

Report of the Returning Officer regarding the UMSU Byelection, April 2023

Monday, 15th May 2023

Note this report is the report defined by r 47.1 of the UMSU Electoral Regulations, required for finalising the declaration of the poll. A more thorough examination of the Byelection will be included with the Election Report delivered as part of the annual elections.

List of candidates declared provisionally elected

[Regulation 47.1(a)]

Indigenous Representative on Students' Council

No nominations received.

Southbank Campus Representative on Students' Council

Caitlin Wessner (provisionally elected unopposed)

Indigenous committee

No nominations received.

Southbank Campus committee

No nominations received.

Indigenous committee

No nominations received.

Summary showing vote totals

[Regulation 47.1(b)]

No polling was required as no position had more candidates than vacancies.

Details of the conduct of the election

[Regulation 47.1(c)]

- Opening of nominations: noon, 3rd April 2023
- Closing of nominations: noon, 12th April 2023
- Planned date of poll: 24th – 26th April 2023

We were able to obtain the student roll from the University without any difficulty. It proved more difficult to get access to the UMSU membership list, which was required to check candidate eligibility. This is the cause of the significant delay between the election and this report, although given only one candidate was elected and the election was not contentious, we don't believe there are any detrimental consequences flowing from this.

Two applications for a ticket registration were received. There is some ambiguity in the Regulations about (a) the validity of a ticket application with no candidates, and (b) whether the

registrations remain valid for the September election. We have made a recommendation relating to this below.

No formal complaints were received.

Recommendations of the Returning Officer

[Regulation 47.1(d)]

These recommendations will be elaborated upon in the report for the UMSU September election.

- **UMSU Membership List:** The Regulations require candidates to be members, and therefore we require access to the membership list to verify this. It took some time to get this, but we believe we now have contact with the right people in UMSU and will be supplied a list in good time for September. In future years if there is no byelection to trigger such a process, it should begin well before access is required.
- **Ticket applications—ambiguity in Regulations:** The Regulations do not impose a clear requirement that a ticket have any candidates (although it is arguably implied). We recommend this be changed to require a ticket to put forward some minimum number of candidates (possibly only one). Similarly, the period that a ticket is registered for is not clear: does it expire at the end of the (by)election, after the annual election, at the end of the year, or some other time? We recommend this be clarified.
- **Advertising and timeline:** As only one candidate nominated for a large number of vacancies, students are effectively denied representation. The Returning Officer makes efforts to advertise nominations, but realistically our reach is limited, particularly as it is UMSU that has members' contact details. We recommend UMSU develop a communications plan for future byelections. Anecdotally, it appears the nomination timeframe (partly overlapping the Easter break) may also have contributed to low interest, and if possible this should be reviewed.

Other information requested by the Electoral Tribunal

[Regulation 47.1(e)]

None.

16 May 2023

Stephen Luntz
Returning Officer
Above Quota Elections Pty Ltd

