

# Student Representation Policy



## Purpose/objective

The purpose of this Policy and Procedure is to provide students at the Australasian Academy of Higher Education (AAHE) with an opportunity to voice their views, suggestions and concerns through a fair and efficient governance process.

## Scope

This Policy and Procedure applies to students, AAHE Boards and Committees, and members of AAHE's Executive Management Committee.

## Definitions

Terms used in this document are defined in the AAHE Glossary.

## Policy

### 1 Principles

1.1 The guiding principles of this policy are:

- a) independent and accountable student representation,
- b) meaningful processes for consultation between AAHE decision-making bodies and elected student representatives,
- c) equality in campus representation,
- d) active participation of students in AAHE life,
- e) effective functioning of student organisations,
- f) effective support structures for student representatives, and
- g) commitment to a culture of respect, civility and transparency.

### 2 Student participation

2.1 AAHE's Governance Charter ensures student input and participation in the life of the Academy through The Student Representative Council (SRC), which *"has responsibility, delegated by the Board of Directors (BoD), to ensure that students have opportunities to participate in the deliberative and decision-making processes of AAHE's corporate and academic governance. The SRC is to contribute to AAHE's boards and committees, especially on issues that directly affect students"*.

2.2 The specific functions of the SRC are to:

- a) Reflect on matters relating to student services and amenities.
- b) Collate and present recommendations from the student body concerning student services and amenities to AAHE's boards and committees,

- c) Work with the AAHE executive on academic and non-academic student experiences and matters for improvement.
  - d) Consult with all students concerning their student experience and topical issues.
  - e) Facilitate opportunities for students to provide feedback and suggestions with regard to academic and non-academic matters.
  - f) Participate as a voting member in Academic Board.
  - g) Provide reports to the Board of Directors on key non-academic issues concerning the students.
- 2.3 In addition to these functions, AAHE's Executive Management Committee will schedule consultation sessions with the SRC to obtain SRC's feedback and input on operational matters.
- 2.4 The SRC Executive will:
- a) Meet at least once prior to each SRC meeting to consider, co-ordinate and recommend policies at the next sitting of the SRC.
  - b) Ensure that all members of the SRC Executive are performing their respective duties and responsibilities.
  - c) Ensure that all SRC directives, policies and motions are adhered to, that all the provisions of the Election Procedures are complied with and take any remedial action where warranted.
  - d) Perform any other duties that the SRC may determine from time to time direct.

## Procedure

### 1. Membership

- 1.1 Under the AAHE Governance Charter, the Student Representative Council may have up to seven (7) members, including the Dean, who is an *ex officio* member. The members of the SRC include:
- Chair – one member appointed by the elected members of SRC.
  - Members - appointed by election from among enrolled students.
- 1.2 Members shall serve a term of office no longer than two (2) years, or the duration of their course.
- 1.3 Elections will be held each term for positions that are vacant.
- 1.4 Except in the first year of AAHE's operations, new students in their first semester of study are not eligible for election.
- 1.5 No student may nominate for a position on the Student Representative Council if their enrolment has been suspended or they have previously been removed from a position as a Student Representative for any reason related to their enrolment or the Student Code of Conduct.

### 2. Elections

- 2.1 The AAHE Registrar will act as Returning Officer and shall set the times and dates for elections.

- 2.2 Elections for the SRC will be conducted using Victoria's Optional Preferential Voting (OPV) system<sup>1</sup>.
- 2.3 In determining the eligibility of a student to stand for election, and for the purposes of voting and electoral rolls, the Registrar, as Returning Officer, shall have authority in this regard.
- 2.4 Ballot material may be distributed instructing eligible voters to attend a specified place or places managed or controlled by AAHE, at a specified date and time, in order to receive a ballot paper and vote in the election.
- 2.5 Elections can be held electronically or in hard copy format. The Returning Officer or their nominee(s) shall provide to students validating information to enable students to vote electronically.
- 2.6 In order to vote by electronic means, students may access the AAHE computers or their own computers.
- 2.7 The names of candidates for all ballots will appear in random order selected by lot by the Returning Officer.

### 3. The Returning Officer

The Returning Officer:

- a) is to take all reasonable steps to ensure the fairness and integrity of the election process
- b) shall decide all matters related to the conduct and procedure of elections, and their decision shall be final, subject to these procedures
- c) shall notify all students of an election by posting a notice of election on the designated web site and by email notice to students, which will include:
  - i. number of position(s) to be filled and number of vacancies for each position
  - ii. category or categories of persons eligible for election
  - iii. term of office
  - iv. an invitation to nominate for election
  - v. how to nominate and where nominations should be lodged
  - vi. the date and time by which the nominations must be received by the Returning Officer
  - vii. persons eligible to vote in the election
  - viii. the method of election (that is, by electronic or other means)
  - ix. the closing date of the ballot, and
  - x. any other information about the election that the Returning Officer decides is relevant to include in the notice.

### 4. Nominations

- 4.1 All nominees must be students at the time of the election and may continue to serve on the SRC only while AAHE students.
- 4.2 Eligible nominees may request the Returning Officer to circulate election statements of no more than 150 words to the student body. The candidate statement must include the name of the candidate and the award course in which they are enrolled. Photographs supplied by

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.vec.vic.gov.au/voting/how-voting-works/preferential-voting>

candidates must be in the format and size stipulated by the Returning Officer. Statements will be circulated exactly as they are submitted including any spelling mistakes, punctuation errors, grammatical errors and capitalisations, except where deemed offensive, discriminatory or defamatory or otherwise inappropriate for publishing by the Returning Officer.

## 5. Chair

- 5.1 The elected members of the SRC at the inaugural meeting, which is to be convened one (1) month after the elected positions have been appointed, will vote to appoint the Chair.
- 5.1 The Chair may serve for a maximum period of two (2) years, or the duration of their course, whichever comes first.
- 5.1 In the absence of the Chair, a meeting can be held by nomination of a Deputy Chair.

## 6. Frequency of Meetings

- 6.1 The SRC will meet at least four (4) times per year, on a date and time according to AAHE's Governance Calendar.
- 6.1 The Chair may convene a special meeting at any time, with reasonable notice.
- 6.1 The SRC will meet with the Secretary to the Board of Directors, Academic Board and Executive Management Committee quarterly.

## 7. Conduct of Meetings

- 7.1 SRC meetings will be conducted according to parliamentary standing orders<sup>2</sup>.
- 7.2 Training will be provided for SRC members.

## 8. Removal of Members

A member of SRC can be removed from office by the Registrar if they:

- a) fail to comply with these Procedures
- b) make unsatisfactory progress in their study
- c) conduct themselves unethically
- d) conduct themselves in a malicious or derogatory manner with any staff member or student of GAT
- e) commit any other breach of the Student Code of Conduct.

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<sup>2</sup> See: Puregger, M. (1980) Mr. Chairman: A Guide to Meeting Procedure, Ceremonial Procedure, and Forms of Address, with Specimen Meetings and Standing Orders. University of Queensland Press, St. Lucia.

## Related documents and relevant legislation

AAHE Governance Charter

Student Code of Conduct

Victorian Electoral Commission – Preferential Voting

## Document information

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