

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Between

Victoria University of Wellington Students' Association Te Rōpu Tauira o te Kura Wānanga o te Upoko te Ika a Māui Incorporated, being an incorporated society under the Incorporated Societies Act 1908, for and on behalf of the students of VUW, whose place of business is at Kelburn Parade, Wellington (hereinafter referred to as "VUWSA").

and

UniQ Victoria, being a Representative Group established for Queer students at Victoria University of Wellington, whose principal place of business is at Kelburn Parade, Wellington (hereinafter referred to as "UniQ").

1. INTERPRETATION

- 1.1 "Queer" includes but is not exclusive to gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, takataapui, intersex, fa'afafine, whakaleiti, questioning, asexual, pansexual, and all who identify as such.¹
- 1.2 "Representation" means the opportunity for all students to have a voice, and truly participate, in their student experience at Victoria. Representation occurs through students electing through democratic processes students to represent them in both academic and general student experience matters.
- 1.3 "VUW" means Victoria University of Wellington

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 VUWSA and UniQ wish to enter into a strategic partnership to ensure that:
 - (i) there is an independent and student-led representative voice at VUW;
 - (ii) that this representative voice is, where possible, reflective of the diverse student body;

¹ This definition is per the interpretation set out in Part I, Section 2 of the Constitution of UniQ Victoria 2015



- (iii) that representative groups contributing to the representative voice are recognised for their unique and integral role within the University.
 - (iv) that these representative groups strive to engage their diverse communities in contributing to their overall experience at VUW;
- 2.2 VUWSA has been recognised by students as their representative body at VUW since 1899. VUWSA is a democratically elected organisation, accountable to students, which enables an authentic and legitimate student voice to be given in processes of decision making;
- 2.3 UniQ has a long history at VUW and with VUWSA. UniQ is an association controlled by queer and queer-allied students, working in the interests of its members and representing their views.
- 2.4 The struggle representative groups face at VUW in the post-Voluntary Student Membership environment continues to hold a significant grip on the placement, treatment and recognition of representative groups within the university.
- 2.5 In 2013 VUWSA introduced a funding strategy aimed at providing representative groups with funding, in support of their vital role within the student community.
- 2.6 Since then, VUWSA has supported representative groups in many ways, including through their facilitation of the Equity and Diversity Committee², the ongoing dialogue and support, and collaborative projects they have been engaged in.
- 2.7 VUWSA and UniQ acknowledge that student representation greatly improves the experiences of students. This, in turn, can foster higher retention and success rates as well as greater wellbeing. It also:
 - (i) Strengthens all levels of decision-making within the wider University ensuring that students are considered at each level and that final decisions are fair;
 - (ii) Facilitates the development of quality student-centred learning based on the relationship between the university, academics and students;

² The purpose of **The Equity and Diversity Committee** is to provide a space where student representatives can gather to share our knowledge, discuss important issues, and solve issues they identify within the university together.



- (iii) Empowers students and encourages the development of leadership, communication and creative and critical thinking;
- (iv) Leads to more responsive and appropriate student services, which are delivered cost-effectively; and
- (v) Promotes positive conflict resolution, discouraging unnecessary conflict between the student body and the University.

3. PURPOSE

3.1 The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding is:

- (i) to establish a durable and effective partnership between UniQ and VUWSA;
- (ii) to enhance student representation for the benefit of all students;
- (iii) to recognise importance of representative groups through their contribution to the student voice and community.
- (iv) to recognise the contribution and expertise that VUWSA has provided and continues to provide to student representation at all levels of decision making at VUW.
- (v) to recognise the contribution and expertise that UniQ has provided and continues to provide regarding representation and a community for Queer students at VUW.

4. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE GROUPS

- 4.1 Student representative groups at VUW should be independent, democratic, and student-led at all levels;
- 4.2 Student representative groups play an important role in projecting a student voice which is diverse, and which best reflects the student body.
- 4.3 Student representative groups at VUW play an important role in building communities fostering wellbeing and success among the students they represent.
- 4.4 VUWSA recognises UniQ as such a representative group for queer students at VUW.

5. COLLABORATIVE AGREEMENT

- 5.1 UniQ and VUWSA will deal with each other in good faith, and use their collective strengths and skills to further the purposes of this MoU.



5.2 The Parties will work actively and cooperatively to negotiate and implement the Agreement.

5.3 The Parties will execute this MoU with due regard to any material constraints affecting either Party and the terms and conditions of the Agreement.

6. TERM

6.1 Following approval of this MoU by the specified signatories, the VUWSA Executive, it will come into force on its execution and will remain in force unless terminated by the mutual agreement of the Parties.

7. FUNDING

7.1 The Parties agree to provide funding for their own activities, with the exception of specific funding arrangements which will be negotiated on a case by case basis.

8. GENERAL

8.1 Any variations to this MoU shall only be effective if recorded in writing and signed by the Parties.

8.2 Nothing contained in this MoU will be deemed or construed to constitute any Party to be a partner, agent or representative of any other Party, or to create any trust or commercial partnership.

8.3 The identities of VUWSA and UniQ will remain independent from one another. The views of each Party will not necessarily represent one another, except by negotiation, agreement, and or adoption by the Parties.



Signed by the President of

UniQ

Signature:


Alex Mark

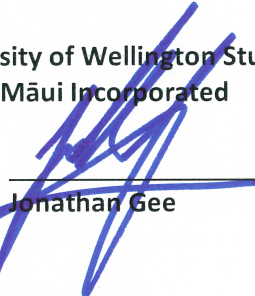
Date:

3.8.16

Signed by the President of

Victoria University of Wellington Students' Association Te Rōpu Taura o te Kura Wānanga o te Upoko te Ika a Māui Incorporated

Signature:


Jonathan Gee

Date:

3.8.16

Signed by the Equity Officer of

Victoria University of Wellington Students' Association Te Rōpu Taura o te Kura Wānanga o te Upoko te Ika a Māui Incorporated

Signature:


Chrissy Brown

Date:

3.8.16

