

**University of Melbourne Student Union  
Advocacy & Legal Student Advisory Group  
Minutes 10:30 am, 18.02.2015  
Meeting 1 of Semester 1**

Chair: Phoebe Churches, Manager, Advocacy & Legal

## **1 Welcome and Procedural Matters**

Phoebe welcomed all those in attendance.

1.1 Apologies: Greta Haywood

1.2 Attendance

Phoebe Churches, Alanna Smith, Nadia Di Battista, Beornn McCarthy, Jordan Rozanski, Shanley Price, Steven Smith

1.3 Confirmation of previous minutes

Last meetings minutes were confirmed without amendment by Alanna.

## **2 A & L Service Reports**

### **2.1 Advocacy case work**

Phoebe described the high demand on the Advocacy Service in the last quarter. We saw student for primarily CUPC meetings, as well as academic misconduct matters and assessment disputes. There has been a spike with RHD UPC meetings in the last quarter, as well as a serious research misconduct matter, which has gone through a number of hearings. Detection and awareness could explain the rise in misconduct matters. Over the last year serious cases have arisen, including buying essays online, forging medical documents, etc.

The Assessment Policy has changed to allow disputes based on academic judgement. Phoebe said that we may see an increase of assessment disputes based on this new change in policy. Regardless of this Alanna has seen numerous faculties refer students straight to the complaints procedure.

Alanna has seen many special consideration appeals and assessment related issues over the last few months. Steve commented on academic misconduct matters in the Law Faculty and said he has seen many in the last few months. This is obviously concerning as there are bigger consequences for law students when a finding of academic misconduct has been found. Jordan was concerned that some students may not actually understand the legal consequences of academic misconduct, specifically international students where English may not be their first language. Boerne added that he thinks international students receive worse outcomes than local students. Further on from this Phoebe says that the University is starting to recognise that it is beneficial to put University documents in a student's home language. It was a breakthrough for the Advocacy Service when they produced a short film around academic misconduct in English, Chinese and Indonesian. We also discussed the big academic misconduct matter at the end of last year which involved 120 Engineering students for group assignments. Phoebe says the new statute will have a section on group assignments.

Phoebe is current writing a paper for the Advocacy Reference Group on academic misconduct in review of statute 13.1. Once complete this paper will then go to the University.

## 2.2 Legal case work

There are delays with setting up the steering committee for legal volunteers, this item has been tabled.

Phoebe spoke on the service on Greta's behalf. Migration issues are the biggest matter students are presenting with – ISS hasn't had a migration agent for a while and only now has employed someone in that position. ISS won't provide advice to students looking at visa options after they graduate. Greta is also taking on more litigation matters and hope to expand on this once we have volunteers.

## 2.3 Projects and initiatives

### 2.3.1 Research and other projects

No current projects.

## 3 Reports from Student Office Bearers

Shanley is aware of numerous special consideration cases at Trinity College. Phoebe said she can refer them to the Advocacy Service should they require assistance with appeals.

Steve said he is aware of a spike in academic board appeals, mostly involving misconduct and UPC termination.

## 4 Directions for A & L SAG in 2015

Future meetings dates will be sent by email.

## 5 Other Business

The Advocacy Service is organising the Student Governance Training to be held on Friday 20 March. A schedule will be sent out soon.

Phoebe is also working with Rachel Webster to organise a 'buddy system' for students sitting on committees.

## 6 Next Meeting

Close: 11.43am