Q3 2024 Political Representative Report

Liam Patrick White

Political Representative

Submitted: 07/09/24

Essential: 2,135

Total: 2,486

1. **General Duties of all Executive Officers**
	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.**

Yes

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

Done on market day.

* + 1. **Assisting at the OUSA Tent City and other activities during Summer School, Orientation and Re-Orientation; and;**

Not relevant to Q3.

* + 1. **Assisting with elections and referenda where appropriate.**

Not relevant to Q3. Have been working alongside the President and AVP to “buff up” the executive elections by preemptively planning campaign events, info nights for candidates and so forth. It is hoped this will help candidates to better understand their nominated positions and give voters the opportunity to engage in the elections. Yay democracy!

* 1. **It is expected that Executive Officers attend Executive meetings.**

I don’t think I have missed an executive meeting without reasonable cause (other meetings and events). I’m enthusiastic about those 9am Thursday meetings... but more excited for the pre-meeting coffee I organise and am habitually 15 minutes late to.

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

At the beginning of the Quarter, I organised a meeting with Hugh the VUWSA campaigns officer and we agreed to keep in contact around the fast-track bill, also had some meetings with groups around campaigning to extend the winter energy payment plan to all students. Also, I sizzled a fair few sausages for lecture recordings.

* 1. **All Executive officers shall:**
		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;**

It’s been interesting seeing the financial process through FESC and the executive meetings.

* + 1. **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;**

Yes! I’m always trying but as potentially the whitest person at the University of Otago, I can recognise that I’ve got a lot to learn. This quarter, I learned that I love kava. It's a great experience (after you drink it) to hang out with people in a chill environment.

* + 1. **Act in accordance with and uphold Te Tiriti o Waitangi while exercising their duties;**

YES! In my submission to the University Advisory Group I specifically called on the Advisory Group to recognise its obligations under Te Tiriti and appoint a Māori student representative to University Council.

* + 1. **Where reasonable, attend events hosted by clubs related to historically marginalised demographic groups;**

I attended the Te Rōpū Māori fundraising BBQ and tried a Taniwha burger for the first time. Dude I still think about that burger. Also, Tele and the OUPISA crew were kind enough to host us for a kava night as previously mentioned, and it was a great opportunity for us to learn more about the specific needs of Pasifika students at Otago.

* + 1. **Prioritise sustainability and minimization of environmental impacts in all aspects of their role and keep up to date with environmental issues;**

I think I have printed maybe one thing. In fairness, for the budget there were a lot of printed documents that were probably not terribly environmentally friendly, but what is a guy to do. On environmental action, it’s important to keep following the Fast Track Bill and Aotearoa350’s cruise ship campaign.

* + 1. **Every quarter undertake five hours of voluntary service which contributes to the local community; and;**

Yep! I volunteered to MC a practice debate over at the mighty Caroline Freeman College. I also volunteered with Generation Vote delivering Civics education workshops at Queens Highschool (I taught 2 workshops on Te Tiriti o Waitangi and 1 on local government).

* + 1. **Regularly check and respond to all communications.**

Again, I’m pretty good on comms. I think I missed an email from Aaron Hawkins about housing so sir if you’re reading this you get my sincere and public apology.

1. **Duties of the Political Representative**
	1. **13.1. Write a variety of submissions on behalf of the Association, including, but not limited to:**

There actually haven’t been a ton of submissions this Quarter tbh. I think Chris Luxon is running scared from my powers of public submission

* + 1. **13.1.1. Student Related Local and national government documents:**
			1. **Parliamentary bills;**

None this quarter, unless you count the oral submission on [Residential Tenancies Ammendment Bill](https://ousa-my.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/g/personal/political_ousa_org_nz/EQ7iL3ih1B1Cn6X0BC4XAxcBOXK-4h9855HlPZuZQHwE0g?e=3ILH9f) (Carmel Sepuloni said she agreed with me which was pretty slay). Video: https://vimeo.com/showcase/10758270/video/989246328

(this was shockingly difficult to find and yes this report is now multimedia)

* + - 1. **Government projects/proposals;**

None other than the [University Advisory Group phase 2 submission](https://ousa-my.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/g/personal/political_ousa_org_nz/EY2GwCKULL5Hu3jqO6-UFWkBYY0lMjjm_nvHGXpM3lwDlQ?e=Mm2thi).

* + - 1. **Referenda;**

None have come up this quarter.

* + - 1. **Dunedin City Council Annual Plan; and;**

None this quarter.

* + - 1. **Otago Regional Council Annual Plan;**

None this quarter.

* + - 1. **Otago Regional Council projects/proposals; and;**

None this quarter except the Air Quality plan which fell at a personally hectic time and I decided not to submit. However, the impact of this will be fairly neglible as I still plan on submitting on the Council’s Climate Action Plan.

* + - 1. **University of Otago reports, reviews, and consultative documents.**

None this quarter.

* 1. **Submissions outlined in 13.1 must be:**
		1. **Well researched, written in a clear and concise manner, and address the submission from the perspective representative of students;**

I think so? I tried to make sure submissions have been more concise and really trying to limit myself to 5 pages.

* + 1. **Written, where relevant, in conjunction with the Executive Officer whose role relates to the topic of the submission;**

Yep! Did this for the UAG.

* + 1. **Where relevant, with input from Executive sub-committees which relate to the topic of the submission;**

Again, as far as I know there are no relevant sub-committees on our submissions.

* + 1. **Approved by the Executive before the submission is submitted; and;**

The [UAG submission](https://ousa-my.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/g/personal/political_ousa_org_nz/EY2GwCKULL5Hu3jqO6-UFWkBYY0lMjjm_nvHGXpM3lwDlQ?e=b1PHAe) might still be waiting for this but will be approved by the executive in retrospect. However it was sent out for feedback by the executive and got none, so I take that as read and approved.

* + 1. **Relevant to the strategic plan.**

I think my submissions are relevant to the strategic plan both through the value of “advocacy” principles of “Te Tiriti o Waitangi,” and strategic objectives of furthering the “student voice and advocacy,” and “student experience.”

* + 1. **Written in conjunction with NZUSA, where relevant and appropriate.**

Again just like last quarter, not sure what is happening with NZUSA. However, I would like to publicly flame VUWSA for leaving without a referendum.

* 1. **Be a member of appropriate internal committees of the Association, including, but not limited to;**

I’m part of the Finance Expenditure and Strategy Committee and dude it has been a rollercoaster. However, I am confident we have produced the best budget possible.

* + 1. **Submissions Committee.**

Again, it’s just me.

* 1. **Where relevant, assist other Otago student groups and members of the Association in writing submissions and support the student body and Clubs and Societies in political action at the Political Representative's discretion.**

I’ve been trying to support political action. Aotearoa350, SEA and OUSA will be collaborating on some climate action around Fast Track. I would also like to work with SYL and OCG on their campaigns to extend the winter energy payment to students.

* 1. **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.**

Meetings of the submissions committee have been running effectively. However, the sole member and chair has been repeatedly late without sending through apologies for lateness. Consider this formal notice from the Chair of the Committee, Liam White, that Liam White shall be removed from his position as Chair of the Submissions Committee effective immediately. Subsequently, we are proud to announce that in recognition of his hard work, Liam White shall be stepping into the role as Chair of the Submissions Committee.

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

Due to the political instability of the submissions committee, little has been done however we are hoping that under the leadership of our new Chair, Liam White more will be accomplished in coming months.

* 1. **Work in conjunction with the President and the Finance and Strategy Officer to raise student issues and lobby for improved outcomes on student issues with, including, but not limited to:**

Yep! Been doing this! I feel like now that we’re post-budget Daniel and I will sit down and set some goals for the next couple of months

* + 1. **Ministers of Parliament;**

I am hoping to get some more letters drafted in the coming weeks to key Ministers regarding what can be done on the state of student housing, the cost of power, and concern over the government's actions towards Māori.

* + 1. **Local government officials;**

Again, hoping to write some letters. I am also going to ask Jules the Radish about getting more bins around student areas to minimize glass on the street also what he plans on doing around student housing. I further be asking a collection of councillors, what can be done around student housing.

* + 1. **Spokespeople of national level political parties; and;**

Uhhhhhhh... I haven’t reached out to any political party Presidents if that’s what this is asking.

* + 1. **Relevant figures at the University of Otago.**

I think I’m doing this? Still trying to work alongside some figures in the University to support our efforts on housing and wellbeing, but this is still slow going and I think that’s admittedly from me not having enough hours in the week.

* 1. **Hold consultative student meetings to gain feedback on submissions and to inform the Executive.**

Have not done recently, however I do hope to do this with the ORC’s climate plan.

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

My relationship with the AVP I would say is at an all-time high. Recently we’ve discussed me reprioritizing the work that I'm doing. Over this last quarter I have become more involved in internal OUSA administration, and this might have resulted in me neglecting my political role.

* 1. **In an election year coordinate politics week and election campaigns.**

This dosen’t apply fuckers!

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

Refer to previous section. Dummy.

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

My average weekly hours for this quarter were 13.20. There were some high weeks of 20 hours and some slower ones at around 7 or 8. Also I think this might be written wrong as surely it’s “not work more than ten hours per week.”

But meh, my disapproval of the hours system has been noted previously.

1. **Attendance and Involvement in OUSA and University Committees**
	1. **OUSA**
		1. **Submissions Committee**

It was the position of the previous chair, Liam White, that the submissionc committee should have been removed and frankly administratively castrated. However, the new chair, Liam White, is hopeful that the situation can be rectified, and the submissions committee can continue in efforts of doing nothing.

* + 1. **Finances, Expenditure and Strategy Committee**

Yes! I have been very active in FESC, at one point it forced me to miss the same lecture 3 weeks in a row. I do have to say that FESC under Daniel and Keegan’s leadership has been a resounding improvement. I’m confident the financials of OUSA are finally getting the TLC that they need.

* + 1. **Constitutional Review Committee**

This has been a very strange committee.

* 1. **University**
		1. **Humanities Academic Committee**

Still rocking and rolling on this side. I really enjoy being Humanities rep, and while it was sad to see Jess Palmer go I think it’s fair to say that she has earned a tremendous amount of respect from staff and students alike through navigating Humanities through the very choppy sea of the last couple of years. Hugh Campbell certainly has big shoes to fill but I am more than confident that he will continue to be a strong advocate for the Hums division.

* + 1. **Humanities Divisional Board**

Refer to previous answer.

* + 1. **Humanities Divisional Leadership Group**

Refer to previous answer.

* + 1. **Teaching and Timetabling Committee**

Yep! Guys get a load of this. I submitted an agenda item at Teaching and Timetabling Committee for regular student lunch breaks, and I’m now exploring its viability with Claire Gallop! So, watch this space I suppose.

1. **Goals and Progress – Not essential reading**

So remember how last report, I asked you to ask me if it’s hope that kills you? Well, I’m not sure anymore. The longer I am in student politics the more hopeful I become, recognizing the massive potential for great work being done by enthusiastic people. However, I become more and more aware of the sheer magnitude of work to be done and the level of despondence from students.

We all know the key areas: cost of living, housing, the environment, giving meaningful effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, advocating for minority communities and so on. But there is far too much for any one representative or even executive to meaningfully challenge. But there isn’t really anyone else but us to try.

Following the election, I came into this role believing that it was the role of the political rep to ‘facilitate political engagement’ however I now see that was incorrect. The real job of the political rep is to choose one thing, and drill down on it.

I think over the next quarter, I want to be more proactive in advocating for students, rather than just attaching myself to the work of others.

That is why I’m going to set some promises:

1. I promise to protest the Uni raising student fees.
2. Set the groundwork for an advocacy campaign exposing just how poor the standard of housing is in Studentville.
3. Lead a lobbying campaign with SYL and OCG to extend the winter energy payment plans to students.
4. Work with SEA and Aotearoa350 on organising fast-track action.

Is this a reasonable set of work when; my dissertation is due in 6 months and I am way behind, I’ve got assignments galore, other stuff..., and I’m in my last semester of uni and want to enjoy my time with my mates? I don’t know, but by the time the Q4 report rolls around I will either be a conquering hero or a tired postgrad. That is my promise to you Otago, get busy and get knackered.

Bless up,

Your pols rep

Liam