



SUPRA

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE ASSOCIATION

Annual Report 2013-14



Acknowledgment of Country

SUPRA acknowledges the traditional owners of this land, and we pay our respects to them and their elders past, present and future. If you are reading this publication, you are standing on Aboriginal Land.

Annual Report Credits:

Editor: Guien Miao

Sub-editing: Guien Miao, Amity Lynch, Lousie Thatcher, Pru Wirth

Layout: Pru Wirth

Cover Design: Guien Miao

Thank you to all SUPRA councillors, staff and constituents who contributed photographs to this report.

SUPRA is the postgraduate student organisation at the University of Sydney and is run by postgrads, for postgrads. SUPRA represents all postgraduates at Sydney University, and all postgraduates can look to SUPRA for assistance with any issues that may confront them - both academically and personally - during the course of their candidature.

CONTENTS

PART 1: REPORTS

President's Report	4
Vice-President	6
Education Officer	8
Treasurer Report	10
Secretary Report	11
Director of Student Publications	12
Women's Officer	13
International Student Officer	14
Disability Officer	16
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Officer	16
Queer Officer	17
Rural and Regional Officer	17
List of Current SUPRA Council and Staff	18
Administration Team	20
SAAO Service	22
Redfern Legal Service	30

PART 2: FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Produced by CM Pitt & Company	33
-------------------------------	----



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

Our operational costs, space and administrative support are financed by the University of Sydney through Student Services and Amenities Fee Funding.

President

Joanne Gad (July 2013 – Jun 2014)

It is a genuine pleasure to present this report outlining SUPRA's accomplishments and successes over the last year and also an honour to have been SUPRA's President during the 2013-14 SUPRA Council term. In some ways this is a bittersweet report because, while SUPRA has achieved so much over the last year, tertiary students across the nation are currently facing some of the fiercest attacks on tertiary education – particularly postgrad education – in recent history.

As I write this report, students are mobilising for the upcoming Emergency Rally against some of the biggest cuts to education seen so far. The action, to be held on Wednesday May 21st, is against the deregulation of fees, against the introduction of annual fees for research students and against a host of other cuts to the education portfolio which target research funding, equity and accessibility. If implemented, these changes will have lasting negative effects for every postgraduate student in Australia. And for postgrads at Sydney University, they will be particularly bad because our institution is so heavily research-based. As an organisation representing and advocating for postgraduate students, SUPRA will continue to work with the national peak body, CAPA, as well as with other postgraduate organisations, and oppose these attacks every step of the way.

Thankfully, SUPRA is in a good position to undertake this fight, but across the country, sadly, we already observe variable prosperity among postgrad associations in different institutions. Some, such as the Macquarie University Postgraduate Representative Association (MUPRA), have been aggressively shut down. Others struggle to function on threadbare budgets and are unable to provide even a fraction of the services and resources that we do. Students at Sydney University are quite fortunate to have a postgraduate association whose value and service to the student population is recognised by the whole Sydney University community. I am very happy to report that even after taking all of this into account, SUPRA stands in an exceptionally good position to face any challenges that may lie ahead. Contributing to our strength of position and the overall health of the organisation, are a number of critical achievements over the last year.

We released three major annual publications of exceptional quality, which have been very well received by our constituents, commended within the University and even attracted positive attention from overseas. To date our Thesis Guide has been licensed for publication by at least one other postgraduate association in the country and I'm happy to report that a larger level of SUPRA's budget and staffing has been

allocated to these valuable and in-demand resources.

SUPRA also bid for and won additional funding for improvements to the SUPRA spaces and the provision of a postgrad resource room. This resource room, which is expected to be open within the next month, will provide a safe and comfortable space where postgrads can meet up, organise, study or just chill out away from their faculties.

The organisation also recently made a strong bid for the allocation of suitable permanent premises in the future. A permanent home for SUPRA would make a world of difference for the postgrad community at Sydney Uni and SUPRA will continue to push in order that postgrad needs are planned for, and accommodated for, in the University's long term Campus Improvement Plan.

While our temporary premises have presented a number of problems over the year, I am also very pleased to report that a variety of sources tell us that SUPRA has maintained a superb level and quality of service delivery over the last year. SUPRA scored highest of all the student organisations in both the Satisfaction and Importance scales of the University commissioned Sydney Student Life Survey. We know it's a priority that students are able to access a free legal service and free professional advice and advocacy, if they need it and when they need it. Whilst it was an organisational challenge to maintain availability of services, and there were administrative costs associated with ensuring that access to these services was maintained and that students were aware of our relocations, all evidence has proven that accessibility to these services was a high priority and expected by our members. On top of that, our own surveys and also the direct feedback from you - our members - confirms that the priorities and decisions taken over the last year, organisationally and administratively, have been the right ones and have resulted in positive outcomes for our members.

I'm delighted to report that SUPRA also secured a much-needed significant funding increase for 2014. From a budget of \$1,000,000 in 2013, SUPRA has



Joanne Gad, SUPRA President.

secured a historic increase of almost 15%, bringing 2014's budget to \$1,148,000. With staffing and wages being the largest organisational expense, this increase will enable the organisation to make desperately needed expansions to the Advocacy service in order to continue to meet the demand of a quickly growing postgrad student population. We are now also on track to revitalise a number of internal pieces of digital infrastructure, such as our internal databases and digital platforms.

Over the last year, we have maintained a regular but variable suite of social and community events, with events ranging from cultural evenings, wine & cheese nights, bushwalks, women's groups, coffee events and more. As a part of this community portfolio, SUPRA has also expanded its level of support to satellite campuses by sponsoring and organising events at the Faculty of Health Sciences, the Nursing School, Camden and Westmead. A common focus for many social events has been combating postgrad isolation, particularly among historically disengaged postgrads and, as a part of our strategy, SUPRA has also placed more emphasis on delivering relevant and useful information to interested students. We have increased activity in the Community Education portfolio which has seen the implementation of a monthly Seminar Series, covering topics ranging from tenancy to immigration to health and wellbeing. This is in addition to other information sessions that we facilitate, such as the visa advice service and taxation information sessions.

I'm very happy also to report that at the conclusion of the 2013-14 term, every SUPRA Council position is filled – including all equity positions. Additionally, all positions have again been filled for the coming 2014-15 Council term after a hotly contested election. Our engagement through social media has increased dramatically and we observe steady but modest growth in membership. Volunteerism and new engagement with the organisation appears to be growing and these are all very positive signs.

This has all happened under the directorship of a diligent and committed Executive and Council, and an active and engaged constituency, and I am again delighted to report on the incredible level of activity seen in systemic advocacy and student representation over the last year.

In response to a number of surveys, community consultations and having stayed closely engaged with constituents, Office Bearers have been active particularly in areas of affordable housing and tenancy, visa and immigration issues, facilities and services for parents, education meetings, cross-equity barbecues and other activities. Indeed, SUPRA had a strong presence at O-week including an official O-week stall and holding numerous presentations at postgrad inductions. We ran a number of different events, provided a variety of resources and organised different types of access points to make it as easy as possible

to help postgrads connect with SUPRA and with other postgrads at the early stages of their studies.

Representation on behalf of postgrad students has been made in an incredible range of areas, including student safety, accommodation issues, women's health (and particularly international student access to pregnancy related care), international student travel concessions, parenting, gender issues, income support and more.

Additionally, a large number of academic issues have been raised and addressed and postgrads have been represented on over 17 University committees. To name just a few of the areas where we have been fighting for postgrads, we have been active around the assessment policy, virtual spaces and eLearning, group-work assessments, supervision issues and supervisor workloads, research training, special consideration, review of academic grades, coursework in the PhD and reporting on progression for research students. We have also advocated for postgrads during amendments to the University complaints policy to ensure that avenues for student complaints are fair and simple for students.

Students have also been represented externally and nationally on a range of issues, including on the quality of research training, higher education standards and research standards, during the review of demand driven education, on the question of tax-deductibility for self education expenses and on questions of affordable housing in Sydney.

The above is by no means a comprehensive report on the activities of SUPRA throughout the past year; however I hope it gives some indication of the phenomenal level of activity and work that SUPRA has been doing on behalf of postgrad students at Sydney University.

In all, it has been a year of concerted and sustained effort and I have much confidence in saying that SUPRA is all the stronger for it. I look forward to seeing what the coming year will bring and being a part of SUPRA as it fights to preserve postgraduate student rights and fights for a free and accessible education for all.

Finally, I particularly would like to thank the University of Sydney Union and the Student's Representative Council for their efforts in collaboration with SUPRA. I thank the SUPRA Council members and Office Bearers throughout the year and give special thanks to members of the SUPRA Executive. Last, but not least, I extend a sincere thanks to the dedicated and committed SUPRA staff members, who work so hard to keep this wonderful organisation as great as it can be.

Sincerely,

Joanne Gad

Vice-President

Kylee Hartman-Warren (July 2013 – June 2014)

SUPRA's community seems to have grown in the last year and I think this largely has to do with the fact that we have an amazingly talented and energetic staff which keeps SUPRA running strongly, a committed council who volunteers a great deal of time at events and activities and, at last, a year where we have been in one location! This year at SUPRA began in our new location at Ross Street and has been eventful. My areas of focus this year have been inductions, policy and outreach; I have remained active in committee work, as well as international student advocacy.

Policy

We began the year with a new induction format, and policy which made every new councillor at SUPRA responsible for knowing ones legal responsibilities for governing SUPRA and the policies by which one should conduct themselves as a SUPRA councillor. That training also included a considerable look at ways by which SUPRA can act as the voice of postgraduate students and we included speakers from other student bodies, Academic Board, and our own Advocacy and Advice team.

We also continued working on the Higher Education Standards submissions, which had several communiqués and ongoing submissions. This project stalled largely due to a change in government, but it has picked up again with another submission due in June. Other submissions included a look at the proposed Commission of Audit and two tenancy submissions to the state and federal government. Our Student Advice and Advocacy Officers have been amazing in providing information on these areas and their years of expertise help us round out these submissions.

I've also been involved with several University working parties and focus groups on topics regarding intellectual property, admissions, thesis grading and assessment and tenancy to name a few. These evolved out of my participation in the SEG Research and Training Committee.

And finally, the Policy Manual will be presented at the 2014 AGM. Please be sure to check it out because, like most policy, it will be exciting stuff.

Outreach

Our key focus with outreach is always O-Week (or Re-O Week for students who join the university



Kylee Hatman-Warren, SUPRA Vice President.

in July). O-Week is a time where SUPRA gets to meet an amazing group of new students and introduce them to everything SUPRA has to offer. This year, we returned to Eastern Avenue with an O-Week stall and we allowed the USU themes to capture our imagination in terms of outfitting that stall. We had the opportunity to meet a lot of great students, and student associations alike. We also had a variety of O-Week events, including a Tea and Survival Session, a Democracy Forum, a Visa Seminar (thanks to the efforts of our international student officer) and an information session, which welcomed new students to SUPRA (organised by our talented SAAO team).

While I wasn't responsible for organising everything that happened at O-Week I had to make sure everything happened and this is a challenging task for many reasons. Earlier in the

year, I once again attended a free training session at Redfern Town Hall – this time on Project Management. In October, I applied this training on O-Week and began figuring out what core activities and events we would host in November so SUPRA events would have a home in the university wide activity apps and publications. From there, it was a matter of building a project management template and making sure I could get enough councillors and volunteers together to see everything through.

There are always challenges in these exercises – and mine was communication – which is harder than one thinks. However, our staff is very experienced with O-Week and without the Admin Team, O-Week (and much of what SUPRA does) simply wouldn't happen. Luckily, they were there to catch me where I fell short and I'm hoping to complete an O-Week Manual based on the successes and challenges that this year's O-Week had to offer.

In addition to O-Week, we had several events this year, which I organised or helped out with. They included pub nights, our annual events such as the end of semester party, BBQ's at other campuses, such as Cumberland, and our popular Wine and Cheese nights. I'm happy to say other councillors were more active in hosting events this year. Guien Miao continued with a regular Coffee Afternoon, and our equity officers offered an array of events from film screenings to bush walks. Our SAAO team was also quite active in developing events of their own, and I want to thank them for that work.

Other Work

In addition to the work mentioned above, I have maintained involvement with a variety of interest areas. As an international student, I'm constantly interested in advocating for international student rights and wellbeing and I keep myself informed of those issues at hand. Sadly, there has been an increased reporting of violence against international students in Brisbane this year and I am worried about what cuts to AusAid will mean for future international students. However, I was involved in the Council of International Students this year, as well as campus activities focused on international student education such as the career conference held last April.

I've also tried to get SUPRA involved with more social media opportunities. I created a Facebook Page for SUPRA and I participated in a few online discussions with students and politicians early in my term. I also helped promote CAPA's federal voting campaign and I made sure SUPRA events had invites in social media. I think social media is a powerful tool for the student voice and it is one we're continually seeking to improve.

Finally, I've returned to the Workplace Consultative Committee, which has given me a more in depth insight of just how much work SUPRA's staff does for students, and how much their contribution matters to our association. With this in mind, and on a closing note, I want to thank our admin team: Prunella Wirth, Amity Lynch, Catherine Davies, Louise Thatcher, and Rachel Engdahl for all of their efforts this year, their talent and their dedication to make sure our day-to-day operations run smoothly. I'm also forever grateful for the knowledge of our SAAO Team: Adrian Cardinali, Margaret Kirkby, Francine Seeto, Hank Whan, and Hayley Stone, who have passionately helped postgraduates and have stayed updated with policy at the university and in the sector in order to assure SUPRA's work stays well informed.



SUPRA O-week stall 2014.

What's Left to Do

This week I'm heavily involved finishing the Policy Manual for the AGM. We will be having a Policy Meeting tomorrow where we will review the few policies we're considering for modification and discussing policy work on the horizon.

I'm also involved with the Council Induction planning and will be working with the SAAO team to solidify our schedule for these inductions. As with last year, I will bring new training and experience to this schedule. I hope I'm bringing a lot of what I've learned this year to this induction planning and I'm passionate about improving training and sharing knowledge with fellow student representatives.

Kylee Hartman-Warren

Education Officer

Timothy Scriven (July 2013 – Jun 2014)

In the words of our beloved Vice-Chancellor: it has been a good year on many fronts. We got a lot done, even if it wasn't always what we were hoping it might be.

Much of my work involved contact with the Education Action Group. I won't belabour the details of every campaign the EAG ran, but will give a quick summary. We started off with the windup of the strike campaign. We also had a series of national days of action arranged in conjunction with the state education network. This culminated in the struggle around the Norton-Kemp review, the Commission of Audit and, of course, the Federal Budget. Other activities (and there were many) included a small, but I think important, campaign about a student disciplined for chalking on a wall, "Education is a process, not a commodity."

Perhaps my favourite campaign was not even my own! The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences had planned to introduce a number of changes to the PGARC space. Georgiana Toma, our Treasurer at the time, spearheaded a wonderful campaign to oppose these cuts to resources and conditions. The campaign was especially notable for the grassroots energy it summoned up. I was very proud to assist the campaign, which was a marvellous success.

In second semester of my term, I became involved in SHAC, the Student Housing Action Collective. While I don't want to dictate the next Education Officer's agenda, if you have the time, I strongly urge my successor to maintain links with this group. Despite its small size, we've achieved a lot through behind the scenes work – focusing on



Timothy Scriven, SUPRA Education Officer

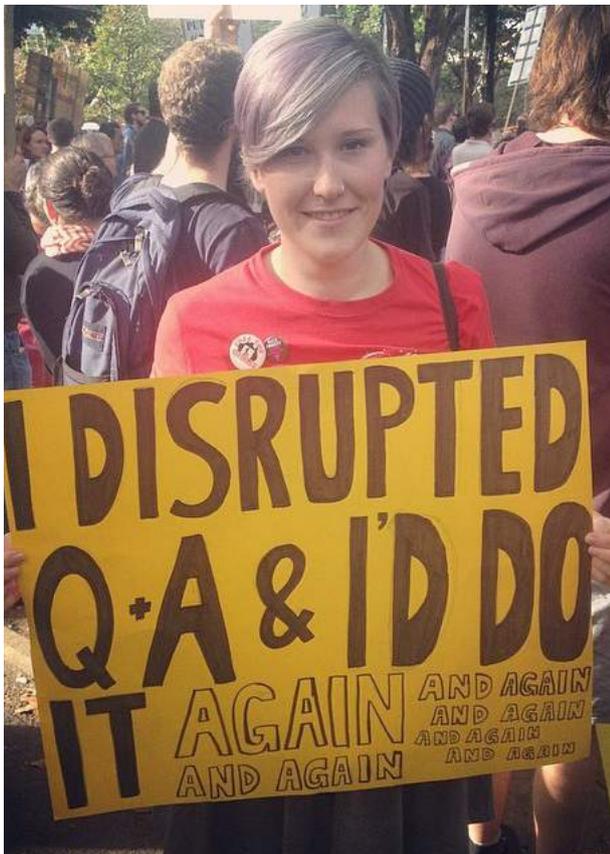
keeping the pressure on the university to provide affordable housing.

Throughout perhaps the first three quarters of my term, I liaised with the Macquarie University Postgraduate Representative Association (MUPRA) in order to try and help defend it against attacks from Macquarie University. Sadly, MUPRA was in serious difficulty when I first became involved and its condition has only further deteriorated. I firmly believe that, as long as there is even one university without a student representative association, no student representative association is safe. Universities must understand that providing funds and space for an independent student association is simply an expectation, not an option. I urge future Councils to keep an eye on MUPRA and other student associations which may be in peril – not just for their sake but for the sake of our own organisation and thus constituents.

Much of the work I did was, for better or worse, strictly speaking outside my portfolio and involved the strategic governance of SUPRA. This included (full disclosure) one or two things I can't really talk about here. The best example of strategic governance work was my involvement in the SSAF negotiation project. Against bitter (and bluntly, often quite cynical) resistance we managed to

get a substantial increase in our SSAF allocation. My advice to future negotiating teams is to form a close knit group, which spends a lot of time discussing the negotiations and considering possible scenarios. As our sole source of income, SSAF negotiations must (sadly) be a priority, **THEY DESERVE A LOT OF EXECUTIVE TIME AND A GROUP EFFORT.** We got that right this year, please get it right next year and the year after. Another major strategic governance activity I was involved in was negotiating with the university's consultants over what our KPI's would be.

What I have found most frustrating about my work was the question of how to involve broader layers of postgraduate students. I think education activism has greatly strengthened the visibility and effectiveness of SUPRA and I'm proud of that. To really hit our peak, though, we must begin involving more postgraduate students who aren't on Council. I made many attempts towards this, including a Postgraduate Log of Claims and trying to expand and work on PEN; however, progress was in many ways limited. I hope



Education Activist and SUPRA Councillor Brigitte Garozzo at March in May 2014

I've laid the groundwork for the task ahead by establishing connections with a number of activist postgraduates. There is much more work to be done. I commend this task to my successor and wish them the best in getting it done. I'm always happy to advise on my own experiences, if that's desired.

As many will know, I suffered mental health problems throughout my term. Sometimes this meant I couldn't do the job I wanted to; however I do want to say that SUPRA has been a supportive space for me. My sometimes bizarre work schedules, occasional disorganization and even one memorable case in which I broke down crying in a meeting have been tolerated with magnanimity. Because of this welcoming, supportive environment, I've been able to do what should be done even during personal crises that in any other workplace would have made continuing unthinkable. Special thanks to Margaret Kirkby, Joanne Gad, John Fell and Prunella Wirth in this regard.

It's been a privilege being on the executive of SUPRA for around 2 ½ years. While one should never rule anything out definitively, I think my time on the SUPRA Executive has come to an end and I do not plan to nominate at Meeting of the Representatives-Elect this year because it's time to give fresh voices a turn. I still hope to serve out at least one more term on council in order to provide (or perhaps inflict upon you) all the benefit (irritations) of my experience (arrogance). I'm very reluctant to single anyone out for thanks because so many people have done so much with me. Nonetheless I think it's undeniable that I had a special working relationship with Jo that helped us achieve a lot together. Thank you to Joanne Gad, thank you to all SUPRA Executives and to those Council members who put in the time and effort. Thank you to all of SUPRA's staff. Thank you to all of our constituents who used the opportunities we provided to advocate for themselves. Finally, of course, though he passed away before this most recent term, I will never forget you, John N, RIP.

On the whole, I see a bright future for SUPRA's involvement in the robust activism that I hope will define this role precisely because I see a pretty bleak future for so many of things we hold dear. The current Education Minister will not even meet with Vice-Chancellors individually. Do not imagine he will put much weight on our submissions unless backed up by boots-on-the-ground activism.

For the higher education sector, and for student organisations, I fear winter may be coming.

Vale.

Timothy Scriven

Treasurer

Douglas King (September 2013 – Jun 2014)

Guien Miao & Georgiana Toma (July 2013 – August 2013)

The 2013-2014 Council year for SUPRA has proven challenging for the Treasury office but, ultimately, productive for our constituents.

Negotiations between student bodies over division of the Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) funds was especially prolonged this year, with consensus reached only in mid-March. Negotiations proved tense and, at times, heated, with several deadlines for final agreement overshot. Even so, final outcomes were favourable to SUPRA, with general recognition and respect by all parties for the range of services we offer for postgraduates. Furthermore, initiatives for greater co-operation and collaboration with other student bodies on campus were mooted. Most importantly, SUPRA secured an unprecedented increase in SSAF funding levels (from \$1,000,000 to \$1,148,000): the second highest increase, both by percentage and by dollars, of any party at the table.

Recognition of and thanks for this achievement must go to my fellow members of the negotiating team: President Joanne Gad, Education Officer Timothy Scriven and Financial Manger John Fell.



Douglas King, SUPRA Treasurer

At the time of writing this report, due to this delay in determining our final SSAF figure, a final budget for the year has not been passed by Council. However, an interim budget has been formulated and approved. This expansionary budget was formulated in response to concerns that SUPRA's funding for outreach and portfolio work had slipped in recent years; additionally, staffing levels were demonstrably no longer sufficient for the casework workload. As such, funds were allocated to: allow an additional Student Advice and Advocacy Officer, plus on-costs; increase our publications budget; increase our O-week budget; increase our portfolio and events budget; and increase our funding for events on satellite campuses. These initiatives are already showing a benefit for SUPRA and our constituents. A final budget approved by Finance Committee, based on the interim budget and keeping most of its new features, will be presented to Council in April.

It is important that the Treasury office, and SUPRA more generally, seek to expand on this funding increase over the next few years, especially in light of the University's upcoming changes to the SSAF allocation process and the uncertainty of SSAF itself in the present political climate. The percentage of postgraduates at this University is ever-increasing, and every funding increase to meet this growth has been due to hard-fought battles by SUPRA. We have seen what has happened to student representative bodies at other universities that have allowed themselves to continuously cut back, or give up the fight – they shrivel and are, in time, crushed. And once independent, student-led governance and services are gone, they will never come back.

It has been a most satisfying privilege to serve postgraduates as SUPRA Treasurer over the last year. I am most grateful to our Financial Manager, John Fell, for his extensive work and assistance, and also to my fellow members of the Executive. I look forward to continued service with SUPRA over the next few years.

SUPRA has shown itself to be a real survivor over the years – from uncertain, volunteer-led and non-University-recognised beginnings in the '70s, through the dark days of Voluntary Student Unionism to SSAF today. Working from this year's increase in funding, I foresee we can, and must, grow and thrive: not just survive.

Douglas King

Secretary

Guien Miao (April 2014 – Jun 2014)

Guien Miao & Tuba Omer (August 2013 – March 2014)

Michael de Waal (July 2013 – August 2014)

The past year has been a very eventful one! There has been a constant stream of work, including helping out with events, organisation of meetings and conversations with many of you. I've thoroughly enjoyed my time as Secretary due to the variety of work involved in the role, as well as being able to work with a hard-working and supportive Executive. As the job consists of a lot of background support, the work of a Secretary often goes unnoticed if done properly; for this reason, I can only hope that all the hard work I've put in during my term has seemed effortless to those on Council, as well as you, our constituents.

We held a SUPRA Council meeting in the Koori Centre for the first time and, with over 20 people attending the meeting, it was exciting to see such a great turnout! This historic event could not have

happened without the efforts of Joanne Gad and Francine Seeto, who liaised with the Koori Centre to organise the room and access. It was also fantastic to have Debra Reid (Senior Manager, Trust and Engagement, of Indigenous Strategy and Services) attend to extend a welcome and acknowledgement of country, as well as answer questions from those in attendance. I would like to thank Debra Reid for her invitation to use the Ivan Turner Room again in the future and hope that the next Council will make efforts to hold another meeting there in the next term.

Due to affirmative action provisions, there has been a need to put a lot of work into encouraging students, especially those studying off-campus, to join Council. During my term, this was a priority as I believe that our organisation can only exist due to the breadth of the collective knowledge and experience of a group of such different people. For this reason, I put in a concerted effort into ensuring that Council vacancies were promoted in eGrad and in Facebook, as well as at events. We have recently filled every position on SUPRA Council, which was a milestone in my term as Secretary. I am confident that the variety in councillor background and experience is a testament to the relevance of SUPRA's affirmative action provisions; and I also hope that the next Council is as diverse as our current one.

As Secretary, there is a strong need to stay organised and ensure that councillors are as well. Unfortunately, it is in the nature of postgraduate students to have a number of competing demands, whether study or social, on them and it is understandably difficult to make sure that this occurs smoothly. Nevertheless, it has been a great experience for me to work with this term's councillors and I would like to thank everyone for their prompt responses to requests and reminders. To the next Secretary, I wish you all the best in taking on this challenge!

To anyone thinking of joining Council, keep in contact with the Secretary and find out when there are vacancies on Council – the only requirement is enthusiasm! I've only been with SUPRA for a year (and, when I first joined, I would never have thought about being Secretary), yet I've had the opportunity to get involved in so much, so my recommendation is this: join in, help out and see where things take you!

Guien Miao



Tuba Omer (L) and Guien Miao (R).

Director of Student Publications

Tanveer Sohal (June 2013-June 2014)

Guien Miao (Acting August 2013, April-June 2014)

This year has been a very busy year in terms of the publications portfolio; SUPRA has released a new edition of the Thesis Guide, Postgraduate Survival Guide and calendar! You also hold now, in your hands, a copy of the Annual Report!

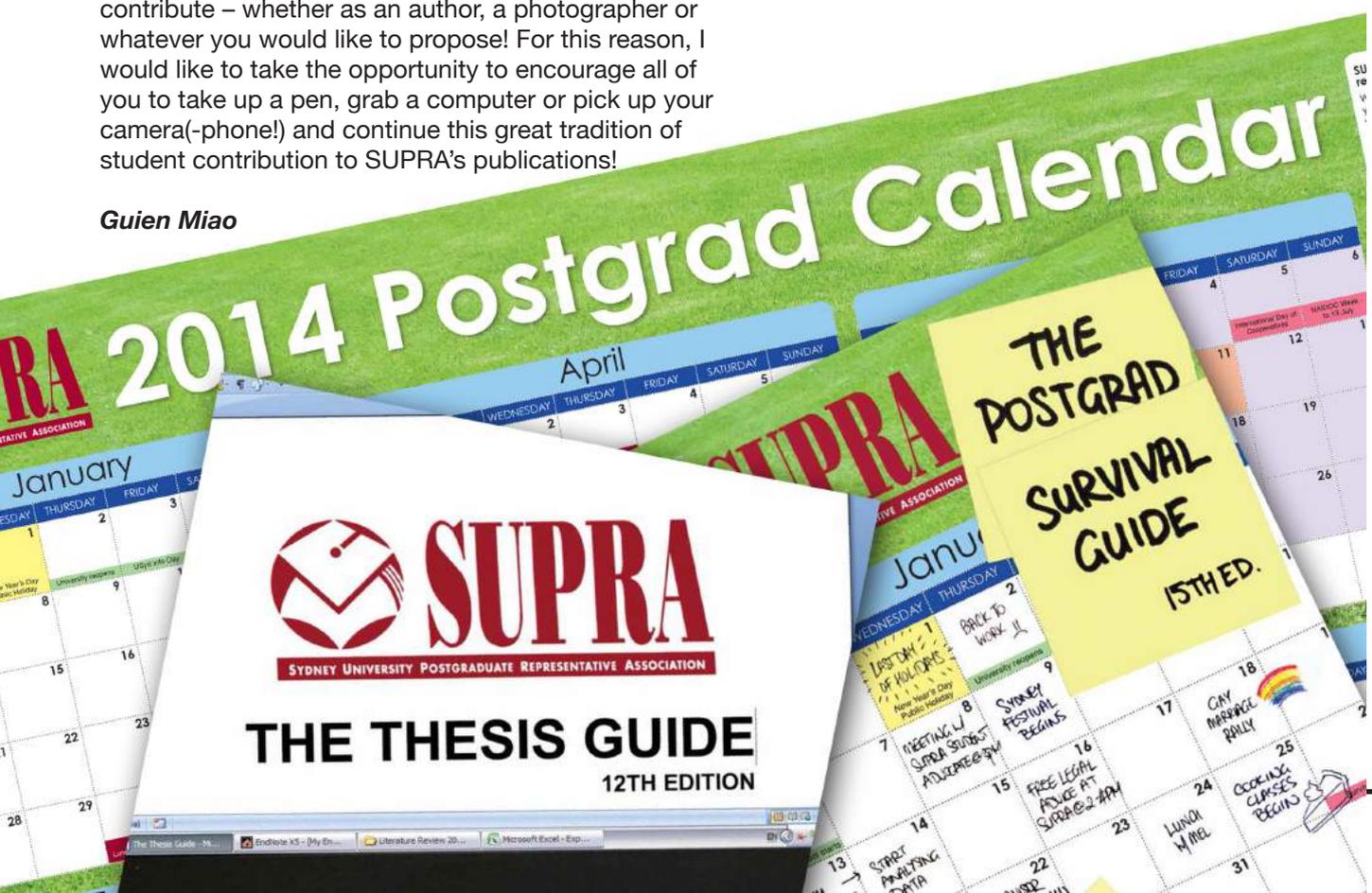
In my opinion, there is no way that these publications could have been completed without the help of staff, councillors and constituents. This role has simply been to act as the interface between the various contributors and to guide the publications to completion – and, while important, this role cannot exist without the hard work of others. I would like to thank our fantastic admin team of Amity Lynch, Prunella Wirth, Louise Thatcher and Rachel Engdahl for not only their work, but also their guidance and advice during the projects. Thanks also need to go to our SSAO team for taking time to write and submit articles to these publications on top of their already substantial workload. Finally, thanks to the councillors and postgraduate students who submitted articles – our publications are not only for students, but also created by students.

Each time that SUPRA produces a new publication, we receive feedback from postgraduate students and work that feedback into the following editions of these publications. They are ever-evolving projects and there are always plenty of opportunities for anyone to contribute – whether as an author, a photographer or whatever you would like to propose! For this reason, I would like to take the opportunity to encourage all of you to take up a pen, grab a computer or pick up your camera(-phone!) and continue this great tradition of student contribution to SUPRA's publications!

Guien Miao



Tanveer Sohal (L) and Guien Miao (R).



Women's Officer

Ensiyeh Ghanizadeh (September 2013 – June 2014)

Georgiana Toma (July 2013 – August 2013)

We want to keep the conversation going and add more voices.

Equity is not a done deal, yet.

With increased safety, educational opportunities and recognition that their voices count, women have more opportunity than ever to be problem solvers and contribute to building a more safe and sustainable world for everybody. But girls and young women still face many challenges related to gender and often have to reconcile their own dreams with expectations of what they “should be.”



Women's Coffee, Cake and Chat happens every second thursday and is enjoyed by a wonderful variety of Postgrad Women.

As SUPRA's Women's Officer, I have had several goals. My main goal was to find issues affecting the postgraduate women of Sydney University. To achieve that, I worked on forming the Women's Network. I wanted to expand general awareness and participation in women's activities. One way was through the regular fortnightly Coffee, Cake and Chat events. I also wanted to increase my knowledge about women's successes and issues; to achieve that, I got involved with societies such as Women in Science. Women in Science have held regular seminars attended by successful, inspiring women who have spoken on their experiences. I have also noticed that, despite many successes in empowering women, numerous issues still exist in all areas of life like gender discrimination and violence against women. I organised a lunch seminar on International Women's Day and invited Karen Willis as the keynote speaker. Karen Willis is the



Ensiyeh Ghanizadeh, SUPRA Women's Officer

Executive Officer of the NSW Rape and Domestic Violence Centre, a non-government, not-for-profit service that has been assisting those who have experienced sexual assault in NSW for the past 40 years. Her talk was great and informative and addressed the issues of rape, sexual assault, domestic violence and ethics. I thank Margaret Kirkby and Prunella Wirth for their brilliant assistance in organising the event. I also screened the “I am a girl” movie, which is an inspirational feature length documentary that paints a clear picture of the reality of what it means to be a girl in the 21st century. I am currently working on survey which I plan to conduct very soon.

Working with SUPRA has been a great experience for me. It has helped me to increase my knowledge about the women's world. I am grateful to have the opportunity of working with other postgraduates and encouraging them to get more involved with SUPRA. I believe increasing student involvement can make a big difference in our lives and we will get there.

Ensiyeh Ghanizadeh



SUPRA International Women's Day event with guest speaker Karen Willis, centre.

International Officer

Tuba Omer (July 2013 – June 2014)

I was fortunate to be elected the International Officer of Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA) for the second year running. This is a position that I have become deeply attached to because of all the diverse experiences that it brings with it, including representing international student concerns, often on a national level, with integrity and responsibility.

I am excited to report the highlights of this year, which focused on the following policy and social events:

I represented SUPRA at the Work Integrated Learning Forum in NSW. This was an opportunity presented through Council of International Students Australia (CISA). It was held by the NSW Government and attracted industry employers, university careers services and student officers. It was an opportunity to voice concerns that international students have faced in entering the industry in general. It included discussions around the employer need for permanent residency and how international students may lack requisite skills in resumes, networking and interviewing. The discussion facilitated a two-way communication whereby the employers understood international student concerns whilst highlighting their requirements for skills in international students.

I was also very happy to report my experiences to the SCC Committee in Sydney University. Raising career development as a concern for international students with the Vice Chancellor and the team of Support Services helped to create awareness about this issue. I was able to work with the Careers Service in Sydney University to develop a plan for an international student conference, held for the first time ever. This conference invited key industry speakers, who were international students themselves, to share tips on their success stories. Furthermore, the conference was aimed at giving a practical insight into concerns faced by international students, how to overcome challenges and advice to widen their opportunities available in different countries.

Another event that I hosted, with Sydney University Law Society (SULS), was the Panel Discussion for International Students. This featured a panel comprising of services important to international students such as career support, accommodation, advocacy and employment issues, and legal support regarding student visa conditions and cancellation policies. This was well received and I am happy to report that international



*Tuba Omer,
SUPRA International Officer*



Photos both pages of this report are from the International Students' Bushwalk,

students were able to raise questions and concerns about services offered to them at Sydney University and to raise awareness about how these services can be improved. I was also lucky enough to be nominated by SUPRA Council to represent international students at the national Council of Australian Postgraduate Association (CAPA) conference in Tasmania. I travelled with the President and a member of staff of SUPRA. We collectively raised pertinent issues affecting international students on a national level, and pushed for an increased budget for the international portfolio.

My social events portfolio has focused on creating opportunities for international students to integrate with other local students as well to find other international students they can relate to. The following events formed part of my portfolio:

I ran a BBQ with the Women's Officer. This was a great event, we panicked slightly when we thought we would run out of sausages for the first time, but we managed in the end. We had a lot of support from the rest of the SUPRA administration



Other events included helping out with the BBQ in O-Week and some Wine and Cheese nights throughout the year. Throughout my 2 years as International Officer, I am proud of how SUPRA council and administration tries hard to work as a team, to support each other and to give their best to the postgraduate body.

Personally, I will miss the students that I have been honoured to represent and the Council and administration from whom I have learnt what support, encouragement and mentorship means. As an international student myself, SUPRA gave me a safety net, one that I will always cherish as I move on.

Thank you.

Tuba Omer



and council in setting up, barbecuing and cleaning up. This was also supposed to be a fancy dress night but I was the only one dressed in a red sari, which could explain my bizarre appearance in the photos.

Another social event was bushwalking in the Ku-Ring-Gai Chase National Park. I had great support from the Finance Manager and the Treasurer in organising this event and carrying it through. International students loved it, despite the long, tiring and sweaty walk. They came out of it, having had a great day and cooling off with drinks in the end. As we walked home, trying in vain, not to get soaked in the pouring rain, I had students still smiling and telling me "we need to do that again!".



Disability Officer

Shaikh Nayeem Faisal

(July 2013 – June 2014)



S. N. Faisal, SUPRA Disability Officer

As the Disabilities Officer of SUPRA for the period of 2013-14, I faced a lot of challenges due to the lack of an established network of postgraduate students with disability. The “disability” issue is very sensitive and the students who are living with disability are not interested in revealing their disabilities. However, I have successfully managed a small group. I have arranged some Coffee Afternoon events and also met with them in other social events arranged by SUPRA to discuss the limitations and problems they are facing in the University.

Another big achievement for students with disabilities is the University of Sydney’s proposed Disability Action Plan (DAP). In the past, there was no plan or regulations about the special facilities for students with disability. This year, they are proposing to form a Disability Action Plan committee with the Faculty members and students representatives to find out the limitations of and improve the situation. As a member of this committee, I have proposed several issues related to postgraduate students with disabilities, including carer issues and the limitation of research facilities as well as learning facilities.

In addition, I have also made contact with the other student representatives to input our maximum to this proposed plan. I hope that we can together make this University as a safer and caring place for the students with a disability.

S. N. Faisal

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Officer

Michael Butler

(April 2013 – June 2014)

I was recently elected as SUPRA’s Indigenous Officer. I’m a 45-year-old dad of three young kids, am currently doing the Juris Doctor and have been an engineer and journalist before coming back to university. My goal is to consolidate the Indigenous postgraduate network within SUPRA, support and represent Indigenous postgraduates and get us all talking.

I have mostly been learning the ropes and setting up the infrastructure of the role. I have been in contact with Shane Houston, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Strategy and Services), and Andrew Olsen, who looks after the Cadigal program postgraduate students. In particular, talks with Andrew Olsen have been focused on working out how we can help each other. I also attended an intensive kinship workshop to get up to speed with sensitivities and get a deeper understanding of the role.

I am currently working towards setting up networks for Indigenous coursework and research students, in particular, creating a Facebook group so that there exists an online space for Indigenous students to connect. If you identify as Indigenous, please get in contact and let’s get things moving.

Michael Butler

Queer Officer

Timothy Scriven

(July 2013 – June 2014)

I only claimed hours or did work for the first half of the year because, when I faced a mental health crisis, I decided it would be better to cut back on my work as Queer Officer than Education Officer. For this reason, this report will be brief.

I started off my term with a wonderful occupation of Sussex Street, the headquarters of the NSW Labour Party. This involved chalking a delightful rainbow crossing outside it.

I spent a week at the Queer Collaborations student conference, making connections with queer activists around the state and doing a presentation on queerness and the prison system.

Soon after, the PNG “solution” was announced which meant, among other things, sending refugees – many of whom flee because of their sexuality – to a nation in which homosexuality is illegal. Among other things I organised the first rally against the PNG “solution” outside Town Hall, which was attended by approximately four thousand people.

I was later involved in lobbying the university around the question of “gender” questions in surveys and other official documents, arguing for a variety of options. I understand this has now begun to show fruit which is very exciting!

I made several unfortunately unsuccessful attempts to set up some kind of concrete Queer Network, including through social media groups and through queer tea afternoons. An attempt to hold a queer-salsa class had to be canceled because of my deteriorating health.

Although it is a pity I did little for the role in the second half of the year and did not manage to create the sort of queer social network I would have liked to, I am proud of the work I did get done.

It was a privilege, thank you.

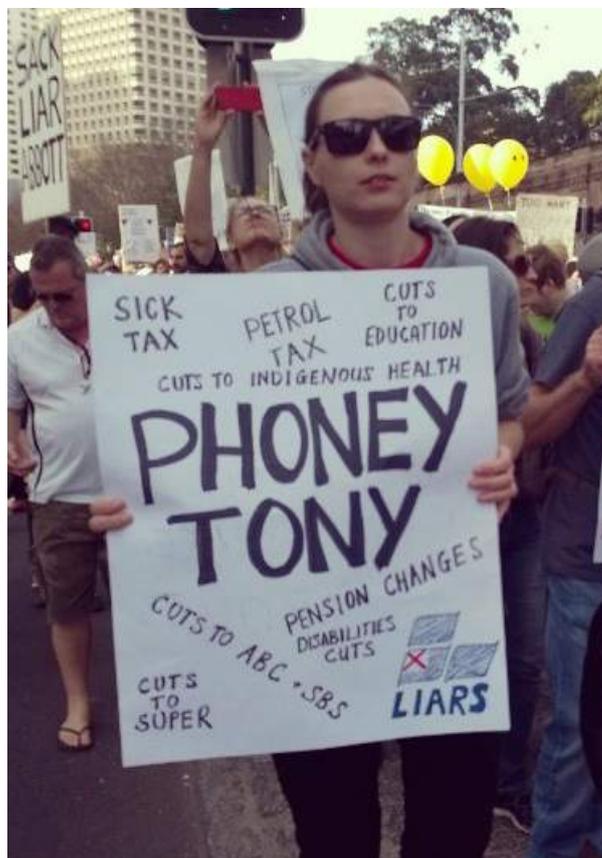
Timothy Scriven

Rural and Regional Officer

Callum Forbes

(July 2013 – June 2014)

No report submitted.



SUPRA Council

As at 20th May 2014

Michael BUTLER	Vaivi MASE
Joseph CALLINGHAM	Joss McCAY
Gareth CHARLES	Brigitte MCFADDEN
Wen CHEN	Guien MIAO
Michael DE WAAL	Thomas O'CONNOR
Callum FORBES	Tuba OMER
Andrew FRASER	Timothy SCRIVEN
Joanne GAD	Nayeem Faisal SHAIKH
Ensiyeh GHANIZADEH KAZERARNI (Forough)	Tanveer SOHAL
Anette HANSEN	Arunan SRIRAVINDRARAJAH
Kylee HARTMAN-WARREN	Kaitlin TAGG
Maral HOSSEINPOUR	Jay THARAPPEL
Douglas KING	Vanessa WELLS
Miriam L'ENGLE	Annie WU
Kieran LATTY	

The current SUPRA Executive Officers (as of 20th May 2014) are:

President	Joanne GAD
Vice President	Kylee HARTMAN-WARREN
Education Officer	Timothy SCRIVEN
Secretary	Guien MIAO
Treasurer	Douglas KING
Director of Student Publications	Tanveer SOHAL

The current Equity Officers (as of 20th May 2014) are:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Officer	Michael BUTLER
International Student Officer	Tuba OMER
Women's Officer	Ensiyeh GHANIZADEH KAZERARNI (Forough)
Queer Officer	Timothy SCRIVEN
Disabilities Officer	Nayeem Faisal SHAIKH
Rural and Regional Officer	Callum FORBES

SUPRA Staff

As at 20th May 2014

Student Advice and Advocacy Officer (SAAO) & Legal Team

Margaret KIRKBY	Acting SAAO Co-ordinator
Francine SEETO	Acting Senior SAAO
Hank WHAN	SAAO
Hayley STONE	SAAO
Adrian CARDINALI	SAAO Co-ordinator (Currently on long service leave)
Ingrid VAN TONGEREN	Solicitor Redfern Legal Centre

Administration Team

John FELL	Finance Manager
Pru WIRTH	Administration Co-ordinator
Louise THATCHER	Administration Officer
Amity LYNCH	Administration Officer



We sincerely apologise for any misspellings or exclusions.



L: SUPRA's Postgraduate Survival Guide launch.
Above: Students enjoying the Postgraduate Survival Guide launch.

Administration Team

Amity Lynch

Louise Thatcher

Prunella Wirth

Catherine Davies

Rachel Engdahl

The Administration team continued to provide exceptional service to SUPRA members during the last year. As the first point of contact for the majority of students and visitors contacting SUPRA, we aim to be welcoming and knowledgeable about the services SUPRA offers and other services we refer to students to if necessary.

We also continued to provide administrative support to the SUPRA Council and staff members. We took on additional duties to help the Association cope with increased demand on our services due to the current higher education climate. Increased intake for the SAAO and legal service has resulted an increased workload for administrative staff, but we are always ready to assist students in need and welcome them to SUPRA.

The Admin team also continues to perform the duties previously undertaken by the former Publications Officer. This includes a significant level of project management, editing, layout and design work for major publications as well as making posters, flyers, web content and our weekly e-bulletin eGrad, to advertise SUPRA events and services.

Administration team members juggle a variety of tasks in a busy environment and do so with grace under pressure. We have had two casuals who have really saved the day, filling in the gaps in our team at various points - we would like to thank Rachel Engdahl (formerly an admin officer at SUPRA) and Cath Davies, for their outstanding contributions. The permanent Admin team currently consists of Amity Lynch and Louise Thatcher (Administration Officers) and Pru Wirth (Administration Coordinator).

Admin's biggest tasks for the last year have been coordinating SUPRA's presence at faculty inductions at the start of each semester as well as our publications work. This has included working on the 2014 Postgraduate Survival Guide and a new updated edition of the SUPRA Thesis Guide, which had not been reproduced since 2009. There have also been a number of large, on-going operational projects, including negotiating with web developers about specifications for

a new SUPRA website, assisting with funding submissions and SUPRA's capital works funded through the 2013 SSAF capital sinking fund, writing a Business Case for SUPRA to gain a permanent space on campus and a number of internal policies. In general Louise Thatcher has focused on inductions and networks, Amity Lynch has focused on publications work and Pru Wirth has focused on operational and policy work. However, the admin team work well together and much of our work is shared among the team.

Overall, the 2013-14 year has been a success. Two major publications, a successful orientation week and induction period, a successful funding application, a business case for a permanent location submitted and capital works well underway that make SUPRA's current space a great space for Postgrad events. We now have a kitchen large enough for some catering and a covered courtyard area that can be used in all weather, as well other minor changes that make the space more user-friendly.

Community

Faculty inductions are many students' first introduction to SUPRA and the services and support we offer. We are proud of our work on these and enjoy the interaction it gives us with SUPRA council and the broader university community. The success of these inductions is due to the hard work and organization of Louise Thatcher, who was again assisted by an active group of councillors. We would like to thank those involved with packing the inductions packs, and attending the inductions. Each induction had a council member and a SAAO working together to present information to students and distribute SUPRA materials. This lightens our load significantly and makes SUPRA's participation in inductions more genuinely student-led.

We have also enjoyed assisting with the many events hosted by SUPRA office bearers, such as seminars, meetings and excursions, and regular network meet-ups, as these events bring students in to SUPRA and give us the chance to work with the office bearers.

Publications

Generally, our publications work has been steady, with periods of intense activity, and consisted of editing, layout and design of the 2013 Thesis Guide and 2014 Postgraduate Survival Guide, assisting with the 2014 wall calendar, making a range of posters to advertise SAAO services, and publishing the weekly eGrad bulletin, SUPRA's only regular organ for communicating with subscribers. Amity Lynch has worked tirelessly and thoroughly on both these publications, with great attention to detail.

This year's publications work has been difficult, as the working groups to coordinate the work for specific publications did not occur. This led to a delay in the publication of the 2014 Survival Guide as work could not be properly delegated and organized. However, the publication is now complete and has been distributed widely to students, faculties and student services.

Operational projects

Since SUPRA's relocation in 2013 SUPRA's operational load has increased. The Administration team has been developing our new premises and ensuring, as far as possible, that it accommodates staff and council's needs.

A number of larger operational and policy projects have been commenced in the 2013-14 year.

Operational projects have included:

- Compiling a scope of works for SUPRA's capital sinking fund spending in consultation with staff and council.
- Liaising with Campus Infrastructure Services around the Scope of Works and the commencements of capital works and purchasing.
- 2014 Capital Sinking Fund and 2015-2016 Capital Projects Prioritisation (CPP) submissions, which included a detailed business case for a permanent space for SUPRA.
- SUPRA Website up-grade. Due to funding constraints, the Administration Coordinator and President have negotiated with a website development firm who offer discounts to not-for-profit organisations. The advice and assistance of Ingrid van Tongeren of SUPRA legal service has been invaluable and we thank her for the many hours she has spent working on the contract. This has been time-consuming and is an on-going project. The website should be operational this year and will meet the needs of postgraduate students and SUPRA.

- Investigating a database management system for the casework service.
- Assisting with the SSAF Funding submission for 2014.
- Policy work has included assisting with SUPRA's Work Health and Safety Action Plan, Flexible Working Arrangements Policy, Staff Code of Conduct.

Administrative Support for Council and Staff

Some of the other projects the Administration team has been involved in to assist council and staff over the last year include:

- Helping to organise events by booking venues, organizing catering and publicity. This has included BBQs, outreach events at non-main campuses, immigration seminars, regular events like network meetings, and of course our O-week events.
- Assisting councillors and office bearers with their daily work.
- Offering additional administration support and data entry to the Student Advice and Advocacy Officers (SAAOs) in an attempt to alleviate some of their workload.
- Acting as electoral assistants to the independent returning officer for SUPRA elections.

The Administration team would like to thank the advocacy and legal teams for their support through what has been a very busy and hectic year. We would like to thank the President and the Executive, the Equity Officers and the rest of SUPRA council for all their work over the last year. This council has been very active and hands-on. We believe this has translated into greater involvement in SUPRA by postgraduate students more broadly and increased awareness and use of our services.

Pru Wirth, Administration Coordinator

SAAO Team

Margaret Kirkby Hank Whan Adrian
Francine Seeto Hayley Stone Cardinali

Annual report back to all postgraduate students for calendar year 2013 from the staff employed in the SUPRA Student Advice and Advocacy Officer (SAAO) team.

Background

Since 2008, SUPRA has employed 4 professionally qualified staff, who provide individual casework support, advice and advocacy to postgraduate students. In recognition of the diverse number of ways in which postgraduate students study at this University, and in recognition of the incredibly large number of University locations away from the main University campus at Camperdown/Darlington, our individual casework support includes meeting face-to-face on an appointment basis, by phone and by email.

Some of our individual casework support may be predominantly by appointments or by a combination of face-to-face meetings plus email plus phone contact. As a team, we find that individual face-to-face meetings enable us to provide the highest level of support to postgraduate students. However, we also recognise that postgraduate students are time poor, have multiple commitments which they are juggling with their study, and they therefore experience high levels of stress.



Margaret Kirkby & Hayley Stone at Cumberland Campus

Additionally, the SAAO team fulfil the following responsibilities:

- A policy briefing service to SUPRA Councillors and Officers in relation to the 18 University Committees upon which SUPRA had representation across 2013.
- Writing content for the regular SUPRA publications such as the weekly electronic newsletter eGrad (weekly through each semester), the yearly Postgraduate Survival Guide, pamphlets, posters, etc and to the content in the ad hoc publication The Thesis Guide.
- Support and assistance on policy issues related to each of the SUPRA Equity Officers and their networks (Queer PG Students Equity Network; Women PG Students Equity Network; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander PG students Equity Network; Disabled PG Students Equity Network; Rural and Remote PG Students Equity Network; and PG International Students Equity Network).
- Providing our services through outreach at the University's satellite campuses: in 2013 we provided outreach at the Faculty of Health Sciences at Lidcombe (weekly during both semester); and during Semester 2, we provided outreach at the Nursing and Midwifery campus in Mallett Street, Camperdown (weekly during semester); at the Conservatorium of Music (on an ad hoc basis); the Plant Breeding Institute at Cobbity Farm and the Veterinary Science students at Camden Farm (these latter two on an ad hoc basis during 2013).
- Community education – caseworkers present community education sessions for students on issues which we identify as being of concern to the postgraduate student population at large – e.g. we ran seminars in 2013 on tenancy/housing issues and an international students facts forum.

The 2013/14 SAAO staff were:

Hank Tre Whan – commenced, in a term contract position, mid-January 2013 and became permanent later in the year.

Francine Seeto: ongoing

Adrian Cardinali: ongoing however took extended leave-without-pay commencing end July 2013 – due back end July 2014.

Margaret Kirkby: ongoing

Hayley Stone: commenced on a one-year contract position early August 2013.

We report below to all postgraduate students our work for calendar year 2013:

A. Individual advice and advocacy service:

Demand for our Advice and Advocacy Service has grown year-on-year since 2008. A database for this service was developed by the University for SUPRA and the SRC during 2007 and the team commenced full use of that database in 2008. The below data reveals the increased use of this element of our work:

- 438 cases in 2008;
- 540 in 2009;
- 608 in 2010;
- 682 in 2011;
- 567 in 2012 and
- 600 in 2013.

Please note: the above data for 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013 are not accurate. They are an underestimate of our caseload. As is common with all databases, the data is only as good as the data which has been entered into the (SUPRA SAAO) database.

Unfortunately, the SAAO team has received minimal administrative support due to the nature of SUPRA's funding since the anti-student organization legislation was carried in Federal Parliament in 2006. This has meant that all SAAO staff are predominantly responsible for their own data entry of their cases. There is minimal allowance in the funding that SUPRA receives for administrative support to enter our data. This, plus the increased demand for our individual casework support, has meant that the SAAO team have had to face that inevitable issue when there is inadequate administrative funding plus increase

in demand on your services: “do I spend time on data entry of my cases or do I keep seeing more and more students?”

Hence, the above data for 2010 to 2013, understates our casework support. This is because either a case is entered on the database only, but not all consultations with each student have been entered and, even though the case has been concluded, there has not been the time to actually enter all data and close the case. This data entry work will be undertaken as time and funding allows and updated data for each of the years will be published as an update in our Annual Reports and other forms of reporting back to the student body and to the University. Follow-up student consults on new matters may also not be recorded, as once a relationship is established with a caseworker, students will often contact the caseworker directly for new advice on a different matter. Where possible caseworkers have been trying to dedicate time to the input of data into the database, however, this is a highly time consuming process.

University of Sydney postgraduate and undergraduate students are fortunate in that the senior management of the University were in agreement that SUPRA and the other student organisations (USU, SUSF and the SRC) continue to be funded. This meant that all of the student organisations received funding 2007 to 2011 inclusive from the University, however, that funding was at a much lesser amount than the amount which SUPRA previously received from the individual membership fee (of \$80) paid by each postgraduate student.

Our individual casework support during 2013:

In 2013, of the (estimated) 600 students we assisted via the Advice and Advocacy Service, 303 were domestic students and 255 were international students with 42 unknown due to not completing that part of our intake form. In terms of enrolment status, 464 were full time; 52 part-time; 74 unknown; and 10 inquiring about enrolment as an issue and not yet enrolled.



Hayley Stone with SUPRA President Joanne Gad at the Business School Induction.

In regard to study mode, 443 were coursework students and 137 research students with 20 unknown. In terms of study locations, 569 were on campus, with 12 indicating 'off campus' and 19 unknown.

The ten most common issues we dealt with in 2013 were:

By way of breaking down particular case issues, the most recent statistics for calendar year 2013 reveal the ten most common issues (in descending numerical order) are:

- Academic appeals – 107 cases;
- Show cause/exclusion – 51 cases;
- Other – 49 cases;
- Enrolment – 49 cases;
- Academic honesty – 46 cases;
- Special consideration – 44 cases;
- Tenancy matters – 41 cases (re private rental market);
- Supervision – 40 cases;
- Accommodation – 38 cases (re living spaces such as boarding which do not come under the 2010 Residential Tenancies Act)
- Course fees – 19 cases.

What do the ten most common issues tell us about students' experience?

The above ten most common issues our service deals with go to the heart of one's experience as a postgraduate student – no matter whether one is a coursework student or a research student. The highest numerical case matter is that of academic appeals. Appeals against an academic decision involve a 3-stage process (informal to lecturer; if unsuccessful appeal against lecturer's decision to Faculty; if unsuccessful appeal against Faculty decision to Student Appeals Body).

Each stage of an academic appeal requires research of relevant University policy and discussion to ensure that a credible case is made by a student that the relevant University policy has been breached, firstly, by the academic and, secondly, by the Faculty. Our casework experience informs us that many academic and general staff in Faculties are receiving inadequate training in regard to these policies. Equally, our casework experience as a team, also informs us that, unfortunately, some Faculties do not want to change their bad practices or their unfair interpretations of the University's policies even when a student is successful with their academic appeal.

Our casework experience has exposed us to this intransigence from some Faculties and it has resulted in the SUPRA SAAO team assisting students, over time, with exactly the same issue/

practice, which has previously been successfully appealed by a student. Our casework experiences inform us at an on-the-ground-level of which policy wording needs some changes so that it is clearer and not open to exploitation by Faculties against students. Thus, our individual case support work greatly assists our policy advice to the SUPRA officers and representatives who sit on University Committees as a SUPRA representative.

As postgraduate students would know, we in the SUPRA SAAO team of staff cannot control the intransigently negative attitudes towards students, which are displayed in some Faculties or disciplines.

Academic appeal matters are complex and oftentimes consuming for SAAO caseworkers. These types of cases usually require the drafting of documentation, the collation of evidence and the application of University policy to the student's individual problem. Multiple follow-ups with the student are required, either by email or face-to-face. Appealing to the final, and highest level (i.e. to the Student Appeals Body) requires the preparation of a detailed submission and significant prepping of the student. The whole process can be highly intimidating for a student if they were appealing without the support of a SUPRA casework staff member.

NB: the high number of cases designated as 'other' indicates another element of the existing SAAO database which needs to be addressed – more problem codes are needed and, if possible, more accurate identification of the issue which postgraduate students bring to our SAAO service will need to be considered as a new data base is developed for our service across 2014. The remaining 16 problem areas (and case numbers in descending order) identified by our database are:

- Centrelink – 17 cases;
- Examination issues – 16 cases;
- Scholarships – 16 cases;
- Legal issues – 13 cases (these students would have met the SAAO and then, once the issue of concern was ascertained/ identified to be a legal issue, would have then been referred to the SUPRA Legal Service – NB: the process of ascertaining an issue is not necessarily short – it will vary according to each student and whether they also have multiple issues);
- Harassment and/or discrimination – 10 cases;
- Course structure/rules – 7 cases;
- Visa issues – 7 cases (NB: SAAO's do not offer advice regarding a visa, however, a student may bring up a visa issue in the course of seeking help about another issue; most students would be referred to either

the International Office or informed that they need to go to see a private (for fee) registered immigration agent; or to the federal Immigration Department);

- Career advice/issues – 5 cases (NB: SAAO staff do not offer careers advice – this ‘issue’ captures cases such as where a student has been underpaid or not paid at all; or a broad career or profession-specific issue which the student wants to discuss);
- Resource issues – 5 cases;
- Transportation issues – 4 cases;
- Personal issues – 4 cases;
- Thesis preparation – 3 cases;
- Administrative processes – 3 cases;
- Study issues – 3 cases;
- Academic misconduct – 2 cases;
- Childcare – 1.

What can be drawn from the above data for 2013:

- When studying at postgraduate level lots of things can come up which will impact on one’s studies – whether it is specific to study such as an academic appeal over, for example, the unfair imposition of a deduction from a mark for an assignment or whether it is related to one’s overall life (such as sorting out childcare issues);

- The numerical numbers attached to each of the problem areas bears no reflection to the amount of time which will be spent by a SAAO on the matter;
- The numerical numbers attached to each of the problem areas bears no reflection on the significance of the issue – for example, childcare (and other parenthood-related matters), do affect many more students than the above statistic reflects – many PG’s sort out their parenthood-related issues externally via friendship, family and other networks but that does not mean that their studies are not affected by these issues – universities need to remember this and be mindful of it;
- It is very concerning that we dealt with 10 cases in 2013 which were related to either harassment or discrimination matters specific to the studies of the students at this University – again much more work needs to be done on increasing students’ understanding of their rights in this area; unfortunately harassment and discrimination are not going to go away as an issue – even in an university which has high regard in the community.

2013 Statistics regarding Faculty:

Faculty	No of students
Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources	3
Architecture, Design and Planning	28
Arts and Social Sciences	78
Business School	131
Dentistry	7
Education and Social Work	24
Engineering and Information Technology	45
Health Sciences	55
Law	48
Medicine	54
Nursing and Midwifery	27
Pharmacy	11
Science	42
Sydney College of the Arts	9
Sydney Conservatorium of Music	12
Veterinary Science	9
Don’t know	17

As evidenced by the feedback provided by postgraduate students in the University's 2013 Student Services Amenities Fee Survey and in a 2012 SUPRA survey, the provision by SUPRA of an independent advice and advocacy service for postgraduates is strongly supported by the postgraduate student population. We the SUPRA SAAO staff continually report within the organisation that a key factor for postgraduate students is the assurance that when a student is seeking advice from SUPRA casework staff it is kept confidential and that our advice and advocacy service is independent from the University.

As a team of staff, whose positions are funded by all of you the postgraduate students of this University, we certainly recognise the importance of being independent of the University and assist students to put forward the student perspective on these issues.

B. Briefing services:

In 2013, SUPRA had representation on the following 18 University Committees/Working Parties/ad hoc committees:

Name of Committee	No of Meetings in 2013	No. of briefings
Academic Board	8	8
Graduate Studies Committee (of Academic Board)	8	4 x HW + 2 by HS
Academic Standards and Policy Committee (of Academic Bd)	6	5
Admissions Sub-Committee	8	No SAAO allocated to this Committee
SEG Education Committee	10	15 in total which includes 6 briefings in Sem 1 and 9 briefings and attendance on working groups in Sem 2, 2013;
SEG Research Training Committee	10	8 - change of SAAO due to leave commitments
SEG Human Resources and Equity Committee	6	No SAAO allocated to brief for this Committee
SEG Indigenous Strategy and Services Committee	10	11 – includes briefings on SUPRA representation of Indigenous student issues, as prompted by SEG ATSISS
SEG WHS Committee	4	Papers not forwarded to relevant SAAO no contact from SUPRA rep on this committee
SEG International Committee	3	Papers not forwarded to relevant SAAO
International Student Program	5	Papers not provided to relevant SAAO
Student Consultative Committee	8	8

Disability Consultative Committee	Unknown	Nil (SUPRA officer unwell and unable to attend)
Child Care Coordinating Committee	Nil	Nil
Student Wellbeing Working Party	13	Unknown – this Wking Party broke into sub-groups each mtg at different times – difficult to attend all the various mtgs
Healthy University Committee/Project	Unknown	Nil – student rep did not seek briefings – SUPRA resolved to not participate due to processes within the Project not allied to student representation
Annual Progress Review Working Party (Semester 1, 2013)	4	10-20 (includes add'l mtgs b/n SAAO and SUPRA rep on WP plus mtgs with SAAO staff 4 feedback)
Thesis and Examination Processes Working Party (Sem 2, 2013 to Sem 1, 2014)	2 meetings in 2013	Attended both mtgs

Comments about the SAAO Briefing Service to elected/nominated student representatives on University Committees:

This is an important part of the work of the SUPRA Advice and Advocacy Service especially because of the high level of turnover of student representatives in the organisation. That high level of turnover is a factor which attaches to postgraduate student representative work. No matter whether a student representative is in a research degree or a coursework degree, both levels of study are highly intensive and make high demands on a person's time.

Research degrees at Masters level are, usually, of 2 years duration, and at PhD level they are of 3-4 years duration. From our experience, it is highly unlikely that a postgraduate student can remain involved in SUPRA representative work for extended periods of time. The majority of the SUPRA representatives can be involved for perhaps one semester or two semesters at most. As postgraduate coursework degrees can vary from as short as 6 months (at Graduate Diploma level) to as long as 36 months in the professional degrees (such as the Juris Doctor in Law Faculty

or the Doctor of Dental Medicine in the Dentistry Faculty) and due to the intensity of the student workload in these degrees coursework students usually can only be involved for a maximum of one year but quite frequently, for just one semester.

Over time it has, therefore, become a pattern that a reasonable number of elected representatives or officers will only be on SUPRA Council for 6 months, and the longest duration can be 12 months, unless a representative is willing and happy to go through the annual election process a second or third time. Additionally, there is always a small percentage of postgraduate representatives, most commonly PhD students, who can remain actively involved in SUPRA for much longer lengths of time.

Therefore, the SAAO Briefing Service becomes an even more significant service for the elected representatives and councillors because of the 'corporate memory' which many of the advice and advocacy staff hold in their minds and in their files related to policy work. If there is not a level of continuity amongst the advice and advocacy staff, the work of the elected representatives becomes that much more difficult. It is much

easier to get a verbal briefing from a staff member who has followed the proceedings of a University Committee for sufficient time as to be able to inform the elected representatives that ‘this issue was last discussed in/on <year/date>’.

Equally, that corporate knowledge within the advice and advocacy service indirectly provides not only elected SUPRA postgraduate representatives with a manifest benefit, but also the postgraduate representatives in faculties, the postgraduate representatives at all the far outlying locations wherein a postgraduate research student can be located. Many postgraduate students would not be aware, but PG students of this University may be located at ANSTO at Lucas Heights, at the Kolling Institute within Royal North Shore Hospital, at the Camden Farm, at Cobbity Farm and the Plant Breeding Institute, at Sydney College of the Arts at Rozelle, at the Conservatorium of Music in the city, or at the Faculty of Health Sciences at the Lidcombe campus. All of the student reps who become involved in SUPRA obtain a benefit from that corporate knowledge within the Student Advice and Advocacy Officer team of staff.

Finally, the University is also indirectly provided with a manifest benefit due to the internal ability for SUPRA, as an organisation, to maintain a familiarity and detailed knowledge of the various policies of the University and, especially, of the policies which are usually areas of ‘contest’ between students and decision makers within the University structures.

C. SUPRA Publications:

The advice and advocacy service produced content for the 2013 Postgraduate Survival Guide, and more legal aspects of postgraduate student policy was left to the SUPRA Legal Service to write. SUPRA advice and advocacy staff also draft pamphlets; posters; and content for the weekly electronic publication eGrad which is circulated weekly during each semester to all postgraduate who subscribe to our database. In 2013 advice and advocacy staff wrote content for all issues of eGrad.

Additionally, a very substantial effort was made during the year to fully update the Thesis Guide - a SUPRA publication which is well received by Faculty staff as much as it is by research students due to the fact that it compiles, in one place, information from all of the multitude of University policies which relate to research students.

D. Submission Support:

Submission support was provided to Council Members on student related issues or questions that arose during 2013 – some of these matters

arise from Federal Government level and others are internal to the University. Writing of submissions and/or other assistance was provided to the following written representations made by SUPRA on behalf of University of Sydney postgraduate students:

External submissions:

SUPRA Submission to the Higher Education Standards Panel regarding “Draft Standards for Research, Research Training and Learning Outcomes” in July 2013.

Internal submissions:

2013 was a big year for submission writing related to internal-to-the-University matters such as:

- Working Party on the Annual Progress Review for research students – attendance by a SAAO at this Working Party was required plus writing comment on draft revisions of the APR documents was provided plus other written comments about APR related issues;
- Student consultation processes regarding the Student Services Amenities Fee (SSAF) – a lot of attention was directed during 2013 to internal consultation processes generated by the University regarding reviewing the 2012 implementation of the SSAF; to seek student views of the SSAF and the work of each of the student organisations via a survey conducted by a consultancy firm employed by the University; to address any issues raised during this process. All of this work took up a substantial amount of time for the Student Advice and Advocacy Officer team of staff.

E. Outreach activities:

Outreach activities provided by SUPRA included regular advice and advocacy outreach to the Cumberland campus, the SCA, the Conservatorium, and the Nursing School. In addition, ad hoc outreach activities were conducted at the remaining campuses of the University. Information on the Advice and Advocacy Service generally and all Advice and Advocacy Service-generated publications are always provided as part of these outreach activities.

During 2013 outreach was undertaken weekly during each semester at the Lidcombe campus – this has been facilitated by the very supportive library staff in that the library has permitted both SUPRA and the SRC to utilise a table within the library and near to the entrance which allows students to see our display of SUPRA produced materials and which, whilst the advice and advocacy officer may be seeing an individual

student in a private space elsewhere within the library or in an outside area, passing students can take a copy of any information which is of interest to them. SUPRA's advice and advocacy staff would like to thank FHS library staff and the many other staff in the FHS research students' administration unit and elsewhere within the Faculty of Health Sciences campus for their continued support for our work at Lidcombe campus.

Our outreach work includes providing information about the work of the elected SUPRA representatives and officers to postgraduates at satellite campus locations. Equally students who drop by our table in the library at the Lidcombe campus regularly provide us with feedback about course or policy related issues which they ask the advice and advocacy staff to feedback those comments back to the SUPRA Council.

This outreach work has been repeated at the Conservatorium of Music in 2013, but not as extensively as it has been at the Lidcombe campus. During 2013, we were in the stage of ascertaining the level of need for outreach work at the Conservatorium and at Sydney College of the Arts and our work in 2013 has led us to believe that once-per month at these campuses may be more appropriate and more within our capacity during 2014.

The advice and advocacy service has now established a SKYPE account for contact with students who are not located at the main campus and all postgraduate students are able to contact our service by email and/or phone as well as in person.

Whilst the above Faculty statistics for the number of students who have utilised the advice and advocacy service from satellite campuses are predominantly low for locations such as SCA, the Conservatorium, Dentistry and Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, they are substantial for Faculty of Health Science students demonstrating that our targeted outreach work is successful in improving access for Health Science postgraduates and can be improved in 2014 for the other campuses.

F. Postgraduate network and equity group support on policy issues:

Advice to the postgraduate network of representatives and to the equity groups on either issues related to postgraduate representation or on issues related to the portfolio area for each equity officer was provided on multiple occasions by the advice and advocacy service staff during 2013. Note: the 'postgraduate network' of representatives extends to elected student representatives in some faculties and satellite campus locations. It is quite common

for an advice and advocacy staff member to be contacted by, for example, a student representative within a Faculty on main campus or at a satellite campus who wants some advice about an upcoming meeting at which they will be putting forward the postgraduate perspective on a matter – and they are calling for an opportunity to discuss a policy issue or to get some advice about how to raise a matter.

The advice and advocacy team work to ensure that individual postgraduate representatives are well supported and resourced and that the equity group officers also feel well supported and resourced whether they are directly involved with SUPRA or are doing representative work within their Faculty.

The key factor which interferes with this element of the work of the advice and advocacy service is the very important consideration that any officer or representative who has put their hand up to be involved with SUPRA or to be a representative within their Faculty, will not suffer any disadvantage to their academic work in the course of undertaking their own work as either a representative or as an officer.

This is always a delicate balance for both the advice and advocacy service as well as for the elected representatives and the elected officers as the demands of study at postgraduate level are substantial. Advice and advocacy service support will continue to be provided to the extended postgraduate network and to equity groups as needed as those extended network play a very important role within the University.

Conclusion

The SUPRA Student Advice and Advocacy Officers continue to meet the needs of an increasing postgraduate student population at this University. We find that student needs are complex and our casework experience reveals that this complexity is, in fact, increasing due to the highly pressured environment which higher education faces in today's political and economic environment.

As we go to press with the SUPRA Annual Report for the Annual General Meeting to be held on Tuesday 20th May 2014, the Federal budget came out with horrendous cuts to higher education. No doubt the impact of those cuts for postgraduate students will be reflected in our next annual report in 2015.

***Prepared by Margaret Kirkby, Acting Coordinator, incorporating comments and feedback by my colleagues, Francine Seeto Acting Senior SAAO; Hank Whan, SAAO; and Hayley Stone, SAAO
Wed 15th May 2014***

Legal Service

Ingrid van Tongeren



History And Outline Of The Service

The Redfern Legal Centre branch office at the Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (“SUPRA”) has been in operation since late February 2008 with each of the years since being characterised by an increasing demand for the service. This service is funded by SUPRA, which in turn receives funding from the University from the Student Services & Amenities Fee (“SSAF”) for the service. It provides legal services to postgraduate students from any of the University’s seven campuses including the affiliated campuses of the Sydney College of the Arts, The Conservatorium of Music, Orange Agricultural College and Camden Farms.

The SUPRA legal service employs one full time solicitor. Face to face appointments are available at various times during the week with Thursday afternoons being dedicated to a drop in service. Students at distant campuses and students unable to attend the SUPRA offices can also make telephone appointments or receive advice by email.

The solicitor primarily provides advice and casework services. Casework services are provided either through representation or through providing assistance and support to enable students to represent themselves in their matters. Deciding who to represent and who to assist is made after consideration has been given to the potential for the client to effectively and successfully manage the matter themselves with assistance from the solicitor, the other legal services available to the client, and their own resources. The aim is to allow the solicitor to spend greater time on clients who have a high degree of need and are unable to access other services for whatever reason whilst at the same time providing the most efficient and useful service to the entire postgraduate student community.

The solicitor also provides regular legal and strategic advice to the four Student Advice and Advocacy Officers (“SAAOs”) employed by SUPRA who deal with a variety of issues concerning students such as academic or welfare matters. The solicitor also maintains a close link with and provides assistance to the other staff and office bearers of SUPRA in relation to any

other legal matters that may arise, for example by providing advice in the areas of Intellectual Property or Defamation Law to office bearers or those involved in preparing SUPRA publications.

The solicitor also undertakes community legal education and policy work. Community legal education aims to increase the ability of clients to avert legal problems or to solve them themselves by providing legal information, for example in the form of fact sheets, information brochures or contributions to SUPRA publications. Policy or law reform work is work that may not be related to any one particular client but aims to achieve some systemic change in the legal system or the University in order to benefit a group of postgraduate students or all postgraduate students.

Advice And Casework

Advice and casework has been provided on the full gamut of legal issues. Overwhelmingly, the involvement of the legal service has resulted in achieving favourable outcomes for the students involved.

University/Administrative/Government Matters & Intellectual Property

As the legal service remains independent of the University it can advise students on University matters and can represent students in conflicts with the University. This year the service has also advised and assisted a large number of student with other external administrative or government law matters that are unrelated to the University. In addition, the service provides a high percentage of advice in the area of Intellectual Property, either through the provision of independent advice to students on contracts prior to the assignment of rights to the University or in handling disputes with the University.

Consumer Complaints & Credit/Debt Matters

The legal service receives a large number of enquiries about consumer contracts and credit/debt matters. Many of these enquiries relate to aggressive sales techniques or onerous credit contracts. Further a significant number of the complaints received in this area are in relation to consumer contracts with telecommunications

service providers particularly in relation to mobile phones or internet services. The legal service has been able to negotiate successful outcomes for students in a range of matters in these areas. In addition, a number of students seek advice from the solicitor regarding money owed to or by the student in relation to housing. Many students are living in situations where they are not covered by the Residential Tenancies Act or the Boarding Houses Act and as such must commence or defend proceedings in relation to these matters in the Local Court. Being in the Local Court creates unnecessary legal complexity and cost issues for the students involved regardless of which side of the matter they are on. The legal service has provided advice to, and conducted negotiations on behalf of, a large number of students in relation to such matters. The service has also provided representation to students in these matters at the Local Court.

Tenancy

Due to their poor economic situations, many students are often ill placed to afford rent increases and so often fall into arrears. In addition, lack of funds or the need to make the financial resources they have last as long as possible often means that they are residing in accommodation that is of a poor standard which leads to tenancy issues such as the need for repairs, compensation for breaches of the tenancy agreement and the like. The legal service has provided advice, and conducted negotiations on behalf of, a large number of students in relation to such matters. The service has also assisted students to obtain representation in difficult tenancy matters at the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal ("NCAT") which incorporates the former Consumer, Trader and Tenancy Tribunal (CTTT).

Employment

Many students are working outside the University to supplement their other income (usually parental support, scholarships or part time University employment in their departments). They are often working in positions where their conditions and entitlements are questionable and often in positions where their employment status (ie whether they are in fact an employee or sub-contractor) or the requirements and legal obligations imposed on them by virtue of their status are unknown to the student until a dispute arises, the employment ends or they find themselves being investigated by government departments such as the Tax Office. The legal service has successfully negotiated on behalf of many students to recover wages and entitlements, assisted them to resolve concerns about working

conditions, and assisted them in their dealings with government departments and in complying with their taxation or other legal obligations.

Motor Vehicle Accidents/Property Damage

A significant number of students attend the service to seek advice in relation to recovering damages and/or defending claims for damages following motor vehicle accidents. They are often inexperienced drivers or holders of international licences who are unfamiliar with the rules and regulations in New South Wales. The financial impact of these matters can be significant for students who rely on their vehicles and earn a small income or have limited financial resources. The service has successfully assisted a number of clients to obtain compensation for the damage done to their vehicles. In addition, the service has successfully represented a number of students and obtained orders in their favour in situations where it was necessary to both defend the matters against them and cross claim against the other parties. It has also assisted a number of students to obtain judgements in their favour and, where necessary, to successfully enforce the judgements obtained against the other party. Where the students have admitted liability but disputed the amount claimed, the legal service has also successfully negotiated to reduce the amount to be paid to an acceptable amount and/or to allow the clients to pay the sum off by instalments.

Advice on the Civil Legal System/Process in NSW/Australia

As there are a high percentage of international students in the postgraduate student population, the service regularly provides advice in relation to local government, state and Federal government legislation and the civil legal system/processes operating in NSW and throughout the Commonwealth.

Road Traffic and Motor Vehicle Regulatory Offences

Inexperience or lack of familiarity with the road rules, coupled with having older or less well maintained vehicles due to economic constraints often means that the clients of the legal service present with penalty notices received for these offences. For the same reasons they are often less able to meet the financial burden imposed in paying a penalty notice. A significant number of clients have chosen to court elect and plead guilty. In these situations, the legal service has either represented or assisted them, either in person or by way of drafting their written pleadings. In addition, the service has successfully represented a number of students in defended hearings.

Criminal Matters

The solicitor has provided advice and representation in Local Court to a number of students mostly in relation to matters concerning possession of drugs, driving offences (mostly alcohol related offences), assault, carrying prohibited weapons, larceny (by a servant), and fraud.

Legal Education/ Policy And Law Reform

The Service has provided information and education to a number of students in the areas of intellectual property, traffic offences & fines, privacy issues, consumer contracts (specifically telecommunications service provider contracts), motor vehicle accidents (property damage), tenancy, and employment. During 2013, the solicitor has also provided information and education to the SAAOs on changes and amendments to the law in areas of relevance. The solicitor has also been involved in an advisory capacity in the policy and submission work being undertaken by SUPRA.

Advice And Casework Statistics

Total Number of Matters Advised On (Advices/Cases): **971**

Percentage Distribution of Matter Types

University/Government/Administrative Matters	22%
Intellectual Property	15%
Consumer	7%
Credit/Debt	7%
Tenancy	7%
Employment	6%
Motor Vehicle Accidents/Property Damage	5%
Civil Legal System/Process	4%
Road Traffic & Motor Regulatory Offences	4%
Criminal	3%
Other Civil Matters	15%
Other Matter Types (including Family)	5%

Percentage Distribution of Country of Origin

Australia	27%
China	23%
Middle East	4%
Europe	2%
Other Asian Countries	2%
Indian Sub-Continent	2%
North America	2%
South America	1%
Other Pacific Countries	1%
Africa	1%
Not known	35%

Ingrid Van Tongeren

**SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE ASSOCIATION
(SUPRA)**

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2013

**SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE
REPRESENTATIVE ASSOCIATION
(SUPRA)**

31 DECEMBER 2013

C O N T E N T S

	Page No.
Auditor's Independence Declaration	1
Statement of Comprehensive Income	2
Balance Sheet	3
Statement of Changes in Equity	4
Statement of Cash Flows	5
Notes to and forming part of the Accounts	6-12
Statement by the SUPRA Council	13
Independent Auditor's Report	14-15
Detailed Statement of Comprehensive Income	16-19

C M PITT & CO

Chartered Accountants

TELEPHONE (02) 9715 1555
FACSIMILE (02) 9715 1566

CHARLES M PITT B.BUS FCA

2 PHILIP STREET
STRATHFIELD NSW 2135
PO BOX 580
E-MAIL cpitt@cmpitt.com.au

Page 1

AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE ASSOCIATION (SUPRA)

As lead auditor for the audit of Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA) for the year ended 31 December 2013, I declare that to the best of my knowledge and belief, there have been:

- (i) no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements as required by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia; and
- (ii) no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

This declaration is in respect of Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA) during the period.

Charles M Pitt
C M Pitt & Co
Units 6 & 7, 2 Philip Street
STRATHFIELD NSW 2135

Dated: 18 February 2014



Chartered Accountants

Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE ASSOCIATION

Page 2

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2013

	Note	2013 \$	2012 \$
Revenue			
University Funding		1,000,000	989,118
Interest received		22,329	26,550
Other revenues		-	267
Donations		90	470
Total Revenue		<u>1,022,419</u>	<u>1,016,405</u>
Expenditure			
Employment Expenditure		(831,085)	(749,954)
Administration Expenditure		(204,796)	(184,099)
Activities & Functions		(10,385)	(25,585)
Publications		(12,708)	(5,490)
Total Expenditure		<u>(1,058,974)</u>	<u>(965,128)</u>
(Deficit)/ Surplus before income tax for the year		(36,555)	51,277
Income tax expense		-	-
(Deficit)/ Surplus after income tax for the year		<u>(36,555)</u>	<u>51,277</u>
Total comprehensive income for the year attributed to members of the Association		<u>(36,555)</u>	<u>51,277</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these accounts.

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE ASSOCIATION

Page 3

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2013

	Note	2013 \$	2012 \$
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash & cash equivalents	2	498,422	563,431
Trade & other receivables	3	<u>7,650</u>	<u>7,765</u>
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		<u>506,072</u>	<u>571,196</u>
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Furniture, Plant and Equipment	4	<u>2,227</u>	<u>2,515</u>
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		<u>2,227</u>	<u>2,515</u>
TOTAL ASSETS		<u>508,299</u>	<u>573,711</u>
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade & other payables	5	41,251	65,192
Short Term Provisions	6	<u>288,664</u>	<u>293,580</u>
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>329,915</u>	<u>358,772</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES		<u>329,915</u>	<u>358,772</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>178,384</u>	<u>214,939</u>
EQUITY			
Accumulated Funds	7	<u>178,384</u>	<u>214,939</u>
TOTAL EQUITY		<u>178,384</u>	<u>214,939</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these accounts.

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE ASSOCIATION

Page 4

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2013

	Note	2013 \$	2012 \$
RETAINED EARNINGS			
Balance at the beginning of the year		214,939	163,662
Surplus/(Deficit) attributed from operations		(36,555)	51,277
Balance at the end of the financial year		<u>178,384</u>	<u>214,939</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these accounts.

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE ASSOCIATION

Page 5

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2013

	Note	2013 \$	2012 \$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
<i>Receipts</i>			
University Funding		1,000,000	989,118
Interest Received		21,662	23,354
Sundries		90	237
		<u>1,021,752</u>	<u>1,012,709</u>
<i>Payments</i>			
Payments to suppliers and employees		(1,086,761)	(1,006,137)
		<u>(1,086,761)</u>	<u>(1,006,137)</u>
Net Cash provided by / (used in) operating activities	9	<u>(65,009)</u>	<u>6,572</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Purchase of Property, Plant and Equipment		-	-
Net Cash provided by/(used in) investing activities		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
(Decrease)/ Increase in cash held		(65,009)	6,572
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		<u>563,431</u>	<u>556,859</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	2	<u>498,422</u>	<u>563,431</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these accounts.

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2013

NOTE 1 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The financial statements are a general purpose financial report that have been prepared in accordance with Accounting Standards, Urgent Issues Group Interpretations and other authorities pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board.

The financial report was authorised for issue by the Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA) on 18 February 2014.

Compliance with Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements

The financial statements of Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA) comply with Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements as issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB).

They satisfy the requirements of SUPRA its constitution and the reporting requirements of SUPRA.

SUPRA is unincorporated and domiciled in Australia. The following is a summary of the material accounting policies adopted by SUPRA in the preparation of the financial report.

The accounting policies have been consistently applied unless otherwise stated. The financial report has been prepared on an accrual basis and is based on historical costs and does not take into account changing money values, or except where specifically stated current valuations of non current assets. Cost is based on the fair values of the consideration given in exchange for assets.

(a) Economic Dependence

The financial report is prepared on the basis that SUPRA is a going concern. SUPRA is dependent on the allocation of funds from the Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) by the University of Sydney. The University of Sydney provides SUPRA with premises, utilities and computers, in order to conduct its operations. No dollar value has been attributed to these services.

(b) Furniture, Plant and Equipment

Furniture, Plant and Equipment are measured on the cost basis less depreciation and impairment losses.

The carrying amount of Furniture, plant and equipment is reviewed annually to ensure it is not in excess of the recoverable amount from these assets. The recoverable amount is assessed on the basis of the expected net cash flows that will be received from the assets employment and subsequent disposal.

(c) Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated on a straight line basis so as to write off the net cost of each item of property, plant and equipment over its expected useful life. Estimates of remaining useful life are made on a regular basis for all assets, with annual reassessments for major items.

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2013

CONTINUED

The depreciation rates used for each class of depreciable assets are:

Furniture, Plant and equipment 10% to 20%

- (d) **Receivables**
Other receivables represent the amount due at balance date.
- (e) **Amounts Payable**
These amounts represent liabilities for goods and services provided to the consolidated entity prior to the end of the financial year, which are unpaid. The amounts are unsecured and are usually paid within thirty (30) days of negotiation.
- (f) **Maintenance and Repairs**
Maintenance, repair costs and minor renewals are charged as expenses as incurred.
- (g) **Employee Entitlements**
Provision is made in respect of the liability for annual leave, long service leave and redundancy at balance date. Contributions are made on behalf of employee by SUPRA to the National Entitlement Security Trust (NEST) refer to note 6.
- (h) **Leases**
Operating lease payments are charged to expense in the period in which they occur.
- (i) **Cash**
For purposes of the Statement of Cash Flows, cash includes deposits at call which are readily convertible to cash on hand and which are used in the cash management function on a day-to-day basis.
- (j) **Goods and Service Tax (GST)**
All revenue is stated net of the amount of Goods and Service Tax (GST).
- (k) **Comparatives**
Where necessary, comparative information has been reclassified to achieve consistency in disclosure with current financial year amounts and other disclosures.

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2013

CONTINUED

(l) Critical Accounting Estimates and Judgments

SUPRA evaluates estimates and judgements incorporated into the financial report based on historical knowledge and best available current information. Estimates assume a reasonable expectation of future events and are based on current trends and economic data, obtained both externally and within the group.

(m) Impairment

SUPRA assess impairment at each reporting date by evaluating conditions specific to the asset group that may lead to impairment of assets. Where an impairment trigger exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is determined. Value-in-use calculations performed in assessing recoverable amounts incorporate a number of key estimates.

No impairment has been recognised for the year ended 31 December 2013.

(n) New and amended standards adopted by the Association

None of the new standards and amendments to standards that are mandatory for the first time for the financial year beginning 1 January 2013 affected any of the amounts recognised in the current period or any prior period and are not likely to affect future periods.

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE ASSOCIATION

Page 9

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2013

	2013 \$	2012 \$
CONTINUED		
NOTE 2 Cash & Cash Equivalents		
Cash at Bank and on Hand	78,923	90,903
Deposit with NEST	212,977	206,143
Deposits on Term	<u>206,522</u>	<u>266,386</u>
	<u>498,422</u>	<u>563,431</u>
NOTE 3 Trade & Other Receivables		
Sundry Debtors	500	500
Accrued Interest Receivable	4,744	4,077
Prepayments	<u>2,406</u>	<u>3,188</u>
	<u>7,650</u>	<u>7,765</u>
NOTE 4 Furniture, Plant and Equipment		
Furniture, Plant and Equipment at cost	121,422	121,422
Less, Accumulated Depreciation	<u>(119,195)</u>	<u>(118,907)</u>
	<u>2,227</u>	<u>2,515</u>

Movements in carrying amounts

Movements in carrying amounts for each class of property, plant & equipment between the beginning and the end of the current financial year are:

	Computer Equipment	Furniture and Fittings	Office Equipment	Total
Balance at beginning of year	-	2,515	-	2,515
Additions	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-
Depreciation expense	-	(288)	-	(288)
	<u>-</u>	<u>2,227</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,227</u>

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE ASSOCIATION

Page 10

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2013

		2013	2012
		\$	\$
CONTINUED			
NOTE 5	Trade & Other Payables		
	<i>Current</i>		
	Sundry payables and accrued expenses	<u>41,251</u>	<u>65,192</u>
NOTE 6	Short Term Provisions		
	Provision for Annual Leave	31,835	31,205
	Provision for Long Service Leave	17,048	15,135
	Provision for Redundancy	<u>239,781</u>	<u>247,240</u>
		<u>288,664</u>	<u>293,580</u>
	At 31 December 2013 the total amount provided for a future liability was \$288,664. Funds to \$212,977 are held on behalf of employees in the National Entitlement Security Trust (NEST).		
NOTE 7	Accumulated Funds		
	Accumulated Funds at the beginning of the financial year	214,939	163,662
	Surplus/(Deficit)	(36,555)	51,277
	Accumulated Funds at the end of the financial year	<u>178,384</u>	<u>214,939</u>
NOTE 8	Auditors Remuneration		
	Audit of financial statements	<u>7,500</u>	<u>7,500</u>
NOTE 9	Reconciliation of Net Cash Inflow from Operating Activities to Surplus/(Deficit)		
	Net Cash Inflow/(Outflow) from Operating Activities	(65,009)	6,572
	Depreciation	(288)	(334)
	Change in Operating Assets and Liabilities		
	Increase/(Decrease) in Other Current Assets	(115)	5,371
	(Increase)/Decrease in Payables and Equipment Finance	23,941	(13,249)
	(Increase)/Decrease in Provisions	4,916	52,917
	Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	<u>(36,555)</u>	<u>51,277</u>

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2013

CONTINUED

NOTE 10 Financial Instruments

(a) **Terms, Conditions & Accounting Policies**

Accounts Receivable

Other small sundry sums are net of any provisions for amounts estimated to be uncollectable. Interest is not charged on outstanding amounts.

Accounts Payable

Liabilities are recognised for amounts to be paid in the future for goods or services received, whether or not billed to the University. Accounts payable are normally settled within thirty (30) days from date of invoice and no interest is incurred on these accounts.

Term Deposits & Cash Management Accounts

Term deposits and cash management accounts are stated at the lower of cost and net realisable value. At balance date these accounts had various maturity dates and the effective weighted average interest rates for the year were 4% (2012 - 4.68%).

(b) **Credit Risk Exposures**

The Association's maximum exposures to credit risk at balance date in respect of each class of financial asset is the carrying amount of those assets as indicated in the statement of financial position, net of any provision for doubtful debts.

The Association does not have a significant exposure to any individual counterparty, other than the short term money on deposit with a major commercial bank.

(c) **Net Fair Values**

The net market values of the Association's short-term deposits, cash management accounts, accounts receivable, accounts payable and accrued charges approximate their carrying amounts.

The aggregate net fair values of financial assets and financial liabilities at balance date are stated in the accounts.

**SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE
ASSOCIATION (SUPRA)**

STATEMENT BY THE SUPRA COUNCIL

Page 13

In accordance with a resolution of the Council of the Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA).

In our opinion:

- (a) the Statement of Comprehensive Income is drawn up so as to give a true and fair view of the deficit of the Association of the year ended 31 December 2013;
- (b) the Statement of Financial Position is drawn up so as to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Association as at 31 December 2013;
- (c) at the date of this Statement there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Association will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due;
- (d) as detailed in note 1 to the financial statements, the financial viability of SUPRA is dependent on the allocation of funds from the Students Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) by the University of Sydney.
- (e) the extent and scale of services that would be available beyond 31 December 2013 are dependent on funds allocated from the SSAF.

The Accounts have been made in accordance with applicable accounting Standards at Sydney on 19 February 2014.

Joanne Gad
PRESIDENT

Douglas King
TREASURER

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2013

CONTINUED

NOTE 11 Events Subsequent to Balance Date

No transactions or events of a significant nature have occurred since balance date.

NOTE 12 Related Parties

Stipends are paid to office bearers and other counsellors in accordance with SUPRA's Stipend policy.

NOTE 13 Association Details

The office of University of Sydney Postgraduate Representative Association is situated at Demountable Village (A06), University of Sydney NSW 2006.

Permanent employees at year end were eight (8) (2012 - 7 permanent employees)

The Association's Australian Business Number (ABN) is: 17 011 530 375.

C M PITT & CO

Chartered Accountants

TELEPHONE (02) 9715 1555
FACSIMILE (02) 9715 1566

CHARLES M PITT B.BUS.FCA

2 PHILIP STREET
STRATHFIELD NSW 2135
PO BOX 580

E-MAIL cpitt@cmpitt.com.au

Page 14

INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE ASSOCIATION (SUPRA)

REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL REPORT

We have audited the financial report of Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA), which comprises the balance sheet as at 31 December 2013 and the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes and the statement by members of the committee.

Committee's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The Management Committee is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards (including the Australian Accounting Interpretations). This responsibility includes establishing and maintaining internal controls relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. These Auditing Standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the counsellors, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.



Chartered Accountants

Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Audit Opinion

In our opinion, the financial report of Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA), is in accordance with Constitution and Regulations of SUPRA, including:

- i. Giving a true and fair view of the association's financial position as at 31 December 2013 and Of its performance for year ended on that date; and
- ii. Complying with Australian Accounting Standards.

Charles M Pitt
C M PITT & CO
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

ICCA Membership No. 20180
Registered Company Auditor No. 2944
Unit 6 & 7, 2 Philip Street Strathfield

Date: 18 February 2014

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2013

	Note	2013 \$	2012 \$
Income			
University Funding		1,000,000	989,118
Interest received		22,329	26,550
Donations		90	470
Office Sales		-	267
Total Income		<u>1,022,419</u>	<u>1,016,405</u>
Expenses			
Employment Expenses			
<i>Salaries and Wages</i>			
Administration Salaries		217,302	218,890
Administration Superannuation		21,234	21,489
Relief Student Advisors' Salaries		34,816	855
Relief Student Advisors' Superannuation		3,198	77
Student Advisors' Salaries		326,971	327,510
Student Advisors' Superannuation		30,161	33,013
<i>Total salaries and wages</i>		<u>633,682</u>	<u>601,834</u>
<i>Stipends</i>			
Disabilities Officer's Stipend		3,658	5,769
Disabilities Officer's Superannuation		329	519
International Student Officer's Stipend		11,711	12,592
International Student Officer's Superannuation		1,067	1,133
Education Officer's Stipend		1,373	1,397
Education Officer's Superannuation		124	126
Equity Convenor's Stipend		1,398	1,420
Equity Convenor's Superannuation		126	128
President's Stipend		42,630	49,470
President's Superannuation		3,989	3,998
Student Publication Director's Stipend		10,909	14,689
Student Publication Director's Superannuation		990	1,325
Amount brought forward to page 17		<u>78,304</u>	<u>92,566</u>

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2013

	Note	2013 \$	2012 \$
Amount carried forward		78,304	92,566
Queer Officer's Stipend		7,840	5,787
Queer Officer's Superannuation		768	523
Secretary's Stipend		15,789	15,564
Secretary's Superannuation		1,442	1,399
Treasurer's Stipend		12,012	11,166
Treasurer's Superannuation		1,102	1,005
Vice President's Stipend		48,997	42,289
Vice President's Superannuation		4,423	3,803
Women Officer's Stipend		3,863	959
Women Officer's Superannuation		251	86
<i>Total Stipends</i>		<u>174,790</u>	<u>175,147</u>
<i>Other Employment Expenses</i>			
Employee Entitlements		(4,916)	(52,917)
Payroll Management Systems		3,652	3,828
Payroll Tax		6,532	1,104
Staff Development		4,214	9,289
Staff Recruitment		1,584	830
Staff Support & supervision		2,060	3,630
Staff Travel, Meals & Accommodation		2,122	682
Workers Compensation Insurance		6,311	5,821
Sundries		1,053	704
		<u>22,612</u>	<u>(27,028)</u>
Total Employment Expenditure		<u>831,085</u>	<u>749,954</u>

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2013

	Note	2013 \$	2012 \$
<i>Administration Expenses</i>			
Audit	8	7,500	7,500
Bank Charges		323	452
CAPA Affiliation fee		22,560	21,753
CISA Affiliation fee		7,500	
CISA Conference Sponsorship		7,500	
Consumables - Risograph		-	292
Computer Expenses		820	467
Depreciation		288	334
Insurance		4,264	3,665
Lease Equipment (Photocopier)		10,196	13,685
Legal Expenses		11,256	25,116
Legal Expenses - Redfern Legal Centre		118,850	100,746
Merchandising		1,255	1,409
Office Amenities		900	859
Office Equipment (Non IT)		530	-
Postage & Courier		49	22
Printing & Stationery		4,776	5,315
Removal Costs		118	231
Telephone		11	2,024
Sundry		50	228
Website Development		6,050	
		<u>204,796</u>	<u>184,099</u>
<i>Activities & Functions</i>			
Activities & Functions		3,990	2,858
Campaigns		1,572	4,760
Council Meeting Expenses		1,555	10,735
Councillor Conference Attendance (including airfares)		2,648	5,386
O Week		620	1,847
		<u>10,385</u>	<u>25,585</u>

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2013

	Note	2013 \$	2012 \$
<i>Publications</i>			
Calender		1,295	-
Information brochures / books		-	41
Sundry		-	904
Survival Guide		9,033	4,545
Thesis Guide		2,380	
		<u>12,708</u>	<u>5,490</u>
Total Expenditure		<u>1,058,974</u>	<u>965,128</u>
(Deficit)/ Surplus from ordinary activities		<u>(36,555)</u>	<u>51,277</u>