Auckland University of Technology Student Association Incorporated

**Annual General Meeting**

Notice is hereby given of a meeting of the Annual General Meeting on 30/06/2020 at 11:30 am to

be held online via Zoom.

# MEMATANGA | MEMBERSHIP

# Tiamana/Chairperson – Sisifa Lui (President)

# Tiamana Tuarua/ Deputy Chairperson – Mariner Fagaiava-Muller (Vice President)

# Ngā Mema / Members

Rainbow Officer-Ester Mackay

Postgraduate Affairs Officer-Sukhpreet Kaur Gill

DCT Faculty Rep Charina Racasag

C&S Faculty Rep-Anahita Oei

North Campus Representative -Kelsey Cornwaithe

Maori Affairs Officer-Te Haua Taua

Welfare Officer-Nathan Fehr

International Affairs Officer-Prayag Shethia

Bel Faculty Rep -Wujood Zadjali

HES Faculty Rep- Hallam Bailey

# 33 Students as of 11:55am (quorum met)

## Student Members Present

Google spreadsheet: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1rFVFPB0GGQXUvB14UbRU35PmZsC8CQDho_qYkfFs1wE/edit#gid=0>

Sisifa welcomes everyone and thanks them for taking the time join the meeting. She assures everyone that there are important items on the agenda and that she will try to make this meeting as productive as possible. Sisifa passes the meeting onto Mariner who introduces himself and reiterates the importance of items on the agenda.

Sisifa outlines the meeting agenda, which is:

1. AUTSA’s Covid-19 response and summary of SRC’s reports.
2. Amending the constitution to reference Rainbow and Wellbeing officers
3. Implementation of the 2 Vice President structure for 2021
4. Appointment of Accommodation Officer(s)
5. Proposal to increase the SRC term to two years

Agenda Item One:

**AUTSA’s Covid-19 response and summary of SRC’S reports.**

SRC presented a summary report of the last quarter and the hit that they took due to Covid-19. They are seeking feedback and are giving students the chance to gain further insights into what has gone on. SRC invite an independent review of AUTSA’s response to Covid-19.

Floor opened for questions.

Chantel asks whether the constitution can be amended to add something about what the SRC’s response should be if there was another pandemic.

Sisifa discusses the importance of handing over information to their successors and making sure they can build on the challenges the current SRC have faced. Putting an amendment in the constitution as to how the SRC should respond to specific challenges could be a way of doing that.

Mariner talks about the planned review which will look at how a variety of things can be improved, and how this could be used to frame discussion around changing the constitution at the next AGM.

Will Watterson (AUTSA General Manager) discusses how it might be an operational change rather than a constitutional change. Once the review concludes an operational plan could be made for how to respond to crises. It would be like a business continuity plan so that if anything were to happen again AUTSA could keep operating.

Nathan acknowledges Chantel’s idea and reiterates the importance of planning ahead for pandemics. He commends the rest of the SRC and AUTSA staff for their response to the pandemic and believes it would be a good idea to get the processes followed into writing.

Sisifa discusses the need for SRC to work together with AUTSA operational staff to draft a report regarding the constitutional change.

**Motion:** Accept that the operational team from AUTSA works alongside SRC members to work on a proposal about developing an operation plan to ensure business continuity during crises, and report back to the student body at the next AGM.

Moved by Sisifa

Seconded Esther

**Poll results:**

In favour: 19 votes (86%)

Against: 1 vote (5%)

Abstain: 2 votes (9%)

Majority in favour, motion passed.

Ashley asks for a date by which the operational team can be expected to begin creating the report. Kelsey (North Campus Representative) reiterates the importance of waiting for the review to finish before making constitutional changes.

Simon (Student Engagement Manager) clarifies that the constitutional change could include a reference to an operational plan which would be an ongoing, live document with recommendations from the review and advice based on best practice.

Will confirms that there would be a clause in the constitution stating that an operational plan must exist and that it must be up to date. There would be two separate documents: the constitution which could be changed quickly to state that the SRC must have a plan for crises; and the operational plan itself which will provide the basis for training SRC members, be updated regularly and be freely available. The clause in the constitution is a way of enshrining a plan for emergencies and making sure that there is a member of AUTSA responsible for it.

Gareth reiterates the importance of a document that activates an emergency response plan that covers a range of possible crises. Currently there is still a lot of uncertainty around Covid-19 and there is not enough data on its effects, so it is necessary to wait for the review.

SRC will report their progress on changing the constitution and developing an operational plan, at the next AGM.

**Motion:** Accept the Covid-19 response and the SRC’s summary report.

Moved by Sisifa

Seconded Nathan

**Poll results**

In Favour: 16 votes (70%)

Against: 1 vote (4%)

Abstain: 6 votes (26%)

Majority in favour, motion passed.

Agenda Item Two:

**Amending the constitution to reference Rainbow and Wellbeing Officers.**

The SRC recognise the hard work that has gone into creating the profiles of the Rainbow and Wellbeing officers. AUTSA wants to amend the constitution so that Rainbow and Wellbeing officers are added as permanent positions, whilst retaining the capacity for AUTSA to add 2 nominated portfolio officers. This would mean the SRC would not be able to take away Rainbow or Wellbeing officers without a motion at the AGM, but they still have the freedom to create additional portfolios as needed.

Nathan talks about his role as Wellbeing Officer. He supports students with issues that affect their physical and mental health. He held a mindfulness webinar a few weeks ago and created a program with AUT called Young Sustainability Leaders, which involved pairing up AUT students with mentors to develop a project over a year.

Esther talks about her role as Rainbow Officer. She sees her role as offering a voice for the rainbow community. For the LGBTQ+ community, it is so important to see someone representing their views. She has spent most of her role offering one on one support to students but thinks she might be able to do some bigger projects once things settle down.

**Motion**: Accept the amendment to the constitution to reference Rainbow and Wellbeing Officers.

Motion moved by Sisifa

Seconded Mariner

**Poll results**

In favour: 19 votes (70%)

Against: 1 vote (4%)

Abstain: 7 votes (26%)

Majority in favour, motion passed.

Agenda Item Three:

**Implementation of Two Vice President Structure for 2020 elections.**

In the 2019 AGM it was voted that there would be 2 Vice Presidents for the 2020 elections. This AGM will vote on how this 2 Vice President system will be implemented. The SRC recognises that the Vice President role comes with a lot of responsibilities, so dividing them between two roles will alleviate stress. This vote will focus on how those responsibilities are divided. AUTSA currently has three proposals for this:

1. There will be one Vice President in charge of Academics and one Vice President in charge of Community. The Academic Vice President will make sure the curriculum is effective and get feedback on how students are learning. The Community Vice President will engage students in terms of events, clubs, and recreation.
2. There will be two Vice Presidents who share the workload between them.
3. There will be a Vice President and a Deputy Vice president. The Vice President takes on the same role and portfolio as per the current structure, but they can ask the Deputy Vice President to take on some of their responsibilities. If the Vice president leaves the Deputy Vice President would take their place.

Mariner discusses the importance of making the workload for each Vice President transparent and having a clear line of authority for the SRC to follow. The SRC and students need to know who they can see to get the kind of support they need. Most Student Councils in New Zealand have a 2 Vice President structure but what that looks like differs amongst universities.

Floor opened for questions.

Ashley asks: how many meetings would you be expected to attend if you were the Academic Vice President?

Mariner confirms that specific expectations for the Academic Vice President

have not been worked out yet, and that if proposal 1 were voted on, discussion would happen further down the line. The Academic Vice President would be working with faculty members, attending teaching, and learning committees, working with class representatives and have an operational connection with advocacy. They would need to work with faculty reps to confirm how their workload would be allocated.

Sisifa reminds meeting attendees that the reason they present these options to the student body is to ensure transparency but also to allow students to give power to their voices.

Will Watterson states that the option that most closely resembles what is done in other universities is option one. The Auckland University Students Association has three Vice Presidents: one for engagement, one for welfare and one for education. Most student associations assign specific portfolios to their Vice Presidents.

Simon explains that each proposal needs to be voted for as a specific motion. If your preferred notion does not come up first, you can vote to abstain until it does come up.

If the student body cannot decide on a proposal, the decision lies with the SRC.

**Motion:** Accept proposal one to implement the two Vice President structure for the 2020 elections.

Moved by Charina

Seconded Mariner

**Poll Results**

In favour: 14 votes (52%)

Against: 7 votes (26%)

Abstain:6 votes (22%)

Iram wants clarification around how option 2 is different from option 3.

Mariner confirms that option 3 is different because it means that the Deputy Vice President is not at discretion to determine what their duties are.

Simon states that in most instances with a Vice President and Deputy Vice president model, it is used to ensure succession. If the President steps down the Vice President becomes the President and the Deputy Vice President becomes the Vice President. In model where both Vice Presidents have equal standing there would need to be a vote at an AGM to determine who would take over as President.

Sisifa reiterates that students can suggest alternative proposals if they wish too.

**Motion:** Accept proposal two to implement the two Vice President structure for the 2020 elections.

Moved by Kelsey

Seconded Nathan

**Poll Results:**

In favour: 12 votes (46%)

Against: 4 votes (15%)

Abstain: 10 votes (38%)

**Motion:** Accept proposal three to implement the two Vice President structure for the 2020.

Moved by Iram

Seconded Hallam

**Poll results**

In favour: 9 votes (38%)

Against: 6 votes (25%)

Abstain: 9 votes (38%)

The majority of those in favour went to proposal 1. Proposal one motion passed.

Agenda Item Four**:**

**Appointment of Accommodation Officer(s)**

In response to the concerns within student accommodation at Akoranga Student Village (ASV) and Wellesley Student Apartments (WSA), highlighted by the events during lockdown, the SRC moves that there is need for an Accommodation Officer/ Officers, to join the Student Representative Council. AUTSA also notes, with AUT moving to bring the delivery of student accommodation inhouse, there is great opportunity for collaboration and for the Student Representatives to hold AUT to account for the delivery of this service.

Mariner explains that through the lockdown there was no representation offered for students living in accommodation services, which caused a significant amount of issues. Out of covid-19, the SRC learnt that there needs to be greater communication between whoever runs the accommodation and the students that live in those buildings. It is suggested that there should be one student representative from WSA and one from ASV for this year’s elections.

Nathan agrees that it is important students receive representation in all facets of their studies, including regarding where they live. It would also reduce some of workload of the Wellbeing officer, because if students have issues with their accommodation, that affects their overall wellbeing.

Kelsey agrees student representation regarding accommodation needs to occur. Students who live in accommodation have quite a different university experience to those who do not, and they can bring a different perspective to the SRC. It is good to have an insider perspective who can speak for and on behalf of people living in accommodation. She would suggest one Accommodation Officer that covers both campuses, as she worries the workload might be too thin for two separate officers.

Nathan agrees you can run the risk of the workload being spread a little thin, however it would be better to have too little rather than too much for the Accommodation Officers to do. Having an officer from each specific village also helps create a feeling of community and gives visibility to the unique experience of each place.

The first vote will determine whether two officers should be elected, and if that fails an additional vote will be used to see if one Accommodation Officer should be elected.

**Motion:** Accept the appointment of two Accommodation Officers, one for ASV and one for WSV.

Moved by Sisifa

Seconded Hallam

**Poll Results**

In Favour: 17 votes (71%)

Against: 2 votes (8%)

Abstain: 5 votes (21%)

Majority in favour, motion passed.

SRC will need to discuss whether the motion will come into effect for this year’s election and next year’s representatives or whether it will be implemented later.

Sisifa calls for a 5-minute water break at 1:14.

Sisifa calls the recess to an end at 1:20 and welcomes everyone back. She thanks everyone for contributing so far and emphasizes the power of using your voice. She welcomes additional feedback or questions.

Agenda Item Five:

**Proposal to extend the SRC term to 2 years for the 2021 elections.**

The SRC term for all its members is one year, except for the SRC President who has a two-year term. Each year the President must spend the first few months developing their relationships with SRC, before they can tackle bigger issues, which means there is less time to get things done. Extending the term to 2 years would mean the President could give a clear mandate to their council about what they want to achieve and ensure that everyone is on the same page. It would also mean there would be more time for transitioning the next SRC into their new roles and to build relationships with stakeholders. There needs to be stability within the SRC so that everyone has the chance to develop their leadership skills and gain a strong understanding of their role.

Sisifa adds that the President’s role is the only one that can action continuity and implement change from one year to the next, and that extending this to other SRC roles would provide more support. Covid-19 has meant that for the first 6 months of year, the SRC’s focus has been on getting through the pandemic, which means they only have a few months left to enact more longer lasting change.

Ashley agrees that based on her time in the SRC, it would be better for students to be consistently represented by the same voices. A high level of turnover reduces the SRC’s ability to get things done.

Mariner adds that the SRC has done a lot of work over the lockdown and that they could lose all that if they are not able to create better continuity between incoming and outgoing SRC representatives.

James asks what would happen for students that join in their in final year, as that would mean they would have to leave halfway through their term.

Mariner confirms that students in their final year would not be able to join the SRC under this proposal and that this is a weakness that would have to be considered. Student politics is fast paced, and a lot of things can be done over the space of a year. A high turnover allows for a greater diversity of thinking, but it is still difficult to represent the views of all 29,000 students.

Gareth adds that the AUTSA spends about 3-4 months training the SRC, which gives them about 5 months to effectively do their work. The SRC need to be given time to evolve into their roles, develop those strong relationships within AUT and form connections with students. He also points out that if a few members have to quit halfway through their tenure that is manageable, and that not a lot of final year students try to go for positions on the SRC as they are focused on their studies.

Chantelle asks for clarification around whether you can run in your first year, as if you are doing a three-year degree this means you can finish the term.

Mariner confirms you can run in your first year. Mariner reiterates that the SRC and President should be in office for the same amount of time.

Kelsey agrees that having a one-year term has led to disconnect between incoming and outgoing SRC members. Projects get pitched but are not followed through, or the same issues get brought forward but remain unresolved. She still thinks people should still be able to be elected even if they only want to do one term, as otherwise a lot of students will be excluded. It should be left up to student voters to decide whether they want to elect someone that could only be in the position for one year.

Chantel asks whether elections will be held every year to replace members that might not have made it through the full term, or whether they will be held every second year. She also asks whether there would be an opportunity to for incoming SRC members to shadow existing ones.

Prayag points out that postgraduate courses are less than 2 years, so this could be a barrier to electing a Postgraduate Officer. He also thinks it could be quite daunting to run for election for a two-year role.

Sisifa reminds everyone that if the motion for increasing the term to two years is accepted, the SRC do have until 2021 to formalise any gaps and think about how it can be successfully implemented.

Te Haua points out that there will always be concerns about whether SRC members will be able to last the two years. The SRC has had to replace members over the course of one year before, and it should be the candidate’s choice before running as to whether they think they can commit to two years. The AUTSA operations team should make sure the SRC are fully equipped and are as supported as possible. A discussion would need happen as how they would elect new members to replace ones that do not make it through the full term. Clauses could be put in the constitution stating what to do in these cases. Students have the right to elect whoever they think is going to be their best voice.

Sisifa agrees with Mariner and reiterates the importance of believing that students will elect the person who is best suited to the SRC role.

Will clarifies that if this proposal were to go through, it would mean that during the 2021 elections students would elect an SRC committee for two years who would then begin their term in 2022. The President and the SRC would be elected together and there would only be an election every two years. He confirms that there is an existing clause in the constitution allowing for the President to continue even if they are not enrolled in any papers, and that this could be extended to other SRC members. Nonstudents have, and can still, make effective SRC members provided they have a strong understanding of their role and have built the relationships with their constituency.

Sisifa confirms that if this proposal were implemented, it would not affect the current group of SRC members, but rather inform the 2021 elections for the SRC, who begin their term in 2022. She reminds everyone that they do not have to accept the proposal and that it is possible to continue the discussion offline at an SGM.

**Motion:** Accept the proposal to extend the SRC term to two years as of 2021 elections.

Moved by Sisifa Seconded Te Haua

**Poll results:**

In Favour: 13 votes (59%)

Against: 3 votes (14%)

Abstain: 6 votes (27%)

Majority in favour, motion passed.

**General Discussion:**

Te Haua reminds meeting attendees that the SRC can make their quarterly reports and their response to Covid-19 available publicly.

Sisifa agrees that it is important to be transparent with students and will make sure those reports are available online.

Renata asks: what are the current standards for passing motions and changes to the constitution?

Simon clarifies that for a motion to be passed the majority must vote for it. Only one proposal has directly amended the constitution, which was the proposal to ratify the Rainbow and Wellbeing officers. AUTSA operational staff are open to feedback on how they improve these processes.

Te Haua reminds everyone that there is another AGM coming up where any issues around voting, or student representation can be put on the agenda.

Sisifa explains that students can continue to engage with the SRC offline, and that they are there to provide support whenever it is needed.

Gareth and Renata confirm that 75% of the people in attendance must be voting for any changes to take effect.

Sisifa thanks everyone for attending. She asks that people continue to engage with AUTSA through email, private messaging or by going to see them in person.

Meeting finishes at 2:13PM.

**Actions to be Followed up:**

* SRC to make their quarterly reports and their response to Covid-19 publicly available.
* SRC to work alongside AUTSA operational staff to work on a proposal about developing an operation plan to around business continuity during crises. They will report their progress back to the student body at the next AGM.
* SRC will amend constitution to reference Rainbow and Wellbeing Officers.
* SRC will work together with AUTSA operational staff to update the constitution to include the changes created by motions 3, 4 and 5.

Te atawhai o te runga rawa

Te aroha o tētahi ki tētahi

Me ngā manaakitanga o te wā Haumī e Hui e Tāiki e!