Student Groups 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 Student Associations) and their members.

Section 2 - Scope

(2) This Policy applies to:

a. Victoria University (VU) students; and
b. members of VU-affiliated Student Groups.

(3) This Policy does not apply to:

a. The VU Student Union (VUSU) who are governed by the VUSU Inc. Constitution 2024 and an annual Funding Agreement with VU;
b. The VU Postgraduate Association (VUPA) who are governed by the Constitution of the VU Postgraduate Association Inc. 2020 and an annual Funding Agreement with VU; or
c. Sports Clubs which are governed by the VU Sport Procedure – Sport Club Affiliation Procedure.

Section 3 - Policy Statement

Part A - Student Leadership

(4) 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.

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

(6) VU commits to fostering an inclusive environment where diverse student voices are heard and respected. Efforts will be made to ensure leadership opportunities are accessible to all students, including those from underrepresented and marginalised groups.

This policy document may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Printed copies, or part thereof, are regarded as uncontrolled and should not be relied upon as the current version. It is the responsibility of the individual reading this document to always refer to Victoria University's Policy Library for the latest version.

Part B - Student Representation

(7) 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.

(8) VU provides opportunities for students to be involved in the governance of the University, including as members 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.

(9) 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 - Affiliated Student Groups

(10) 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.

(11) There are three types of formal VU Student Groups:

a. VU Clubs
b. VU College Societies; and
c. VU Student Associations.

(12) All official VU Student Groups must be affiliated to Student Life & Leadership; College Societies and Student Associations must affiliate with VU via VUSU.

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

(14) In order to be eligible for affiliation, a Student Group must:

a. Align with VU's core values: Propose a clear mission and objectives that resonate with the values and academic goals of VU.
b. Engage actively with the student body: Provide a documented plan for activities and representation that benefits the student community.
c. Comply with VU's policies: Adhere strictly to the policies outlined in the Student Groups Leadership and Representation - Student Group Establishment, Affiliation and Funding Procedure, ensuring governance standards and operational integrity.

(15) VU will not affiliate a Student Group that it considers to be serviced by an existing Student Group.

This policy document may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Printed copies, or part thereof, are regarded as uncontrolled and should not be relied upon as the current version. It is the responsibility of the individual reading this document to always refer to Victoria University's Policy Library for the latest version.

(16) Student Groups must re-apply for affiliation annually. Affiliation automatically lapses each year on the date prescribed in the Student Groups Leadership and Representation - Student Group Establishment, Affiliation and Funding Procedure.

(17) As VU College Societies are intended to represent all students within a specific College, VU will only affiliate one VU Society per College/TAFE. However, in circumstances where Colleges merge or where College disciplines are considered sufficiently separate and distinct, VU may allow multiple College Societies at the discretion of Manager, Student Life & Leadership.

Part D - Affiliated Student Group Responsibilities

(18) 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.

(19) All newly affiliated Student Groups will include 'VU' or 'Victoria University' in their name, such as 'VU [insert name] Club', 'Victoria University [insert name] Society' or '[insert name] Association of VU'.

(20) Affiliated Student Groups must:

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

(21) 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).

Part E - Funding for Student Groups

(22) Affiliated Student Groups can apply for and may receive university funding and/or support in accordance with the Student Groups Leadership and Representation - Student Group Establishment, Affiliation and Funding Procedure.

(23) The funds VU provides affiliated Student Groups are from the Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF). There are strict legislative requirements placed on VU in terms of what SSAF funds can be spent on.

(24) University SSAF funds provided to Student Groups must not 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.

(25) 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.

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

(27) All actual and potential conflicts of interests must be declared by the individual with the conflict, or a representative Student Group Executive Member to VU via the Clubs Officer who will provide guidance as to the appropriate management of such a conflict and will also notify VUSU President of any conflict of interest reported as they pertain to College Societies or Student Associations.

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

(29) 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.

Part F - Club Events and Activities

(30) Affiliated Clubs must follow directions of the Clubs Officer to run their events safely and must mitigate risk to an appropriate level.

(31) Affiliated Clubs must run a minimum of 4 events/activities for their members in an academic year. Clubs who affiliate after Semester 2/Block 1/Week 1 will be required to deliver a minimum of 2 activities/events per year.

(32) Specific policies apply to the provision of alcohol and/or food.

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

Part G - Insurance

(34) While affiliated Student Group activities will generally be covered by VU's insurance policy, it is the responsibility of all affiliated Student Groups to ensure that their activities are covered by VU’s insurance policies in consultation with the Clubs Officer and/or the VUSU General Secretary.

Section 4 - Procedures

(35) Student Groups Leadership and Representation - Student Group Establishment, Affiliation and Funding Procedure

Section 5 - HESF/ASQA/ESOS Alignment

(36) HESF: Standard 7.2 Information for Prospective and Current Students.

(37) Outcome Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations 2025: Standard 2.5 Diversity and Inclusion.

Section 6 - Definitions

(38) Affiliation: A formal recognition by Victoria University that allows Student Groups to access resources, funding, and institutional support. Examples include but are not limited to Clubs, College Societies, and Student Associations.

(39) Club: A group of people who share a common objective, interest or involvement in an activity. These types of groups may be categorised as Religious & Spiritual Groups, Academic Groups, Hobby & Special Interest Groups, Cultural Groups, Community Groups.

(40) Clubs Officer: The VU staff member who supports students to set up and manage their club.

(41) College Society: A student group dedicated to representing students enrolled in a particular college of the University.

(42) Executive members: Office holders of Student Groups who have been elected to Executive positions in accordance with their relevant Student Group's Constitution.

(43) Sport Club: A club based on sporting activities that may be competitive or social in nature. These are managed by VU Sport.

(44) Student Association: a student group which represents students belonging to a particular cohort connected to their enrolment.

(45) Student Groups: VU associated groups of students and/or VU-affiliated groups; including VU Clubs, VU College Societies, and VU Student Associations. All types of these organisations will be defined as "Student Groups" and will be typically chartered to 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.

(46) VUSU: Is the Victoria University Student Union which is the democratically elected representative student body, which provides representation and general services to students. VU recognises VUSU as the peak student representative body and the VU branch of the National Union of Students. VUSU is an incorporated association, with a legal personality separate and distinct from VU.

(47) VUPA: The Victoria University Postgraduate Association, which represents postgraduate students at Victoria University. VUPA is an independent entity, governed by its own constitution and operating under a distinct funding agreement with Victoria University. The association advocates for the interests and needs of postgraduate students, providing specialized services and support to enhance their academic and professional development.

This policy document may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Printed copies, or part thereof, are regarded as uncontrolled and should not be relied upon as the current version. It is the responsibility of the individual reading this document to always refer to Victoria University's Policy Library for the latest version.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	15th November 2024
Review Date	15th November 2027
Approval Authority	Academic Board
Approval Date	6th November 2024
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Accountable Officer	Lisa Line Deputy Vice-Chancellor Enterprise and Digital Lisa.Line@vu.edu.au
Responsible Officer	Carol Corzo Chief Wellbeing Officer +61 3 9919 5100
Enquiries Contact	Stephanie Folau Senior Student Engagement Officer (CLUBS) 9919 5967

This policy document may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Printed copies, or part thereof, are regarded as uncontrolled and should not be relied upon as the current version. It is the responsibility of the individual reading this document to always refer to Victoria University's Policy Library for the latest version.