

CONSTITUTION OF UNIQ VICTORIA

THE QUEER STUDENTS' GROUP AT VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON

2018/9

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PART I: INTRODUCTION

S.1: NAME

The name of the group shall be UniQ Victoria.

S.2: DEFINITIONS

In these rules, unless a contrary interpretation appears:

1. “UniQ” means UniQ Victoria.
2. “VUWSA” means “Victoria University of Wellington Students’ Association”.
3. “Queer” includes, but is not exclusive to, gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, takatāpui, intersex, fa’afafine, fakaleiti, questioning, asexual, pansexual, and all who identify as such.
4. “AGM” means “Annual General Meeting”.
5. “IGM” means “Inaugural General Meeting”.
6. Gender-neutral pronouns shall be used.

S.3: AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. Preamble:

UniQ is an association controlled by queer and queer-allied students, working in the interest of its members and representing their views.

2. Goals

1. Social

- 1.1. To provide (at a minimum) weekly social events for the benefit of the community.
- 1.2. To raise UniQ’s visibility on campus so as to facilitate outreach to our more disparate constituents (first years, Pipitea & Te Aro campuses, etc).
- 1.3. To annually participate in the national UniQ conference where possible.

2. Support

- 2.1. To provide safe spaces for our community that are in line with our ‘Safer Spaces, Safer Queers’ outlined in Schedule 4.
- 2.2. To provide resources that meet the specific needs of our community.
- 2.3. To run a queer mentoring programme for interpersonal support.
- 2.4. Where relevant, to be capable of referring community members to resources better qualified to provide support for mental health, sexual health, etc.

3. Engagement

- 3.1. To pursue policy changes on the university level in the interest of queer student safety and wellbeing.
- 3.2. To report on tangible progress made on these initiatives
- 3.3. To educate future generations of UniQ students on the progress made on these initiatives so their progress and momentum are not lost.
- 3.4. To support research conducted at Victoria University of Wellington that is relevant to our community, in accordance with the Research Policy in Schedule 3 of this Constitution.

3. Te Tiriti o Waitangi

The executive, or any member of UniQ, shall take into account, uphold, and celebrate Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Where possible, references to ‘the Crown’ shall be read as including UniQ.

This is currently understood to incorporate the following:

- (a) partnership, and a duty to act reasonably and in good faith,
- (b) that the Crown has a duty to actively protect Māori interests,

- (c) that the Crown has a duty to remedy past breaches,
- (d) that Māori retain rangatiratanga over their resources and taonga and have all the rights and privileges of citizenship,
- (e) that the Crown has a duty to consult with Māori,
- (f) that the needs of both Māori and our community must be met, which will require negotiation and compromise,
- (g) that UniQ cannot avoid its obligations under the treaty by conferring authority on some other body, or by failing to engage with paras (b), (c), and (e).
- (h) that the treaty can be adapted to meet new circumstances,
- (i) that tino rangatiratanga includes management of resources and other taonga according to Māori culture,
- (j) that taonga include all valued resources and intangible cultural assets, including Te Reo and Me Ona Tikanga (with specific relation to Article Four of Te Tiriti o Waitangi).

S.4: MEMBERSHIP

1. UniQ membership shall be available to members of the wider community, however any official decisions regarding the UniQ executive, whether voting, candidacy, or running of the group shall only be open to VUWSA members.
2. Membership of UniQ shall cease in the following circumstances:
 1. the death of a member.
 2. if gross misconduct is committed within the context of the group, the executive can expel a member. This can be appealed through VUWSA.
 3. the member advises the Executive in writing that they no longer wish to be a member of UniQ.

PART II: GENERAL MEETINGS

S.1: GENERAL MEETINGS

1. The Executive may call a General Meeting.
2. Resolutions of General Meetings shall be binding on the Executive unless unconstitutional.
3. Quorum shall be ten (10) members.
4. The meeting shall lapse if quorum is not reached, or lapses.
5. A motion will be passed by the majority of members present and voting. Constitutional amendments require two thirds' majority.
6. Meetings shall be held during an academic term between 8 am and 10 pm.

S.2: INITIAL AND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS

1. There shall be at least two General Meetings every year. An IGM shall be called within the first four weeks of the first term. An Annual General Meeting shall be conducted in the second half of the second term.
2. All meetings must be advertised in *Salient*, on noticeboards around the university campuses, and online, stating the time, place, and date, at least fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting.
3. At these meetings:
 1. The current officers shall give a report regarding the group's position at the Initial General Meeting (IGM). An annual report will be given at the AGM.
 2. There shall be a workshop determining the year's direction.
 3. A new executive will be elected at an AGM in accordance with part V of the Constitution.

S.3: MISCELLANEOUS

1. There shall be no voting by proxy.
2. Each eligible member shall exercise one (1) vote only, provided that the chair shall possess both a deliberative and a casting vote.
3. Minutes from all meetings shall be publicly posted for any member to comment or provide feedback on.
4. Minutes are to be of the form as specified by templates provided by Vic Clubs.

PART III: THE EXECUTIVE

S.1: THE EXECUTIVE

1. The Executive of UniQ Victoria shall comprise:
 1. President or Co-Presidents
 2. Secretary
 3. Treasurer
 4. Communications Officer
 5. Social Media Officer
 6. General Executive Officer(s)

S.2: GENERAL

1. The governance body of UniQ Victoria shall consist of members holding the five Executive roles, with a maximum of not more than eight (8) members.
2. The job descriptions of each member of the Executive shall be in accordance with Schedule 1 of this Constitution.
3. Members of the Executive shall take office upon election, whereby there will be a handover period.
4. During this period, both the outgoing and incoming members will share the role.
5. The outgoing member's official period will cease on the final day of Trimester Two.

S.3: POWERS OF THE EXECUTIVE

1. The Executive, subject to the provisions in this Constitution, may do all things it deems necessary or expedient for the fulfilment of the objectives and goals of the group.
2. The Executive shall have power, subject to this Constitution, to administer and control all funds of the group. However, the signatories to UniQ funds shall be the President or Co-Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer, or Secretary-Treasurer.

S.4: MEETINGS OF THE EXECUTIVE

1. Meetings of the Executive shall have a quorum at any meeting of a majority of members of the Executive.
2. A meeting of the Executive may be called by any member of the Executive. The Secretary shall give twenty-four (24) hours' notice of the meeting to all other members of the Executive.
3. The Secretary shall give the same notice to non-Executive members of the group.
4. In exceptional circumstances, a meeting may be called with less than twenty-four (24) hours notice, provided at least half the members of the Executive give consent.
5. Any member of the group shall be entitled to attend meetings of the Executive, and these meetings must be adequately advertised to members.
6. Notwithstanding S.3(5) above, the Executive may move the meeting into committee to discuss matters of sensitivity, whereupon all non-Executive members shall be required to leave the room until the meeting is moved out of committee.
7. No matter discussed by the Executive while it is in committee shall be discussed outside the meeting. Failure to comply with this section may be considered an act of gross misconduct for the purposes of Part I, S.4(2)(2) of this Constitution.
8. The Equity Officer of the VUWSA Executive is encouraged to attend UniQ meetings and may give reports as an independent party for the purposes of avoiding conflicts of interest. They

may also make comments as an honorary member of UniQ at meetings of the executive. The VUWSA Equity Officer does not have a vote on the UniQ Executive.

9. The executive shall decide at its first meeting on a time when regular meetings can be held, and these shall take place not less than once per month.

S.5: CESSATION OF MEMBERSHIP OF THE EXECUTIVE

1. If any Executive member is absent from three (3) consecutive Executive Meetings without giving apologies in advance, they shall be deemed to have resigned.
2. Notwithstanding anything in S.4.1 above, the Executive may grant continuation of membership if, at the Executive meeting immediately following the third absence, a two-thirds majority vote of the Executive resolves that the member's absence was due to exceptional circumstances.
3. Members of the Executive shall resign when called upon to do so by a two-thirds majority of those members present and voting at a Special General Meeting called for that purpose.
4. Any member of the Executive may resign their membership by giving written notice of their resignation to the President.

S.6: VACANCIES ON THE EXECUTIVE

1. The office of any Executive member shall become vacant if the person holding such office:
 1. ceases to be a member of the group.
 2. dies.
 3. is the subject of a successful "no confidence" motion at a Special General Meeting duly called for that purpose.
 4. resigns from office.
2. In the event of any vacancy, including when a General Meeting fails to elect a member to a vacant position, the Executive shall appoint an acting member of the Executive who shall continue in office until the new member is elected at a General Meeting, which should be conducted as soon as is practical.
3. Every Executive Member is required to write a set of notes to hand over their role at the end of their time on the executive, for the continuity of the group. This includes passwords, physical assets, computer files, as well as general advice and guidance. A copy of handover notes must be kept in a folder in UniQ's locker.

PART IV: FINANCE

S.1: CONTROL OF FUNDS

1. All monies received by the group shall belong to the group.
2. Proper accounting practices shall be kept. This includes, but is not limited to, the keeping of all receipts for the following purposes: reimbursement, presentation to the parties that have provided financial support to the group.
3. Signatories to the group's funds shall be any of the group's Officers.
4. The Executive shall determine the budget, in consultation with the group, and present funding applications to the University – or any other body responsible for administering funding applications – as and when necessary. Note that where the University is the benefactor, the University prefers one, all-inclusive, funding application per representative group per year.
5. In considering any application involving underwriting or grants, the Executive shall consider the financial resources of the applicants.
6. The Financial year of the group aligns with the date of the AGM where each Executive finishes their term.

PART V: ELECTIONS

S.1: CONDUCT OF ELECTIONS

1. Elections of the Officers and general members of the Executive may only take place at a General Meeting.
2. A member of the group may be nominated before or during the General Meeting. They may nominate themselves.
3. The winner of each position shall be the person who wins simple majority of those present and voting at the General Meeting.
4. If there is only one candidate, that person shall not be deemed to be elected. They must stand against a no-confidence vote. If the majority of those present and voting declare a vote of no confidence, the candidate is not elected and nominations must be reopened.
5. Each candidate for election is required to give a speech before they can be elected and must allow questions to be asked of them.
6. When each position is to be voted on the candidates must leave the room for members of the group to give testimonies for or against the candidates. These testimonies shall be confidential and must not be discussed outside of the general meeting.
7. Any member of the group who is also a member of VUWSA is eligible for election.
8. If a candidate is unsuccessful for a position they may stand for another one.
9. Elections shall take place at the AGM held in the second half of Trimester 2, with those elected taking office upon election, with a handover period whereby both the incoming and outgoing members hold the office concurrently. This period shall end on the last day of Trimester Two, whereby the incoming member will hold the office.
10. When electing members of the executive, voting must be carried out anonymously. These votes will be counted by the president or secretary.

PART VI: CONSTITUTION

S.1: CONSTITUTION

1. This Constitution shall consist of Parts I to VI inclusive.
2. Alterations shall be made to the Constitution only at a General Meeting by two thirds' majority of those members present and voting

S.2: INTERPRETATION OF THE CONSTITUTION

1. This constitution shall at all times be read in consideration of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Where a conflict of interpretation arises, deference will be made to the interpretation made by the Takatāpui Representative, mana whenua (Ngati Toa, Ranga Te Atiawa, Taranaki Whanui o te Upoko o te Ika a Maui), or a combination thereof, as relevant
2. A substantial compliance with this Constitution shall in all cases be good and sufficient, and no regulations, resolution, decision, election, appointment, notice, or other matter or thing shall be invalidated by reason only of a failure to comply exactly with these rules. Nothing in this subsection shall apply to UniQ's obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi, or work to nullify those obligations.

SCHEDULE 1: EXECUTIVE JOB DESCRIPTIONS

All Members of the Executive

1. To uphold the constitution
2. To further the goals and objectives of the group
3. To act as full members of the Executive and group at all meetings of the group and of the Executive
4. This executive shall, for the entirety of their term and to the best of their ability, ensure UniQ remains active and visible.
5. This executive shall ensure that such activity supports the aims of the group (Part I S3)
6. All executive members are required to submit quarterly reports to the rest of the executive at meetings of the executive or general meetings.

President/Co-Presidents

1. Overall leadership and policy implementation
2. To Chair and convene Executive and General Meetings
3. To present budget to VUWSA Executive
4. Chief representative(s), responsible for all external relations
5. To handle sponsorship and finance in conjunction with the Treasurer
6. In case of Co-Presidents, the Co-Presidents will decide amongst themselves which Co-President performs which tasks
7. Liaise with the VUWSA Equity Officer at regular meetings.

Secretary

1. Unless otherwise designated by the Executive, to act as the President in the President's absence
2. To take the minutes of Executive and General Meetings and distribute them to anyone who wishes to read them
3. To keep in regular contact with all members of the Executive in regards to meetings of the Executive
4. To organise and co-ordinate volunteers
5. To ensure the appropriate archival and retention of documents and media produced by UniQ.
6. To administer the UniQ email account at least every two days and responding to emails or forwarding to relevant parties as appropriate.

Treasurer

1. To draft and maintain a budget
2. To hold and maintain petty cash
3. To provide financial advice to the Executive
4. To price projects by obtaining quotes
5. To handle sponsorship and finance in conjunction with the President or Co-Presidents
6. To co-ordinate funding applications in conjunction with the President or Co-Presidents.

Communications Officer

1. To ensure the establishment of the queer column in Salient at the beginning of every year and to ensure that its content is of an exceptional and informative nature, reflects the purpose of UniQ and is preferably community-sourced; the Communications Officer does not necessarily need to edit or co-ordinate this column
2. To organise the production and distribution of promotional material in conjunction with the Social Media Officer
3. To liaise with both student and non-student media regarding the group's activities

4. To assist the president or co-president with communication of events and relevant issues through UniQ's email and social media accounts
5. To be responsible for the designs of UniQ's advertisements including posters, flyers, and general graphics, and ensuring the retention of a high-resolution version of the UniQ logo and archiving promotional material
6. To coordinate a regular newsletter to communicate with UniQ's members.
7. Maintenance of the UniQ website (currently) at <https://uniquvictoria.wixsite.com/uniq>

Social Media Officer

1. To maintain UniQ's social media presence including, but not limited to, Twitter and Facebook
2. To ensure that pictures are taken at UniQ events
3. To organise the production and distribution of promotional material in conjunction with the Communications Officer

SCHEDULE 2: RESEARCH POLICY

UniQ supports and encourages research that is relevant to our community, and/or that seeks to include representative voices.

In the interests of protecting the members of our community from harm, we require that any person(s) approaching UniQ with the aim of seeking assistance in creating, conducting and/or recruiting individuals (or any other activity) for research purposes declare that their research complies (to the full extent relevant) with Victoria University of Wellington's Human Ethics Policy (found here: <https://www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/research-policy/human-ethics-policy.pdf>). This declaration must be made in writing, and must be made before any steps are taken to conduct or recruit.

UniQ reserves the right to decline to assist with or participate in any research for any reason it sees fit, without any obligation for disclosure of such reasoning, and without prejudice.

SCHEDULE 3: SAFER SPACES, SAFER QUEERS GUIDELINES

Safer Spaces, Safer Queers

UniQ Victoria aims to provide safe spaces for all people attending its spaces. As such, queerphobia*, racism, misogyny, classism, ableism, xenophobia, fatphobia, other forms of bigotry, harassment, and cultural appropriation are unacceptable in any form, including those you may think are “harmless.” As safety is a priority, UniQ reserves the right, in cases of serious breaches of these guidelines, to ask you to leave the space until a restorative meeting can take place.

It is expected that those in UniQ spaces respect the physical and emotional safety of others. In the interest of this, safe spaces operate on a policy of “what happens in safe space, stays in safe space.” This includes being aware that not all students are ‘out’ to others, and as such, may not wish to be identified/approached outside of UniQ spaces by others attending UniQ. In addition to this, ideas and experiences put forward by UniQ attendees is private information, and as such anyone wishing to share them, in particular in research or media, should speak with the person whose idea/experience it is before sharing.

Those attending UniQ spaces should be careful not to assume the identity of other attendees. This includes not applying labels to people without knowing if they claim them, and using they/them as default pronouns for those whose pronouns you do not know.

The points below outline the expectations of UniQ in our discussion spaces. Serious breaches of these will be subject to a restorative process. The facilitator has the right to ask disruptive parties who ignore these guidelines to leave the room as they deem necessary.

1. Don't speak out of turn or over other people in the discussion. If the facilitator tells you to quiet down or wait for someone else to speak, listen to them.
2. We will be using a system of hand raising and speaking order lists for when more than one person wants to speak.
3. Don't play devil's advocate; this is a space of genuine discussion and not a debate.
4. This is a space to share and learn, ignorance is expected, but willful ignorance will not be tolerated.
5. Don't condescend; not everyone has the same knowledge bases and experiences, try to keep this in mind.
6. Avoid using slurs in a non-reclaiming context. If you can avoid using it, please do.

(*queerphobia includes but is not limited to homophobia, transphobia, binarism, aphobia, biphobia, panphobia)