

Liam Patrick White

Political Representative

1st Quarter Report 2024

Submitted 13/03/24

Words: 2,039

Part One: Executive Officer Position Description Duties

13. Duties of the Political Representative

13.1. Write a variety of submissions on behalf of the Association, including, but not limited to:

13.1.1. Local and national government documents:

I am planning to submit on the Dunedin City Council on the Town Belt Reserve Management Plan review which closes on the 1st of April.

13.1.1.1. Student related parliamentary bills;

As of writing this report I am planning to write submissions on the Pae Ora (Health Futures) (Improving Mental Health Outcomes) Amendment Bill which closes on the 28th of March and the Fast-track Approvals Bill which closes on the 19th of April. I would not describe either of these as essential pieces of legislation as they don't have a clear student focus but I still believe the OUSA's input could be valuable to the select committee.

13.1.1.2. Student related Government projects/proposals;

There have been no student related Government projects/proposals that I have been invited to write submissions on. Nor have I seen any relevant projects/proposals.

13.1.1.3. Referenda;

N/A in first Quarter.

13.1.1.4. Dunedin City Council Annual Plan; and;

N/A in first Quarter.

13.1.1.5. Otago Regional Council Annual Plan.

N/A in first Quarter.

13.1.2. University of Otago reports, reviews, and consultative documents.

I have not had the opportunity to submit on any documents from the University of Otago this quarter.

13.2. Submissions outlined in 13.1 must be:

13.2.1. Well researched, written in a clear and concise manner, and address the submission from the perspective representative of students;

I have been preparing the formation of the submissions committee where I hope to invite a number of students with contradictory opinions to mine to ensure submissions have considered and reflect the diversity of student opinions.

13.2.2. Written, where relevant, in conjunction with the Executive Officer whose role relates to the topic of the submission;

As I have not written any submissions this semester, I have not yet had to consult the relevant Executive Officer however, once I do, I will!

13.2.3. Written, where relevant, with input from Executive sub-committees which relate to the topic of the submission;

Not relevant yet as there has been no opportunity.

13.2.4. Approved by the Executive before the submission is submitted; and;

Again, not relevant yet as there has been no opportunity.

13.2.5. Written in conjunction with NZUSA, where relevant and appropriate.

Again, not relevant yet as there has been no opportunity.

13.3. Where relevant, assist other Otago student groups and members of the Association in writing submissions.

I am hoping to invite the Students for Environmental Action and Otago Campus Greens for consultation on the Fast-track Approvals Bill.

13.4. Chair meetings of the Submissions Committee ensuring that all committee members are advised of meeting times, that the agenda is prepared and circulated beforehand and ensuring that the standing orders of the committee are adhered to.

Not relevant to first quarter as the Submissions Committee has not yet been formed.

13.5. Take direction from the Submissions Committee on matters of local and national government.

Not relevant to first quarter as the Submissions Committee has not yet been formed.

13.6. Work in conjunction with the President to raise student issues and lobby for improved outcomes on student issues with, including, but not limited to:

13.6.1. Ministers of Parliament;

I have been preparing a series of letters to key members of Cabinet and members of the government lobbying for great action in key areas of student concern such as the cost-of-living crisis, health, the environment and transport.

13.6.2. Local government officials;

I am planning on writing to several DCC Councillors and ORC Councillors on key student issues but have not had time to begin writing them.

13.6.3. Spokespeople of national level political parties; and;

My previously mentioned letters to members of the government will also be sent to the National Party President.

13.6.4. Relevant figures at the University of Otago.

None relevant in the first quarter.

13.7. Hold consultative student meetings to gain feedback and to inform the Executive.

I have not yet held any student meetings to gain feedback.

13.8. Maintain a good working relationship with the Administrative Vice-President, proactively bringing issues of relevance to their attention, meeting with them on a weekly basis.

In the first couple of weeks, due to my inexperience in the role, I met with our fearless President Keegan regularly, seeking advice and guidance in my role. However, after executive training, I realised that I was wrong... so I began meeting with Emily. We have a great working relationship! They have been extremely useful in advising me to overcome inefficiencies in my work process. They have further encouraged me to manage by deadlines and commitments. Also, Emily is great at her job but that's for YOU THE PEOPLE to decide.

13.9. Perform the general duties of all Executive Officers.

Hold onto your horses, that's part two!

13.10. Where practical, work not less than ten hours per week.

I have consistently avoided working more than 10 hours except on the week of the Humanities Divisional Meeting which was a significant meeting with equally large preparation which pushed me beyond my 10 hours.

Part Two: General Duties of All Executive Members

3. General Duties of all Executive Officers

3.1. The appointed term for all OUSA Executive Officers shall commence from the 1st of January and will terminate on the 31st of December of that same year.

3.2. Where reasonable, all Executive Officers are expected to assist as volunteers for OUSA events and functions, including, but not limited to:

3.2.1. Assisting at the OUSA Tent City and other activities during Summer School, Orientation and Re-Orientation; and;

Oh dude. You have no idea how well I cooked those sausages at Tent City. I was self-appointed as grill master general in charge of sausage cooking. I did not attend Clubs Day in an OUSA capacity however I did attend in another role and was able to very briefly assist other clubs in their set up.

3.2.2. Assisting with elections and referenda where appropriate.

Not relevant to Q1.

3.3. Where reasonable, all Executive Officers are to be available for Executive meetings, national conferences, national and local campaigns, Executive training sessions and Executive planning sessions.

Yep! I have attended all executive meetings and trainings so far.

3.4. All Executive officers shall:

3.4.1. Keep up to date with the Finance and Strategy Officer's Executive budget, bringing to the Finance and Strategy Officer any spending proposals, keeping track of their spending and ensuring they do not exceed budgeted expenditure;

Not relevant in Q1

3.4.2. Educate themselves on needs and experiences relevant to historically marginalised demographic groups including intersectionality and promote and encourage all demographics to participate, where relevant, in clubs, societies, committees and OUSA events;

I have tried to continue developing my understanding of marginalised ground in Aotearoa. I understand that as an elected official of the OUSA I have a unique responsibility to work for all students and encourage participation in the wider University and student communities. I always want to provide a encouraging space for a wide range of voices and opinions.

3.4.3. Prioritise sustainability and minimization of environmental impacts in all aspects of their role and keep up to date with environmental issues;

I haven't seen many opportunities in my role to prioritise sustainability beyond general courtesies in my role. However I do consider environmental sustainability at all opportunities.

3.4.4. Every quarter undertake five hours of voluntary service which contributes to the local community.

As part of my commitment to Generation Vote I have dedicated many hours to the Clubs development and responsibilities.

3.4.5. Regularly check and respond to all communications.

I feel like I've been pretty good at checking my emails. If you want to test how quickly I'll get back to you send an email to political@ousa.org.nz 😊.

Part Three: Attendance and Involvement in OUSA and University Committees

- Chair: OUSA Submissions Committee – this committee has not got off the ground and I have been working towards securing its membership. If anyone is reading this and wants to be on the ground floor of the OUSA's submissions process, please send me an email at political@ousa.org.nz! If you have any policy areas of key interest, please let me know and I can also invite you in specially to meeting at my discretion. I doubt this will be an overly popular committee but I am only allowed a limited number of general member so I may have to make some tough decisions regarding membership (I am saying this as a formality I

doubt I will find 5 enthusiastic and intelligent potential members of the submissions committee [but if this is you EMAIL ME!!]).

- Member: Humanities Divisional Board - The Humanities Divisional Board basically wrote me off for 3-4 days. There was a 400 page agenda that took me hours to work through. Most of the agenda comprised approving new papers, deleting papers or dual coding papers. My aim with our first meeting was to minimise the impact of paper deletions to students. Such as ensuring similar content from other papers, ensuring that when papers were combined students would still receive the same depth of knowledge and class engagement. I also wanted to make sure that the committee considered the practical realities of what paper proposals needed to contain; word counts on assignments, clarity of language and other similar considerations.
- Member: Teaching and Timetable Committee - This was a very different meeting to the Humanities Divisional Board. In this meeting we discussed a new method of scheduling lectures to avoid clashes which seemed like a great idea and very student focus. The focus of the meeting was very much on staff and how they fill out forms and info so it wasn't really my place to engage in the meeting however my focus was to continuously reiterate the value that this new service would bring to students

Part Four: Goals and Progress

I campaigned on 3 main goals which will remain my focusses for this year:

1. Fight for students and the political issues that they care about: cost of living, the environment, mental health and supporting diversity throughout our community.
2. To try to reinvigorate passion in student politics.
3. Advocating for students at all levels of politics across all political parties.

So far, I have made some progress in the first goal by advocating for students through planned submissions and my letters to the government. I believe that this first Quarter will be the most relaxed and lazy. I think my personal challenge will be ensuring that every week I will attempt to deliver something for students each week. This might be a submission, a letter, potentially an op-ed. I also hope that by expanding the Submissions Committee to not just a means of exchanging opinion, but a productive committee dedicated to ensuring that official submissions are not only of a high quality but also reflective of all students.

For my second goal, I hope to encourage more publicity for the work that the OUSA and the Executive does both on social medias but also developing great transparency and visibility for the executive's activities. I would like this to go beyond publishing quarterly reports and making more regular use of the OUSA executive Instagram.

For my third goal, limited progress has been made. I have tried to make sure that I've got my feet under the desk and feel secured before expanding into greater lobbying has been made. Having said that, I have been written multiple letters to different members of government. I have met with Rachel Brooking (former OUSA PRESIDENT and current Dunedin MP) and we discussed on key political interests of students and we agreed to keep in communication regarding any key developments in policy aimed at students with a focus on SmokeFree legislation, housing, cost of living and the environment.

Part Five: General

- I attended a “Free Fares” hui on behalf of the President and sought to focus our collective efforts across our member groups to delivering free fares for students and other groups in need.
- I will also be meeting with the Finance and Strategies Officer to formalise the OUSA’s political objectives for 2024.