

Vice President Welfare & Wellbeing -Student Representative Council Position

Description

ABOUT UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION LTD

The University of Newcastle Students' Association Limited (UNSA) is a student run, not-for-profit organisation that represents and supports University of Newcastle (UON) students across all onshore campuses, as well as those studying online (the Cloud Campus).

Students are represented through the Student Representative Council (SRC) led by the President, and governance of the organisation is overseen by the Board of Directors.

The SRC is a sub-committee of the Board established pursuant to clause 44 of the UNSA constitution.

The Vice-President Wellbeing & Welfare (VP Wellbeing & Welfare) occupies the role of student representative as elected to the SRC from time to time.

In addition to having a paid role as a student representative on the SRC, the elected student also holds the position of volunteer Board member of the UNSA Board. The volunteer Board role is separate to and distinct from the SRC student representative role and has its own position description and responsibilities.

The SRC and Board achieve their goals through the support of dedicated staff who deliver key services and the day-to-day operation of the organisation. These services include, but are not limited to: support for clubs and societies, an academic support, welfare and hardship support as well as a range of events and activities across the academic calendar.

UNSA acknowledges that the needs of students are diverse and ever-changing, but the organisation aims to ensure that anyone studying at UON can learn and develop in an environment that is welcoming, supportive and inclusive, and that UNSA gives them a genuine representative voice.

POSITION SUMMARY

The VP (Wellbeing & Welfare), as the student representative, leads a portfolio that identifies and advises on a range of services and activities around student welfare, to ensure students feel safe, supported and part of a community while studying at UON.

The VP (Wellbeing & Welfare) represents student interests to create change on relevant welfare, wellbeing, and equity issues, collaborates with UNSA staff to deliver a range of well-designed wellbeing and welfare services, and ensures the Wellbeing & Welfare Committee supports the needs of students at UON.

In addition to the overarching functions of the Wellbeing & Welfare Committee, it is the responsibility of the VP (Wellbeing & Welfare) to lead the Committee representatives and support them in their activities to ensure they can, and are, serving the membership of their cohorts.

The VP (Wellbeing & Welfare) works closely with the President, UNSA staff, particularly the General Manager, and the other members of the Executive to achieve all these responsibilities.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

As well as responsibilities common to SRC members, the VP (Wellbeing & Welfare) is accountable for a range of additional duties:

- Chair of the Wellbeing & Welfare Committee: setting agendas, presiding over committee meetings, and ensuring actions are undertaken in a timely manner;
- Reporting to the SRC on the activity and recommendations of the Committee;
- Lead student advisor in creating and monitoring the annual UNSA wellbeing and welfare strategy and the programmes that implement that strategy;
- Leading and supporting the members of the Wellbeing & Welfare Committee in fulfilling their obligations to their respective cohorts as well as the wider student body;
- Advocating research to identify issues affecting the welfare and wellbeing of UON students and staying informed of feedback from students of all demographics to understand the issues important to them;
- Encouraging student participation in relevant UON and national education sector surveys;
- Liaising and collaborating with relevant persons or bodies on issues that affect the welfare and wellbeing of UON students by developing links and working in partnership with key stakeholders at UON and in the community;
- Support and promote campaigns on welfare issues (including mental health, sexual health, personal safety, financial hardship, and employment issues);
- Working with and promoting UON support services, and relevant UON staff to promote healthy, active lifestyles;
- Representing the UNSA on UON committees or other decision-making bodies as directed by the President;
- Ex officio membership on the SRC and Board;
- Deputising for the President when required;
- Participating in professional development opportunities for the benefit of the role; and
- Any other duties and responsibilities as agreed with the SRC.

Further, and specifically, the Vice President Welfare & Wellbeing must adhere to the following requirements:

- ***Attend all scheduled meetings and apologise with 24 hours' written notice if unable to attend;***
- ***Inform UNSA of any conflicts of interest or issues that will affect participation in UNSA events and activities;***
- ***Respond to all UNSA related emails within 3 business days;***
- ***Respond to all UNSA related emails marked 'high importance' within 1 business day; and***
- ***Copy the UNSA office into all relevant communications relating to UNSA business.***

Throughout the performance of these duties, it is a requirement that at all times the VP (Wellbeing & Welfare) must act in good faith, adhere to the UNSA constitution, and comply with all UON policies and codes of conduct.

This is a critical role for both UNSA and UON and it is expected that it be treated as such.

PREFERRED ATTRIBUTES

- Community-mindedness and passion and enthusiasm for improving the wellbeing of students studying at UON;
- Punctuality and professionalism;
- High level organisational and time management skills;
- Personal responsibility and ownership;
- An ability to listen to, to lead and to collaborate with diverse groups;
- An understanding of UNSA's mission and goals; and
- The drive to improve your leadership and employability skills.

TERM OF OFFICE

In a normal business cycle the term of office for all SRC representatives is from the 1st of January to the 31st of December of the calendar year immediately following their election. In 2021 the Term of Office will be from 1 July to 31 December 2021.

From the 1st of November the incumbent representative is required to negotiate a substantial period of hand-over to the incoming VP (Wellbeing & Welfare), as well as to contribute to annual planning for the following year based on their experience as the outgoing elected representative. The incoming VP (Wellbeing & Welfare) is encouraged to contribute to the planning for the year of their term of office.

The term of office for SRC representatives who are elected or appointed to fill a casual vacancy will also expire on the 31st of December.

ELIGIBILITY

In order to nominate and hold office, the nominee must be a Voting Member of UNSA and an onshore UON student. Please refer to the UNSA constitution for the definition of a Voting Member and details on eligibility to nominate.

As the role of VP (Wellbeing & Welfare) is an ex officio position to the Board, nominees must meet the criteria for Directors. Refer to the UNSA constitution for eligibility criteria.

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE AND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

As well as the key responsibilities, there are a range of additional experiences a VP (Wellbeing & Welfare) can gain during their term to enrich their UON experience and significantly contribute to their employability.

These leadership development activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Communication skills - giving presentations, public speaking and advising the SRC President relating to media releases;
- Formal Written skills – drafting position papers and correspondence, providing feedback on policy;
- Research skills – assisting UNSA staff in conducting surveys and focus groups;
- Event skills – collaborating with UNSA staff on event planning, activation and risk assessment;
- Project Management - collaborating with UNSA staff on designing and managing projects;
- Recruitment skills - shortlisting candidates and sitting on staff panels; and
- Networking and building professional relationships

Additionally elected student leaders all UNSA Representatives are offered development opportunities by UNSA’s staff and UON, as well as being given direct support to lead SRC-approved initiatives. It is strongly recommended that the VP (Wellbeing & Welfare) undertake mental health first aid and responding to disclosure training.

ACQUIRED SKILLS

There are a number of professional, transferrable skills a student can expect to hone as they develop in the VP (Wellbeing & Welfare) role: across their term of office:

- High level written and verbal communication skills;
- Strong and culturally diverse interpersonal skills;
- Negotiation and influencing, conflict resolution, debating ideas and producing a consensus;
- Problem solving and innovation, critical and analytical thinking;
- Policy interpretation and application;
- The ability to seek out and respond to feedback;
- Experience managing volunteers; and,
- Resilience.

This list is by no means exhaustive. It aims to demonstrate how this role can increase your employability and develop core transferrable skills. The role of VP (Wellbeing & Welfare) is an

opportunity for a year long journey of professional development and personal growth, providing a range of experiences that can be applied in any industry.