

Hanna Friedlander

Postgraduate

First Quarter Report 2024

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### **Part One: Executive Officer position Description Duties**

#### **11.1. Promote via publications, promotions and campaigns, an environment within the Association and on campus which is supportive of postgraduate students.**

SPS, the Society for Postgraduate Students that I chair was inaugurated on February 21<sup>st</sup> at tent city of all places! I have been talking to different departments and groups and have started planning different initiatives around supporting our postgraduate cohort. We have our launch event coming up this Friday that we have been promoting through every channel/means possible and are excited to continue promoting more future events!

#### **11.2. Work with the University and the Student Support Centre to implement the Association's policy on Postgraduate Student Representatives.**

I'm not gonna lie, I didn't know we had a policy on postgraduate student representatives. That's my bad, I'll put my hand up and say that's on me. I'll do better, promise 😊 I will talk to Student Support Centre and our AVP to be more informed on what it's all about in the coming week.

#### **11.3. Be one of the Association's representatives on the University of Otago Senate.**

I have attended 1/1 meeting run by senate.

#### **11.4. Be a member of appropriate committees of the Association, including, but not limited to:**

##### **11.4.1. Society for Postgraduate Students; and;**

I chair the club 😊

##### **11.4.2. Academic Committee.**

As far as I am aware, the ToR is being updated for this committee so we have not had a meeting yet.

**11.5. Chair monthly meetings of the Society for Postgraduate Students, 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.**

We have had one general meeting as of this first quarter and we have decided on bi-weekly meetings at a set time that suits everyone. Agenda is prepared by myself and we have a secretary that makes very nice minutes and is sent out to everyone following the meeting in our group chat.

**11.6. Take direction from the Society for Postgraduate Students on all matters relevant to postgraduate members.**

The exec is very much on the same page about what we, as a team, have planned for the year and I am very happy with the team I have.

**11.7. Be the Association's representative on the Board of Graduate Studies.**

I have attended 2/2 meetings in person.

**11.8. Maintain a good working relationship with relevant OUSA staff, ensuring that information is shared on issues of relevance to postgraduate students.**

The OUSA exec have meetings where we share what we have individually been up to since our last meeting. It is a really great way of keeping everyone in the loop about anything and everything.

**11.9. Facilitate a variety of student representation on postgraduate related University Committees.**

Oh yeah. I can proudly say I'm not afraid to speak my mind even when I'm in a room full of academics – mainly because I've already been doing it through my first year of postgraduate studies but also because only child tings?

**11.10. Maintain a good working relationship with the Director of Graduate Research School and endeavor to meet with them on a regular basis.**

I have yet to meet the Director as a new one has just been appointed and he is in the "learning the ropes" stage. I have developed relationships with other members of the GRS though and will reach out to the Director once things have settled a bit.

**11.11. Maintain links with and assist affiliated Postgraduate bodies.**

So many meeting with all the different groups around campus that are doing things relating to postgrads. I learn something new everyday about the behind-the-scenes at the University.

**11.12. Maintain a good working relationship with the Administrative Vice-President, proactively bringing issues relevant to postgraduate students to their attention, and meeting with them on a weekly basis.**

I love sweet Emily <3 We've had our meeting this week (me ranting about life to her 😊)

**11.13. Sit on the Society for Postgraduate Students as an ex-officio member and maintain and fulfil the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding held between the Association and the Society for Postgraduate Students.**

As the chair, I am fully aware of the MoU and adhere to it.

**11.14. Perform the general duties of all Executive Officers.**

Well, it is my job after all, so of course!

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

I have been working approx. 15 hours a week on average.

### **Part Two: General Duties of All Executive Members**

**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;**

I was here from the second week of January so I helped out with the BBQ during Summer School. I also helped out during tent city and o-week with BBQ 😊

**3.2.2. Assisting with elections and referenda where appropriate.**

N/A

**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.**

I have been to every scheduled session in person.

**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;**

I'm gonna be honest, I haven't seen much of Abby but that is probably a combination of her being real busy with uni and me not really hanging out in the OUSA office much. I didn't know that we had an executive budget.

**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 attended Maturanga Māori workshops in my own time as I believe it is relevant to understand specifically for postgrad/research students. I am not an expert by any means but I am more than happy to share what I have learned to fellow postgrad students. I have also received private Māori and Pasifika consultation from few researchers in the BMS and science division and I endeavor to continue doing so and also to pick up some te reo! I also plan to meet with Ibuki at some point to discuss what International postgrads needs are and how I can support them better. It is important that I am informed of the different cultural needs and wants so that I can make informed decisions about how I want to organize and run the events I have planned with SPS.

**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 have not met the committee yet, but the Air Travel Steering Group is very sustainability focused and I hope to become more informed through my involvement with them.

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

I need to do better. I'll report back in my next quarter report.

**3.4.5. Regularly check and respond to all communications.**

I'm pretty easy to reach as I always have my phone with me. I have responded to everything that is required of me to respond to.

### **Part Three: Attendance and involvement in OUSA and University Committees**

Yeah...so there's a lot of committees accompanied by a WHOLE lot of reading. If anyone cares, here's the list: human ethics, board of graduate studies, graduate research student liaison committee, graduate studies committee, air travel project steering committee, senate, library services, pae tata strategy science division working group.

### **Part Four: Goals and your Progress**

I have two separate sets of goals. One set is centered around getting SPS running and realizing our vision for the club. For one, we are working towards fostering an inclusive postgraduate community. We are also working to develop and implement initiatives aimed at providing academic support, such as skills workshops and writing retreats, to enhance personal and professional development of the students. Another major initiative we are hoping to get running is a postgrad-focused podcast where people can come and chat candidly about a specific topic relating to postgrad. I also hope to run these podcasts with different groups/services around the uni that provide support for postgrads to provide constructive feedback from the student body on the services available and almost as a way to hold them accountable to actually make adjustments to their services. Progress is really early stages tbh. I have made contact with relevant parties who are willing to collaborate with me to implement these initiatives so it's just about getting it all up and running, really. Sooooo watch this space 😊

In terms of my role as OUSA postgrad rep, I want to act as a bridge between postgraduate students and faculty/administration to ensure both sides are on the same page about what we all want and to keep each side updated. I endeavor to represent the diverse needs and interests of postgrad students via advocating for necessary resources, services, and motions that will result in a conducive academic environment. I would like to also collaborate more closely with the other exec members to address common concerns and work together to make things happen. I seek to ensure transparency and accountability for anything that I say in meetings in my role as postgrad rep via regular consultation with students and staff. Progress so far has been overall good. I'm not disheartened regarding my ability to do what I signed up to do and I am looking forward to continually reflect and improve on the very valuable skills I am learning from this experience.

### **Part Five: General**

Think Emily Blunt in that one scene from *The Devil Wears Prada* and she's really sick right before the benefit. Not the her being sick part but the "I love my job" x4 part. It's become a morning ritual while I'm waiting for my first coffee of the day.

On the real though, if there is any student that is reading this, please know that I exist and that I am here to represent and advocate for you and I am more than happy to have a chat over a coffee (my treat 😊) about anything!