

# THE GENERAL SECRETARY

<b>Responsible Person:</b>	Coordinator, Student Representation
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# The General Secretary

The General [Secretary](#) is a critical, time-intensive role, which is both challenging and extremely rewarding. In conjunction with the CEO the General Secretary is responsible for ensuring UMSU meets its obligations as a large charity under the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012* (AIR Act). The role is also integral in maintaining UMSU's position as a credible representative organisation through ensuring UMSU is governed in a transparent and accountable way. The successful candidate will need to be able to devote significant time to the role, and be available to UMSU's members, Officer Bearers, and Students' Council for around 25 hours per week throughout semester, as well as during assessment periods and semester breaks.

## Role and Accountability of the General Secretary

The General Secretary works in close collaboration with the CEO of UMSU, who are together responsible for providing support, guidance, and advice regarding legal and risk, financial reporting, and other compliance matters. The General Secretary must use their best endeavours to implement and carry out the Constitutional purposes of UMSU. The General Secretary is accountable to and subject to the direction of the Students' Council. Unless otherwise decided by Regulation, the General Secretary acts as the secretary for UMSU under the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012* (AIR Act), as well as secretary for the Students' Council, the Committees, and all Sub-Committees of UMSU. Over the course of their term, the General Secretary will provide support and resources for all Elected Student Representatives. The General Secretary also makes up one of the two student representatives within the management team of UMSU, with the other being the President. The General Secretary must act in accordance with the requirements of UMSU's Constitution (together with all UMSU Policies and Regulations), the *AIR Act* and the requirements of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission (ACNC), including the ACNC Governance Standards. They must exercise reasonable care and diligence in carrying out their duties as a member of Council as well as all additional duties arising from their Office.

## Responsibilities of the General Secretary

As outlined in the UMSU Constitution and subject to other provisions, the General Secretary's responsibilities are:

- a) To maintain proper records of UMSU, including up to date copies of the Constitution, the Regulations and Policy documents and to make them accessible to all Students;

- b) to the extent financial information is available and able to be passed on, ensure accurate and timely financial information is provided to Officers, Voting Council Representatives and Committee members;
- c) to present half-yearly reports to the Students' Council on UMSU finances, where possible;
- d) to act as Secretary to the Students' Council, the Committees, and all Sub-Committees of UMSU, except where other provision for this responsibility is made in, or in accordance with, the Constitution or the Regulations;
- e) to be the publisher of all material published by UMSU, unless otherwise decided by Regulation;
- f) to act as the secretary under the AIR Act, unless otherwise decided by Regulation;
- g) to carry out such other duties as are prescribed by the Constitution and the Regulations or directed by the Students' Council; and
- h) To assume the role of President, in accordance with Rule 6.9(e) of the Constitution if a vacancy occurs.

## Duties of the General Secretary

In addition to their constitutional responsibilities, the General Secretary is also obligated to carry out the following duties throughout their term:

### ***Governance & Accountability***

- Attend and participate in an induction program at the beginning of their term, as well as any ongoing training throughout their term.
- Engage in a courteous and respectful manner with members of Council, their Committees, and staff at UMSU.
- Report in writing to each ordinary Students' Council meeting an accurate summary of their actions and achievements, a record of monies approved for expenditure, funds expended, and reporting on any subcommittees held and/or conferences attended in their capacity as an Officer, since the previous report.
- With support of the CEO, present half-yearly reports to the Students' Council on UMSU finances.
- Compile an annual report for the Students' Council at the end of their term, summarising their actions and achievements throughout the year and relevance to UMSU, an evaluation of the success or otherwise of projects, campaigns, working groups, etc. undertaken throughout the year, and any recommended actions to be considering for implementation by future General Secretaries and/or Students' Council.
- At the end of their term, complete all handover duties reasonably required.

- Act in accordance with the Council Charter at all times while in office.

### **Advisory**

- Assist Officer Bearers in the preparation and implementation their departmental budget for their year in office, as well as ensure that no expenditure in UMSU is made which is not in accordance with the approved budget.
- Ensure they are accessible to students for a reasonable proportion of hours each week, with availability indicated on their office door and the UMSU website.
  - A reasonable proportion of hours for this role being approximately 25 per week.
- Have strong familiarity with and provide information and assistance to students and representatives with regards to UMSU Regulations and Policy.
- Liaise with applicants to the Whole of Union fund, including Student Initiative Grant applicants.
- Receive appeals against decisions made by Department Committees or the Students' Council and liaise between appellers, Department Committees, and the Students' Council.
- Liaise where appropriate with the Returning Officer, Electoral Tribunal, Grievance Tribunal, and Charter Tribunal regarding matters outlined in Schedules 2, 3, and 4 of the Constitution.

### **Facilitation of Meetings**

- Calling meetings of the Students' Council and all its Sub-Committees.
  - This includes ensuring the determination of meeting schedules, preparation and distribution of notice and papers, chairing, reports back, and the recording and publishing of minutes; either to be completed by the General Secretary or by a delegated authority.
  - Students' Council meets fortnightly within Semester and monthly during summer and winter breaks. The Operations Sub-Committee must always meet fortnightly.
- Calling meetings of Department Committees when requested by the relevant Officer, or if said Officer is unavailable/the Office is vacant.
  - This includes ensuring the determination of meeting schedules, preparation and distribution of notice and papers, chairing, and the recording and publishing of minutes, either to be completed by the General Secretary or by a delegated authority.
  - Department Committees meet fortnightly within Semester and monthly during summer and winter breaks.
- Calling meetings of Office Bearers.

- Calling meetings of the Student Theatre Council.
- Calling and chairing the Annual General Meeting, any Special General Meetings, and Referendums.
- Attend, prepare appropriately, and facilitate where necessary, all Working Groups in which they have either voluntarily committed, been directed by Students' Council, or are required by Regulation to participate.
  - Traditionally the General Secretary will facilitate regular meetings of the *Constitution, Regulation, and Policy Working Group*.

### **Recordkeeping**

- Ensure the UMSU Website is kept up to date, including (but not limited to) the following:
  - Membership of Students' Council
  - Membership of Department Committees
  - Notice, schedules, papers, and confirmed minutes of all meetings of Students' Council, Committees, Sub-Committees, and Working Groups established by the Students' Council.
  - Council Stance Booklet, updated with new policy and position statements made by the Students' Council.
  - Constitution, Regulations, and Policies
- Complying with all reporting requirements under the AIR Act and to maintain UMSU's registration as a large charity with the ACNC.
- Keep and maintain the Register of Members.
- Keep attendance records of Students' Council and Department Committee meetings and hold discretion over attendance requirements
- Receive and maintain a register of delegations to the Operations Sub-Committee from Committee budgets, as well as ensure Operations Sub-Committee acts within its delegated authority.
- Keep record of all Student Materials published by UMSU.
- Ensure that the statements required by the AIR Act and the ACNC Legislation are prepared and audited annually.
- Provide documents and securities of UMSU to Members for inspection on request, with provisions outlined in R25 of the Constitution.

### **Publishing**

- Hold responsibility of being the sole Publisher of all materials produced for UMSU.
- Have familiarity with, implement, and act according to the *Publishing Regulations, Student Media Policy, and Social Media Publishing Policy and Procedure*.

- Ensure all UMSU Publications are compliant with the standards set out in the above regulation and policies.
- Review and make determinations on whether to approve or reject publications of Student and Staff Materials, in accordance with the Publishing Regulations, unless otherwise having delegated this authority.
  - Student Materials include all content contained within the Farrago and all Departmental Magazines

### ***Leadership***

Alongside the President, the UMSU General Secretary serves as a member of UMSU Management. Throughout their term in this position, the General Secretary is expected to work closely with the CEO and UMSU Management and fulfil the following:

- Attend and participate in UMSU Management meetings.
- Liaise between student representatives, UMSU staff, and Students' Council.
- Act as repository for all communications directed towards Students' Council, including (but not limited to):
  - Notices of resignation
  - Leave requests
  - Motions
  - Reports
  - Constitutional, Regulation, and/or Policy Changes
- Give notice of Casual Vacancy to UMSU Members if they should occur.
- Attend and prepare appropriately for meetings of all Student Advisory Groups (SAGs) and, along with the President, provide reports back to Students' Council.
- Alongside the CEO and President, review and authorise any expenditure requests as required of the Financial Regulations, as well as act as signatory for any cheques made out on behalf of UMSU.
- Support the President and CEO in liaising with key stakeholders at the University, including attending meetings and working groups, and reporting back to Students' Council.

If the General Secretary is unable to fulfil any or all of the above obligations due to extenuating circumstances or disability, supports with and/or adjustments of will be made available.

## Implementation

The General Secretary is the secretary of UMSU, elected to be the keeper of all UMSU records, publisher of all UMSU materials, facilitator for UMSU meetings, advisor on UMSU Policy and Regulations as well as good governance practices, and most importantly, member of UMSU senior management. Collaborating with Office Bearers, Students' Council, Department Committees, UMSU staff, and external organisations, the General Secretary will spend their term managing UMSU's affairs and ensuring student representative and staff compliance to the UMSU Constitution, AIR Act, and good governance practices. The General Secretary will also support the President in liaising with the University, attending meetings with key stakeholders, and representing UMSU when the President is unavailable. Finally, the General Secretary above all will be, to their best capacity, accessible and available to students, and act in good faith as their elected representative.

## Time Commitment & Recognition of Services

The General Secretary is expected to be accessible to students for a reasonable proportion of their weekly hours, as well as making themselves available for their commitments during semester times, including:

- Students' Council Meetings (fortnightly);
- Meetings of the Operations Sub-Committee (fortnightly);
- Officer Bearer Meetings (fortnightly);
- All scheduled training;
- All scheduled meetings of any Working Groups of which they are a member;
- All scheduled meetings of University committees of which they are a member;
- Any Departmental Committee meeting in which the General Secretary is requested to attend;
- Any UMSU General Meetings and/or Referendums throughout the year including the Annual General Meeting; and
- The administration work required of the General Secretary.

In recognition of these services and activities, Officers are remunerated by honorarium, as set by Students' Council. The honorarium is an *ex-gratia* payment, i.e., an honorary reward for voluntary services. For 2024, the honorarium was set at **\$26 836** for an Office held individually, including the Office of the General Secretary. Students' Council is responsible for reviewing honoraria as part of its annual budget process. Upon completion of their term, all UMSU elected representatives are also eligible for a Melbourne Plus digital credential.

**Melbourne Plus** is the University's program for recognising your participation in co-curricular activities and the capabilities you develop through them. Serving as an elected student representative is eligible for recognition through Melbourne Plus as it helps students develop their capability in *People Leadership*. When students have completed their terms, they will have the opportunity to reflect on how their time at UMSU helped develop this capability; and will receive a digital credential that is verified by the University of Melbourne. This credential can be shared across networks and students may use it, along with the reflection piece, to demonstrate and articulate their capabilities in the future.



## Versioning

TITLE	PARA. AMENDED	APPROVAL DATE
Statement Enacted		07/12/2022
Language amended	2, 5, 6, 9, 16	11/10/2023

## Declaration

I acknowledge that I have read, understand, and agree to the role and responsibilities of my position as outlined in this document, and consent to act in the capacity of an elected representative of UMSU with effect from the date of my appointment or election.

I have read and agree to comply with the UMSU Constitution.

I have read and agree to comply with the UMSU Council Charter.

I have read and agree to comply with the Policies and Regulations of UMSU.

<b>Elected Representative's Signature</b>		<b>Name</b>	
		<b>Date</b>	