



Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA) Postgraduate Advocate and Policy Officer Policy

A. Preamble

Name of Policy

This is the Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA) Postgraduate Advocate and Policy Officer Policy.

Commencement

This policy commenced on 15 August 2013.

Policy is binding

This policy binds SUPRA, its staff, and members.

Statement of intent

This policy:

- a) supports the SUPRA Constitution ('the Constitution') and the SUPRA Enterprise Agreement in force at the time ('the SUPRA EA'), and shall not be interpreted so as to contravene either the Constitution or the SUPRA EA.
- b) should be read in conjunction with the SUPRA Safer Spaces Policy and the other policies in the SUPRA Policy Manual which cover specific areas of personal and professional conduct.
- c) should also be read in conjunction with the duty statements of staff employed as caseworkers.

- d) outlines the role of SUPRA in providing an advice and advocacy service to postgraduate students.
- e) provides for the SUPRA Postgraduate Advocate and Policy Officer Procedures which detail the operation of the postgraduate advocacy service.

B. Policy

1. Definitions

- 1.1 The definitions set out in the Constitution, the SUPRA EA, and the SUPRA Safer Spaces Policy, shall apply to this policy.
- 1.2 In addition, for the purposes of this policy:
 - 1.2.1 **Caseworker** means postgraduate advocate and policy officer.
 - 1.2.2 **Procedures** means the SUPRA Postgraduate Advocate and Policy Officer Procedures implemented pursuant to this policy.
 - 1.2.3 **Service** means the postgraduate advocacy service.
 - 1.2.4 **Staff** means the collective group of persons directly employed by SUPRA but not by the SUPRA Legal Service Pty Ltd.

2. The Role of SUPRA in Casework and Advocacy Work

- 2.1 SUPRA operates the postgraduate advocacy service to provide advice and advocacy to all University postgraduate students.
- 2.2 The aim of the service is to inform, empower and resource students to assert their rights, resolve issues, concerns, or disputes, and to assist them to resolve academic and welfare matters.
- 2.3 The service operates within a framework of support and respect for the student's ability to make decisions in light of their own beliefs and values.
- 2.4 The service provides confidential one-to-one advocacy for individual students, as well as providing input and feedback to inform SUPRA's broader advocacy imperatives.

3. Postgraduate Advocate and Policy Officers

- 3.1 Within SUPRA's organisational objectives, values, and reasonable capacity to provide service, SUPRA employs caseworkers to assist students.
- 3.2 Caseworkers shall:
- a) provide accurate, timely, and appropriate advice and advocacy services to the best of their ability, and within the limits of SUPRA's resources;
 - b) respect the student's right to self-determination;
 - c) work within the stated objects and principles of SUPRA;
 - d) contribute to the development of casework policy and other relevant policies; and
 - e) work towards the best possible standards of service to SUPRA members.

4. Conduct

- 4.1 Caseworkers must:
- a) maintain a high standard of professional and personal conduct whilst assisting students and providing advice and advocacy services;
 - b) act with integrity and impartiality;
 - c) use accountable and transparent processes;
 - d) adhere to established protocols and procedures; and
 - e) actively work with and facilitate the participation of disadvantaged groups.
- 4.2 Caseworkers will not:
- a) discriminate against students on any grounds set out in the Safer Spaces Policy;
 - b) provide any services if their ability to do so is impaired. This includes, but is not limited to, any impairment resulting from alcohol or drugs, or a personal conflict of interest which may affect the caseworker's capacity or impartiality;
 - c) exploit relationships with students or professional relationships for personal advantage; or
 - d) use unethical processes.

5. Procedures

- 5.1 The procedures set out how SUPRA will operate the postgraduate advocacy service.
 - 5.2 The procedures also contain information on how to make a complaint about the service.
 - 5.3 The casework coordinator as the nominee of the President will administer the procedures to keep them current.
 - 5.4 Any breaches of the procedures should be reported to the casework coordinator in the first instance.
 - 5.5 Any breaches of the procedures by the casework coordinator should be reported to the President.
 - 5.6 SUPRA will respond promptly to reported breaches or to complaints received about the service.
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NOTES

SUPRA Postgraduate Advocate and Policy Officer Policy

Date ratified by Council:	15 August 2013
Date commenced:	15 August 2013
Date last amended:	28 October 2021
Administrator:	President, SUPRA
Review date:	28 October 2023

Amendment History

Name change:

This policy was previously known as the SUPRA Student Advice and Advocacy Officer Policy 2013.

Dates amended:

1. 28 October 2021