

MONSU.CAULFIELD

MONSU Caulfield.

2022 ANNUAL ELECTIONS

Monday 19 September – Thursday 22 September 2022

2022 ELECTION REPORT

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1. Introduction

In 2022, 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 2022 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 23 August that Annual Elections would be held from Monday 19 September to Thursday 22 September 2022 (see [Appendix 1 – Notice of Election](#)), with nominations for all positions due 5pm Tuesday 6 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 31 August and closed at 5pm on Tuesday 6 September.

The provisional notice of nominations received was published on Wednesday 7 September and then the final notice of nominations received was posted on Sunday 11 September (see [Appendix 2 – 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 two nominations being determined as being ineligible.

Following the verification of nominations, all positions had at least one valid nomination received, with Activities Officer 1, Activities Officer 2, Marketing Officer, Queer Officer 1 and Queer Officer 2 only receiving one valid nomination and General Representative receiving three valid nominations. Each of these positions were declared elected unopposed.

At the close of the nomination period:**39 nominations had been received.****2 nominations were invalid****8 positions were declared elected unopposed****Voting**

As per the Regulations and precedence from 2020 and 2021, voting 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.

All undergraduate students at the Monash Caulfield and City (Melbourne) campus received an email with a link to the voting page on Wednesday 21 September.

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 19	Tues 20	Wed 21	Thurs 22
00:00-03:00		5	3	7
03:00-06:00		0	1	2
06:00-09:00		4	1	2
09:00-12:00	71	24	24	7
12:00-15:00	56	22	28	14
15:00-18:00	62	23	31	27
18:00-21:00	40	11	13	
21:00-24:00	34	15	18	

3. Results**Declarations**

Results for all positions were declared at 5:49pm on Thursday 22 September, with the notice made available on the MONSU website and via an email sent to all candidates (see [Appendix 3 – Notice of Results](#)).

Participation

The 2022 election recorded a lower number of students voting compared to last year's election, with 521 voters casting a total of 3,821 votes across all positions through the polling period. This is in comparison with 986 voters in the 2021 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.

Final day of polling becoming a public holiday

The dates of polling for the election was set by the Returning Officer prior to the Notice of Election and subsequently ratified by the MONSU Student Council. On 11 September, the Federal Government announced that Thursday 22 September, the final day of polling, would be a public holiday for a National Day of Mourning following the death of Queen Elizabeth II.

The Constitution requires that the election be held over at least 3 academic days, but does not prevent additional polling days on non-academic days. Accordingly, the dates of polling were not changed following the announcement of the public holiday.

Inadequacy of publicity rules for an online election

As I included in the 2020 and 2021 Election Reports, the move to an online election 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, 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.

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.

Voter Turnout

The numbers of voters casting a ballot in MONSU elections has been decreasing over the last few years with only 521 students casting a vote in this year's election. MONSU should consider ways to increase engagement in the election to ensure more students cast a vote in future elections.

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.

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. By extending the nomination period, students will be able to have their eligibility confirmed prior to the close of nominations. This will reduce the instance of invalid nominations being received.

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. While this pandemic was ongoing at the time of the 2022 Election, it is likely COVID-19 will no longer be declared a pandemic by the time future elections occur. 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 an event that may or may not have finished.

6. Conclusion

This year saw the MONSU Caulfield Elections be conducted exclusively online for the first time with students present on campus. This occurred successfully significantly with improved voter behaviour compared to previous elections when students have been on campus.

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
2022 MONSU Elections

7. List of Appendices

Appendix 1 – Notice of Election

Appendix 2 – Notice of Nominations Received & Positions Elected Unopposed

Appendix 3 – Notice of Results

APPENDIX 1 – NOTICE OF ELECTION

MONSU.CAULFIELD

MONSU Caulfield Inc.
2022 ANNUAL ELECTIONS
Monday 19 September – Thursday 22 September 2022

NOTICE OF ELECTION

The MONSU Caulfield Inc. (**MONSU**) 2022 Annual Elections will be held from Monday 19 September 2022 to Thursday 22 September 2022 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 6 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 re-register a ticket from the 2021 Annual Elections between 9am Tuesday 23 August and 12pm Friday 26 August with the permission of the previous ticket registrant. You may register a new ticket from 4pm on Friday 26 August until 5pm Wednesday 31 August.

Nominations

Nominations for all positions will open at 9am Wednesday 31 August and close at 5pm on Tuesday 6 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 19 September and 5pm Thursday 22 September.

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 2022

APPENDIX 2 – NOTICE OF NOMINATIONS RECEIVED & POSITIONS DECLARED UNOPPOSED

MONSU.CAULFIELD

MONSU Caulfield.
2022 ANNUAL ELECTIONS
Monday 19 September – Thursday 22 September 2022

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 and MONSU membership 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
Fathima	Hussain	Activities Officer 1	Ignite
Abeer	Verma	Activities Officer 2	Ignite
Isabella	Connor	Marketing Officer	Ignite
Anita	Thuon	Queer Officer 1	Ignite
Theodore	Susetio	Queer Officer 2	Ignite
Dennis	Truong	General Representative	United
Gavriel	Watts	General Representative	United
Jasmine	Geraridis	General Representative	United

Valid Nominations Received for all other positions:

First Name	Surname	Position	Ticket
Natasha	Richards	President	Ignite
Selina	Ho	President	United
Thomas	Pewtress	Vice President	Ignite
Archit	Aggarwal	Vice President	United
Sneha	Anand	Education Officer	Ignite
Ryan	Siow	Education Officer	United
Miranda	Frieer	Welfare Officer	Ignite
Alissa	Erin	Welfare Officer	United

First Name	Surname	Position	Ticket
Matthew	Dickins	Clubs Officer	Ignite
Ezra	Yung	Clubs Officer	United
Afrah	Ousmand	Women's Officer	Ignite
Sanjhi	Mehar	Women's Officer	United
Shikhar Jung	Shahi Thakuri	Overseas Student Service Officer	Ignite
Aditi	Jalan	Overseas Student Service Officer	United
Nayla	Rosihan	People of Colour Officer	Ignite
Shruti	Varsani	People of Colour Officer	United
Ravindra	Sudewo	NUS Delegate	Ignite
Kieran	Farrell	NUS Delegate	Ignite
Samuel	Huybers	NUS Delegate	Ignite
Kai Wen	Yao	NUS Delegate	Ignite
Isabella	Connor	NUS Delegate	Ignite
Linda	Wang	NUS Delegate	Ignite
Archit	Aggarwal	NUS Delegate	United
Aditi	Jalan	NUS Delegate	United
Selina	Ho	NUS Delegate	United
Shruti	Varsani	NUS Delegate	United
Sanjhi	Mehar	NUS Delegate	United
Alissa	Erin	NUS Delegate	United
Chayut (Tata)	Seraneeariyaporn	NUS Delegate	United

The following nominations have not been accepted:

First Name	Surname	Position	Ticket	Reason
Chayut (Tata)	Seraneeariyaporn	Activities Officer 1	United	Candidate not eligible under C34.1 of the MONSU Constitution.
Angeline	Sutanto	Marketing Officer	United	Candidate not eligible under C34.1 of the MONSU Constitution.

Glenn Donahoo
Returning Officer
11 September 2022

APPENDIX 3 – NOTICE OF RESULTS

MONSU.CAULFIELD

MONSU Caulfield.
2022 ANNUAL ELECTIONS
Monday 19 September – Thursday 22 September 2022

NOTICE OF RESULTS

President

Candidate	Ticket	Total
Natasha Richards	Ignite	188
Selina Ho	United	283
Total		471

Selina Ho was declared elected.

Vice President

Candidate	Ticket	Total
Thomas Pewtress	Ignite	181
Archit Aggarwal	United	273
Total		454

Archit Aggarwal was declared elected.

Overseas Student Service Officer

Candidate	Ticket	Total
Shikhar Jung Shahi Thakuri	Ignite	163
Aditi Jalan	United	281
Total		444

Aditi Jalan was declared elected.

Education Officer

Candidate	Ticket	Total
Sneha Anand	Ignite	183
Ryan Siow	United	270
Total		453

Ryan Siow was declared elected.

Welfare Officer

Candidate	Ticket	Total
Miranda Frieer	Ignite	176
Alissa Erin	United	271
Total		447

Alissa Erin was declared elected.

Clubs Officer

Candidate	Ticket	Total
Matthew Dickins	Ignite	177
Ezra Yung	United	272
Total		449

Ezra Yung was declared elected.

Women's Officer

Candidate	Ticket	Total
Afrah Ousmund	Ignite	107
Sanjhi Mehar	United	175
Total		282

Sanjhi Mehar was declared elected.

People of Colour Officer

Candidate	Ticket	Total
Nayla Rosihan	Ignite	77
Shruti Versani	United	120
Total		197

Shruti Versani was declared elected.

NUS Delegates (7 to be elected)

Candidate	Ticket	Total
Ravindra Sudewo (elected 2 nd)	Ignite	153
Kieran Farrell (elected 4 th)	Ignite	2
Samuel Huybers (elected 7 th)	Ignite	3
Kai Wen Yeo	Ignite	3
Isabella Connor	Ignite	5
Linda Wang	Ignite	3
Archit Aggarwal (elected 1 st)	United	234
Aditi Jalan (elected 3 rd)	United	7
Sanjhi Mehar (elected 5 th)	United	7
Selina Ho (elected 6 th)	United	19
Shruti Varsani	United	2
Alissa Erin	United	4
Chayut (Tata) Seraneeariyaporn	United	3
Total		445

Archit Aggarwal, Ravindra Sudewo, Aditi Jalan, Kieran Farrell, Sanjhi Mehar, Selina Ho & Samuel Huybers were declared elected.

Glenn Donahoo

Returning Officer

22 September 2022

monsu.returningofficer@gmail.com