments section. ”

“A staff member glared at me for several minutes while I was wearing my keffiyeh. He then came over to me and said “you disgust me, wanting Jews dead isn’t hip and cool.”

"The initial letter to students on October 7th made me feel as if only the struggle of those in Israel is valid, whereas there has been no acknowledgement of the ongoing genocide of those in Gaza despite a death toll of 35,000."

"I'm too scared to voice my support"

"I wouldn't feel free to openly state my pro-Palestinian position as a staff member at monash"

"I have been avoiding classes and being on campus as much as possible which has been horrible for my learning, but I'm genuinely so tired and don't want to face any potential assaults anymore"

"a fellow student who knew i was Arab from my name, expressed to me they were jewish and I said yeah that's cool. Then they proceeded to describe Hamas and terrorism and insinuating I would support terrorism by supporting Palestinians which was deeply offensive and put me in a very uncomfortable situation. I had not brought up the topic of Palestine nor expressed any views once on that trip prior to that and after."

The MSA thanks MARS and MUIS for their submission to the MSC and their work representing students. The MSA commits to continuing to communicate the voices and concerns of students. We commit to always representing the concerns and feelings of students on campus at the MSA is the peak representative body for students on the Monash Clayton Campus.

Motion # 6:

- 1) This MSC directs the MSA President to share the demands received by MARS and MUIS with Monash University so action can be taken;
- 2) This MSC support the right of students to protest and make their voices heard, and denounces the previous attacks on student protests on Monash University property at the current Pro-Palestine encampment;
- 3) This MSC will actively engage with Monash University's administration to demand full disclosure of all existing ties with the State of Israel and any weapon manufacturers, promoting transparency within the university community;
- 4) This MSC encourages and support Monash University in issuing another public statement that recognizes the ongoing situation in Gaza as a genocide, and explicitly refers to Palestine by name, while ensuring that the university's position aligns with principles of academic freedom and freedom of speech;
- 5) This MSC directs the MSA President to continue working closely with Monash University security and administration to address and enhance safety measures for Arab, particularly Palestinian, and Muslim students, ensuring their concerns are heard and acted upon promptly;

Moved: Anshuman Das

Seconded: Dilhan Simsek

In Favour: 18

Against: 0

Abstentions: 1

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Discussion during MSC:

The mover of the motion, Anshuman Das, requests to pass his speaking rights to a Palestinian attendee.

Lana introduces herself as the secretary of the Monash Arab Society and a Palestinian. She emphasises the importance of the motion for their community. For a month, they have been trying to engage in open dialogue with the university, hoping their concerns would be heard. Unfortunately, their concerns have fallen on deaf ears. The university has given many excuses for why no action can be taken or why their hands are tied. This is very frustrating, especially when Palestinians are facing threats and do not feel safe on campus. As shown, only three people are satisfied with how Monash University has been dealing with the issue. Lana notes that Monash has a responsibility, especially since they purposefully crafted a statement in response to October 7 to recognize what has been happening. Being silent or choosing neutrality is not an option at this point. The ICJ has called it a plausible case for genocide. Students need to be free to express their views on it, and Monash University needs to encourage students to express something. This is a global movement at the moment, so they strongly encourage support for this motion for the safety of students on campus and for their commitment to human rights as global citizens.

The seconder of the motion, Dilhan Simsek, showcases his support to the motion and requests to pass his speaking rights to an attendee to contribute to the discussion.

Asma speaks in support of the motion and introduces herself as the Vice President of the Monash University Islamic Society. She mentions that they have been working closely with the Monash Arab Society in advocacy for Palestine. What is incredibly important for them in advocacy is ensuring the safety of their community. In the survey data presented, the results show how threatened and unsafe Muslims and Arab students feel on campus due to the university's lack of acknowledgment and response regarding the ongoing genocide unfolding in Palestine. On top of this, the university's lack of action in response to certain Islamophobic instances on campus, such as the turning on of sprinklers at peaceful protests, the yelling of Islamophobic phrases on megaphones, and hate speech evident on widely used student pages on social media, has magnified the threat felt by Muslim and Arab students. It is very frustrating that they constantly have to fight for the basic rights of Muslim students on campus, from things as simple as adequate prayer spaces to the fundamental right of students to not be publicly targeted through verbal hate speech or physical violence. As such, they strongly urge the MSA, a student body meant to represent the values of students, to accept all the demands and pass the motion brought forward by the Monash University Islamic Society and the Monash Arab Society.

Dilhan Simsek thanks everyone for their contributions, stating that this is a very important motion and it is crucial to listen to what student communities and student leaders on the ground have to say. The speaker commends the work of the MSA president for collaborating with the societies and for representing their thoughts thus far with university administration.

Beck Riches expresses agreement with the motion, stating its importance. He finds the university's response to the statement released after the October 7 attacks absolutely appalling and notes the continued lack of support for Muslim students as hardly surprising in the current political context. Beck Riches speaks to the motion and shares that he believes that the reason for the current situation is that Monash University aligns with Australian capitalism and the Australian ruling class, which supports Israel. Due to the university's financial and academic ties to the Australian military-industrial complex, which supports the ongoing genocide, the university has no interest in supporting Palestinian students. Beck Riches highlights that the genocide has brought out some of the most vile and base racism that Arab people have endured for a long time, particularly the insinuation that the Palestinian cause is related to supporting terrorism. While agreeing with the substance of the motion, the speaker uses their speaking time to urge the MSA to endorse the encampment taking place on the lemon-scented lawns. They believe it is not just about condemning the university; students need to be fighting back as well. The encampment makes the issue of Palestine very visible and raises demands aimed at the university about divesting from Israel and supporting the Palestinian cause.

Madeline Curkovic agrees that this is a good motion, noting that it reflects a lot about the university administration. The speaker believes it says a lot about the university administration that their reaction to pro-Palestinian speech and students advocating for Palestinian rights, wearing keffiyehs, or simply existing as Arab or Muslim students on campus is something the university fails to protect. Madeline Curkovic find this absolutely outrageous. Madeline Curkovic shares that the encampment over the last couple of days has been an incredibly important and useful protest. It has opened up avenues for discussion with random students walking by. There has been an outpouring of support from students and staff, who have donated food for the encampment. This has been an important pushback, along with the work of the Arab and Islamic societies posting survey results online, highlighting the complete inadequacy of action by the administration. Madeline Cukovic hopes the MSA uses its institutional power, legitimacy, resources, and social media pages to endorse the ongoing rally. This peaceful protest by students is against war, genocide, and oppression. Madeline Curkovic hope the MSA officially endorses the rally, as it has with previous pro-Palestinian rallies, which has been positive. Madeline Curkovic acknowledges the direction taken by the MSC to generally adopt a pro-Palestinian stance as an incredible improvement from previous years. Madeline Curkovic hopes to see this continue in a concrete sense and urge the MSA to support this as well.

Jay Davis expresses complete support for the motion and the demands presented. However, he views it as somewhat hypocritical for the MSC to demand that Monash University not adopt the IHRA definition of antisemitism when there is still a resolution from meeting 1/2023 of the MSC endorsing that definition. Jay Davis would move an amendment to rescind that as part of this motion, but it cannot be done with less than 48 hours notice. Jay Davis believes this is something the MSC should look at doing

Joshua Walters explains that the IHRA definition was passed in previous MSCs and those decisions are binding until they are rescinded. In the first MSC of this year, the Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism was adopted as an interpretive tool for the IHRA definition. He

notes that the rescission of motions can only be done with 48 hours notice, and he clarifies that the motion is for the MSA to present MARS and MUIS's demands to the university, and not for the MSA to demand it themselves. Thus, this motion can be passed and shouldn't contradict the existing resolution.

J. HECS Debt

Preamble:

This year, the average HECS Debt of a student is at \$26,494, having risen by \$1,723 since the 2021-22 financial year, with 2.9 million Australians owing a HECS Debt.

Since the start of this Academic Year, this MSC has debated a plethora of issues that are outside the scope of both the purposes of the MSA and many students' University experience.

Yet, HECS has only been briefly mentioned once at MSC. This is a gross failure of both Change and Together, the major tickets that run in the MSA Elections.

HECS Debt during the last financial year was indexed at 7.1%, when at the same time, the Consumer Price Index was at 6%. Causing the average HECS Debt to rise by \$1,881. The fundamental spirit of the HELP-HECS Scheme was to provide interest free loans to students. However, 35 years on from when the Scheme was first introduced, it is anything but interest free.

The rise in HECS Debt among University Students is making every subsequent aspect of their lives harder. That is why the MSA must take a stance against a policy that is clearly just another avenue for the Government to raise revenue off University students.

Motion #7:

This MSC:

- 1) Authorises and directs the President of the Monash Student Association to sign the petition titled "Make our HECS debts easier to pay off!", started by Dr Monique Ryan MP using the Common Seal of the MSA.
- 2) Nominates Stuart Gibson and Grayson Lowe to witness the use of the common seal as prescribed under section 55(3) of the MSA Constitution.
- 3) Advocates for the indexation rate of HECS loans to be linked with; or lower than; the Consumer Price Index.

Moved: Stuart Gibson

Seconded: Zoe Binns

In Favour:

Against:

Abstentions:

MOTION LAPSED

Discussion during MSC:

Chloe Ward moves that the motion moved by her (M. HECS is not best - it's worse) is to be considered a foreshadowed motion to the motion moved by Stuart Gibson (J. HECS Debt), Joshua Walters, the chair of the MSC, approves Chloe Ward's request.

Zareh Kozanian, the MSA Secretary, raises a point of order against the chair as a foreshadowing motion can only be moved in between speakers as per 21.2 of the Standing Orders in which Stuart Gibson could be given the opportunity to talk on his motion first. He highlights that his intention is to ensure procedures are followed.

The mover of the motion, Stuart Gibson, speaks to the motion and expresses his support for the foreshadowed motion. Stuart Gibson emphasise that one of the most important experiences for a university student at the moment is paying off HECS, as it is a fundamental part of attending university. He is glad that the MSA president is willing to discuss this issue and bring it up as an important matter. Depending on how the MSC votes on the motion, Stuart Gibson encourages the president to consider signing the petition mentioned in their motion, but leaves that decision up to her. He shows agreement with the foreshadowed motion.

Joshua Walters explains that foreshadowed motions are discussed in the reverse order they were submitted. Therefore, the MSC will discuss Chloe Ward's motion first and then come back to Stuart Gibson's motion.

M. HECS is not best - it's worse

In Australia, higher education was free from 1974-1989 until the Hawke Labor government introduced the Higher Educational Contributions Scheme or HECS.¹ When it was first introduced, all degrees cost the same amount - \$1,800 per year - until 1996 where the Howard Coalition government introduced a three-tiered rate system.² The original idea was that the higher a student's potential future earnings were, the more that they should pay for their degree.³ This is ironic considering that the majority of members of parliament currently directly benefited from free tertiary education whilst they were young, yet still fail to see the hypocrisy of charging current students.

This system completely disregards a student's financial or social disadvantages that they may face, instead treating all students equally regardless of any socioeconomic struggles that they have. Many students are unaware of the prospective debt that they may incur when they apply to higher education, and the subsequent sacrifices they have to make in order to pay for it in the future. Not only this but, on average, women take two extra years to pay off their HECS debt, further disadvantaging women and gender-diverse people who are already suffering under the enormous gender pay gap that Australia has.⁴

For the average Australian in the current cost-of-living crisis, the idea of being able to buy a house, pay for groceries or simply live day to day is a hard task, and then the added need of paying off HECS debt, leaves Australians in a more vulnerable position and shows that the current Labor government clearly doesn't care about students. There needs to be immediate systematic change if the Labor government really cares about students or the broader Australian public. But we know that this won't be the case, the Labor government has shown a complete disregard for students in many facets, including the youth allowance age of independence, the youth allowance amount and the significant delay to walk back the Job-Ready Graduates Program that the Coalition government introduced in 2021.

Not only is the current system of HECS debt discriminatory and disadvantages students who have an inherent right to education, the indexation that occurs every year on 1 June means that many students will never be able to pay off their HECS debt in their lifetime. In 2023, the HECS indexation was a disgusting 7.1% and in 2024 it will be 4.8%, meaning that the average student will have \$1,272 added to their current debt, on top of a \$1,758 increase from last year.⁵ Students have an intrinsic right to free education. Students should never be punished for wanting to pursue their dreams and study what they want to. Students have a right to not be sentenced to a lifetime of debt simply because the Labor government is afraid of taking real action on behalf of students.

The recent University Accords only aimed to perfect and tweak the current HECS and tertiary education system in order to increase the uptake of university degrees and respond to current industry needs, but this is not a solution. Workers and students should not have to pay for their degrees in the first place, especially not to suit what the economy or bosses need at the time. This focus on the supposed "needs" of bosses rather than the needs of students was seen with the Coalition's Job-Ready Graduates Program. Students, regardless of price, will and should always choose their passions, and they should never be punished for that. Less than 5% of students enrol in courses without interest in the field, clearly telling us that students' passions will always be the deciding factor in choosing their course or degree, and not price.⁶ Education should be free and accessible for all people, regardless of socioeconomic status, what high school they went to or how much their prospective earnings could be once they graduate.

The neoliberal education system that we are currently operating within, treats students as an economic commodity, devaluing degrees that do not strengthen the market or produce profits. This dehumanising approach to education, ignores that students do not seek out education simply to get jobs and make money,

Profit should never be the motive behind education. As we see clearly at Monash University, focussing on profit is extremely detrimental to our education. Monash University's focus on profit has seen staff go on strike because their working conditions are simply not acceptable. This harms student learning directly and if Monash University cared about students, as they claim they do, then both staff and students would be at the forefront of their decision-making. But, we all know that this is, unsurprisingly, not the case.

If this current Labor government and Monash University wants to say that it invests and cares about students, then maybe they should invest some time into listening to what we are saying.

Sources:

- 1) <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-07-27/generational-hecs-debt-university-access-higher-education-cost/102480290>

- 2) Same as above
- 3) Same as above
- 4) Same as above
- 5) <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2024/apr/24/australia-hecs-debt-fee-help-loans-rising-indexation-cpi>
- 6) https://melbourne-cshe.unimelb.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0016/1513123/FYE-2014-FULL-report-FINAL-web.pdf

Motion #10:

This MSC

- 1) Demands that the current Labor government forgive all HECS debt;
- 2) Demands that the current Labor government make all tertiary education free for everyone
- 3) Demands that there is an immediate overhaul of the current tertiary education system to make education free to ensure a more accessible and equitable educational pathway for all prospective and current students;
- 4) Condemns the current state of the tertiary education sector and its aim to only make profit for universities and not to benefit students in any way;
- 5) Condemns the way that Monash University has become a lucrative and exploitative corporation aimed at only making profit at the expense of it's students;
- 6) Commits to continue fighting against the corporatisation and neoliberal nature of the current education system until education is free for all students;
- 7) Commits the MSA Executive to making a public press release about HECS and its enormous downfalls on social media to raise awareness about the issue

Moved: Chloe Ward

Seconded: Madeline Curkovic

In Favour: 16

Against: 0

Abstentions: 1

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Discussion during MSC:

Chloe Ward begins by asking for forgiveness as it is their first time speaking to a motion in this setting. Chloe Ward believes the motion is straightforward, asserting that education should be free, considering it a basic human right that everyone should have access to, regardless of the level they wish to pursue in their life. Chloe Ward criticises Monash University as a profit-making institution that only cares about making money. They mention that the 2023 financial reports recently came out, and despite claims of being in a deficit, they believe this is misleading. The university talks about the need to increase enrollment numbers, but the speaker believes the true focus is on international and national rankings. Chloe Ward argues that this will not change unless a statement is put out and there is a

stand against HECS, which they consider to be unfair. The speaker reiterates that education should be free.

Madeline Curkovic begins by stating that fighting for free education is something that is in the MSA constitution. Madeline Curkovic addresses something Stuart said earlier, expressing the belief that the motions moved by Chloe and themselves and the motion moved by Stuart are counterposed. Free education is not the same as having a HECS debt to pay off later in life, regardless of whether it is indexed. Madeline Curkovic argues that calling for HECS to be indexed to CPI or something lower is not good enough because it shouldn't be indexed at all; HECS shouldn't exist. Workers shouldn't have to pay for their own education, which ultimately benefits their bosses. Madeline Curkovic compares it to working at a cafe and paying the boss to learn how to make coffee. Students end up with tens of thousands of dollars in HECS debt for wanting to get a job that doesn't pay minimum wage, and even then, many university degrees like nursing and education don't pay well. Madeline Curkovic believes that funding for free education should be a basic principle of student unionism, which is why it is in the constitution and why it is continually raised. Madeline Curkovic argues that calling for HECS to be indexed is counterposed to funding for free education. The current structure of higher education in Australia is neoliberal and favours bosses, as seen in the higher education accords that cater to their needs. Madeline Curkovic emphasises that education should be free, accessible, and a human right, without students having to spend their lives paying off debt or having zero prospects of owning a house. Madeline Curkovic highlights that HECS is a massive contributor to student poverty, youth poverty, and the lack of home ownership among young people in Australia. Madeline Curkovic urges members of the MSC to vote for the motion moved by Chloe and themselves.

Chloe Ward mentions that they forgot to say something earlier when they were speaking as a mover. Regarding the petition referenced in Stuart's motion, it was handed in to the Federal Education Minister last week or this week, so it is now closed. Chloe Ward reiterates that they don't believe advocating for a lower CPI or a 1% interest rate is a meaningful change at all, echoing Maddy's point. Chloe Ward concludes by emphasising that education should be free to begin with because everyone deserves to be educated, regardless of what high school they went to, what ATAR they got, what socioeconomic background they come from, who their parents know, or any other outside factors that may give some people an advantage and others a disadvantage. Chloe Ward asserts that it shouldn't matter; education should simply be free.

Dilhan Simsek says he aims to add extra nuance and perspective to the Council's discussion. He notes that when the HECS scheme was implemented in 1989, only 3 in 10 children would complete high school. He emphasises that, fundamentally, he is in favour of free education but points out that, historically, the people who attended university when it was free were typically affluent and well-off, coming from wealthy families. The working class paid for this through their taxes. He mentions that Australia's progressive tax rates are not optimal, and the rich are not taxed as much as they should be. However, he highlights that after HECS was introduced, the high school attainment rate increased from 3 out of 10 to 8 out of 10 by the end of the Keating government. He believes that while the current structures do not cater to universal access to education, simply implementing free education overnight will not

necessarily provide the access needed. He references the job-ready graduate package and its impact on the education sector, noting that when the Liberals doubled the cost of arts degrees and halved the cost of STEM degrees, it was meant to increase students in STEM-related fields. However, only 5% of students end up in degrees they don't want to pursue, sending a price signal to universities that it is less profitable to teach STEM and more profitable to teach arts units. He reiterates his support for free education, stating that it is a principle in the student union's constitution. He shares his personal HECS debt, which will be around 45k by the time he graduates, and notes that others, like Maddy, may have even higher debts. He concludes by urging everyone to support the motion.

Stuart Gibson speaks to the motion by expressing his support for the idea of free education, acknowledging that it would be great and could transform the country. However, he believes that in the current context, the realistic step the government might take is indexing HECS to the consumer price index. While he thinks free education would benefit people, he does not believe it is likely to be implemented right now. He explains that this is why he put forward his motion, aiming to address the cost of living crisis for students and make a tangible change in the present. He reiterates his desire for free education but emphasises the importance of taking realistic and actionable steps for students now.

Jay Davis raises a point of order, noting that motion 7, which advocates for HECS to be linked with CPI, seems inconsistent with the constitution that calls for free education. He believe that motion 7 should be ruled out and that motion 9 should be treated separately.

Joshua Walters clarifies that the current motion is being treated as a foreshadowed motion. If this motion passes, then the initial one lapses as a motion anyway. He suggests that if this motion doesn't pass, it can be raised and discussed again. Jay notes that he would like to submit an amendment to this motion.

Motion to Amend:

- 1) Demands that the current Labor government forgive all HECS debt and help debts;
- 2) Demands that the current Labor government make all tertiary education free for everyone
- 3) Demands that there is an immediate overhaul of the current tertiary education system to make education free to ensure a more accessible and equitable educational pathway for all prospective and current students;

The Mover and the Seconder consented to the amendment so this motion did not proceed to a vote

Moved: Jay Davis **Seconded:** Dilhan Simsek

AMENDMENT CARRIED

[Discussion during MSC:](#)

Madeline Curkovic believes there is much to discuss regarding free education and its possibilities. Madeline Curkovic argues that a significant amount of money in the current system is spent on things like tax cuts for the rich and military expenditures, including \$368 billion on submarines. Madeline Curkovic finds this prioritisation disgusting and believes it is focused on boosting the profitability of the system, military budgets, and borders, which they view as racist. The Labour Party has been involved in this, and a lot of money is spent on repressing people in Australia, often based on skin colour, and on manufacturing weapons. Madeline Curkovic asserts that much of this money should be redirected towards paying for education in Australia, likely requiring only a small fraction of the funds currently used for objectionable expenditures. Madeline Curkovic believes that student unions should raise expectations of what is possible, fight for the rights of students, and advocate for issues that matter to students through campaigns and activism. Madeline Curkovic argues that even if there isn't enough money in the system, taxing the rich could provide the necessary funds for free education, a stance they believe most in the room would support. Madeline Curkovic insists there is enough money to fund free education in Australia and that students should demand more than the weak reforms currently proposed, which likely won't significantly impact people's lives. Indexing HECS to CPI is still problematic because wages increase less than CPI each year, meaning students still lose out and continue to pay for their education.

Paul Halliday expresses his support for the motion and addresses Dilhan's earlier point about educational attainment rates. Paul Halliday acknowledges that the jump from 3 out of 10 to 8 out of 10 is great but is unsure how the HECS program caused that jump. Paul Halliday points out that now, 8 out of 10 people, who might not all be from the upper class, are paying HECS when they previously wouldn't have had to. These individuals are predominantly from the working class and need support.

Dilhan Simsek responds directly, noting that the jump in educational attainment happened over two governments and may have been due to greater investment in secondary education. While he doesn't know the entire context, he argues that when the government properly funds education, it leads to good outcomes for the country. He emphasises that students should have the opportunity to study regardless of gender or socioeconomic backgrounds. He views that era in education policy as great because of the increase in the number of people graduating from year 12 and going on to university. He notes that previously, if three out of 10 graduated, probably only two went on to university, but now it's eight out of 10 or more. He agrees with the point that the burden of education shouldn't be on the working class but on the affluent and wealthy upper class. He advocates for taxing the upper class more proportionately to their status to fund education for the lower class.

Jay Davis addresses school attainment, stating that it poses no issue towards funding free higher education. He notes that many countries, such as Germany, France, the Nordic countries, Egypt, and Czechia, already provide free education. Therefore, he doesn't believe that school attainment rates are relevant to the ability to provide free education.

Dilhan Simsek explains that the context he was providing was that, at the time, education spending was insufficient. However, when the priorities of the government shifted and

education was fully funded, it led to better outcomes, even though higher education experienced funding withdrawals to support secondary education. He acknowledges that in an ideal world, every level of education would be well-funded and free. He argues that properly funding and resourcing the entire education system leads to better outcomes for society and the nation.

Joshua Walters announces that as the foreshadowed motion has carried, the original motion, which is motion seven, lapses.

K. Gendered Violence in Australia

TW: Graphic mentions of gendered violence, murder, rape, assault

Preamble:

The rate at which gender based violence exists and is increasing in this country is shameful and unarguably horrific. This year alone, an Australian woman is violently killed every four days by a man. This must stop.

Last weekend, tens of thousands of people took to the streets in 17 rallies across Australia calling for greater action on a growing epidemic of women being killed in violent attacks. Violence against women is everyone's issue - but it's important for people to grasp that it is almost always at the hands of men. Queer women, transgender, gender diverse people, First Nations people, people living with a disability, and children all experience higher rates of sexual violence; the intersectionality of this issue cannot be ignored.

There are so many egregious examples of women being violently killed. Yet no action has been taken. No reform. No new legislation. Only empty words from government officials about the seriousness of this epidemic. This clearly shows a systematic lack of actions from current and former governments, and it has to stop.

Far too frequently, the same harrowing pattern unfolds within our overwhelmed judicial system: a man is accused of heinous crimes against women, manages to secure bail despite the grave nature of his offences and personal connection to the victim. Tragically, this leniency often culminates in the ultimate act of violence, with the perpetrator going on to murder the very women he previously victimised. This alarming recurrence underscores a glaring flaw in the Australian legal system and law enforcement institutions, where victim-blaming tendencies further compound the injustice.

"But what was she wearing?"

"Don't walk in dark areas if you don't wanna be targeted."

"She was asking for it wearing that."

Every woman and gender-diverse person has heard these words far too often. It is *never* the woman's fault for being attacked or murdered, it is *always* the perpetrator's.

The media also have an important role to play in the correct and respectful reporting of domestic and gendered violence. These 27 women, each have unique lives and are deserving of dignity, and their lives should not be reduced to a mere number in a news story. The media often uses domestic violence to characterise narratives and spin headlines that will create revenue. Headlines such as 'troubled men', 'dating app death', 'star footy player charged' and 'former loving husband,' obfuscate the real issue: Men are killing women.

April 26: Erica Hay (30) WA
April 23: Emma Bates (49) VIC
April 22: Molly Ticehurst (28) NSW
April 13: Yixuan Cheng (27) NSW
April 13: Pikria Darchia (55) NSW
April 13: Jade Young (55) NSW
April 13: Dawn Singleton (25) NSW
April 13: Ashlee Good (38) NSW
April 12: Tara Morrison (38) WA
April 05: Hannah McGuire (23) VIC
April 02: Unnamed Woman (66) QLD
March 16: Mauwa Kizenga (22) WA
March 09: Chaithanya 'Swetha' Madhagani (Unknown) VIC
March 08: Joanne Perry (53) VIC
March 08: Unnamed Woman (60s) NSW
March 06: Samantha Murphy (51) VIC
February 28: Unnamed Woman (26) WA
February 19: Min Cho (41) NSW
February 15: Amarjit Kaur Sardar (41) QLD
February 09: Samira Dean (80) NSW
February 07: Unnamed Woman (60s) NSW
February 03: Vyleen White (70) QLD
February 03: Antoinette Tozer (76) SA
January 28: Alana Martin (30) QLD
January 28: Keira Marshall (29) QLD
January 08: Nerol Doble (65) NSW
January 05: Alison Robinson (39) TAS

Victim-survivors deserve dignity, support and, most of all, justice. Gendered violence should not only be taken seriously when a life is taken. Based on NSSS figures, at least 14,300 students will be sexually assaulted in a university context this year. However, these numbers are estimated to be higher as not all victim-survivors report their attacks. Such a flawed and traumatic reporting system that prioritises the perpetrators are often the reason so many choose not to report. All too often, rather than aiding survivors in their recovery, university sexual harm prevention processes further compounds

survivor's trauma. As a result, this ongoing trauma impacts every facet of their lives. It adversely impacts students, academic performance, their ability to complete their degrees and their capacity to pursue chosen careers. This cannot continue to be overlooked by universities. While Monash University has strategic and action plans in place, unless there is concrete, tangible action, people will continue to be victimised on university campuses.

It is not good enough. It will never be good enough.

Motion #8:

This MSC

- 1) Mourns and grieves any loss of women's lives at the hands of gendered violence;
- 2) Stands with victims and survivors of gendered violence;
- 3) Condemns gendered violence in all of its forms;
- 4) Declares the accelerated rate at which women are being killed by men a national emergency and demands the Federal and State governments to do the same;
- 5) Acknowledges and condemns that violence against women is almost always at the hands of men and men must be active allies in fixing this issue if anything is to actually change;
- 6) Directs the MSA Executive to post on social media to raise awareness of this epidemic;
- 7) Calls on Monash University to enact tangible solutions in order to prevent gender-based violence on campus and review their reporting systems to ensure that victim-survivors are at the forefront of any policy, reporting system or solutions;
- 8) Commits the MSA to sending contingents, attend and engage with any future rallies or protests in support of addressing the gendered violence epidemic.

Moved: Dilhan Simsek

Seconded: Zoe Binns

In Favour: 14

Against: 0

Abstentions: 2

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Discussion during MSC:

Dilhan Simsek expresses his willingness to waive their speaking rights to any women or gender minority individuals who would like to speak in their place.

Johsua Walters asks if anyone would like to take Dylan's turn speaking. When no one responds, Dilhan begins speaking.

Dilhan Simsek acknowledges that violence against women is a tragedy that everyone should recognize and that men have a part to play in addressing it. He emphasises that violence against women is never okay and must be called out when seen. He mention that, according

to NSSS statistics, many people in the university context experience sexual harassment or sexual assault on campus. He stresses the importance of making university spaces as safe as possible and free from such incidents. He highlights the need to call out inappropriate behaviour, drive education, and raise awareness about what gendered violence looks like. He notes that gendered violence can take multiple forms, including physical, verbal, mental, and coercive, and it is never acceptable. He emphasises that the goal should be zero incidents of gender-based violence, as no lives should be lost to the hands of men and gender-based violence.

Aish speaks to the motions and begins by ensuring everyone can hear her before addressing the group. She states that the discussion is not just about violence against women, but also about the fundamental principles of representation and recognition. She notes the importance of acknowledging that the motion on violence against women is being moved by a man. While she appreciates his support for the cause, she points out the inherent problem with this arrangement. Aish emphasises that it's not just about who delivers the message, but about whose voice is being amplified, whose experiences are being centred, and whose struggles are being acknowledged. By having a man move this motion, the very essence of addressing violence against women is being inadvertently de-centered. She clarifies that this isn't about questioning his intentions but recognizing the societal dynamics where women's issues are often sidelined, overshadowed, or addressed through a male perspective. She warns that allowing men to take the forefront in advocating for women's issues risks diluting the urgency, sensitivity, and specificity of those issues. Violence against women is a societal issue requiring collective action, and it is imperative to amplify the voices of those most affected by this violence. When a man moves this motion, it perpetuates the narrative that women need male validation to legitimise their struggles, implying their experiences aren't valid or powerful enough on their own. Aish stresses that it sends a message suggesting women are not capable of championing their own cause and that their agency is secondary to male endorsement. She asserts that men are essential allies in the fight against violence towards women, but their role should be to support and uplift women's voices, not overshadow or speak over them.

Zoe Binns expresses her agreement with the previous points raised. She notes that the motion was heavily edited by Chloe and herself and clarifies that it is for personal reasons that they are not the ones moving it. They apologise for not elaborating further but emphasise that this is the reason, indicating that Chloe Ward had the opportunity to move or second the motion but she didn't as reflected in the agenda.

Dilhan Simsek thanks everyone for their contributions and reiterates the importance of discussing this issue. He mentions that he intended to remove the burden from women by consulting with Zoe, who was offered the opportunity to move the motion. The motion was heavily edited with contributions from Chloe and Zoe. Dilhan Simsek notes that he was happy to waive his speaking rights to anyone in the audience who wished to contribute and invites others to speak if they want. He emphasises that by moving this motion, it was not his intention to speak over women or for women, but rather to remove the burden from them. He expresses gratitude to Chloe and Zoe for their support and contributions in completing the motion.

Madeline Curkovic expresses their belief that it is important for men to stand up against sexism and that Dilhan's moving this motion is a positive thing. She elaborates her confusion and dissatisfaction with Aish's response to the mover. She argues that it shouldn't just be women who speak out against sexism; men should be actively anti-sexist and take a strong stance against sexism. Madeline Curkovic highlights that gender-based violence is a significant issue, which has increased in recent years, reflecting a societal problem. Madeline Curkovic notes that this issue is compounded by societal attitudes that encourage women to remain silent and not stand up for themselves in various situations, including abuse and workplace discrimination. Madeline Curkovic emphasises that these increasing numbers indicate a broader societal issue. Madeline Curkovic acknowledges that the motion's direction may not fully address all contributors to the problem, especially those exacerbated by the cost of living crisis, which has worsened the situation for women. Madeline Curkovic points out that the housing crisis makes it difficult for women in domestic abuse situations to find safe housing. Madeline Curkovic criticises the destruction of public housing by the Labor government in Victoria and the lack of sufficient social services, healthcare, and women's shelters. Madeline Curkovic also notes that repressive measures, such as harsher bail conditions, may disproportionately impact Indigenous people and people of colour, leading to higher rates of incarceration and not necessarily addressing the root issues of violence against women. Madeline Curkovic argues that measures like increasing CCTV footage and having PSOs at train stations have not effectively reduced violence against women. Madeline Curkovic concluded that while there is a huge problem in society that needs to be addressed, the solution requires more than just changes in attitudes. Madeline Curkovic stresses that the issue is intertwined with housing, welfare, and public services, and a broader approach is needed to address the systemic issues that contribute to violence against women.

Teagan Hayward expresses her agreement with the previous contribution to the discussion. Teagan Hayward acknowledges that while they agree with the points raised, the motion's specific line calling on Monash University to enact tangible solutions to prevent gender-based violence leaves it open for both the MSA and Monash University to implement solutions beyond cultural and attitude-based measures. Teagan Hayward emphasises that the motion allows for supporting women financially, empowering them, and addressing the cost-of-living crisis. Teagan Hayward explains that they support the motion because it remains open to various solutions and recognizes that many contributing factors to gender-based violence are not just cultural, but also economic, such as the cost-of-living crisis.

Madeline Curkovic acknowledges the previous points and emphasises that there are actions the MSA and Monash University could take to address the problem. Madeline Curkovic mentions that some halls on campus have sexist environments. In their first year at Rose, Madeline Curkovic observed that the institution only showed a single video on respect, which ambiguously suggested a woman could be at fault for being drunk at a party where she was harassed and abused. Madeline Curkovic highlights that there are glaring issues that institutions like the MSA and the university could address. Madeline Curkovic acknowledges that the motion broadly calls on Monash University to enact tangible solutions, which could include increasing security on campus. However, Madeline Curkovic points out that many women have reported feeling less safe around security personnel, who sometimes are the

ones harassing them. Madeline Curkovic notes that while there aren't easy solutions to the problem, it is crucial to recognize the various issues. Madeline Curkovic concludes by reiterating that, despite the difficulties, the problem of gender-based violence remains significant and must be addressed.

Charlotte Sutton expresses their support for the motion. As someone involved with disability and carers, they have worked with women on issues of sexual assault on campus. She acknowledges the great work being done by the Women's Department. She emphasises that no one proposing this motion believes it will fix everything, as there is no simple solution. She urges everyone to vote in favour of the motion, seeing it as a step in the right direction. She also acknowledges and commend the Women's Department for their efforts in working with the university to improve the situation.

L. Change the Age of Independence and Student Payments

Preamble:

The National Union of Students (NUS) has been campaigning to lower the age of Centrelink independence from 22 to 18 years old so every student can access financial support when they're studying. The rising cost of living pressures, casualised and insecure work, high rent costs, and the increasing cost of education fees are making it harder than ever for students to pay for their studies.

It is unfair to base a student's payment eligibility on their parent or partner's income. This often leaves students vulnerable to financial manipulation, coercion and stuck in a toxic relationship.

The 'Locked out of Youth Allowance: Student poverty and Centrelink in Australia' report from the National Union of Students (NUS) and the Foundation of Young Australians (FYA) was released in October 2022, and examined the multiple challenges students face while pursuing tertiary education. It found that over 450,000 students are being excluded from Youth Allowance payments because they're under 22, and therefore, seen as a dependent in their family household.

Even then, those who are approved to get the Youth Allowance payments are struggling to make ends meet. A recent report from Anglicare Australia found that there is not a single property across Australia – or even a room in a shared house – that's affordable for someone on youth allowance.

Policy needs to keep up with the reality of young people's lives. The Federal Government has a responsibility to ensure students do not have to live below the poverty line or are left vulnerable to financial manipulation while they study.

Motion #9:

This MSC

- 1) Urges the Federal Government to immediately Lower Centrelink's Age of Independence from 22 to 18;
- 2) Urges the Federal Government to lift student focused social security payments above the poverty line of \$429 per week;
- 3) Directs the MSA executive to post on social media to raise awareness of these issues, the Change the Age campaign and information about how students can access the Low Income Concession Card;
- 4) Commits the MSA to continue to expand its support for students who are facing financial hardship.

Moved: Dilhan Simsek

Seconded: Teagan Hayward

In Favour: 14

Against: 0

Abstentions: 0

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Discussion during MSC:

Dilhan Simsek emphasises that this is a campaign the NUS has been running for a very long time and that it is very important for the MSA to continue advocating to reduce the age of independence. He acknowledges the work of the ESJ department in engaging with the NUS and the Change the Age campaign, noting that recent promotions have been seen. He highlights the importance of promoting these efforts as much as possible. The speaker points out that another action point in the motion addresses housing and accessibility of housing under these payments. He stresses that students eligible for these payments should not be forced to live with their parents or unable to gain independence while studying. He also notes that current policies leave many students vulnerable in relationships, as partners are considered in eligibility calculations, which can lead to manipulation by parents or partners. Additionally, the speaker discusses the low-income concession card, sharing that many students on campus are eligible but unaware of it. He emphasises the importance of amplifying awareness about the low-income concession card to ensure students receive the benefits they deserve. While acknowledging that the current benefits may not be sufficient, they see this as a starting point to ensure students access all available welfare and concession benefits. The speaker links this issue to the public transport concession previously passed by the council, advocating for concession cards for all students. He concludes by stressing the importance of this issue and the need to continue advocating for it.

Teagan Hayward acknowledges that Dylan has covered most points. Teagan Hayward reiterates that this is an NUS campaign and that the NUS has reached out for support. Teagan Hayward believes it is a long-established campaign doing very good work and expresses hope for its success, urging the MSA to endorse it.

Jay Davis expresses his support for the motion, stating that it is a very good motion. He highlights point two, which addresses social security payments being below the poverty line, emphasising the need for these payments to be raised above the poverty line in a first-world country in the 21st century. He also supports point three, agreeing with Dylan that many students are unaware of the services they can access. He believes it would be beneficial to spread the message and help students become aware of and utilise these services.

N. General Business

Discussion during MSC:

Madeline Curkovic mentions that Beck Riches and her have submitted a motion in writing to the Treasurer, Secretary, and President. They are now going to address the motion under general business and need to raise a procedural motion to consider it urgent.

Joshua Walters reads out the motion and then proceeds to vote on the procedural motion.

Procedural Motion:

Move from the chair that the meeting shall consider a motion in general business that was not included on the agenda which was submitted by Madeline Curkovic and Beck Riches

Moved: Joshua Walters (the Chair)

In Favour: 7 (Jay Davis)

Against: 8

MOTION FAILED

Preamble:

Over 30,000 Palestinians have died since the most recent bombardment of Palestine began. Our government has cut aid and signed deals with companies supplying weapons to Israel. Our University has ties to BAE systems and Tel Aviv University. A university in historic Palestine and apartheid Israel.

On May 1st Students for Palestine Monash and supporters set up a Gaza Solidarity Encampment inspired by the heroic student protests in America. We demand that Monash university disclose all of its ties to weapon companies and Israel. That Monash university divest from all ties to weapons companies and Israel. And we demand an end to the slaughter and occupation.

In response to the peaceful student demonstration a group of far right pro Israel thugs attacked the camp. At approximately 1AM, they marched in and destroyed camp equipment, threw food on the ground, trampled a tent with a student still inside, yelled at students including transphobic abuse and played far right music that celebrated making Palestinians “run like rats into holes” by bombarding them.

This was a disgraceful attempt to intimidate and silence students out of protesting against oppression and war. The student protesters deserve the official and public support of the student union, a body with institutional weight and real funding that can and should be put towards advocating for the issues that students care about, and student rights.

General Motion #1:

This MSC moves that:

1. The MSA publicly condemns the violent far right attack on peaceful Palestine Protesters, and publicises this in official MSA social media.
2. The MSA publicly endorses the Monash Gaza Solidarity Encampment, and attends the encampment as the MSA, with official MSA signage and attire.
3. The MSA moves the location of its Free Breakfast Program on Wednesday the 8th of May to the Lemon Scented Lawns.
4. The MSA encourages students to attend the Gaza Solidarity Encampment at Monash via public social media accounts of the MSA.
5. The MSA formally requests to unit coordinators that they give academic allowances to students attending the camp, and allow students from the encampment to give announcements to classes promoting the encampment.

Moved: Madeline Curkovic

Seconded: Beck Riches

MOTION LAPSED

Charlotte Sutton has asked if there is any reasoning as to why this wasn't put on the agenda.

Madeline Curkovic responds by explaining that the solidarity encampment started on Wednesday morning at around 11 o'clock. Madeline Curkovic mentions that they have been in communication with the MSA executive about potentially having a meeting to endorse the rally, but have experienced significant delays. Madeline Curkovic wanted to bring the matter to the entire MSA for a debate, allowing other members to discuss it. The speaker acknowledges that the motion was submitted quite late, but notes that the protest was only called on Tuesday. Throughout the day on Tuesday, they were uncertain whether they would receive any support from the MSA, and the situation has been in flux over the last few days. Once it became apparent that support would not be forthcoming until the fourth or fifth day of the camp, which they found unacceptable, they decided to submit the motion so that other members of the MSA could also discuss and consider it.

The Chair announces that the motion fails and that the motion will not be discussed.

Madeline Curkovic expresses disappointment that the motion cannot be discussed. They explain that the solidarity encampment began on Wednesday morning as part of a global student movement that started at Columbia University in the US and has spread to hundreds,

possibly thousands, of other universities, including several in Australia, in solidarity with Gaza. They highlight the worsening situation in Gaza, with citizens in Rafah facing increasing threats of bombardment and starvation, underscoring the need for a similar encampment at Monash. The speaker clarifies that they were not the one to initially call the rally but notes that the Arab Society and the Islamic Society were consulted on the day it was called and were invited to participate. They emphasise that the solidarity encampment was called by Students for Palestine Monash as part of the global student movement, recognizing Monash University's ties to companies like BAE Systems, which they allege are not publicly disclosed. The speaker details that the encampment has grown, with more people joining and additional tents being set up. They mention that there was a Zionist attack on the encampment on the first night, but emphasise that the hardships faced by Gazans are far more severe. They highlight the ongoing occupation and apartheid-like conditions in Palestine, noting that the Israeli government periodically bombs Gaza to demoralise its population. The speaker stresses that the MSA, as an institution with significant resources, should have held an emergency meeting to discuss endorsing the encampment. They express frustration over the delays and lack of institutional support from the MSA, despite individual members showing their support. They call for the MSA to endorse the rally and provide tangible support, such as safety measures and resources, to ensure the encampment's success and safety. They conclude by urging more members to visit the encampment, wearing MSA shirts and bringing banners, to show institutional support and solidarity with the Palestinian cause.

Dilhan Simsek acknowledges that the Council has repeatedly shown a pro-Palestinian stance. He mentions that he came down to the encampment last night, helped set up a tent, and intended to support the cause as an individual. He clarifies that the reason he voted against the procedural motion and visited the encampment was to see firsthand what was happening. The speaker expresses their support for the notion of protest and academic freedom, aligning with the university's stance on providing a space for demonstrations. However, he expresses concern over hearing discussions about engaging in violent behaviour if provoked. He mentions hearing a conversation where participants were willing to use violence if confronted again, which he believes puts the safety of students, Palestinians, and the Muslim community at risk. The speaker stresses that while they support the right to protest, there are boundaries and limits to how protests should be conducted. They argue that endorsing or encouraging violence is not something the Council or the MSA should support, as it endangers the community. He emphasises that the Council has moved numerous motions in support of the Palestinian cause and that supporting Palestine does not require endorsing violence. He concludes by advocating for peaceful support of the Palestinian cause to ensure a safe community for all.

Madeline Curkovic responds to Dilhan, clarifying that what they both heard was someone saying that if someone comes at you to punch you in the face, you should not let them. They express hope that Dilhan would also not let someone punch him in the face. The speaker accuses Dilhan of weaponizing this statement and using it as an opportunity to delay endorsing a pro-Palestine protest. They acknowledge that the MSA has supported pro-Palestine motions but criticise Dilhan for not backing this support with action, suggesting his reluctance is due to his affiliation with the Labor Party. The speaker accuses the Labor

Party of politically supporting the genocide in Palestine and highlights the party's statements about Israel's right to defend itself as evidence of their complicity. The speaker asserts that Dilhan's actions undermine the legitimacy of the peaceful protest and criticises him for advising MSC members not to support it. They clarify that the statement made at the encampment was about self-defence in the face of aggression, not seeking violence. They emphasise that the discussion included strategies for non-violent resistance, such as making noise, waking up the camp, linking arms, and preventing intruders. The speaker argues that more institutional support from the MSA would deter attacks on the pro-Palestinian event and make it harder to intimidate and repress the protest. They call for the MSA to publicly support and endorse the encampment to strengthen the movement.

Jay Davis raises a point of order, citing that 13.1.2 allows the chair to name individuals who are speaking or behaving in an intimidating manner as Madeleine Curkovic was yelling for a couple of minutes.

Joshua Walters reminded the MSC members to not interrupt other speakers or behave in an intimidating manner.

Dilhan Simsek clarifies their position, stating that they did not initially want to name individuals or detail the conversation but feels it is necessary to respond to the allegations made. They mention Grace Hill and Jasmine Duff, who were at the encampment and reached a general consensus that if something were to happen, they should confront the aggressors directly. The speaker acknowledges that Matty did mention that violence would be a last resort, but emphasises that violence should not be a resort at all. They believe that if a protest is advocated as peaceful, it should remain peaceful without any contingencies for violence or physical intimidation. The speaker asserts that individuals who shouldn't be at the protest in the first place should be managed by the university. They express strong support for peaceful demonstrations on campus but argue that having a backup plan for violence puts the community in danger, something they cannot support. The speaker notes that if the protest were truly peaceful, they would have voted for the procedure and the motion. However, they cannot endorse anything that puts the campus community, whom they are elected to represent, at risk.

Bec Riches contextualises the discussion by highlighting the nascent mass movement happening worldwide, particularly on US college campuses where students face heavy police repression. They mention that the president of Columbia University has threatened to call the National Guard on protesting students. They question what Dilhan's position would be if he were at Columbia, suggesting that he would likely advise against attending protests and fighting back against oppression, occupation, or genocide. The speaker argues that it is unrealistic to expect people not to defend themselves against repression, whether from police or far-right extremists. They assert that such a position is untenable for someone who claims to support Palestine. They challenge Dilhan to clarify under what conditions he would support the protest, implying that his preference seems to be inaction in the face of repression. The speaker reiterates that greater support would enhance the safety of the encampment. They argue that more people, more tents, and more visible support from regular students who support Palestine would deter attacks or harassment from Zionists or

others. They accuse Dilhan of being opportunistic and using safety concerns as a cover for a conservative stance on the encampment. Dilhan Simsek reaffirms their position, stating that they are pro-Palestine and agree on many points in the context of this debate. They highlight the encampment at the University of Melbourne, which has been ongoing for weeks and is supported and attended by the community. The speaker notes that the organisers of that encampment are not affiliated with the same group as the current encampment's organisers.

Joshua Walters names Beck Riches once for interrupting

Dilhan Simsek continues speaking and mentions that the community, including people in the room and the speaker's own brothers, have expressed support for the encampment but also feelings of unsafety. International students, in particular, feel unsafe participating in the demonstration because their parents are paying significant amounts for their education. The speaker emphasises that violence should never be an option at a peaceful protest. They express concern that the organisers have encouraged violence as a response if confronted by Zionists, stressing that a peaceful protest must remain peaceful. They conclude by stating that as soon as they heard any encouragement of violence from the organisers, they could not support it.

Joshua Walters names Beck Riches once more for interrupting.

Dilhan Simsek raises a point of clarification to the chair about the consequences of being named three times in an MSC.

Joshua Walters explains to the MSC Members that if they were named three times they will be required to immediately leave the meeting. If the person refuses to leave the meeting within a reasonable amount of time after being named a third time, then the Chair may ban the person from attending the next regular meeting of the MSC.

Dilhan Simsek reiterates their point, emphasizing that the community wants to push for a pro-Palestinian stance and be more active on campus. They mention that the person who made the comments inciting violence is named by the age as the organiser of the protest, so there is no hiding from those remarks. The speaker argues that claiming the demonstration is peaceful is hypocritical, given the incitement of violence. They assert that violence should never be a solution, even as a final layer, and that the community should not be put at risk of racist attacks by the police and campus security. They make it clear that they are not willing to put the community in a vulnerable position and conclude by stating that this is not something they are willing to support.

Madeline Curkovic addresses Dilhan, pointing out that he contradicted himself by saying that violence should be a last resort but also asserting that there should be no violence at all. They ask for clarification on Dilhan's stance, suggesting there is a miscommunication. The speaker accuses Dilhan of using this as an opportunistic diversion to shift the debate away from whether the MSC should support a pro-Palestinian protest on campus. They emphasize that while a genocide is happening, Dilhan is convincing the MSA not to support a protest for Palestinian rights. They highlight their own efforts in protesting, camping, and speaking to

people to stand up for justice. They acknowledge that Dilhan helped set up a tent but criticise his current stance, arguing that he is effectively advocating for ignoring the protest. The speaker mentions the University of Melbourne for Palestine encampment, noting that it faced similar challenges with Zionist aggressors but managed to handle the situation due to their numbers. The speaker emphasises that the Palestine encampment in the University of Melbourne succeeded because they had the numbers to stand off and counter-protest aggressors. They point out that the current situation is being used as an opportunistic diversion to convince people not to protest for Palestinian rights. They mention a brother who came down the previous night, acknowledging his support for the protest but addressing his concerns as an international student. The speaker reiterates that they do not advocate for violence and that the entire policy of the encampment has been focused on de-escalation. They emphasise that their approach has been to avoid escalating conflicts and to respond calmly if provoked. The speaker clarifies that the debate is not just about violence versus nonviolence but about whether the institution should support a Palestinian protest. They urge people to recognize the true nature of the discussion.

Jay Davis expresses their agreement that it is quite unfortunate they cannot debate the motion. They note that if there is evidence of a safety concern, it could have been addressed in a proper debate on the motion. They emphasise that it is regrettable not to discuss the motion on its merits.

Zareh Kozanian shares their perspective, stating that they do not believe any actions were taken to influence the procedure up or down. They note that the vote was simply about whether the motion should be discussed or not, and it was submitted at the last minute. The speaker mentions not seeing consent from the Arab or Palestinian community in the event itself, with some involvement but not from the majority. The speaker expresses doubt that the current actions reflect true demands. They reference a statement from MARS and MUIS providing demands for the MSC to present to the university. The speaker asserts that every MSC member has the right to vote for themselves, and the vote was clear and complete. They offer to help move a motion at the next MSC if there is one, or to hold a special MSC if the motion's merits warrant it. However, given the current situation, the speaker does not feel they should support the procedure. They cite a lack of understanding and visible support for the encampment, noting concerns about involvement from non-students. The speaker concludes by stating that if these concerns are verified, they are open to discussing the motion in the MSC.

Dilhan Simsek asserts that a peaceful protest should not have a final line of aggressive behaviour and violence. They emphasise that if a protest is to be called peaceful, violence should not be used under any circumstances. They quote Jasmine Duff, who said, "kick them in the nuts," and mention that Grace Hill asked for consensus on these comments. Every person in the encampment supported using violence as a last resort. The speaker contrasts this with the University of Melbourne, where the encampment has high turnout because they have engaged with the community, including Islamic societies, Arab students, and Palestinians committed to the cause. They suggest that a similar approach should have been taken to increase representation and participation. They accuse the socialist alternative of inciting violence and putting the community at risk. The speaker argues that the council

cannot endorse a demonstration that encourages violence, questioning how a protest aimed at de-escalation could discuss violence as an option. They share concerns about the safety of the community, which is already targeted by rising Islamophobia, security, and police. The speaker recounts an incident where a Muslim student was ID'd by security while going to the mosque and argues that encouraging violence would worsen the situation. They express strong support for the Palestinian cause but state that they cannot support the current protest due to the encouragement of violence.

Madeline Curkovic addresses Dilhan, expressing hope that if someone were to attack him, he wouldn't just sit there and take it without defending himself. They mention that the person who made the comment about violence later acknowledged it was probably not the best approach. The speaker clarifies that in the discussion, they were advocating for pushing away someone who tries to attack them, not for seeking violence. They accuse Dilhan of discouraging people from attending a pro-Palestinian protest. They state that they did approach the Arab Society and the Islamic Society to collaborate, but were turned down. The speaker criticises these societies for discouraging participation through a post on Instagram. They highlight that some Palestinian and Muslim students have stayed in the tents because they believe it is part of standing up for what is right, even though there is a potential risk from Zionist aggressors. The speaker emphasises that they are not saying everyone has to take this risk but finds it troubling that Dilhan is actively discouraging support for the protest. They conclude by expressing their frustration and stating that Dilhan's actions are a disgrace to the Palestinian movement.

Lana Abdulhalim clarifies that they were not informed about the encampment in advance. They mention receiving a phone call after learning about it, like everyone else, from a member of the organisation, inviting them to join if they wanted. When they raised security concerns, they were told that everything had been dealt with. They were told that there would be an assessment at four and that they would be contacted afterward but heard nothing back. The speaker states that they know nothing further about the encampment and were not asked to organise it. They assert that neither the Islamic Society nor the Arab Society has issued any statements discouraging people from participating, calling the claims baseless.

Azan Asif introduces themselves as the president of the Monash New Islamic Society, explaining their late arrival due to work. They state that neither they nor anyone in their society has been contacted about the encampment. The speaker challenges the claim, asking for proof if any contact was made, as they have not seen any evidence of it.

Madeline Curkovic acknowledges that they cannot provide proof of every instance of contact but emphasises that they are not the only organiser. They express a genuine desire for others to join the protest, inviting people walking by to show their support because everyone is united by the same cause—supporting Palestine. They express frustration at the actions of the government and the university, insisting that efforts have been made to reach out to various groups, including a specific mention of Joss reaching out to Lana. The speaker clarifies that the protest was organized by a pro-Palestinian group and reiterates their openness to collaboration. They emphasise that the intent is not to create hostility between

campaign groups but to unite people for a common cause. The speaker invites everyone to come down and show support, highlighting that increased numbers would strengthen the rally and contribute to its success.

Dilhan Simsek addresses Maddy's point about standing against Palestinians, clarifying that all their actions and comments are guided by their community. They emphasise that they are present to represent and amplify their community's voices and will continue to do so both on the council and outside of it. The speaker stresses that their priority is to ensure the safety of their community, which they believe is being jeopardised by the actions of some members who are willing to enact violence. They conclude by stating that their contribution to the cause and their community is to protect them from harm.

Mohammed Orabi introduces themselves as a representative of Arab students and the president of the Monash Arab Student Society. They express a personal concern regarding the encampment, noting that MARS and MUIS have been surveying Arab student safety for some time. Given the survey results and concerns for student safety, they believe the encampment should not have been established without prior consultation. They emphasise that decisions like this should involve discussions with those most likely to face the consequences, as opposition to the encampment could provoke anti-Palestinian rhetoric and Islamophobic remarks. The speaker asserts that as representatives of these students, they should have been consulted before such actions were taken.

Malak Ababneh shares their experience at the encampment, identifying themselves as a Jordanian-Australian woman. They mention speaking with many Palestinians and other Arabs at the encampment who feel wonderful being part of a global and historic movement. The speaker emphasises that Palestine is an issue where coalition building and collaboration with other groups is crucial. They assert that the liberation of the Palestinian people is tied to the liberation of all oppressed people. They highlight the precautions taken to ensure the safety of Arab and Islamic students, including implementing night shifts and safety procedures. The speaker believes the encampment is a valuable cause and encourages anyone who wants to join to do so.

O. Appendices

Executive Expenditure Summary

Department	Type	Cost (AUD)	Date Approved
100 - Finance & IT	Training & Conferences	199.95	11/03/2024
100 - Finance & IT	Special Projects	100	27/03/2024
100 - Finance & IT	Capital Works	600	27/03/2024
100 - Finance & IT	Special Projects	2902.5	08/04/2024

100 - MSC (Central)	Training & Conferences	115	09/04/2024
150 - Queer	Capital Works	1142	09/04/2024
150 - Queer	Special Projects	1000	10/04/2024
150 - Queer	Special Projects	2000	10/04/2024
150 - Queer	Special Projects	600	10/04/2024
100 - MSC (Central)	Capital Works	1100	12/04/2024
150 - Queer	Special Projects	50	18/04/2024
150 - Queer	Special Projects	1600	18/04/2024

Academic Board Undergraduate Student Representatives Report

What is the Academic Board?

The Academic Board serves as the principal academic body of the University, responsible for maintaining high standards in teaching and research. It operates under the Monash University Statute and Council Regulations. Membership of the Board includes the Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, Faculty Deans, Deputy Deans, Heads of Department, and elected staff and students.

The Board establishes Standing Committees to assist in its functions, including the Steering Committee, University Education Committee (UEC), Monash University Research Committee, and the Graduate Research Committee (GRC). These committees oversee various aspects of academic affairs, from managing urgent business to ensuring excellence in education and research strategy implementation.

The Academic Board meets eight times each year. The Board encourages submissions and engagement from its members to inform decision-making processes. Overall, the Academic Board plays a pivotal role in shaping academic policies, maintaining high standards, and ensuring excellence across Monash University.

Undergraduate Members of Academic Board

Demitri Kaminis (until 31/12/2025), 5th year Law/Commerce student

Hi All! I'm Demitri, one of your Academic Board representatives in 2024. I'm incredibly passionate about making the student experience the best it can be, and want to ensure that the student voice is placed at the forefront of teaching and education. Outside of Uni, I work in the education sector and as a part-time tennis coach, and my hobbies include playing sports, chess, cycling, and reading novels and autobiographies.

Dilhan Simsek (until 31/12/2024), 4th year Commerce/IT student

Hey! I'm Dilhan, one of your undergraduate Academic Board student representatives for 2024. I'm dedicated to ensuring Monash is as accessible as possible. I have been committed to ensuring your time at University is the best it can be. Through my involvement with Clubs & Societies as an Executive and having served on club committees, student life and engagement have been a priority of mine throughout my time at Monash. I'm also currently on the Monash Student Association Executive, working on developing welfare initiatives and big projects. In my life away from Uni, I'm an SES volunteer, work in the Public Service, and spend time advocating for better community outcomes.

As part of our ongoing commitment to student welfare, university experience and academic excellence, we have actively engaged in advocating for several important initiatives aimed at enhancing the overall student experience and academic environment at Monash. This piece

provides an overview of the various issues we have raised at the first 2 meetings of the Academic Board and highlights some key areas of progress.

1. Establishment of More 24/7 Study Areas:

One of the primary concerns we raised was the diminishing access to on-campus resources and the reduction in library hours. We know how important it is to have accessible study spaces, particularly during peak academic periods. Our proposal to establish the Sir Louis Matheson Library and/or the Learning and Teaching Building (LTB) at Clayton as a 24/7 Study Area sparked an investigation into the use of study spaces on campus. The aim is to provide students with uninterrupted access to essential resources and conducive study environments.

Paired with advocacy from the Monash Student Association (MSA), we are proud to share that the university has agreed to transforming a new space into an extended access study lounge.

2. Accessible Class Options:

We have expressed concern and have emphasised the importance of offering a diverse range of class options to accommodate students' varying needs and schedules. This includes advocating for flexible scheduling, greater diversification in class offerings, online learning opportunities, and alternative class formats to ensure accessibility for all students.

We will continue to work with the University to ensure students are given a choice and can schedule their Uni around their life and not the other way around.

3. Universal Submission Time (UST):

We have proposed the establishment of a Universal Submission Time (UST) of 11:55pm to streamline assignment submissions and alleviate student stress. By standardising submission deadlines across units, our students can better manage our workload and plan our study time effectively.

We will continue to follow up progress of the feasibility review into this initiative and hope to have some positive updates in the near future.

4. Extensions and Special Consideration:

Efforts have been made to review and improve the process for granting extensions and special consideration to students facing extenuating circumstances. Due to the recent large changes in these processes and policy, the university has committed to reviewing data as it comes through and continues to make data driven decisions.

5. Unit Feedback Procedures and Reforms:

We have scrutinised the current unit feedback procedures (SETU) due to a noticeable decline in responses received. We have attributed this trend to students providing feedback after the semester concludes, which limits the benefits they can derive from it. In response, we have been advocating for reforms to enhance the transparency, timeliness, and effectiveness of feedback mechanisms. This includes exploring new approaches to gather and act upon student

feedback earlier, thereby improving teaching and learning outcomes and reducing the current lag in feedback implementation.

We are pleased to share that Allie Clemans, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), has confirmed a trial for early semester unit evaluations in semester two. While the specifics of this trial are still being worked through, it will offer students the opportunity to provide feedback on units early in the semester. We anticipate that this initiative will lead to positive steps being taken to address feedback in a timely manner and pivot teaching methods to best accommodate the current teaching period.

6. Semester 2 Mid-Semester Break:

We have raised large concerns with how late the semester two mid-semester break occurs. The mid-semester break during semester two is supposed to allow students time to recharge and manage their workload effectively. When this break happens after nine weeks of a twelve week semester it can not be said to be properly scheduled. It is our opinion that a mid semester break in the middle of a semester is crucial for promoting student well-being and academic success and we will continue to advocate for this shift.

We are glad that the University Chief Operating Officer, who is responsible for semester periods and key dates, has been engaged and will work with us to review the current timelines.

7. Late Submission Marking Penalties:

The late submission marking penalty of 10% per day for a maximum of seven days has been a point of contention. We have benchmarked the university and compared this policy with other universities. What we found was that out of the 37 universities in our country only three have a penalty between 6-10% per day and 28 have a penalty of 1-5% with the rest being faculty dependent.

We want to make sure that when you find yourself in a situation where you aren't eligible for special consideration, the late submission policy does not discourage you from submitting and continuing to persevere and engage with your studies and assessments. We will continue to engage and ensure the review of the existing policies lead to outcomes that ensure consistency and fairness.

8. IBL Credit Points:

While industry placements and experience vary from faculty to faculty, we have identified the Faculty of IT's Industry Based Learning (IBL) program to be one of the best in terms of experience but one of the worst when it comes to unit credits.

The IBL program spans a duration of 105 days or six months of full time work but only credits 18 credit points. Whilst on IBL placement, students cannot be undertaking any unit of study. Comparatively, students in the Faculty of Business and Economics can complete 55 days of industry placement, and are awarded with 24 credit points.

Advocacy efforts have been made to recognise and award fair and well deserved credit points for students participating in IBL programs.

9. Remarking Policy:

We have requested the University revisit the remarking policy to ensure our concerns about transparency and consistency in the remarking process are heard. We are working towards implementing clear guidelines and procedures for requesting and conducting remarking of in semester assessments which currently is not allowed.

Summary:

As your undergraduate members on the Academic Board, we haven't wasted a moment and have been actively advocating for various initiatives aimed at enhancing the student experience and academic environment. We've kept at it and through ongoing collaboration, significant progress has been made on several fronts.

Student representation in decision-making processes is vital, and we will continue to ensure that the needs and voices of students are central to the priorities and initiatives of Monash. Please feel free to reach out to any of us with suggestions, feedback or if you'd like to find out more.

Chloe Ward

President

Report to MSC 5/24

GOALS

- To continue promoting diversity on campus, in all forms
- To continue in providing free food programs to service all Clayton students and tackle food insecurity
- To continue trialling the MSA Foodbank within Wholefoods to further address food insecurity and provide pantry staples to students in need
- Continue promoting the Open Letter with NTEU about the recent exploitative Parking Fee Increases and continue to work with the NTEU to find out more information regarding University profit from parking
- To continue advocating on behalf of students on issues such as the reduced Library opening hours at Matheson and Hargrave libraries, Special Consideration provisions, Late Penalties for assignments and Unpaid Placements
- To continue to provide and deliver safe, accessible and inclusive events for students in order to better their overall university experience

PROJECTS

TW: Minor mentions of sexual assault

MSA Foodbank Project

The MSA Executive, in conjunction with our Volunteering leaders, began our first trial run of the MSA Foodbank (to be named “MSA Pantry”) in Week 8. The initiative was run out of Wholefoods Cafe and provided fresh food and groceries to hundreds of students. This trial was to investigate how the space worked with the project and further infrastructure needed and strategies to ensure that students had the best experience whilst engaging with the project. There is another trial run scheduled for Week 10, where we will also be providing bulk goods, such as rice, lentils and beans, so that students have access to vital pantry staples. We know that food insecurity is a massive issue for students during this current cost-of-living crisis and whilst there is systemic change needed to fully solve this issue, we are committed at the MSA to ensure that students always have access to free or low-cost food. We aim for the MSA Pantry to be fully launched at the beginning of Semester 2, so look out for exciting updates in the lead up to then!

The Muslim Prayer Space Opening and Monitoring

It has now been 6 weeks since the new Prayer Space has been opened. It has been exciting to see what students can meaningfully achieve when hard work and advocacy is at its best. We are continuing to collaborate with the Monash University Islamic Society to ensure that the space is meeting the requirements, especially opening hours and access points. We will continue to monitor the space to ensure that students and staff are having the best experience possible when using it.

Parking Fee Increases, Open Letter, and future plans

At the beginning of Semester 1, the MSA was informed that Monash University was choosing to increase the parking fees dramatically for 2024. We were angered and outraged at this decision, especially as it was made without any student or staff consultation. During a cost-of-living crisis, the University should be supporting both staff and students, not financially disadvantaging them further through a price increase of up to 106%. For many staff and students, public transport is not a viable option - lengthening travel time and possibly endangering students and staff if travelling on PTV late at night. The costs associated with attending university are already astronomical; textbooks, course fees, devices required for learning all contribute to the considerable cost of education. The MSA will continue to fight on this issue and ensure that students are not negatively affected by these changes. We have also been putting up posters around campus and in the MSA newsletter to ensure that the student body is informed of the letter and signs it to continue the collective action. Continue sharing the Open Letter and have these conversations with your peers - cause without collective action, the University will continue to make profit out of students.

We have been continuing to work with the NTEU on future campaign options and continuing to find out just how much profit the University makes off parking fines and fees. At a recent Vice-Chancellor's Student President Advisory Forum (VCSPAF) meeting, I brought up the issues surrounding parking and was met with disregard around the problem. The irony is obvious when the Vice-Chancellor does not pay for parking under the Chancellery building, and students and staff, who are suffering from the current cost-of-living crisis, are paying exorbitant fees. I would like to extend a special thanks to Adam Fernandes (NTEU Victorian Branch President) who has continued to meet and fight alongside me to ensure that students and staff's voices are heard and listened to. We will hopefully have more updates in the future but stay angry because no one should have to pay for parking at an educational institution that they pay to attend in the first place.

Library Opening Hours and 24/7 Study Spaces: Update

At the recent VCSPAF meeting, I also brought up the rash decision from the University to slash library opening hours and the fact that it categorically disadvantages students who attend this University. I was informed within that meeting that a new study space was to

be opened in the Campus Centre. This was in direct response to the high usage in the Campbell Hall 24/7 Study Space, which we told the University would be impacted due to the decreased opening hours at Matheson and Hargrave-Andrews. After being proven correct, the University finally listened to us and has created a new study space on Ground Level of the Campus Centre, Room G60, which will be open until 12AM every day of the week.

Whilst we all acknowledge that this is simply a band-aid solution to the decreased library opening hours, it will help alleviate some of the strain in the lead-up to exam season. We will continue to keep fighting for the library hours to be extended again and have some exciting action planned to inform the University just how upset we are about this unconsulted change. Keep your eyes peeled on the socials for upcoming actions and updates.

Period Positivity Campaign: Update

The Period Positivity Campaign has continued to have developments. In conjunction with the MSA Executive, Office Bearers from Women's and Residential Community departments, have been working tirelessly to create a plan and strategy to ensure that students have period products available to them at all times. We are in the process of gathering letters of support from Residential Hall Presidents and other key stakeholders to ensure that Monash Residential Services (MRS) understands the necessity of this provision being permanent. We are also investigating the results of a trial MRS undertook at the beginning of this year in relation to free period products and the outcomes.

During this trial, period products that are available within Monash University Residential spaces, are limited to shared bathrooms and a central stash for those with private accommodations, predicated on the notion these are for 'emergency use' only, a stance that inadvertently places undue burden and shame on our students. This approach, championed by MRS, not only limits accessibility but also suggests a reliance on these emergency provisions is somehow unwarranted. Compounding this issue is the exclusion of gender-neutral bathrooms from receiving these vital products, a glaring oversight that undermines our University's commitment to inclusivity and equality.

We will continue to fight for the provision of free and accessible period products for all the students. In the meantime, there are always free period products and sexual health items located in the Women's Lounge on Level 1 of Campus Centre.

Sexual Assault Prevention Campaign

We have continued to advocate for and work on the current Sexual Assault Prevention campaign that aims to pressure the University into taking more action to prevent sexual assault on campus and venues regularly frequented by students in the surrounding area.

The University has been in the process of developing a new Strategic Commitment to the Prevention and Response to Sexual Harm (2024-2030) document which both myself and the Women's Department have been reviewing and giving extensive feedback to. We will continue to push the University to make proactive and effective measures to eliminate sexual assault on campus, especially in Residential Halls. This feedback included questions around how these strategies would affect different people, how security is going to be better trained to handle the reporting of these incidents, and will students feel safe and comfortable using the current reporting mechanisms that are available. We are also continuing to push the University to provide specific details around what they are doing or planning to do to prevent sexual assault from occurring.

We will continue to apply pressure on the University to ensure that Monash is a safe place for all students.

PTV Travel Pass Program:

The MSA Executive has been working on a new program to introduce to students. Public Transport Victoria (PTV) is currently doing a program where organisations, such as the MSA, can purchase highly discounted 7-day travel passes and give them out to disadvantaged students. The MSA cannot sell these passes and can only issue it to students who need it. We have developed an application form which will be monitored and then process applications as they come through during the initial trial period. This form has a built in point system while making assessment of the applications much easier and automatable. After the initial trial, we will take our learnings and work to develop a more streamlined assessment process. This program will be launched on Monday the 29th of April and will be available to those students who fit the criteria set by PTV. The MSA Executive is excited to supply students in need with a free 7-day travel pass in order to assist them.

Zareh Kozanian

Secretary

Report to MSC 5/24

GOALS

- Ensure that all meetings, decisions, attendance, and official documents within the MSA are accurately recorded.
- Ensure students are well-informed about the MSA's decisions and activities by facilitating effective communication within the MSA by sharing important information, announcements, and meeting agendas.
- Assist the president and the MSA Office Bearers and divisions by providing administrative support, coordinating logistics for initiatives, and handling correspondence.
- Ensure that students are provided with quality services and support the MSA's continued advocacy for students.
- Addressing any concerns about accessibility and transparency by fostering an inclusive and accessible environment within the MSA.
- Ensure the MSA's compliance to its constitution and relevant regulations

PROJECTS

MSA DAY

The MSA Day is an exciting initiative that I'm looking into introducing during Semester 2 of 2024 with the goal of strengthening the sense of community and connection among Monash University students. The proposed event aims to provide a day full of exciting activities and life-long memories while bringing the diverse student body together under one roof.

The main objective of MSA Day is to establish a welcoming and pleasant atmosphere in which Monash students can actively engage in a range of activities, encouraging amusement and togetherness in addition to enjoyment. This program strives to improve the overall Monash student experience by bringing together students from all backgrounds and disciplines.

Our goal is to create an event that reflects the dynamic and energetic nature of the Monash community by means of persistent teamwork and innovative creativity. To sum up, MSA Day will further demonstrate our dedication to improving the Monash student experience every time. We hope to organise a day where students may unite, appreciate their differences, and work together to strengthen the bonds of community within the Monash University community by working creatively and cooperatively. Every Monash student should have an amazing day filled with excitement and memories to cherish the distinctive academic experience that Monash provides.

MSA Constitution and Standing Orders Revision

I'm investigating strategic initiatives to enhance and adapt the governance framework governing the Monash Student Association (MSA) through revising the MSA Constitution and Standing Orders. Moreover, it is critical to ensure that these foundational documents accurately reflect the evolving values, needs, and aspirations of the MSA. I seek to enhance the clarity, transparency, and relevance of our operational guidelines.

The executive team will be seeking legal advice and input and feedback from the student body to incorporate diverse perspectives. This project is a proactive step towards fostering a more inclusive, responsive, and effective student union to adeptly navigate the challenges and opportunities of the present and future.

Transparency in Advocacy

Ensuring transparency in advocacy is a paramount commitment for the MSA, and we are dedicated to keeping Monash students fully informed and engaged in the advocacy initiatives that directly impact their university experience. We understand the importance of providing comprehensive insight into our advocacy work, and, as such, we will share advocacy summary of our initiatives, achievements, and challenges. We seek to foster a

culture of transparency detailing enegy, collaboration, and active engagement, empowering students to play an integral role in shaping and supporting our advocacy agenda.

PTV Travel Pass Program:

The MSA Executive has been developing a fresh initiative to present to students. Under a current initiative, Public Transport Victoria (PTV) allows organizations, like the MSA, to buy deeply reduced 7-day travel cards and distribute them to underprivileged students. These passes are only available to students who require them; the MSA is unable to sell them. We have created an application form that will be tracked and used to handle applications received during the first trial period. This form features an integrated point system that greatly simplifies and automates the application assessment process. We will use the lessons we learned from the first trial to create a more efficient evaluation procedure. On Monday, April 29th, this program will begin, and students who meet PTV's requirements can participate. The MSA Executive is happy to help students in need by providing a complimentary seven-day travel permit.



***Key Activities**

Outline key activities completed thus far since last report

Completed our third welfare lunch
 Ticket sales completed for Ball

Can outline work being done for upcoming events/projects

Working on the exam info session promotion
 Executing the MUISS Ball at Sea life aquarium
 Promoting and working on the MUISS Olympics

Department Goals

Goal	Progress (complete/ongoing/incomplete)	Comments
Increase community outreach and exposure	- Newsletters (ongoing) - Frequent posting and stories (ongoing)	The day trip reel had the most views on Instagram till now. Even the ball promotion reel and MUISS Olympic reels have got good reach.



Advocating quality education for all international students and making their transition smooth for first- year students	Guide to Melbourne event (completed) - Seminars and events from Service Melbourne and Monash community Exam info session (ongoing)	All the planning for exam info session is completed. Will be a chill event where students will get essential info and can chill around with students and have some snacks.
Cater welfare of all International students	Welfare Wednesday (3 completed) - Welfare Day (incomplete) - R U Ok Day (incomplete)	Served 220 students for our third welfare lunch
To organise social and culturally diverse events for all International students	International Student Ball (completed) - One world Fest (incomplete) - Day trip (completed) - Trivia night (incomplete)	- Sold 75 tickets for the MUISS Ball at Sea life aquarium which is happening on 3/5. - Submitted a grant along with MSA for the One world fest.
To organise academic and informative events for all international students and help them with job opportunities	- MSA expo (ongoing) - Career Industry night (incomplete)	Being part of the ongoing discussions for the MSA expo.

DEPARTMENT: Creative and Live Arts

Outline of Department’s Core Values and Aims for 2024:

Foster an environment that celebrates diversity, embracing multiculturalism in every aspect of Wednesday sessions - from artists and food to the audience.

Outline of Departmental planning so far in elected term:

Following the success of our initial Wednesday sessions featuring performances by Babba in the first week and Aleksiah in the second, we are committed to fostering a multicultural atmosphere. In alignment with this commitment, we are excited to announce "Desi Week" as an expansion of our program. We aim to collaborate with various cultural clubs to ensure these sessions are more inclusive and engaging for students from diverse backgrounds. Our objective is to celebrate cultural richness and create an environment where all students feel represented.

Department Goals for 2024

Goal	Methodology	Comments
Goal 1: Multicultural Wednesday Sessions	Organise weekly sessions that feature activities and showcases from different cultures. Collaborate with cultural societies like the African Society and the Indian Society to bring authentic experiences.	We finished all the Wednesday sessions for semester 1 in week 1-5. All sessions were very popular. These sessions have been effective in promoting cultural diversity and student engagement on campus.
Goal 2: Exciting Challenges on Wednesday Sessions	Implement creative challenges during Wednesday sessions, such as art contests, dance-offs, or photography competitions that encourage participation and showcase student talents.	Activities like the photo booth on the Taylor Swift show were very exciting. Challenges increase active participation and excitement, making the Wednesday sessions more dynamic and appealing.

Goal 3: More Wednesday Merch	Design and distribute themed merchandise such as t-shirts, hats, and bags for each Wednesday session. Use these items as rewards for participation or competition winners.	Merchandise has been popular among students, serving as both incentives for participation and a means of promoting event visibility across campus.
Goal 4: More Brand Engagement	Utilise social media platforms and campus media to promote Wednesday sessions, highlighting upcoming events, past successes, and student testimonials.	Increased online engagement has boosted event attendance and created more buzz around campus activities.
Goal 5: Bigger Wednesday Sessions	Scale up the events by securing larger venues, more diverse activities, and additional sponsors to accommodate growing interest and participation.	Expanding the scale of events has allowed more students to participate and brought more vibrancy and life to campus culture.

DIVISION: Clubs & Societies

Outline key activities completed thus far:

1. OGM

On the 13th of March C&S held its OGM. This meeting heard reports for the President and Treasurer along with by-elections for the positions of Vice-President and 2 Gen-Reps following resignations from the Executive. The meeting also featured a presentation from MSA Finance staff regarding the process and benefits of ACNC registration.

The Following club office bearers were elected to the C&S Executive:

Jesse Fraser	Vice President	Monash Choral Society
Sam Spicer	General Representative	Monash Card Collective
Neil Edward	General Representative	AIESEC Monash

2. Trivia Night

On the 17th of April the C&S Executive held a Trivia Night for club Office Bearers as part of our larger initiative to build a community of club leaders at Monash. The event was attended by 25 club leaders and the Monash Arab Society (MARS) team placed first on the night.

3. Grants Program

As detailed in previous reports C&S has been overhauling the Grants Process for affiliated clubs. Thus far C&S have distributed over \$50,000 in grants to clubs. At the end of March the division's non-salary expenditure sat at roughly double what it was last year. This demonstrates the success of the new Grants system being rolled out this year and that clubs are getting paid significantly faster.

4. Returning Officer Training

C&S held two returning officer training sessions for club officer bearers. This training equips club office bearers with the skills to act as returning officers in their clubs elections. The first session was attended by 19 people representing 14 different clubs. These sessions were delivered by Jesse Fraser (C&S Vice President).

5. Club ACNC Registrations

Recent changes in legislation mean affiliated clubs may now be liable to pay income tax unless they complete a self assessment with the ATO or register as a charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC). After much discussion at C&S, MSA and with other associates such as SEN it was decided the best path forward was to support our clubs in registering as charities with ACNC. To this end C&S has prepared materials which have been distributed to clubs and is offering clubs support in their applications and any changes they may need to make in this transition. On the 2nd of May C&S held its first of several sessions with clubs to provide real time support to clubs in their ACNC applications.

Outline of Departmental planning and upcoming events/projects

Regular Events

This year C&S is looking to run more regular events for club office bearers. This semester C&S has hosted seven events, a major increase from previous years.

Club Governance Overhauls

Many C&S policies are in need of updating. C&S is now taking steps to refresh these regulations. In doing this C&S hopes to be in line with current best practice and provide advice and support to clubs to make any transitions as seamless as possible.

Club ACNC Registrations

As detailed above recent changes have resulted in many clubs needing to register as charities to remain tax exempt. C&S will continue to support clubs in this transition with the goal of having as many as possible by the end of October.

C&S Grants Program

The new C&S grants process continues to be rolled out. Jay Davis (C&S Treasurer) is meeting regularly with C&S and MSA Finance Staff to ensure the smooth functioning of the new process. Further changes to streamline the grants process are being considered for implementation in semester 2.

Division Goals for 2024

Goal	Progress	Comments
Regulations update/refresh	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Completed for Finance Regs - Completed for club model rules - Partially completed for Affiliation Regs - Planned for Complaints and IT

		policy
Regular club office bearer events	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Calendar planned for the whole year - Seven events have been already hosted - IWD event, Trivia night, 2 Returning Officer training sessions and one ACNC workshop held since last report - Officer Bearer Appreciation day to be held in Week 12 - Planning for Awards Night started
Encouraging greater use of the C&S Grants Program	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New grants process launched for some Grant Types. - Over \$50,000 distributed to clubs this year - Faster processing and payout time for clubs this year with new system
Club ACNC applications	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Materials disseminated to clubs - Presentation delivered to club OBs - Working groups planned to assist clubs in application - Clubs beginning to apply for registration.



Paul Halliday
Clubs & Societies REPORT
[Report to MSC 5/24]

Late Submission:

I (Paul Halliday) take full responsibility for the late submission of this report. I apologise to the MSC and the C&S Executive and will work to ensure it doesn't happen again.

MSA MAPS Division Report to the MSC

Constitutional Changes

The MAPS Executive has formally requested that the MSA Executive approve their proposed changes to the MAPS. If these changes are approved, these changes will streamline the Constitution and make membership to the Division easier.

MAPS Lounge

The MAPS Lounge now provides tea and coffee services within the Lounge.

Ordinary General Meeting

The Ordinary General Meeting has now been completed and saw the election to Amethyst Grayson, former Social Secretary, to the position of Secretary, and Joshua Pelach, former Vice-President, to the position of Treasurer.

Support for Distance Educational Regional Students

Discussions between the University and the MAPS Division have ensued to provide support through MAPS to students who live in regional areas and study via a distance education format.

MAPS Lounge Mural

MAPS has contracted a professional painter to begin designing a mural for the MAPS Lounge that is expected to be in place by Semester Two.