

MONSU.CAULFIELD

MONSU Caulfield.

2021 ANNUAL ELECTIONS

Monday 20 September – Thursday 23 September 2021

2021 ELECTION REPORT

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1. Introduction

In 2021, MONSU Caulfield (**MONSU**) engaged OGL Group to conduct their Annual Elections, after having conducted their Annual Elections since 2015.

Glenn Donahoo was the Returning Officer for the 2021 Annual Elections and is the author of this report.

This report sets out the process by which the elections were undertaken, specifically highlighting areas that required attention by the Returning Officer and electoral participants.

An overview of the results is provided, emphasising trends and other observations.

The key issues and other areas of concern experienced in the election are discussed in detail. Finally, a set of recommendations are provided to MONSU and future Returning Officers as suggestions by which the electoral process can be improved.

2. Process

Pursuant to the Regulations, notice was given on 24 August that Annual Elections would be held from Monday 20 September to Thursday 23 September 2021 (see [Appendix 1 – Notice of Election](#)), with nominations for all positions due 5pm Tuesday 7 September. The Notice of the election was disseminated to all Caulfield students by email and was also published on the MONSU Caulfield website. An updated Notice of Election (see [Appendix 2 – Updated Notice of Election](#)) with the positions of NUS Delegates added was published on the MONSU Caulfield website on Monday 6 September.

In line with continued Victorian Government and University COVID restrictions, nomination forms and all other election paperwork including candidate and policy statements could only be submitted via email or an online form for these elections.

Candidate Nominations

Nominations for all positions except NUS Delegates were opened at 9am on Wednesday 1 September and closed at 5pm on Tuesday 7 September. Nominations for NUS Delegates closed at 5pm on Friday 10 September.

The final notice of nominations received was posted on Wednesday 15 September (see [Appendix 3 – Notice of Nominations Received & Positions Elected Unopposed](#)).

After the closing of nominations, a detailed verification process was undertaken to ensure that candidates and their nominators and seconders were eligible to participate in the election by virtue of their membership of MONSU Caulfield, their completion of the requisite number of semesters of study along with having the requisite number of units left in their course, as provided for in the Constitution and the Regulations.

The verification process resulted in all nominations being determined as being eligible.

Following the verification of nominations, all positions had at least one valid nomination received, with Queer Officer 2 only receiving one valid nomination. This led to this position being declared elected unopposed.

At the close of the nomination period:

46 nominations had been received.

- 2 nominations were withdrawn
- 1 position was declared elected unopposed

Voting

Due to COVID-19 Restrictions polling was conducted online via the MSL voting platform on the MONSU Caulfield website. To cast their vote, students needed to log onto the MONSU Caulfield website through the University's Okta Verification system and follow the prompts to the election webpage. By logging into the MONSU Caulfield website students automatically became members of MONSU Caulfield and eligible to vote.

The following table summarises the times during which students cast their votes, with the majority of votes being cast on the day polls opened.

Time	Mon 20	Tues 21	Wed 22	Thurs 23
00:00-03:00		14	6	13
03:00-06:00		2	1	3
06:00-09:00		3	3	5
09:00-12:00	100	23	25	21
12:00-15:00	191	41	30	39
15:00-18:00	111	34	58	20
18:00-21:00	56	33	44	
21:00-24:00	52	23	35	

3. Results

Declarations

Results for all positions except NUS Delegates were declared at 5:52pm on Thursday 23 September, with the notice made available on the MONSU website and via an email sent to all authorised officers and independent candidates. The final declaration of all results occurred on Saturday 25 September and made available on the MONSU website and via an email sent to all candidates (see [Appendix 4 – Notice of Results](#)).

Participation

The 2021 election recorded a higher number of students voting compared to last year's election, with 986 voters casting a total of 11,073 votes across all positions through the polling period. This is in comparison with 684 voters in the 2020 elections.

4. Issues

This section deals with specific problems which arose with the election process or logistics, as well as serious disputes or contentious rulings made by the Returning Officer. It is not intended to be an exhaustive account of each issue that became necessary for the Returning Officer to consider.

Addition of NUS Delegates to election

The addition of the election of NUS Delegates occurred following clarification being sought from MONSU on Friday September 3, approximately halfway through the nomination period. While I was able to update the Notice of Election to include the election of NUS Delegates, this involved piecing together NUS and MONSU requirements in an extremely short period of time. The application of this may cause issues in the accreditation of delegates from MONSU to the NUS National Conference.

Inadequacy of publicity rules for an online election

As I included in last year's Election Report, the move to an online election due to COVID-19 restrictions highlighted a number of issues with the publicity rules that govern the MONSU Caulfield Elections.

Currently, all election publicity must be approved by the Returning Officer, this includes private messages and other forms of like communication such as graphics and candidate statements posted online.

This resulted in the Returning Officer approving all personal messages that individual candidates distributed as soon as the relevant publicity rules came into effect.

The nature of campaigning in online elections necessitates candidates being able to directly contact individuals through messaging services and respond in a timely manner. The inability of the publicity rules to effectively account for real time campaigning through messaging services represents a significant flaw in the Election Regulations that needs to be corrected.

While I ruled that authorised message templates could be used with amendments to wording, the Regulations should not require the Returning Officer to effectively overrule the Regulations but instead should be drafted in an enforceable way.

The application of Regulation 20.2.1 and 20.2.2 mean that both the Returning Officer and ticket Authorised Officer must be authorising material that they have not seen in completed form as it is posted by each campaigner.

MSL Voting Platform

The MSL voting platform has a number of positive attributes that make it appropriate for use for MONSU's Annual Elections. Its use in Australian student union elections is however still quite recent and requires further improvement to ensure it can be used with no issue. While most issues could be resolved through discussions with MSL, the inability to run test ballots or adequately view and test the election prior to polls opening remains an issue that needs to be resolved.

Further testing and development should also be completed on the ticket voting options and subsequent counting procedures, as an issue with the counting mechanism for ticket voting significantly delayed the declaration of results for NUS Delegates.

Election Timeline

The timelines provided in the Election Regulations included dates that were not workable and required the Returning Officer to produce new deadlines under Regulations 9.2.1.2 and 9.2.1.3. This included the requirement for the Re-registration of tickets to occur prior to the Notice of Election.

The MONSU Student Council also held a meeting to pass these Regulations on the evening that the Notice of Election was due to be published. This resulted in the Notice of Election being published a day later than is required under the Regulation, as the Constitution prohibits modifications to the Election Regulations once the Notice of Election has been published.

5. Recommendations

Recommendation 1 – That MONSU remove the requirement for publicity to be authorised by the Returning Officer

Requiring the Returning Officer to authorise publicity creates an unnecessary step in candidates campaigning, particularly online, as they cannot react live to anything that may impact their campaign but instead must wait for the Returning Officer to authorise publicity which can often occur with a long lead time.

If MONSU wishes to retain the requirement for the Returning Officer to authorise publicity, it should be restricted to physical publicity only (e.g. posters or how-to-vote sheets) based on a return to on-campus campaigning in 2022.

Regardless of whether the Returning Officer is required to authorise publicity, candidates and tickets will still be able to ask the Returning Officer whether proposed publicity is acceptable if they are unsure.

Recommendation 2 – That the definition of publicity be changed to exclude direct person to person campaigning regardless of the method

The definition of publicity currently excludes verbal communication between one person directly to another, however no exemption is provided for the same communication in a written form. The ability of candidates to effectively campaign in an online election is significantly constrained by this exemption not being provided by the Regulations due to the fact that all direct messages require approval from the Returning Officer prior to distribution.

In order to facilitate the smooth running of elections going forward, especially given the proliferation of online messaging platforms in both online and in-person elections, all communication between one person directly to another should be excluded from the definition of publicity, regardless of the form of that communication.

I recommend that the definition of publicity should be amended to include written communication between one person directly to another. Doing so will not exempt this written communication from the Regulations governing prohibited conduct during the election period.

Recommendation 3 – Continue to work with MSL to improve the voting module

The MSL voting module has had significant improvements made since the 2020 election due to the efforts of MSL and staff from across the Monash Student Organisations. There are still improvements that are needed to ensure it functions as well as possible within the requirements of the Regulations.

In particular the following areas should be worked on for use in the 2022 election:

- Ability to adequately test the voting platform by the Returning Officer and election staff prior to the opening of polls.
- Refinement of ticket voting options, including ensuring the Returning Officer can amend the ticket order as required.

- Modification of the election counting module to comply with the requirements of the Regulations.
- Option to ensure all voting data is anonymised including to MSL. While the current system where individuals voting data is not able to be accessed by MONSU or the Returning Officer is largely acceptable, this should be improved such that the data MSL has and can provide for manual recounts does not include identifiable voter data. This is particularly important if any data breaches occur.

Recommendation 4 – Modifications to Election Timeline

As stated in the Issues section, the timeline needs to be adjusted to move the re-registration of tickets to after the Notice of Election is scheduled. The Notice of Election must be the first action to occur within the election timeline as students cannot be expected to meet deadlines that they have not been made aware of.

Additionally, the period during which nominations are open should be extended. The rise in the number of candidates requesting that their eligibility to nominate be checked has increased in the last few years, while the time it takes to confirm eligibility with the University has also increased due to additional data protection measures and the complexity of eligibility requirements at MONSU Caulfield. As such, the current 48 hour response time for eligibility requests was generally not met in 2021 with many students not receiving a response until after the close of nominations. By extending the nomination period, students will be able to have their eligibility confirmed prior to the close of nominations.

Recommendation 5 – Reinstatement of on-campus campaigning

Regulation 32.5.6 was amended to ban any campaigning occurring on campus. While this was correctly applied in both 2020 and 2021 due to State Government COVID-19 restrictions, Election Regulations are standing documents that should not require annual changes to deal with specific circumstances. This amendment should be reversed, and if deemed appropriate, a separate clause should be inserted to provide for physical campaigning to be disallowed in circumstances where University or Government restrictions prohibit such social contact.

6. Conclusion

This year saw the MONSU Caulfield Elections be conducted exclusively online for the second time due to standing COVID-19 restrictions. This occurred successfully with a larger turnout of voters and significantly improved voter behaviour compared to previous years.

Thanks go to all the staff involved in running the elections, including OGL Group, MONSU, MSL and University staff who assisted in various ways throughout the election. In particular, my thanks go to Ming-En Koh and Lyn Nye.

I wish all successful candidates the very best as they undertake their new responsibilities in the coming year.

Glenn Donahoo
Returning Officer
2021 MONSU Elections

7. List of Appendices

Appendix 1 – Notice of Election

Appendix 2 - Updated Notice of Election

Appendix 3 – Notice of Nominations Received & Positions Elected Unopposed

Appendix 4 – Notice of Results

APPENDIX 1 – NOTICE OF ELECTION

MONSU.CAULFIELD

MONSU Caulfield Inc.

2021 ANNUAL ELECTIONS

Monday 20 September – Thursday 23 September 2021

NOTICE OF ELECTION

The MONSU Caulfield Inc. (**MONSU**) 2021 Annual Elections will be held from Monday 20 September 2021 to Thursday 23 September 2021 for the following positions:

Student Council

- President – Chair
- Vice President – General Secretary
- Overseas Student Service Officer
- Activities Officer (x2)
- Marketing Officer
- Education Officer
- Welfare Officer
- Queer Officer (x2)
- Clubs Officer
- Women’s Officer
- People of Colour Officer
- General Representative (x3)

Eligibility

To be eligible to nominate for all positions in the MONSU Caulfield Annual Elections students must be a member of MONSU Caulfield.

To join as a member students must log into the MONSU Caulfield website (<https://www.monsu.org/login/>) using the student login. Membership is open to undergraduate students enrolled in a course at the Caulfield or City (Melbourne) campuses.

Students must be a member by the close of nominations (5pm Tuesday 7 September) in order to stand as a candidate in the election.

All undergraduate students enrolled at either the Caulfield or City (Melbourne) campus are eligible to vote once they have joined MONSU Caulfield as a member.

Nominations

Nominations will open at 9am Wednesday 1 September and close at 5pm on Tuesday 7 September.

Details on eligibility requirements for all positions can be found in the Election Regulations.

Nomination Forms will be available on the MONSU website (www.monsu.org) or by contacting the Returning Officer.

Candidates may submit a candidate statement and a photograph with their nomination. These must be received by the close of nominations. All statements and photographs must be submitted by emailing the Returning Officer (monsu.returningofficer@gmail.com). Further details regarding candidate statements can be found in the Election Regulations.

Voting

Polling will be conducted online between 9am Monday 20 September and 5pm Thursday 23 September.

Further details of polling will be made available prior to the close of nominations.

Contact details

The contact details for the Returning Officer are:

Email: monsu.returningofficer@gmail.com

Telephone: 0447 189 538

Copies of the MONSU Caulfield Election Regulations and the MONSU Caulfield Constitution governing this election are available from the MONSU Caulfield office or via the MONSU Caulfield website at (www.monsu.org). The Returning Officer strongly encourages all those interested in taking part in these elections to make themselves familiar with these important documents as they govern how these elections are run.

Glenn Donahoo

Returning Officer

0447 189 538

23 August 2021

APPENDIX 2 – UPDATED NOTICE OF ELECTION

MONSU.CAULFIELD

MONSU Caulfield Inc.

2021 ANNUAL ELECTIONS

Monday 20 September – Thursday 23 September 2021

UPDATED NOTICE OF ELECTION

The MONSU Caulfield Inc. (**MONSU**) 2021 Annual Elections will be held from Monday 20 September 2021 to Thursday 23 September 2021 for the following positions:

Student Council

- President – Chair
- Vice President – General Secretary
- Overseas Student Service Officer
- Activities Officer (x2)
- Marketing Officer
- Education Officer
- Welfare Officer
- Queer Officer (x2)
- Clubs Officer
- Women’s Officer
- People of Colour Officer
- General Representative (x3)
- NUS Delegates (x7)

Eligibility

To be eligible to nominate for all positions except NUS Delegates in the MONSU Caulfield Annual Elections students must be a member of MONSU Caulfield. To nominate for the position of NUS Delegate students must be eligible to be a member of MONSU Caulfield.

To join as a member students must log into the MONSU Caulfield website (<https://www.monsu.org/login/>) using the student login. Membership is open to undergraduate students enrolled in a course at the Caulfield or City (Melbourne) campuses.

Students must be a member by the close of nominations (5pm Tuesday 7 September) in order to stand as a candidate in the election for any position except NUS Delegate.

All undergraduate students enrolled at either the Caulfield or City (Melbourne) campus are eligible to vote once they have joined MONSU Caulfield as a member.

Nominations

Nominations for all positions except NUS Delegates will open at 9am Wednesday 1 September and close at 5pm on Tuesday 7 September. Nominations for NUS Delegates close at 5pm Friday 10 September.

Details on eligibility requirements for all positions can be found in the Election Regulations.

Nomination Forms will be available on the MONSU website (www.monsu.org) or by contacting the Returning Officer.

Candidates may submit a candidate statement and a photograph with their nomination. These must be received by the close of nominations. All statements and photographs must be submitted by emailing the Returning Officer (monsu.returningofficer@gmail.com). Further details regarding candidate statements can be found in the Election Regulations.

Voting

Polling will be conducted online between 9am Monday 20 September and 5pm Thursday 23 September.

Further details of polling will be made available prior to the close of nominations.

Contact details

The contact details for the Returning Officer are:

Email: monsu.returningofficer@gmail.com

Telephone: 0447 189 538

Copies of the MONSU Caulfield Election Regulations and the MONSU Caulfield Constitution governing this election are available from the MONSU Caulfield office or via the MONSU Caulfield website at (www.monsu.org). The Returning Officer strongly encourages all those interested in taking part in these elections to make themselves familiar with these important documents as they govern how these elections are run.

Glenn Donahoo
Returning Officer
0447 189 538
5 September 2021

APPENDIX 3 – NOTICE OF NOMINATIONS RECEIVED & POSITIONS DECLARED UNOPPOSED

MONSU.CAULFIELD

MONSU Caulfield.
2021 ANNUAL ELECTIONS
Monday 20 September – Thursday 23 September 2021

LIST OF NOMINATIONS RECEIVED and POSITIONS ELECTED UNOPPOSED

All nominations received by the deadline have been listed by position below. This list is final as all these nominations have been subjects to checks by both myself and the University for eligibility according to student enrolment status.

If there have been any errors or omissions in transcription please let me know **as soon as possible** and I will amend.

I declare the following candidate elected unopposed to the position as listed below. Candidates for all contested positions follow on this notice.

Provisionally declared elected unopposed:

First Name	Surname	Position	Ticket
Cara	Dosser	Queer Officer (2)	Ignite

Valid Nominations Received for all other positions:

First Name	Surname	Position	Ticket
Wenhan	Jia	President	Together
Maxi	Hunt	President	Ignite
Ziying	Wang	Vice President	Together
Vaanavi	Shanmugam	Vice President	Ignite
Jingyi	Liu	Overseas Student Service Officer	Together
Patience	Mbabazi	Overseas Student Service Officer	Ignite
Ravindra	Sudewo	Activities Officer (1)	Together
Runqi	Yuan	Activities Officer (2)	Together
Georgia Annabelle	Bradica	Activities Officer (1)	Ignite
Ming Yin	Chiu	Activities Officer (2)	Ignite
Pei Kei	Tan	Marketing Officer	Together
Madeleine Kate	Trudel	Marketing Officer	Ignite
Driti	Thyagaraj	Education Officer	Together
Thomas Stephen	Pewtress	Education Officer	Ignite
Yingying	Zhang	Welfare Officer	Together

Ashleigh	Quick	Welfare Officer	Ignite
Raphael	Licenblat	Queer Officer (1)	Ignite
Alyssa	Wheaton	Queer Officer (1)	
Archit	Aggarwal	Clubs Officer	Together
Jiong Yung Selina	Ho	Clubs Officer	Ignite
Rajvi	Bagdai	Women's Officer	Together
Hilary Louisa	Edmiston	Women's Officer	Ignite
Aryae	Suthar	People of Colour Officer	Together
Niaa Ayu	Pertiwi	People of Colour Officer	Ignite
Akshat	Chaturvedi	General Representative	Together
Sanskriti	Deshpande	General Representative	Together
Aakanksha	Singh	General Representative	Together
Boyi	Yin	General Representative	Ignite
Danielle	Pattinson	General Representative	Ignite
Victor	Tang	General Representative	Ignite
Aryae	Suthar	NUS Delegate	Together
Wenhan	Jia	NUS Delegate	Together
Runqi	Yuan	NUS Delegate	Together
Rajvi	Bagdai	NUS Delegate	Together
Driti	Thyagaraj	NUS Delegate	Together
Ziying	Wang	NUS Delegate	Together
Jingyi	Liu	NUS Delegate	Together
Ashleigh	Quick	NUS Delegate	Ignite
Georgia	Bradica	NUS Delegate	Ignite
Madeleine	Trudel	NUS Delegate	Ignite
Thomas	Pewtress	NUS Delegate	Ignite
Tiana Jade	Schurmann	NUS Delegate	Ignite
Vaanavi	Shanmugam	NUS Delegate	Ignite
Maxi	Hunt	NUS Delegate	Ignite

Glenn Donahoo
Returning Officer
0447 189 538
15 September 2021

APPENDIX 4 – NOTICE OF RESULTS

MONSU.CAULFIELD

MONSU Caulfield.
2021 ANNUAL ELECTIONS
Monday 20 September – Thursday 23 September 2021

NOTICE OF RESULTS

President

Candidate	Ticket	Total
Wenhan Jia	Together	414
Maxi Hunt (elected)	Ignite	500
Total		914

Maxi Hunt was declared elected.

Vice President

Candidate	Ticket	Total
Ziying Wang	Together	422
Vaanavi Shanmugam (elected)	Ignite	473
Total		895

Vaanvi Shanmugam was declared elected.

Overseas Student Service Officer

Candidate	Ticket	Total
Jingyi Liu	Together	412
Patience Mbabazi (elected)	Ignite	473
Total		885

Patience Mbabazi was declared elected.

Activities Officer 1

Candidate	Ticket	Total
Ravindra Sudewo	Together	420
Georgia Bradica (elected)	Ignite	478
Total		898

Georgia Bradica was declared elected.

Activities Officer 2

Candidate	Ticket	Total
Runqi Yuan	Together	431
Ming Yin Chiu (elected)	Ignite	451
Total		882

Ming Yin Chiu was declared elected.

Marketing Officer

Candidate	Ticket	Total
Pei Kei Tan	Together	410
Madeleine Trudel (elected)	Ignite	470
Total		880

Madeleine Trudel was declared elected.

Education Officer

Candidate	Ticket	Total
Driti Thyagaraj	Together	418
Thomas Pewtress (elected)	Ignite	465
Total		883

Thomas Pewtress was declared elected.

Welfare Officer

Candidate	Ticket	Total
Yingying Zhang	Together	396
Ashleigh Quick (elected)	Ignite	483
Total		879

Ashleigh Quick was declared elected.

Queer Officer 1

Candidate	Ticket	Total
Raphael Licenblat (elected)	Ignite	70
Alyssa Wheaton		37
Total		107

Raphael Licenblat was declared elected.

Clubs Officer

Candidate	Ticket	Total
Archit Aggarwhal	Together	402
Selina Ho (elected)	Ignite	478
Total		877

Selina Ho was declared elected.

Women's Officer

Candidate	Ticket	Total
Rajvi Bagdai	Together	272
Hilary Edmiston (elected)	Ignite	296
Total		568

Hilary Edmiston was declared elected.

People of Colour Officer

Candidate	Ticket	Total
Aryae Suthar (elected)	Together	212
Niaa Pertiwi	Ignite	125
Total		337

Aryae Suthar was declared elected.

General Representative

Candidate	Ticket	Total
Akshat Chaturvedi (elected 2 nd)	Together	356
Sanskriti Deshpande	Together	7
Aakanksha Singh	Together	39
Boyi Yin (elected 1 st)	Ignite	408
Danielle Pattinson (elected 3 rd)	Ignite	56
Victor Tang	Ignite	11
Total		877

Boyi Yin, Akshat Chaturvedi and Danielle Pattinson were declared elected.

NUS Delegate

Candidate	Ticket	Total
Aryae Suthar (elected 2 nd)	Together	355
Driti Thyagaraj (elected 4 th)	Together	13
Wenhan Jia (elected 6 th)	Together	9
Runqi Yuan	Together	3
Rajvi Bagdai	Together	7
Ziying Wang	Together	5
Jingyi Liu	Together	5
Maxi Hunt (elected 1 st)	Ignite	420
Madeleine Trudel (elected 3 rd)	Ignite	9
Tiana Schurmann (elected 5 th)	Ignite	2
Vaanavi Shanmugam (elected 7 th)	Ignite	4
Thomas Pewtress	Ignite	6
Georgia Bradica	Ignite	10
Ashleigh Quick	Ignite	7
Total		855

Maxi Hunt, Aryae Suthar, Madeleine Trudel, Driti Thyagaraj, Tiana Schurmann, Wenhan Jia and Vaanavi Shanmugam were declared elected.

Glenn Donahoo

Returning Officer

25 September 2021

monsu.returningofficer@gmail.com