

JANUARY 2025 SRC MINUTES

29/01/2025 | 6:30pm | CB.03.400 & Zoom

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1. Opening of meeting at [6:38pm]

1.1. Acknowledgement of Country

Adam delivers the acknowledgement of country, acknowledging the Gadigal people of the Eora nation upon whose ancestral lands UTS stands, and extends respect to elders past, present and emerging and any Indigenous people present today. Adam acknowledges that sovereignty was never ceded, and that this always was and always will be, Aboriginal land.

1.2. Confirmation of Deputy Chair

A procedural motion is moved to declare the position of Chair vacant:

Mover: Salma Elmubasher

Seconder: Neeve Nagle

The procedural passes unanimously without abstentions.

Neeve nominates as Chair. There are no other nominations for Chair, so Neeve is confirmed as Chair.

Neeve calls for nominations for Deputy Chair. Adam nominates as Deputy Chair. There are no other nominations for Deputy Chair, so Adam is confirmed as Deputy Chair.

1.3. Attendance, Apologies and Proxies

Attendees

Name	Position (Councillor, Student Observer, Staff)
Adam Levett	General Secretary
Daewah Thein	Queer Officer
Amelia Ireland	Disabilities Officer
Jermaine Petterson-Heard	Indigenous Officer
Yasmine Johnson	General Councillor
Ella Haid	General Councillor
Macka Baran	Observer
Lucia Thornton	General Councillor
Jessica Hill	Staff

Olivia Lee	Women's Officer
Neeve Nagle	Welfare Officer
Raghav Motani	Observer
Sina Afsharmehr	Environment Officer
Amelia Raptis	General Councillor
Eryn Yates	Vertigo
Bianca Drummond Costa	Vertigo
Mayela Dayeh	Vertigo
Laura Cook	Observer
Aidan O'Rourke	Observer
Alessio Maiese	General Councillor
Januka Suraweera	Assistant General Secretary
Salma Elmubasher	Ethnocultural Officer
Samiha Emran	Education Officer
Omar El-Sobihy	General Councillor
Natasha Abdulghani	General Councillor
Tyberius Seeto	Observer
Nour Al Hammouri	Observer
Akash Nagarajan	Observer
Grace Bowen	Observer
Luke Cox	Observer
Rakin Alam	Observer

Apologies

Name	Position (Councillor, Student Observer, Staff)
Mia Campbell	UTSSA President
Dirk Hoare	General Councillor

Eamonn Ryan	General Councillor
Chloe Ferreira	Undergraduate UTS Council
Elliot Kameron	General Councillor

Proxies

Name	Proxy Accepted By
Mia Campbell	Salma Elmubasher
Dirk Hoare	Januka Suraweera
Eamonn Ryan	Sina Afsharmehr
Chloe Ferreira	Olivia Lee

1.4. Declarations of Interest

Neeve calls for Declarations of Interest to be made for this meeting.

No one makes any declarations.

2. Confirmation of Previous Minutes

The minutes from the following months are confirmed as a true and accurate on record.

-February 2024

-March 2024

-April 2024

-May 2024

-June 2024

-July 2024

-August 2024

-September 2024

-December 2024

Adam: Speaks for need to approve previous minutes as accurate on record, as new official template for formatting was adopted starting October 2024.

2.1. Executive Business

Adam tables the Executive minutes attached to the meeting notice from the Executive Meeting held on (22/01/2025). Neeve as chair opens discussion on tabled item. No items for discussion are brought forward.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes

Adam: Speaks to omission of meeting minutes from Reps-Elect (04/12/2024) on most recent meeting notice. The item will be tabled at the February 2025 SRC.

4. Correspondence

Neeve raises correspondence from Mia Campbell and Dr. Sarah Attfield addressed to UTS Vice Chancellor Andrew Parfitt on the 8th of January 2025; regarding UTS Partnership with the Israel Institute of Technology (Technion).

5. Office Bearers' Reports

5.1. President

Mia is not present at meeting; her report is taken as read.

5.2. General Secretary

Adam: Takes his report as read, issues general reminder to Office Bearers to submit updated information for UTSSA website.

5.3. Assistant General Secretary

Januka: Takes his report as read. Highlights email sent to Office Bearers regarding introductory videos.

5.4. Education Officer

Samihah: Verbally takes her report as read. *The report cannot be taken as read as it was sent to the General Secretary after the notice deadline.*

5.5. Welfare Officer

Neeve: Speaks to recent interview with The Sydney Morning Herald about UTS Housing.

5.6. Women's Officer

Olivia: Takes report as read. Highlights attendance at the USU (University of Sydney Union) Student Safety Conference. Speaks to process of moving into new Women's Collective space.

Vaishnavi Omar (Postgraduate Officer) enters meeting at 6:46pm

5.7. International Students' Officer

Harshvardhan is not present at meeting, his report is taken as read.

5.8. Indigenous Officer

Jermaine: Takes his report as read.

5.9. Postgraduate Students' Officer

Vaishnavi Delivers spoken report: Speaks to ongoing efforts and discussions with Mia to set up a Postgraduate Collective social media before students return. Speaks to desire to run events through collective similar to the International Collective last year. Highlights lack of careers and high fees for international postgraduate students as major issues.

5.10. Ethnocultural Officer

Salma delivers spoken report: Speaks to letter tabled in *Correspondence* regarding current UTS partnership with Technion. Speaks to preparation for O'Day and acquisition of pamphlets from ALS (Aboriginal Legal Service).

5.11. Disabilities Officer

Amelia takes her report as read: Speaks to the accessible technology database and accessibility master-doc which gives advice to all UTSSA representatives on how to run accessible events, protests and social media activity.

5.12. Queer Officer

Daewah delivers spoken report: Speaks to ongoing moving of the Queer space. Speaks to UTS' Mardi Gras float spot which could be capitalised on by the UTSSA. Highlights plan to hold Convener elections after O'Day.

5.13. Environment Officer

Sina delivers spoken report: Speaks to transition into Enviro/Technology Collective and preparation for O'Day. Highlights correspondence with Big Lift, with work likely to begin in March.

6. Other Reports

6.1. Committees

No reports from Committee.

6.2. Reports from Councillors, Convenors and Staff as requested or required.

The collated reports from 2024 NUS National Conference attendees, which have been tabled at this meeting, are taken as read.

6.3. Vertigo Reports

Mayela: Speaks to submission of Volume 1 test copy on schedule for O'Day. Speaks to work about to begin on collecting Volume 2 submissions.

7. Operational and Procedural Business, Stipends and Reimbursements.

7.1. 2024 Financial Report

Action:

That the UTSSA approves the amount of \$9,250 plus GST to engage Trood, Pratt and Co to produce a complete audit; including a financial report for 2024.

Mover: Amelia Ireland

Second: Olivia Lee

Macka: Raises question about the high cost.

Mariah: Notes that the UTSSA gets three quotes every year, and the current one is massively reduced compared to what a standard corporation would pay due to the organisation's non-for-profit status. Notes that for an organisation our size, the standard would be around \$20,000. Notes that the report is being conducted by the same people as last year, and that in the UTSSA constitution it needs to be changed every three years.

The motion passes unanimously.

7.2. Bluebird Pantry Cooking Classes in Partnership with Oz Harvest

Preamble:

In Autumn Semester 2024, the Bluebird Pantry ran a six week free cooking class course for fifteen UTS students in need through the OzHarvest NEST program <https://www.ozharvest.org/education/nest/>. The course was run by a qualified dietitian, on campus, outside the Bluebird Pantry and was a great success, allowing students to learn not only valuable cooking and nutrition skills but also food sustainability skills and provided the opportunity for social connection with other students in the course.

The Bluebird Pantry would like to run the course again in Autumn and Spring Semesters 2025, to further the food welfare services the UTSSA runs for students in need. The start date for Autumn Semester would be Monday 24th February 2025, (week 2). The 2024 quoted cost was \$6,600+GST to run the two courses, so to include a buffer for any 2025 price increases we would like to request an upper spending limit of \$8000+GST to run the OzHarvest NEST Cooking Classes through the Bluebird Pantry in Autumn and Spring Semesters

2025.

Action:

That the SRC approve a \$8,000+GST upper spending limit for the Bluebird Pantry to run the OzHarvest NEST Program at UTS in Autumn Semester and Spring Semester 2025.

Mover: Olivia Lee

Secunder: Amelia Ireland

Neeve: Speaks to popularity of these courses last year.

Alessio: Asks whether these sessions can be recorded and circulated virtually.

Neeve: Responds that this is a good suggestion.

The motion passes unanimously.

7.3. Bluebird Pantry Egg Purchases

The eggs the SRC funded in the Bluebird Pantry in both Semesters in 2024 were very well received by students in need and provided a versatile protein source for the dietary requirements of those from a variety of cultural backgrounds.

Eggs are a very popular item in the Bluebird Pantry and we would like to again request additional funds for the purchase of 45 dozen eggs each week the Pantry is open in 2025, totalling 22 weeks. This is an increase in the number of eggs in 2024 so that more students in need have access to this valuable and versatile protein source.

Action:

That the SRC approve a maximum of \$10,000 upper spending limit for weekly deliveries of fresh eggs for the Bluebird Pantry in Autumn Semester and Spring Semester 2025.

Mover: Amelia Ireland

Secunder: Daewah Thein

The motion passes unanimously.

7.4 Approval Funds for 2025 NUS President's Summit

Preamble:

The President's Summit is a vital initiative designed to equip student leaders with essential skills, foster collaboration among student organisations, and shape the direction of student advocacy for 2025. This two-day event from the 6th-7th of February will include a series of training sessions, workshops, and strategic planning activities aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of student organisations and their leadership teams.

The National Union of Students (NUS) Office Bearer team has expressed strong enthusiasm for collaborating with student leaders throughout 2025 to advance student welfare and advocacy on a national scale. This partnership underscores the broader impact of the summit, enabling participants to contribute meaningfully to the national discourse on student welfare.

Action:

1. That the UTSSA will purchase a President's Summit ticket for both the UTSSA General Secretary and UTSSA Assistant General Secretary.

2. In accordance with the UTSSA Policy on Conference attendance, that the UTSSA will reimburse each attendee listed in item 1 of this motion:
 - a. Up to \$300 per person for travel to and from the conference.

3. In accordance with the UTSSA Policy on Conference attendance, that the UTSSA will reimburse each attendee listed in item 1 of this motion as well as any currently elected UTSSA NX members:
 - a. Up to \$300 per person for accommodation during the conference.

4. That all attendees be reminded of the UTSSA Policy regarding conferences, especially the following sections:
 - a. Representatives must adhere to the UTSSA Code of Conduct throughout the conference;

- b. Representatives must attend a minimum of 80% of conference sessions, workshops and conference activities;
- c. Representatives must submit a post-conference report to the following SRC meeting. The report should be between 200 and 500 words and must detail the representative's experiences, contributions, and any relevant outcomes from the conference; and
- d. Representatives must submit a reimbursement claim within 30 days of the conference's conclusion, including receipts or proof of payment for all expenses claimed.

Mover: Amelia Ireland

Seconder: Vaishnavi Omar

Aidan: Speaks to President's Summit as a good opportunity for student activists. Notes that the President of the ACTU may be in attendance.

Neeve: Notes that usually the President, General Secretary and Assistant General Secretary are covered to attend. Notes that as a member of NUS National Executive, her flight is covered by the NUS but needs the UTSSA to cover accommodation costs only.

Salma leaves room at 6:59pm proxies vote to Natasha

Tyberius: Asks as the conference being paid for by SSAF money, what the benefit is for students.

Neeve: Responds that the conference is more informational similar to NUS Education Conference, rather than a decision-making body which delivers for students. For transparency, post conference reports will be submitted by all attendees.

Alessio: Asks whether other universities cover these types of costs.

Neeve: Responds in the affirmative.

The motion passes unanimously.

8. Other Business Arising on Notice

8.1. UTS Housing Campaign Motion

Preamble:

Over the past few years, students living in UTS-managed accommodation have faced significant challenges regarding rising fees, limited benefits, and a general lack of protection under tenant laws. Issues such as fees for storing furniture, having personal appliances like air conditioners in rooms, for leaving personal items behind highlight the growing financial burden on residents. Furthermore, charges for lost keycards only add to the already considerable costs of living in UTS Housing.

The central issue lies in the fact that students in UTS Housing are not protected under the Residential Tenancies Act, as they occupy their accommodation through a licensing agreement, rather than a formal tenancy. This distinction is a crucial one, as it leaves students without the protections offered to regular tenants such as safeguards against arbitrary eviction, rent increases, or conditions for rent increase capping.

Moreover, the terms of the licensing agreement, along with the rising fees, have contributed to an unfair situation, especially for regional, low socio-economic, and international students who rely on UTS Housing as a more affordable alternative to expensive private accommodation. The University's sale of housing assets during the COVID-19 pandemic, alongside the closure of many student housing options, has left UTS Housing as one of the few affordable options in the area, but at a much higher price than previously.

Additionally, international students, in particular, are subjected to more stringent financial terms, such as being required to pay for the full six-month duration of their lease upfront, despite their visa duration often being shorter. The UTS housing system disproportionately affects those who are already vulnerable in terms of financial stability.

There is a noticeable lack of transparency regarding the rationale behind these price hikes, and many students are questioning why certain benefits, like the previously offered "week off" rent for students who paid upfront; have been replaced by a much smaller benefit of just \$200.

The current system leaves students vulnerable, and it is time to advocate for a change to the current licensing agreement and fight for fairer, more transparent policies that treat student accommodation in a way that reflects the rising costs students face while attending university.

Action:

That the UTSSA:

1. Supports a campaign to reform the UTS Housing licensing agreement to incorporate greater rights and protections for students, making it more akin to a formal tenancy agreement, and to:

- Provide clearer guidelines regarding fees, with specific focus on unjustified charges for services like storing furniture or having air conditioners;
 - Reinstate benefits for upfront rent payments that were previously available, including a week off rent for upfront payments and more significant financial incentives for early payment;
 - Address the issue of international students being required to pay for the full six-month duration upfront, which is not reflective of their visa duration or reasonable accommodation requirements;
 - Establish a transparent and justifiable process for determining rent increases and other charges, with student input and oversight.
2. Advocates for the University to take action on the following:
- Provide more affordable and accessible housing options for all students, particularly regional, low socio-economic, and international students, with a particular focus on reducing financial barriers to living on campus;
 - Ensure that housing options provided are truly affordable in comparison to private accommodation options in the area, with a full review of pricing structures relative to the local housing market.
3. Will actively work with student groups, legal professionals, and policy experts to push for these reforms, ensuring that the voices of UTS students are heard in the campaign for fairer housing policies.
4. Report on the status of this campaign and prepare and submit a paper to the Student Council Liaison Group (SCLG) to inform further action.

Mover: Omar El-Sobihy

Seconder: Vaishnavi Omar

Neeve: Speaks in favour of the motion. Speaks to the current issues present within UTS Housing, such as having to sign a Licence Agreement and not a Tenancy Agreement. Speaks to consultation with professional solicitors so that irrefutable evidence can be brought to UTS Council.

Ella: Speaks in favour of the motion. However, criticises the motion as written for citing the Tenancy Rights Act, which uses a local market rate unaffordable for students and young people. Speaks to legislation in NSW

regarding no fault evictions which occur anyway. Reaffirms that the UTSSA should be aiming higher on this issue.

Neeve: Speaks to personal experience having to pay \$889 for a single share studio, which barely comes down to \$717 on a fortnightly rental subsidy. Notes that whilst the Rental Tenancies Act isn't the best piece of legislation, there is a need to reform existing UTS Housing Licence Agreements. Notes that whilst rent is better than the University of Sydney, there are many areas which UTS needs to do better. Extends invite to all representatives to get involved in Welfare Collective Campaign.

Vaishnavi: Speaks to experience applying for UTS Housing and getting rejected. Notes that students are treated like cash cows due to amount of money they have to pay to even apply.

Neeve: Notes that if you're an international student you're expected to pay upfront for the semester or for the year, whilst domestic students pay weekly or fortnightly.

The motion passes unanimously.

8.2. Permanent UTSSA Food Spaces Campaign

Preamble:

During the Spring Semester of 2024, Night Owl Noodles and Blue Bird Brekkie were frequently disrupted due to external events hosted in the UTS lobby/exhibition space, including UTS Open Day and SXSW. These closures highlight a recurring issue: the lack of a dedicated and reliable space for UTSSA food services. The University has stated that the lobby/exhibition space is intended to serve as a "more staff/public focused" area, which inherently limits its suitability for regular student-oriented services. As fixture, the University has proposed relocating these services to the Blue Bird Pantry space. However, this proposal fails to address the scale and demand of UTSSA food services.

The numbers speak for themselves. Night Owl Noodles serves between 600-800 students per session, while Blue Bird Brekkie caters to 400-500 students each morning. These figures underscore the critical role these services play in supporting the student community, particularly in alleviating food insecurity.

It is clear that a long-term, sustainable solution is required. The University has acknowledged the need for a permanent space for Blue Bird Brekkie and Night Owl Noodles, yet no viable alternative to the foyer/exhibition space has been provided. Relocating these services to a permanent location within the concourse of Building 1 emerges as the most logical and efficient solution.

Building 1 serves as an internal hub for UTS, housing the UTSSA offices, management offices, Health Service, Academic Services, UTS Bar, and the Jumbunna Institute. Integrating Blue Bird Brekkie and Night Owl Noodles into this space would not only centralise student-focused services but also enhance operational

efficiency. Proximity to the UTSSA offices would streamline setup and coordination, while repurposing an unused retail space within the concourse would provide the stability and visibility these services require. Notably, this retail space has remained vacant for an extended period, with no clear plans for its future use, making it an ideal candidate for repurposing. The space allocated to the UTSSA must be open to negotiation but should ultimately be capable of meeting the high demand for these services and ensuring they are delivered at the highest standard possible.

Securing a permanent location for these services aligns with the UTSSA's commitment to amplifying student voices and addressing their needs in meaningful ways. These services are not merely convenience offerings but essential programs that contribute to student well-being and equity. By establishing a dedicated space in Building 1, the University would demonstrate its support for student welfare and its recognition of the critical role the UTSSA plays in fostering a thriving campus community.

Action:

1. That the UTSSA supports a campaign to achieve permanent spaces for the UTSSA food services, Night Owl Noodles and Blue Bird Brekkie.
2. That a report on the status of this campaign be prepared and submitted to the Student Council Liaison Group (SCLG) to inform further action.

Mover: Vashnavi Omar

Seconder: Omar El-Sobihy

Neeve: Speaks to other campaign the Welfare Collective is working on this year. Speaks to UTSSA food services being temporarily closed by the university during events such as O'Day and South by Southwest. Notes that in 2024 a permanent space was nominally provided for 2025, however there have yet to be any updates.

Tyberius: Asks where the new service space could be.

Neeve: Notes Building 1 concord (Level 3), as a possible space which could be used. Notes that the UTSSA is open to negotiation, and if the university fails to provide a good enough space than we will fight back.

Nour Al Hammouri (observer) enters at 7:10pm

Salma Elmubasher (Ethnocultural Officer), is also present at 7:10pm

Tyberius: Asks what happens if they do fail to provide space.

Neeve: Responds that we will submit to Student Council Liaison Group. Notes that this shouldn't be controversial, but if it is the UTSSA can run a campaign on it.

The motion passes unanimously.

8.3. The UTSSA Stands in Solidarity with the RTBU / Combined Rail Unions

Preamble

The CRU have been bargaining since May of 2024 with Sydney Trains, NSW Trains and the NSW Government to reach an agreement on their next EA that delivers key benefits, conditions and a pay rise that exceeds inflation. CRU members have received below-inflation pay rises for the past decade under Liberal governments.

Unfortunately, instead of coming to the bargaining table and offering the CRU a deal other than a real-terms pay cut after inflation, the Minns Government have shamefully resorted to suing unions and trying to break the rail strike. The Minns government have used the right wing, anti-union Murdoch media to pit the public against the rail unions, spruiking completely false narratives that Train Drivers earn 120K+ a year (their base rate of pay is almost \$20K less than the current average Australian income of 100K per annum), or that the Unions are not coming to the table.

It is a fact that the Minns Government and Sydney Trains management have not agreed to a single bargaining meeting since the beginning of December, and have only been interested in forcing Unions into the Commission and other courts.

It is a fundamental human right for union members to withdraw their labour and take industrial action, and the ALP should be the first and major Australian institution to defend that right in our democratic society. The UTSSA supports any and all industrial actions undertaken by the Combined Rail Unions, and respects and encourages the right of workers to unionise and participate in industrial action.

Action:

1. The UTSSA stands in solidarity with the Combined Rail Unions (CRU), in their efforts to secure fair pay, secure jobs and good conditions for thousands of essential rail workers in Sydney and NSW, against this Union-busting NSW Labor Government.
2. The UTSSA fully supports any and all industrial action taken by the CRU, and urges the Minns Labor Government to come to the table, sit down with unions as a matter of urgency, and reach a deal that sees workers better off than they were before.

3. The UTSSA supports the RTBU campaign for 24hr Public Transport Services.
4. The UTSSA encourages all UTS students to support industrial action in tangible ways. For instance utilising alternative bus routes when available during strike periods, and not tapping on when opal card gates are left open on mass by the union/s.
5. UTSSA executive will write to NSW Transport Minister Jo Haylen, NSW Premier Chris Minns to urge them to support the Combined Rail Unions and include a copy of this motion.

Mover: Amelia Ireland

Seconder: Daewah Thein

Amelia I: Speaks as mover of the motion. Speaks to experience as a union member and her belief in the right to withdraw labour. Condemns the behaviour of the state government as appalling.

Yasmine: Speaks in support of the motion, and the blatant lies spread about what the unions have been demanding. Condemns other unions from backing down in their support of the RTBU which has put their campaign in jeopardy. Speaks to the intersectional need to also pay nurses and teachers during the cost-of-living crisis, noting abandonment between certain unions.

Alessio: Speaks against the motion. Gives support to 24 hour public transport, but believes this can only be effectively achieved through driverless trains.

Amelia I: Responds that driverless trains are “Anti-union”.

Neeve: Raises question as to why the UTSSA should write to the state government.

Ella: Asks Neeve what her opposition to writing a letter is.

Neeve: Responds that she is not against writing a letter. However, believes writing to the government would have no impact. Suggests that as someone who works in a union, writing to the RTBU directly would be more impactful.

Adam: Notes that as any correspondence to Government departments would contain nothing more than the preamble as written, little unnecessary labour would fall onto UTSSA executive.

Yasmine: States that SRCs are all about writing letters that get thrown in the bin, but a statement of solidarity would be a positive addition to this motion. Especially when it comes from another union when so many others have thrown the RTBU under the bus.

An Amendment is proposed to insert an additional action point 6 “The UTSSA will write a letter of support to the RTBU.”

The Amendment is accepted by the mover.

The motion is moved directly to a vote

Votes For: 19

- 1. Daewah
- 1. Amelia I
- 1. Yasmine
- 1. Ella
- 1. Lucia
- 1. Neeve
- 2. Olivia
- 2. Sina
- 1. Amelia R
- 1. Omar
- 2. Salma
- 1. Natasha
- 1. Samiha
- 2. Januka
- 1. Adam

Votes Against: 1

- 1. Alessio

The motion passes as amended.

8.4. The UTSSA Opposes Trump and His Far Right Government

Preamble

Trump's second term in office marks a dangerous development in world politics, a serious threat to students, workers and the oppressed everywhere, and a victory for the far right internationally. Elon Musk has demonstrated the commitment of Trump's administration to the far right by allying himself with Germany's far right party Alternative for Deutschland (AFD), and by outrageously performing a Nazi salute at Trump's

inauguration. Since his inauguration, Trump has carried out a series of executive orders targeting the rights of migrants and refugees, accelerating the effects of climate change, and winding back the rights of LGBTI people. This is only the beginning of Trump's administration, and we can expect many more attacks in the coming weeks, months, and years.

The Australian Labor Party was among the first to publicly congratulate Trump, with Anthony Albanese congratulating him the day after his electoral victory. The ALP's Penny Wong has described her experience attending Trump's inauguration and meeting with members of his cabinet as "extraordinary". She has shamefully failed to condemn Elon Musk's Nazi salute, and has abstained from commenting on or criticising any of Trump's executive orders, instead stating that she is "looking forward" to working with Trump. Anyone who opposes Trump's racist, sexist and bigoted project has a responsibility to put their opposition into practice and publicly criticise his government.

Platform

1. The UTSSA stands against the Trump administration, opposes the racist, sexist and bigoted executive orders Trump has carried out, and condemns Elon Musk's Nazi salute.
2. The UTSSA condemns Anthony Albanese and Penny Wong for their refusal to criticise the Trump administration or condemn the Nazi salute performed by Elon Musk.

Mover: Lucia Thornton

Seconder: Yasmine Johnson

Lucia: Speaks as mover of the motion. Speaks to political developments in the United States since President Trump's inauguration, such as executive orders attacking the rights of the oppressed, wide-scale arrests of migrants, and the pardon of January 6 rioters. Speaks to the Nazi salute performed by Elon Musk and his appearance at the far right AfD conference in Germany. Condemns Anthony Albanese and Penny Wong for congratulating Trump and representing Australia at his inauguration, whilst failing to publicly condemn any of the above. Affirms the need for student unions to speak out against Trump.

Ella: Speaks to the amplification of neo-Nazis and the far right in Australia. Verbally promotes rally to be held on Friday night this week at 6pm.

Alessio: Speaks in favour of the motion in principle. Questions how an international issue has a direct effect on UTS or UTS Students.

Macka: Responds that there is a global rise of the far right including in Australia, noting a rise in racism and attacks on the "LGBTI" community. Notes that attacks on immigrants are an attack on international students, and that the climate crisis affects everyone globally.

Neeve: Notes that the motion contains no action points and that the UTSSA does not have a policy platform. Notes that if the motion is to be passed, it needs to contain something tangible for the UTSSA. Provides a verbal recommendation to the previous speaker against using the incomplete LGBTQIA+ acronym.

Ella: Proposes that a solidarity photo be taken at the conclusion of this meeting.

Neeve: Responds that she does not want the UTSSA to do nothing but solidarity photos and call it activism.

Ella: Responds that the UTSSA would be creating public opposition, to Elon Musk who is a fascist.

Olivia: Asks how we can look at other tactics that inspire more community building and better organising.

Adam: Responds that attendance at a rally could fulfil this.

Tyberius: Asks if Student Unity is against solidarity photos “because it looks weird”.

Neeve: Responds that solidarity photos are a performative gesture, and that genuine action would be starting a campaign at the UTSSA about making informed choices while voting.

Salma: Raises that a campaign on voting choices would be difficult on campus because students have different political views and policy priorities that resonate with them.

Aidan: Notes that motions in the UTSSA actually require an action point to be brought up.

Daewah: Suggests that for a tangible action point, we can get Vertigo to write an article relevant to the points brought up in this motion.

Adam: Notes that the UTSSA can’t request what Vertigo writes because they have editorial independence.

An amendment to the motion is proposed to insert as Action Point 1: “The UTSSA encourages Vertigo to write an article regarding this”

The Amendment is accepted by the mover.

Amelia R: Speaks to platform 2, notes that Albanese and Penny Wong have to keep their silence over someone democratically elected.

The motion is taken to a vote:

Votes For: 19

1. Daewah

1. Amelia I

1. Yasmine

1. Ella

1. Lucia

1. Neeve

2. Olivia

2. Sina

1. Amelia R

1. Omar

2. Salma

1. Natasha

1. Samiha

2. Januka

1. Adam

Abstentions 1

1. Alessio

9. General Business

A procedural is moved to hear a motion in General Business.

Mover: Daewah

Seconder: Amelia I

The following motion is sent to the General Secretary:

The UTSSA condemns the Crisafulli QLD Government for it's ban on Puberty Blockers and Hormone Treatment Therapies
--

Preamble

Medical experts, human rights groups and trans advocates have slammed the QLD government's decision to block young trans people from accessing puberty blockers and cross sex hormones. Cisgender people will still be able to access gender affirming care under these changes, which displays the hateful and targeted nature of this policy.

Puberty blockers are used to delay or prevent the physical changes that occur during puberty, and are lifesaving treatments for transgender people.

Under this ban, new patients under the age of 18 will be unable to access hormone treatments or puberty blockers in the QLD state government's public health network, until the government considers the findings of the review.

This sets a concerning precedent for other state governments and we cannot allow this hateful and bigoted rhetoric and policy to extend to other states. The UTSSA must take a stand against this shameful and bigoted policy.

Action

1. The UTSSA condemns the Queensland Crisafulli Government for its banning young trans people from accessing puberty blockers and hormone treatment therapy.
2. The UTSSA will ensure that transgender students feel safe and respected on campus and that counselling services will be available and promoted to the student body.

Daewah: Reads out loud the motion title, Preamble and Action Points in full.

Olivia: Speaks in favour of the motion.

The motion is taken to a vote

Votes For: 19

1. Daewah

1. Amelia I

1. Yasmine

1. Ella

1. Lucia

1. Neeve

2. Olivia

2. Sina

1. Amelia R

1. Omar

2. Salma

1. Natasha

1. Samiha

2. Januka

1. Adam

Abstentions 1

1. Alessio

Tyberius: Asks Alessio why he abstained from this motion.

Alessio: Responds that it is due to conflict of interest.

Tyberius: Asks the Environment Officer how given the rebrand to *Enviro + Tech*, how his collective will deal with the challenge of AI.

Sina: Speaks to current experience on AI operations board, and personal goal for students not to get unfairly penalised over the use of AI.

Tyberius: Asks whether the university will take a stance on technology companies which are on the BDS list.

Sina: States that the UTSSA is against this.

Tyberius: Raises that at NUS National Conference in 2024, Student Unity factionally voted against anti-war motions such as motion 4.6. Asks if UTS Unity is splintering from their 'Fire Up!' election platform.

Neeve: Responds in the negative.

Tyberius: Raises Student Unity voting down the Abolish the Colleges motion at National Conference.

Neeve: States that motion was written poorly, and that 30 minutes was spent negotiating with NLS and Grassroots attempting to improve it. States that whilst there was desire to vote up motion, we (Unity) weren't comfortable with wording. Speaks to wanting colleges converted into low-income public housing and abolishing the institution. States that Mia's comments at the time were reported badly by student media.

Olivia: Speaks to experience as a University of Sydney student and lack of tangible action around the colleges campaign, which has run for decades with nothing coming from it. Speaks to Women's Collective motion at University of Sydney and need better action which the motion at National Conference didn't provide.

Neeve: Affirms their stance that the Abolish the Colleges campaign has been going on since the 1930s and nothing has come of it. States that supporting this campaign is a very easy way for groups to say they're doing something tangible when they're actually not. Cites the Red Zone Report which also recommends reform rather than abolition of colleges.

10. Close of Meeting at [7:47pm]

Appendix 1: Office Bearer Reports

1. President

I am looking forward to returning from leave on the 10th of February and getting back into the year! December and early January were super busy, so here is an update on the work completed before I went away and a few other notes for upcoming events.

FIRST: O'Week – Sign Up!

All members of the SRC are expected to help with the UTSSA's stall during O'Week on the 11th and 12th of February, UNLESS you are an office bearer that is already running your own stall. If you haven't already, please sign up for a time slot using this link: [O'Day Sign-Up Sheet](#). If everyone does two hours, no one will have to be on the stall all day/both days! Support your fellow SRC members please!!

Campaign Summaries / UTSSA Admin

It was a priority of mine in early January to create detailed campaign summaries for the successful and continuing campaigns ran by the UTSSA last year. These are now almost complete, as I left my diary in Australia and am waiting to fill in a few more details from meeting notes that I took throughout 2024. Hopefully these can be a good resource for OBs and future Presidents to model campaigns from, and can help the UTSSA develop tried and tested campaign strategies and a bit more institutional knowledge across terms.

This year, I'd also like to be more hands-on in helping the OBs find their footing in their roles, so as I mentioned earlier in the year, please reach out to me if you'd like to have a meeting to discuss any of your campaign/event plans.

Course Cuts Campaign

I have drafted an open letter to the Vice-Chancellor about course cuts, which will be shared via the UTSSA Instagram for students to sign in support of the campaign. I have shared this with Samiha for comments and any recommended adjustments, and will be ideally able to share this for signature during O' Week as well as through the UTSSA Instagram.

Know Your Academic Rights Campaign

I'm planning a social media campaign alongside the UTSSA caseworkers, Samiha and Januka to inform students about their academic rights and responsibilities, particularly around appeals, special considerations, and grade reviews. This initiative is part of our broader effort to empower students with the knowledge they need to navigate academic challenges effectively. This will involve short Instagram reels launched throughout Spring semester showcasing different UTS policies.

Campaign for Palestine

In December, I sent a letter to the Vice-Chancellor on behalf of the NTEU and the UTSSA regarding UTS's partnership with the Israel Institute of Technology (Technion). The letter called for an end to any institutional relationships with Technion due to its involvement in the Israeli weapons industry and military apparatus, which contribute to war crimes and crimes against humanity in Gaza. We cited recent international rulings, including the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court, which compel action against entities like Technion. The letter also highlighted safety concerns raised by Palestinian students on campus, emphasising the ethical and moral imperative for UTS to sever ties with Technion.

The letter sought confirmation on the following points:

1. That there is no current Student Exchange Agreement (SEA) with any Israeli university and no plans for new exchange programs.
2. The expiration date of the current Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Technion and assurance it will not be renewed.
3. Details about any ongoing research relationships with Technion and plans to end them.

We offered to meet with the Vice-Chancellor to discuss this issue further. I will keep the SRC updated on any response I receive to this letter.

Looking forward to the year ahead, and I hope everyone has had a restful break. See you all for O' Week!

2. General Secretary

This time of year is usually the busiest for the General Secretary role, in a concise summary, my general responsibilities over the past couple of months have been:

- 1- Finalising and completing the UTSSA diaries, these should be scheduled to be delivered to the office at the end of the month, and handed out on O'week at the main UTSSA stall
- 2- Contacting all incoming Office Bearers, re updating the UTSSA website with relevant information for the 2025 elected team, I have yet to receive all responses, so I would encourage all to do so if you haven't already
- 3- Attendance at the National Union of Students annual conference, which you can read more detail about in my specific report for that event.
- 4- Updating last year's minutes for regular SRC meetings into the standardised template that the UTSSA General Secretary/ Assistant General Secretary will use going forward. These are to be put on notice and moved on block at this meeting.

- 5- Liaising with Vertigo regarding the Working Group which is due to commence during Autumn semester, as well as approving their full first edition of the year

3. Assistant General Secretary

Over the past month, I have been focused on bringing the Website up to date and preparing for O-Week.

1. Website Improvements

Improvements to the website are in progress, this includes bringing everything up to date for 2025 and any minor improvements to the website.

As a part of this OB's have been emailed requesting if they want any changes to their own pages, especially if they want to include a unique plan for 2025 on the page.

Another element of the website that I am to make use of is its Event's section which I've also asked OB's to provide me their events throughout the year so they can be posted on it and hopefully increase engagement.

2. O-Week Preparations

As O-Week approaches, I have been focused on assisting Collectives as much as possible to be prepared to effectively attract new members via Social media.

"Meet Your Collectives" Is my focus with this as a continuation of last year's "Meet your Reps" but primarily to showcase Collectives as I believe they are the first step for students to engage and bring issues to the UTSSA.

I've also been looking at general improvements for the main UTSSA booth operates including a new question on registration forms introducing Collectives to drive more people towards them.

3. Work in December

In late December for the President, I worked to create an organised list of the spending approved by SRC over the last year. While also assisting the General Secretary in updating minutes from last year to a new template.

4. Future Goals

Over the next month, I intend to:

Continue improving the website including events and bringing all information up to date with the assistance of OB's

Continue the “Meet Your Collectives” initiative with the aim of being prepared for O-Week.

4. Education Officer

While I have been away on leave for the most part, I have focused on planning and setting priorities to address key student concerns. While much progress has not been made yet, there is a lot at stake I want to go ahead. For which planning to advocate for universal lecture recordings with closed captions, expand online learning options, and improve timetabling systems. These initiatives will aim to create a more inclusive academic experience for students.

In collaboration with the Disability Collective, I am planning events to help students better understand and utilise the accessibility services provided at UTS, ensuring they can fully partake in their learning.

Additionally, I will be attending the Academic Administration Group meeting to raise these issues and ensure they are on the agenda for future action. Though much remains in the planning stages, I am committed to driving these initiatives forward in the coming months. Also keen to see the implementation of the 72-hour Simple Extensions Policy which is now in effect?!

5. Welfare Officer

Hi everyone! My name is Neeve Nagle, and I’m excited to be serving as the Welfare Officer for the UTSSA this year. I’m deeply passionate about student advocacy, particularly when it comes to improving the everyday experiences of UTS students. Whether it’s fighting for fair academic policies, better living conditions, or greater access to essential services, my goal is to ensure that every student feels supported, empowered, and heard.

As someone who has personally benefited from the incredible work of the UTSSA and its collectives, I’m thrilled to be contributing to this ongoing legacy of positive change. I’m looking forward to working with all of you throughout the year to continue building a fairer and more inclusive university for everyone.

Campaign for UTS Housing

This month, I have dedicated significant time to preparing a detailed paper for the Student Council Liaison Group (SCLG), calling for urgent reforms to address the ongoing issues faced by UTS Housing residents. Students have consistently raised concerns about rising rent, declining living standards, and the removal of key benefits, with little to no transparency from UTS Housing on the rationale behind these changes. As a UTS Housing resident and the Welfare Officer of the UTSSA, I believe it is crucial to take meaningful action to improve the quality of student housing and ensure greater legal protections for residents.

The paper will emphasise the need for accountability, transparency, and a commitment to addressing the concerns of UTS Housing residents. To strengthen the proposal, the Welfare Collective has engaged professional tenancy solicitors to review the UTS Housing Licence Agreement. I personally contacted several firms, outlining the issues faced by residents and obtaining quotes. The selected firm has extensive experience with licence agreements, including work on contracts for Macquarie University, and is currently conducting a detailed review to identify critical issues and provide actionable recommendations.

In addition to the contract review, I have been conducting academic research to support the paper and consulting with student representatives from other universities, such as UNSW and ANU, to benchmark other practices for on-campus housing. This thorough approach will ensure that the paper is well-informed and reflects the voices of UTS students.

By the time of my next report for the February SRC, the paper will be finalised and submitted for consideration at the March SCLG meeting. I will include a detailed summary of the submission and any updates on its progress in my next report.

Campaign for Permanent Locations for Bluebird Brekkie and Night Owl Noodles

This month, I have begun work on a campaign to secure permanent locations for the UTSSA's Bluebird Brekkie and Night Owl Noodles programs. To start, I met with Mariah, the Executive Officer of the UTSSA, to discuss the history of these programs, how they are managed, the changes implemented this year, and the challenges they face, including frequent cancellations or relocations.

I have also gathered evidence showing that the university has previously requested these food services be moved to more student-focused spaces. All of this information will be compiled into a paper for the Student Council Liaison Group (SCLG), similar to the strategy used in the UTS Housing campaign. This will enable us to formally request a response from the university.

I don't anticipate this will be a contentious issue, as the university has already acknowledged in the Future Needs Analysis of the Student Association the importance of establishing permanent locations for Bluebird Brekkie and Night Owl Noodles to meet growing demand. The university has indicated these provisions should be in place by 2025, but further engagement is needed to confirm this timeline.

The location we are currently pursuing is a retail space within the concourse; however, we remain open to negotiating with the university, provided the outcome is realistic and beneficial for all stakeholders, including UTSSA staff and the teams running Bluebird Brekkie and Night Owl Noodles.

To ensure our proposal is well-informed, I also plan to reach out to student representatives at other universities to learn about their free food services and how they are managed.

Similar to the previous campaign, by the time of my February SRC report, the finalised proposal will be submitted to the March SCLG meeting. I will include updates and further details in my next report.

O'Day Preparation

O-Day is just around the corner, and I'm absolutely thrilled to welcome new students to the university and ensure the UTSSA's message is heard far and wide. This year, I'll be hosting my first-ever stall for the Welfare Collective, and I'm determined to make it an engaging and impactful experience.

I've already started preparing materials for the day. On the advice of the previous Welfare Officer, I'll be bringing back food giveaways, which were a huge success in drawing students to the stall. However, I also want to highlight the fantastic wins the UTSSA achieved last year, such as the introduction of 11:59 pm assignment deadlines, three-day simple extensions, and capping late penalties at 5%. These are significant victories that benefit every UTS student, regardless of their involvement in larger societies or groups.

Since every student at UTS is working towards a degree and submits assignments, I want to showcase these achievements in an interactive and memorable way. Whether it's through a game, a voting activity, or another engaging method, we'll make sure students understand how these wins are directly tied to the work of the Welfare Collective and the UTSSA.

I'm also excited about the opportunity to sign up plenty of new members to the Welfare Collective. To add a personal touch, I've been making friendship bracelets to give out at the stall—I think it's a fun and welcoming gesture that will resonate with students.

I'm confident this year's O-Day will be a fantastic opportunity to connect with new students, celebrate our collective achievements, and build a stronger community within the Welfare Collective.

Overall, January has been an incredibly productive month and a strong start for the Welfare Collective. I'm hopeful that this momentum sets the tone for a successful and impactful year ahead.

6. Women's Officer

The past month I have been focusing on my O-Week stall. This has included recruiting volunteers to help out on the stall which I have been very successful with. I am also in the process of reaching out to possible partnership opportunities such as working with Reproductive Equity to promote their campaign around free contraception. I have also reached out to multiple period product companies to potentially get some free products to hand out.

In February, I will be speaking at the USyd Student Safety Conference with a panel of student representatives on sexual violence and prevention strategies in universities. I am particularly enthusiastic about speaking to the work that the UTSSA has achieved in the last year in improving the university's reporting systems.

In terms of events, I am in the process of organising a WoCo welcome drinks for this February. In March, I am currently working with a martial arts business in Darlinghurst who has kindly offered to run a free self-defense course for WoCo. I will also be working on a joint event with the Taylor Swift Society and the Music Society to run a music night fundraiser.

7. International Students' Officer

This January, the International Students' Collective of UTSSA has continued its efforts foster collaboration, advocate for the well-being of international students, and build stronger engagement opportunities. Below is a summary of the key initiatives and activities undertaken during December 2024 and January 2025.

1. Meeting with UTS Indian Society – 19 December 2024

I met with the President of the UTS Indian Society to discuss their upcoming Holi event. They requested my assistance with booking a venue for their event. However, after evaluating the proposal, I determined that it did not align with the goals and benefits of the International Students' Collective. Consequently, I decided not to move forward with this request.

2. Housing Crisis Conference with Jenny Leong – 3 December 2024

I attended a conference led by Jenny Leong at the Inner West Pride Centre, Newtown Town Hall, where discussions focused on the housing crisis. During this event, I raised the challenges faced by international students regarding housing, highlighting the financial and accommodation struggles that significantly impact their well-being. This advocacy served an essential step toward raising awareness and ensuring that international students' voices are included in broader policy discussions on housing issues.

3. Election as Education Officer for NSW International Student Representative Committee – 23 December 2024

I was honored to be elected as the Education Officer for the NSW International Student Representative Committee. In this role, I am committed to advocating for educational and welfare-related policies that directly benefit international students and enhance the academic and personal experiences in New South Wales.

4. Collaboration with UTS Safety Caseworkers – 20 January 2025

I held a meeting with Holly Choli and her team of UTS Safety Caseworkers to establish a collaborative framework for addressing safety concerns among international students. As part of this collaboration:

Any international student facing security concerns or sexual abuse can be referred to their team for immediate consultation and support.

In exchange, I have committed to promoting their safety initiatives, updates, and resources through the International Students' Collective's social media platforms and WhatsApp groups.

This partnership aims to provide international students with a reliable safety network while enhancing awareness of available resources.

5. Meeting with Catherine Nguyen, International Student Ambassador – 16 January 2025

I met with Catherine Nguyen, an International Student Ambassador from the Faculty of Engineering & IT (FEIT), to discuss the 2025 Student Engagement Plan. This meeting emphasized understanding the needs of FEIT international students and building engagement within their community. Plans for collaboration in 2025 were explored, focusing on improving communication channels and organizing events tailored to FEIT students.

6. Advocacy for OPAL Card Concession – 16 January 2025

Alongside the SUPRA Chair, I held a meeting with Alex MP to discuss the OPAL card concession for international students. Alex has offered his support by connecting us with the Transport Minister. The next steps involve drafting a new e-petition incorporating IPART recommendations and seeking approval from Parliament and the Transport Department. Alex has also agreed to review and refine the content of this petition, which is critical in moving this advocacy forward.

7. Assistance with ABC Radio Interview on Discrimination – 15 January 2025

I assisted Scout Wallen, a journalist from ABC Hobart, in connecting with a student from the international community for her story on the experiences of discrimination among international students in Australia. The student, who preferred to remain anonymous, shared their experiences regarding social isolation, exclusion, and fears of visa repercussions, as highlighted in the Human Rights Commission's interim report. Their interview will be aired on ABC Radio in February, shedding light on this pressing issue.

8. Support for Sydney Morning Herald Story on Housing Costs – 27 January 2025

Nicholas Osiowy, a journalist from the Sydney Morning Herald, reached out to discuss the impact of rising student housing costs in Sydney. I facilitated a connection between him and an international student who has been significantly affected by these challenges, including being priced out of accommodations like Scape and Iglu. Their meeting is scheduled for the first week of February, and this engagement is expected to bring much-needed attention to the housing crisis faced by international students.

In conclusion, the activities undertaken in December and January have strengthened collaboration with key stakeholders, raised awareness about pressing issues like housing and safety, and advanced advocacy efforts for international students' welfare. These initiatives reflect our commitment to building a supportive and inclusive environment for international students at UTS.

8. Indigenous Officer

At the start of this year, I had the opportunity to work in Broken Hill, a remote community in Far West NSW. This experience allowed me to engage deeply with the local community and gain a new perspective on building connections within smaller groups. One of the most impactful parts of my time there was participating in Friday morning walks with a group of young Indigenous men like myself. These walks created a safe space for us to share our challenges, support one another, and build strong bonds. After each walk, we would come together to cook a BBQ for the homeless, it was a great way to give back to the community.

This experience inspired me to consider how I could bring a similar sense of connection and purpose to the UTS community, particularly among students in UTS housing. My proposal is to establish a weekly walking group modelled after the one in Broken Hill. The group would meet early on Friday mornings at 6 a.m., walking around Darling Harbour and concluding with a BBQ at the front of Yura Mudang (UTS Accommodation).

This initiative aligns closely with my commitment to raising awareness about mental health and creating a sense of belonging here at Uni. By providing students with an outlet to connect, express themselves, and discuss the challenges they face, the walking group would create a supportive environment that promotes both physical and mental well-being.

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR MOB AT UNI

This year, I will be working closely with Jumbunna (the indigenous sector of UTS) as I have built a great relationship with them over the years, and with this collaboration, I will be getting a weekly rundown of the different identified opportunities that companies have reached out to UTS for, from there, I can distribute the opportunities via a fortnightly mail dispersion newsletter.

COLLABORATING WITH ANOTHER OFFICER FOR ART

Another community engagement idea I have gathered from Broken Hill. I am working on an art project with the Indigenous high school Clontarf program in Broken Hill. This collaboration involves designing their training uniform and creating a mural for the hospital we are currently

working on.

I would love the opportunity to collaborate with a fellow officer to create some UTSSA merchandise, either for the student association or for the university. I've had the privilege of creating art for the university in the past with Unigames, and it was a rewarding experience. I would be honoured to contribute again and work with someone on this project!

PALESTINIAN CAMPAIGNS

I am VERY much interested in becoming more involved with Palestinian campaigns and showing my support through these events. Please keep me informed about any opportunities where I can contribute and help out in this important area.

ODAY

Unfortunately, I will still be in Broken Hill for work until the 17th of February, which means I won't be able to attend O'Day. However, if there are any online administrative tasks or other work needed for O'Week, please don't hesitate to reach out

Plenty more to come, these are the focus points of January/Early February,

I look forward to an even more successful year!

9. Postgraduate Students' Officer

N/A

10. Ethnocultural Officer

Work with UTS Staff and the Technion Letter

One key focus over the past few months has been the collaboration with UTS staff to address concerns regarding UTS's partnership with Technion. Alongside other student representatives and allies, I'm working on a letter to Vice-Chancellor Andrew Parfitt, urging the university to reconsider its relationship with Technion due to its complicity in the oppression of Palestinians. This initiative aligns with our commitment to advocating for justice, ethical partnerships, and the decolonisation of our institutions.

Preparations for O-Day

In preparation for O-Day, I've been working behind the scenes to ensure the Ethnocultural Collective's presence is engaging and impactful. This has included contacting various organisations, such as the ALS (Aboriginal Legal Services), to request flyers and promotional materials to distribute at our stall. We aim to make our space

inclusive and representative, encouraging students from diverse cultural backgrounds to get involved and feel supported.

Additionally, we've been working on designing and printing Ethnocultural Collective flyers that outline our mission, upcoming initiatives, and ways for students to engage. These preparations reflect our commitment to fostering a vibrant and connected ethnocultural community at UTS.

Behind-the-Scenes Work

Although I've been away for the past six weeks, the collective has remained active behind the scenes. During this time, we've focused on creating resources, including educational and advocacy-based flyers, to support our campaigns throughout the year. These resources will be valuable tools for future events, campaigns, and collaborations.

Looking Ahead

While much of the recent work has been behind the scenes, the upcoming months will focus on building momentum for our campaigns and increasing student engagement. O-Day will be a key opportunity to grow our network and raise awareness of the collective's work. Furthermore, we aim to continue pushing for accountability and ethical decision-making at UTS, particularly in relation to our advocacy for Palestine.

11. Disabilities Officer

The last few weeks for the Disabilities Collective has largely been dedicated to setting up the collective for O'Day and the year ahead.

In terms of social media, I have been able to grow the collective's following by reposting things, and becoming more active and establishing a presence online. I created a linktree to put into the social media bio's, and posted an introduction graphic to the collective instagram explaining who I am, the goals that I have for the collective this year, and a recap of the December SRC meeting. I would also like to start posting monthly UTSSA Meeting Recaps/Updates to not only keep the collective up to date with the Disabilities Office, but also make the UTSSA more accessible to the student body.

In other news, I have started on my election commitment of an accessible technologies database. As of January, it is a spreadsheet which I am building out with different kinds of technologies that can assist in the day to day lives of students. I have also started compiling a UTS Disabilities Collective Master Document on Accessible practices for event organising, social media and other student union related activities that could be made more accessible.

Summary

- Social Media
 - Introduction post on social media
 - Created a Linktree
 - Monthly SRC recaps to make stupol/UTSSA more accessible
- Election Commitments
 - Started a spreadsheet for the accessible technologies database
- Misc

- Started at UTS DisCo Guide/Master Doc to Accessibility

12. Queer Officer

N/A

13. Environment Officer

The following are some updates on what I've been working on to start the year off strong:

Updating branding:

As the collective is transitioning to the Environment and Technology collective, a new logo has been adopted to reflect this change. An Instagram has also been made about the change as well as the events the collective is planning on running.

O'day:

I have spent some time preparing to run an O'day stall for my collective. Similar to last year's stall, I have purchased seed packets to give away on the day. This time they have been ordered with the branding of the collective as well as a linktree link on the packets themselves in order to make joining easier for people visiting the stall. I am also planning to have some other prizes that people who join the collective and follow socials can randomly win.

Events:

I am in the process of organising a few events over the next couple of months. This includes a trivia night in February where attendees can learn about sustainability and socialise. I am also working to organise a community garden volunteering day in early March. I am in contact with quite a few community gardens near UTS to see if any are interested. I am also hoping to work on this event with volunteering centred clubs such as The Big Lift and UTS Red Cross. I have been in contact in both and they have both shown interest in being involved with this event.

Work to be done:

Outside of the above projects, I am hoping to work on a few other tasks over the coming weeks. I am planning to update the collective's page on the website to reflect my goals for the year and to provide information about the transition to Environment and Technology. I am also hoping to organise a movie night for the collective towards the end of March as a third event that I can advertise on O'day

Appendix 2: NUS National Conference Reports

1. Mia Campbell

In December 2025, I attended the National Union of Students (NUS) National Conference as an NUS delegate and representative of the UTSSA. This was an important opportunity to engage in national-level discussions about the state of student politics and contribute meaningfully to the direction of the NUS.

My primary focus at the conference was on reforming the NUS to ensure it is more effective, inclusive, and representative of student interests. I proposed six motions, five of which were passed:

1. **Promoting Respect in Student Politics at NatCon** – Aimed at addressing aggressive and divisive behaviours during debates and fostering a more respectful culture.
2. **Fixing Governance for Everyone** – This motion was amended to establish a working group, with input from all member unions, to continue the reform efforts I initiated last year.
3. **Empowering Office Bearers to Excel** – Focused on improving training and support for office bearers to help them succeed in their roles.
4. **Bridging the Gap with Member Unions** – Sought to strengthen communication and collaboration between the NUS and its member unions.
5. **Opposition to Caps on International Students and Support for Higher Education Quality** – Highlighted the importance of opposing the proposed caps on international student numbers while ensuring quality education.

The only motion that did not pass was **Improving the Public Perception of Universities** (due to this being moved en bloc with other controversial motions) which aimed to address reputational challenges facing universities in Australia.

Overall, the conference was far better organised than the 2023 NatCon, with smoother logistical arrangements and more structured sessions. However, I remain concerned about the incredibly fast-paced environment of the NUS National Conference, which continuously made meaningful discussions and debates difficult. This reinforced my resolve to focus on reforming the structure and timetable of future conferences to allow for more substantive engagement.

The most significant outcome from the conference, for me, was the establishment of the working group under the amended governance motion that I put up. This group will build on the foundation of the NUS Reform Working Group I established last year, ensuring that governance changes reflect broad consultation and

collaboration. Attending this conference reaffirmed my commitment to creating a more transparent, accountable, and accessible NUS.

2. Adam Levett

The NUS National Conference this year was out of the two others I have attended, generally sound and unremarkable.

For those unaware, these conferences generally consist of inter-factional screaming matches, whilst a small handful of retiring office bearers all flock to take credit for the singular major achievement that came out of the NUS this year like seagulls over a stray potato chip (which this year happened to be the National Student Ombudsman).

To put any specific factional commentary aside regarding the conduct on conference floor, the NUS national conference has never been a place for particular impactful or productive debate. As due to the way the conferences are structured, the same issues seem to appear year after year without remedy:

- A) Takes way too long for basic processes such as daily registration and entry (which at times took hours)
- B) Often allows speakers in earlier policy chapters to talk for way too long on singular motions without relevancy or strict speaking times, which leaves chapters scheduled later in the conference to be skimmed over on block
- C) Inconsistent and often non-binding accessibility rules which are more often than not enforced by the whim of the willingness (or unwillingness) of various political groups
- D) A repetitive and unproductive cycle of debate, which more often than not acts as banal public practice on the same handful of issues/ trash-talk session on the ALP, rather than productive knowledge-sharing on micro-university level issues (which is what in my opinion would make these conferences more valuable).

Many of the motions which I contributed were within the disabilities chapter, (which as I mentioned on conference floor at the time), across various states/factions contained the types of policy which should occur more often at these conferences, stuff we can take back to our own student unions and tangibly implement.

3. Olivia Lee

Last December UTS attended NatCon. I attended as an accredited observer, taking on votes where needed. I brought multiple policies including a policy on mandating SASH prevention training for clubs and societies, free identified queer counsellors on campus which were successfully passed. I also brought a moo deng motion which was shamefully, however understandably withdrawn.

I also spoke on a range of motions around welfare, women's, disabilities and student unionism. I felt that the UTS group were well represented at NatCon and that they all spoke and behaved extremely well.

This was my second time attending NatCon with the first being in 2023. The conference this time around had major improvements in accessibility having a quiet room, captions, auslan clapping (observed by some)

and earplugs available. Nonetheless, awful, inaccessible behaviour still continued to be observed. I am yet to see a NatCon that is truly productive and worthwhile.

4. Neeve Ann Nagle

The National Union of Students' National Conference (NatCon) provided a valuable opportunity for student representatives to engage in critical discussions about policies affecting students across Australia. As a delegate, I actively contributed by drafting motions, participating in debates, and advocating for the interests and values of the UTS Students' Association (UTSSA). While the conference showed some progress in fostering collaboration and meaningful dialogue, it also highlighted ongoing challenges around inclusivity and respect that require urgent attention.

Key Contributions

One of my key contributions to NatCon was drafting six motions aimed at addressing pressing issues that impact students. These motions sought to ensure that student voices were reflected in the policy outcomes of the conference. Among these, I spoke passionately on motions close to my heart, including:

- Improving regional access to abortion services.
- Strengthening protections for victim-survivors of domestic violence.

These topics hold particular significance for me, and my advocacy was informed by lived experience and a commitment to equity and justice. Beyond drafting and speaking on motions, I gained valuable experience participating in negotiations at the committee of governance (COG) table. This role allowed me to engage in detailed discussions, particularly on policies connected to my lived experience in residential housing. I took pride in advocating for meaningful outcomes that represent the needs of UTS students and broader student communities.

Reflections on Representation

I believe that UTS and the UTSSA were well represented at NatCon. Our delegation demonstrated a strong commitment to engaging thoughtfully and constructively on key issues. While I did not agree with all the statements made by various groups, and strongly opposed some, I welcomed the growing spirit of cross-factional collaboration at the conference. Compared to previous years, this NatCon was markedly better organised and far more conducive to productive debate and decision-making.

That said, challenges remain. The conference environment still lacks inclusivity for individuals from vulnerable groups. The culture fostered by the NUS often discourages those with lived experiences from contributing to debates due to the risk of traumatisation. This exclusionary atmosphere undermines the core purpose of NatCon as a platform for all voices to be heard, particularly those from marginalised communities.

Debate Quality and Conduct

The overall maturity of delegates was reflected in the ability of some to engage in robust, proactive debate without resorting to shouting, insults, or threats. I was particularly encouraged by instances of respectful cross-factional dialogue that focused on policy rather than personal differences. However, unprofessional behaviour still lingers and remains a barrier to the credibility of NatCon as a platform for student advocacy. Creating a respectful culture is essential for fostering meaningful and impactful discussions.

Path Forward

I am proud of the way most of the UTSSA delegation conducted itself at this conference, setting a gold standard for university representation. By demonstrating respectful, policy-driven advocacy, we exemplified the importance of mature and constructive engagement. Moving forward, I hope NatCon continues to evolve into a forum where all voices are valued and respected.

5. Ella Haid

As a UTSSA councillor I attended the National Union of Students National Conference in December 2024.

As we enter 2025, students face many reasons to keep fighting. The genocide in Gaza continues to be carried out, and its perpetrators still do so without recourse. After over a year of protests both on and off campuses, pro-palestine and anti-war activists face an increasing level of repression from both university administrations and the federal government. To this end, I was glad to support several motions at this conference not only in support of Palestine but in support of freedom of academic expression and the right to protest. I was, however, disappointed by the opposition of both Labor factions to passing any motions containing explicit condemnation of the Federal Albanese Labor government. Especially as this government continues to support Israel's genocide and has more recently failed to condemn the far-right Trump administration.

I was also glad to discuss the state of higher education across the country. Several universities face significant cuts to jobs and courses, notably at ANU, UOW and UTS. We passed several motions opposing these cuts and the university administrations responsible for them. These were several positive additions to this year's NUS policy book. Going forward, it will be vital for our student union to oppose the for-profit

model of higher education that lays behind these attacks, and carry a perspective of leading the opposition to them. As student unions, our power lies in mobilising students to oppose such attacks on our rights.

6. Yasmine Johnson

The National Union of Students National Conference was a useful experience for those who attended, and saw an important shift in policy towards support for Palestine. I was proud to move a motions supporting Palestine, including 'Peace is union business: NUS opposes Israel's war on Palestine and Lebanon'.

There was also substantial discussion of the attacks on freedom of speech and academic freedoms which have taken place over recent months. At campuses across Australia, policies have been implemented by university management teams which limit the ability to hand out leaflets, put up posters, and post online about political events. This will disproportionately impact the left and is damaging to the fight for social justice issues. This is part of a broader trend which is seeing suppression of the democratic right to protest. State governments have implemented new laws limiting protest activity, and police have targeted organisers. I moved a motion alongside NUS President Naige Bogemann affirming that NUS supports civil liberties and political expression.

NUS has a role to play in the fight for students' rights, including against serious cuts to courses and staff on campuses around the country. But it should also be part of demanding progressive change. That means opposing the government's refusal to tackle injustice and inequality. Issues raised in conference motions reflected this. On Indigenous rights, things are sliding backwards - Closing the Gap reports show that Indigenous incarceration and suicide rates are worsening compared to the general population. Climate change is accelerating, and will do so faster with the approval of 26 new coal and gas projects since Labor was elected. The \$14.4 billion in NDIS cuts over the next four years pushed through by Bill Shorten is a further slap in the face given the shamefully inadequate level of Disability care in Australia. It was positive to see the NUS pass motions demanding more from Labor. But NUS, like unions around the country, will need to fight Labor if we want to see genuine change for students.

7. Sina Afsharmehr

I attended the 2024 NUS National Conference and found it to be a broadly positive experience where I was able to contribute to the discussion about several issues that I am passionate about.

I wrote motions relating to:

- The civil war in the Democratic Republic of Congo
- The civil war in Sudan
- Displacement of Armenian civilians in Nagorno-Karabakh

- The implementation of the workplace justice visa
- Increasing cooperation with community legal centres

I also spoke on motions relating to:

- Multiple motions relating to privatisation, nationalisation and price controls
- Accessibility of counselling services
- Approach of universities to Artificial Intelligence
- Addressing the perception of universities as institutions for the wealthy

While I appreciated the opportunity to speak on these topics and to hear the perspectives of others, I do believe that the quality of debate at this conference could have been better. At times it felt that certain groups were more focused on shouting at their opponents than they were on hearing their perspectives and contributing to solutions. If attendees approached discussions as an opportunity to work together in order improve the students that they are supposed to represent instead of as an opportunity to fight ideological battles, it is possible for the present issues with this conference to be resolved.

8. Salma Elmubasher

Attending NatCon this year offered a mix of encouraging progress and significant challenges, reflecting both the strengths and weaknesses of the national student movement. Below are some key highlights and takeaways from the conference.

Palestine Motions: A Resounding Success

One of the most significant outcomes was the unanimous support for Palestine-related motions. This was a clear win for the student movement, demonstrating solidarity with the Palestinian cause and a commitment to human rights and social justice. This was particularly encouraging for UTS, as it aligns with our ongoing efforts to champion global issues on campus. This unanimous vote also provides a platform to build further political pressure and awareness within our institution and beyond.

Positive Environmental Policies

NatCon also saw the passage of robust policies on environmental sustainability and climate action. These policies offer a roadmap for student unions to advocate for greener campuses and push universities toward divesting fossil fuels. This is an area where UTS has already made strides, and these policies provide further opportunities for us to take the lead in climate activism and sustainability.

Disability Chapter: A Mixed Experience

The disability chapter was a space of both potential and frustration. On one hand, seeing the diversity of perspectives being shared was encouraging. However, the atmosphere in the room was loud and chaotic, with little respect for order or individuals needing quieter environments. This made meaningful engagement difficult for many.

That said, the National Union of Students (NUS) demonstrated its commitment to accessibility and inclusion by providing a quiet room. This space allowed delegates to step away from the noise while still being counted for quorum, ensuring they could participate without being overwhelmed by incessant noise and tension in the main room. For those of us who value accessibility, the quiet room was a much-needed resource and showed how structural changes can create a more inclusive environment.

Women's Chapter: Disrespect and Missed Opportunities

The treatment of the women's chapter was disappointing and indicative of broader issues within the student movement. Contributions were often dismissed or undervalued, particularly those from women from marginalised backgrounds. This highlights the need for more tremendous respect and intentional inclusivity in all chapters, especially when discussing gender equity.

Challenges of Inefficiency

Much of NatCon was unfortunately bogged down by procedural disputes and performative back-and-forth. This inefficiency detracted from meaningful discussions and decision-making. Moving forward, it's clear that structural reforms are needed to make the conference more productive and focused on actionable outcomes.

Key Takeaways for UTS

NatCon highlighted the importance of prioritising effective, actionable policies with a clear escalation plan. For UTS, this means championing social justice issues like Palestine and environmental sustainability while ensuring our activism is grounded in tangible outcomes.

Additionally, we should advocate for reforms within NatCon to create a more respectful and inclusive space, particularly for chapters like women's and Disability. The quiet room was a step in the right direction, and similar measures should be adopted across all aspects of the conference.

Overall, NatCon reaffirmed the power of collective student activism while emphasising the need for more respectful, efficient, and inclusive practices. UTS is well-positioned to lead by example and foster a stronger, more united movement.

9. Omar El-Sobihy

Attending the National Conference (NatCon) for the first time as an SRC member was a whirlwind experience. Entering a space like that, filled with representatives from across the country, was exciting but also overwhelming. It quickly became apparent how intense and, at times, vicious the environment could get. From the floor to the podium, heckling, passive-aggressive comments, and personal attacks were almost constant. The level of factional infighting was unlike anything I had anticipated, creating an atmosphere that often felt more combative than constructive.

One of the most striking moments for me was witnessing how unity could still emerge amidst the chaos. On the topic of Palestine, factions that were otherwise deeply divided came together in solidarity. As someone who

moved and seconded many of these motions, it was heartening to see broad support for such an important cause. Considering how contentious everything else was, this collective agreement stood out as a powerful moment. It was a reminder that, even in such a fragmented space, shared values can bring people together.

However, much of the conference felt stalled and bogged down by procedural issues and factional gamesmanship. The Education and Women's chapters were particularly hard to navigate. While these chapters are crucial for driving meaningful policy, the discussions were often derailed by procedural arguments, endless amendments, and disagreements that made it difficult to fully form and debate ideas. The introduction of the Queer chapter was a significant step forward, but it, too, faced similar roadblocks. Instead of fostering collaboration, the space became an arena for factions to score points against one another.

The factionalism was not limited to policy debates. Personal slandering, pointed heckling, and passive-aggressive remarks were all too common, creating an environment that felt hostile and unproductive at times. It seemed like a lot of energy was spent on tactics designed to frustrate or humiliate other factions rather than focusing on the issues at hand. This dynamic made it challenging to engage meaningfully in discussions and left many wondering if the time spent in conference sessions could have been better used.

Despite these challenges, there were glimpses of progress. The policy book, on paper, looks impressive and includes many important motions and initiatives. But it's hard not to question whether the outcomes of NatCon will translate into tangible change. The factional nature of the space often overshadowed the potential for real collaboration and progress, leaving many chapters feeling like they fell short of their potential.

All in all, NatCon was a mixed experience. It was an invaluable opportunity to see how student politics operates on a national level, but it also highlighted the pitfalls of factionalism and procedural delays. While the moments of unity, particularly around Palestine, were inspiring, the overall effectiveness of the conference felt undermined by the divisive tactics and lack of collaboration. Moving forward, there is much to reflect on in terms of how these spaces can be made more productive and inclusive for all participants.