

Student Leadership and Representation Policy

Section 1 - Summary

(1) This Policy sets out:

- a. the University's commitment to student leadership and representation; and
- b. the rights and responsibilities of student representatives, and affiliated student groups (i.e. VU Clubs, VU College Societies and VU Associations) and their members.

Section 2 - Accountability

Accountable/Responsible Officer	Role
Accountable Officer	Associate Provost, Students
Responsible Officer	Director, Student Services

Key Decision-making powers under the Policy (if applicable)

(Delegated) Power	Role
Final decision on affiliation and disaffiliation of student groups.	Manager, Student Life & Leadership
Approve allocation of funds to student groups from the Student Life budget.	Manager, Student Life & Leadership

Section 3 - Scope

(2) This Policy applies to:

- a. Victoria University (VU) students; and
- b. members of VU-affiliated student groups.

Section 4 - Definitions

(3) Affiliation

(4) Club

(5) College Society

(6) Student Association

(7) Clubs Officer

(8) Student Groups: provide an opportunity for students to be involved in leadership activities, engage with their fellow students and other members of the University community. They are intended to advance the education and/or student experience.

Section 5 - Policy Statement/Regulation

Part A - Student Leadership

(9) VU is committed to supporting and encouraging students to be leaders - people who are empowered to make, and encourage others to make, a positive difference in their communities, chosen career and broader society.

(10) VU provides opportunities for students to assume leadership positions in VU Clubs, VU College Societies, VU Associations and other representation bodies.

(11) VU also offers leadership programs and activities aimed as instilling leadership skills and attributes in VU's current and future student leaders.

Part B - Student Representation

(12) VU is committed to genuine and meaningful student engagement. VU acknowledges that this requires a culture of student partnership, co-creation and respect for the student voice.

(13) VU provides opportunities for students to be involved in the governance of the University, including as a member of the University Council and Academic Board. Further information can be found on the [Governance & Secretariat Student Elections](#) site. Students are advised of such opportunities via email during the annual election process.

(14) In accordance with the [Student Services, Amenities, Representation and Advocacy Guidelines](#), VU engages its students in its decision making by:

- a. undertaking annual surveys of the student body regarding the students experience and the allocation of Student Services and Amenities Fees (SSAF) funding;
- b. ensuring 50% of the members of the SSAF Consultative Committee are students;
- c. regularly meeting with elected student representatives;
- d. consulting with the broader student body regarding changes to University Regulations and Policies that may impact them; and
- e. inviting students to be members of consultative groups where the student body may be impacted by significant change.

Part C - Student Groups - VUSU, VU Clubs & College Societies

(15) Student groups provide an opportunity for students to be involved in leadership activities, engage with their fellow students and other members of the University community. They are intended to advance the education and/or student experience.

(16) There are four types of formal VU student groups:

- a. the Victoria University Student Union (VUSU);
- b. VU Clubs
- c. VU College Societies; and
- d. VU Associations.

(17) All official VU student groups, apart from VUSU, must be affiliated with VU.

VUSU

(18) VUSU is a democratically elected representative student body, which provides representation and general services to students.

(19) VU recognises VUSU as the peak student representative body and the VU branch of the National Union of Students.

(20) VUSU is an incorporated association, which means it has legal personality separate and distinct from VU.

VU Clubs

(21) VU supports and encourages VU Clubs because bringing students with similar interests, experiences and/or backgrounds together improves the student experience, retention and success.

VU College Societies and VU Associations

(22) VU supports and encourages VU College Societies and VU Associations because it values the student voice and recognises the importance of partnering with students to improve the student experience.

(23) As VU College Societies are intended to represent all students within a specific College, VU will only affiliate one VU Society per College/Victoria Polytechnic. However, in circumstances where Colleges merge or where College disciplines are considered sufficiently separate and distinct, VU may allow multiple College Societies.

Affiliation

(24) VU Clubs, VU Societies and VU Associations must be affiliated by VU, having been formally recognised via the affiliation process.

(25) The affiliation process is detailed in the [Student Groups Leadership and Representation - Student Group Establishment, Affiliation and Funding Procedure](#).

(26) In order to be eligible for affiliation, a student group must:

- a. have a clearly defined mission and aims that align with VU's values,
- b. be concerned with providing services, activities and/or representation to VU students; and
- c. comply with this Policy and the [Student Groups Leadership and Representation - Student Group Establishment, Affiliation and Funding Procedure](#).

(27) VU will not affiliate a student group that it considers to be serviced by an existing student group.

(28) Student groups must re-apply for affiliation annually. Affiliation automatically lapses each year on the date prescribed in the Student Leadership and Representation procedure.

Affiliated Student Group Responsibilities

(29) With the exception of VUSU, only affiliated student groups will be considered to have an association with VU and can publicise that association by using VU's registered trade marks (e.g. 'Victoria University' or 'VU'). Unaffiliated groups of students cannot hold themselves out to have a formal connection or association with VU.

(30) All affiliated student groups will be referred to as a 'VU [insert name] Club', 'VU [insert name] Society' or a 'VU [insert name] Association'.

(31) Affiliated student groups must:

- a. conduct themselves in a manner that does not bring VU into disrepute;
- b. adopt and comply with the [Student Clubs and VU Societies Constitution](#);
- c. be led by VU students and must not be run by or unduly influenced by non-VU students and/or external organisations;
- d. comply with the induction, training and student leadership requirements prescribed by the University;
- e. comply with this Policy and associated procedures, the VU Clubs/Society Constitution, the [Student Charter Policy](#) and other relevant University [policies and procedures](#) (e.g. the [Privacy Policy](#), [Bullying Prevention and Management Policy](#) and the [Discrimination and Harassment Prevention and Management Policy](#)).

(32) Affiliated student groups who do not comply with this Policy, may be disaffiliated in accordance with the [Student Groups Leadership and Representation - Student Group Establishment, Affiliation and Funding Procedure](#). Individual members or officers may also be referred to other University processes (e.g. student misconduct).

Funding for Student Groups

(33) With the exception of VUSU, only affiliated student groups can apply for and/or receive university funding and/or support.

(34) The funds VU provides VUSU and affiliated student groups is from the Student Services and Amenities Fees (SSAF). There are strict legislative requirements placed on VU in terms of what SSAF funds can be spent on.

(35) University funds provided to student groups cannot be used to directly or indirectly support:

- a. a political party; or
- b. the election of a person as a member of:
 - i. the legislature of the Commonwealth, a State or a Territory; or
 - ii. a local government body.

(36) University funds provided to student groups must only be used towards those activities specific in the Higher Education Legislation Amendment (Student Services and Amenities) Act 2011. These are specified on the government website: <https://www.education.gov.au/student-services-and-amenities-fee>.

(37) No student can profit from or gain any direct personal material benefit from their participation in or management of a VU Club, VU Society or VU Association.

(38) All actual and potential conflicts of interests must be declared to VU via the Clubs Officer who will provide guidance as to the appropriate management of such a conflict.

(39) Student groups that receive university or other funding must manage, account and acquit the funds they receive in accordance with the [Student Groups Leadership and Representation - Student Group Establishment, Affiliation and Funding Procedure](#).

(40) Any money provided by VU which is not spent on the activity for which it was provided, or for activities which do not meet the SSAF requirements, must be immediately repaid to the University.

Student Group Events/Activities

(41) Affiliated student groups must seek to run their events safely and must mitigate risk to an appropriate level.

(42) Specific [policies](#) apply to the provision of alcohol and/or food.

(43) Student Life and Leadership are available to provide advice and support regarding how students groups can run and manage events.

Insurance

(44) While affiliated student group activities will generally be covered by VU's Public Liability insurance policy, it is the responsibility of all affiliated student groups to ensure that their activities are covered by VU's insurance policies.

Section 6 - Procedures

(45) See [Student Groups Leadership and Representation - Student Group Establishment, Affiliation and Funding Procedure](#).

Section 7 - Guidelines

(46) Nil.

Status and Details

Status	Historic
Effective Date	24th October 2018
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Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor
Approval Date	24th October 2018
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Accountable Officer	Lisa Line Deputy Vice-Chancellor Enterprise and Digital Lisa.Line@vu.edu.au
Responsible Officer	Darrel Caulfield Chief Student Officer and Registrar darrel.caulfield@vu.edu.au
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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Affiliation" - Formal recognition of a Student Group as being part of/associated with VU.

"Club" - A group of Victoria University (VU) students: who share and are dedicated to a particular interest or activity (e.g. Auslan Society); and who have applied for and been granted Affiliation.

"College Society" - A group of Victoria University (VU) students: who represent the interests of students in a particular College or students enrolled in TAFE; and whose primary aim is to advocate for and improve the student experience for that particular group of students; and who have applied for and been granted Affiliation.

"Student Association" - A group of Victoria University (VU) students: who represent students belonging to a particular cohort connected with their enrolment; whose primary aim is to advocate for and improve the student experience for that particular group of students; and who are represented University-wide (e.g. international students); and who have applied for and been granted Affiliation.

"Clubs Officer" - The Victoria University employee who assists and who has oversight of Student Groups.