

MONSU.CAULFIELD

MONSU Caulfield.

2023 ANNUAL ELECTIONS

Monday 18 September – Thursday 21 September 2023

2023 ELECTION REPORT

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1. Introduction

In 2023, MONSU Caulfield (**MONSU**) engaged OGL Group to conduct their Annual Elections, after having engaged OGL Group to conduct their Annual Elections since 2015.

Glenn Donahoo was the Returning Officer for the 2023 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 21 August that Annual Elections would be held from Monday 18 September to Thursday 21 September 2023 (see [Appendix 1 – Notice of Election](#)), with nominations for all positions due 5pm Tuesday 5 September. The Notice of the election was published on the MONSU Caulfield website.

In line with previous elections, 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 were opened at 9am on Wednesday 30 August and closed at 5pm on Tuesday 5 September.

The provisional notice of nominations received was published on Wednesday 6 September and then the final notice of nominations received was posted on Wednesday 13 September (see [Appendix 2 – Notice of Nominations Received & Declaration of Results](#)).

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 no nominations being determined as being ineligible.

Following the verification of nominations, all positions had one valid nomination received, with General Representative and Activities Officer receiving two valid nominations and Overseas Support Officer and NUS Delegate receiving no valid nominations. Each of the candidates who submitted valid nominations were declared elected unopposed.

The positions of Overseas Student Services Officer, one Queer Officer, one General Representative and all seven NUS Delegates were not elected due to nominations being received for these positions.

At the close of the nomination period:

13 nominations had been received.

No nominations were invalid

13 positions were declared elected unopposed

10 positions had no nominations received

Voting

As there were no positions with more nominations than positions available, a ballot was not required for this election.

3. Results

Declarations

Results for all positions were declared when the final notice of nominations received was posted on Wednesday 13 September (see [Appendix 2 – Notice of Nominations Received & Declaration of Results](#)).

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.

Inadequacy of publicity rules for an online election

As I included in previous Election Reports, the move to an online election highlighted a number of issues with the publicity rules that govern the MONSU Caulfield Elections. These issues did not arise during the 2023 election due to there being no contested positions, but this issue should still be addressed before the next Annual Election.

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 have ruled that authorised message templates could be used with amendments to wording, to ensure a functional framework the Regulations should not require the Returning

Officer to effectively loosely interpret 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.

This issue did not arise during the 2023 due to no ballot being required, but it remains to be an issue during contested elections.

Election Timeline

The timelines provided in the Election Regulations included dates that require ticket re-registrations to occur prior to the Notice of Election. This requires Election Information to be distributed prior to the Notice of Election, which should be the first distribution of election information. While this timeline was met for the 2023 Election, delays in the appointment of a Returning Officer can mean an amended election timeline is required.

The timeline in the Regulations should be changed to ensure no submission dates are prior to the Notice of Election.

5. Recommendations

Recommendation 1 – 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 2 – 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 ability to adequately test the voting platform by the Returning Officer and election staff prior to the opening of polls should be added to the functionality.

Recommendation 3 – Modifications to Election Timeline

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.

Recommendation 4 – Clarification of on-campus campaigning

Regulation 32.5.16 was amended to ban any campaigning occurring on campus due the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The World Health Organisation has declared the global emergency from the pandemic is over. Accordingly, this Regulation should be amended to either reinstate campaigning on campus or to make the prohibition of campaigning on campus clear as a permanent feature of the election rather than as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

6. Conclusion

This year saw the MONSU Caulfield Elections be uncontested for the first time in a number of years, with many positions remaining unfilled at the end of the election.

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 Max Newton.

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



Glenn Donahoo
Returning Officer
2023 MONSU Elections

7. List of Appendices

Appendix 1 – Notice of Election

Appendix 2 – Notice of Nominations Received & Declaration of Results

APPENDIX 1 – NOTICE OF ELECTION

MONSU.CAULFIELD

MONSU Caulfield Inc.

2023 ANNUAL ELECTIONS

Monday 18 September – Thursday 21 September 2023

NOTICE OF ELECTION

The MONSU Caulfield Inc. (**MONSU**) 2023 Annual Elections will be held from Monday 18 September 2023 to Thursday 21 September 2023 for the following positions:

Student Council <ul style="list-style-type: none">- President – Chair- Vice President – General Secretary- Overseas Student Service Officer- Activities Officer (x2)- Marketing Officer- Education Officer- Welfare Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Queer Officer (x2)- Clubs Officer- Women’s Officer- People of Colour Officer- General Representative (x3)- NUS Delegates (x7)
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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 5 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.

Any candidates who submit eligibility requests to the returning officer must include the following statement in their email:

“I consent to Monash University providing the MONSU Returning Officer with personal information about me (my name, enrolment status, course location and course title) for the purpose of verifying certain attributes of my enrolment with Monash University to determine my eligibility to participate in the student council election.”

Failure to include the above statement in requests for eligibility confirmation may mean you have not submitted appropriate material and your request may not be actionable per university requirements.

Ticket Registrations

You may register a ticket from until 5pm Friday 25 August.

Nominations

Nominations for all positions will open at 9am Wednesday 30 August and close at 5pm on Tuesday 5 September.

Details on eligibility requirements for all positions can be found in the Election Regulations. You may nominate via this [google form](#). If you wish to submit your nomination in soft copy format, nomination forms will be available on the MONSU website (www.monsu.org) or by contacting the Returning Officer. Please note, if you nominate via the soft copy format, your nomination will take longer to process.

Candidates may submit a [candidate statement](#) and a [photograph](#) with their nomination. These must be received by the close of nominations. Statement and Photographs can be submitted by emailing the Returning Officer (monsu.returningofficer@gmail.com). You may submit a candidate statement of up to 500 words. Further details regarding candidate statements can be found in the Election Regulations.

Voting

Polling will be conducted online between 9am Monday 18 September and 5pm Thursday 21 September.

Contact details

The contact details for the Returning Officer are:

Email: monsu.returningofficer@gmail.com

Telephone: 0403 336 829

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

0403 336 829

21 August 2023

APPENDIX 2 – NOTICE OF NOMINATIONS RECEIVED & DECLARATION OF RESULTS

MONSU.CAULFIELD

MONSU Caulfield.
2023 ANNUAL ELECTIONS
Monday 18 September – Thursday 21 September 2023

LIST OF NOMINATIONS RECEIVED AND DECLARATION OF RESULTS

All nominations received by the deadline have been listed by position below.

I declare the following candidate elected unopposed to the positions as listed below.

First Name	Surname	Position	Ticket
Rachel	Dang	Activities Officer	
San Nhi	Chung	Activities Officer	
Zhaoling	Lai	Clubs Officer	
Angela	Liao	Education Officer	
Da In	Kim	General Representative	
Yebin	Kim	General Representative	
Leo	Jiang	Marketing Officer	
Mehika	Agarwal	People of Colour Officer	
Eunseo	Lee	President	
Fathima	Hussain	Queer Officer	
Boyi	Yin	Vice President	
Theodore	Susetio	Welfare Office	
Nadine Makayla	Heriantoro	Women's Officer	

As the number of nominations did not exceed the number of positions for any position, no ballot will be held for the 2023 Annual Election.

The following positions received no valid nominations:

- Overseas Student Services Officer
- Queer Officer (1 position)
- General Representative (1 position)
- NUS Delegates (7 positions)

These positions will remain vacant and will need to be filled by the MONSU Student Council in accordance with clause 37.6 of the MONSU Constitution.

Glenn Donahoo
Returning Officer
13 September 2023