

WORONI

Australian National University Student Media Incorporated Association

Summary of Constitutional Amendments

Change #1: Added definition of 'Office Bearers'.

Currently there is no definition of 'Office Bearers' within the constitution. This added definition adds clarity for interpretation.

The amended section reads:

2.k. *'Office Bearers' means an executive of the Board of Editors as described in section 7.3.2*

Change #2: Added definition of 'Postgraduate Student'.

Currently there is a definition for 'undergraduate student' but no definition for 'postgraduate student' within the constitution. This added definition, like change #1, adds clarity for interpretation.

The amended section reads

2.l. *'Postgraduate student' means a student enrolled in a unit or program of study for a Masters degree of any postgraduate award of the University.*

Change #3: Added definition of 'Publication'.

Currently there is no definition of 'publication' within the constitution. This added definition adds clarity for interpretation. It also includes the words 'radio and television' that ensures the continual publication of Woroni Radio and Woroni T.V.

The amended section reads

2.m. *'Publication' means any and all media produced by the Association including, but not limited to, Print, Radio and Television.*

Change #4: Added the word 'radio' to 3.a.

Currently there is no mention of 'radio' in the objects of the Association. We feel it is important to add the word 'radio' to ensure its longevity and to acknowledge its growing role in ANUSM.

The amended section reads

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3.a. *to produce interesting, entertaining, informative, recognised and regular content and publications across print, radio, multimedia, and online media forms for the students of the University.*

Change #6: Deleted 7.3.1.d. which read 'five (5) General Editors'. In its place have added 'd) the Content Editor, e) the News Editor, f) the Television Editor, g) the Radio Editor and h) the Art Editor'.

To explain our decision to propose direct elections as a constitutional amendment, we must first explain why we see a need to make a change in the first place, and then explain why direct elections are better than the other alternatives.

As it stands, only the Managing Editor is directly elected to the ANUSM Board, other positions are decided by nominations and an internal vote. Constitutionally, the Board must have an Editor-in-Chief, Deputy Editor-in-Chief, a Managing Editor and five General Editors. Over the past five years these General Editors have taken on the portfolios of: content, news, radio, art, communications, television and multimedia. This arrangement means that there is no guarantee there will always be someone on the Board with a desire to take on each major portfolio – for example, we used our most recent (and fortunately timed) casual vacancy to fill the position of Content Editor because nobody wanted that portfolio. While we admit that Editors are often forced into positions and things generally 'work out', there have been numerous cases of Editor's looking after portfolios they do not care about and do not have the skills to properly manage. There have also been instances when portfolios have just ceased to exist – we had video in 2014, before it was abandoned and relaunched again in 2017 – because nobody with the skills was elected to the Board.

Another issue with the status quo is that election campaigns are generalised. Most candidates discuss the newspaper in their campaigns because they feel like they have to compete with the candidates who want news or content. 'Print' campaigns are the loudest and most recognisable, so those who want radio, art, multimedia and deputy positions often feel that they need to compete or risk being overlooked. In reality, it is ridiculously unfair to ask a radio candidate to run against a news candidate. The status quo is the same as having all the ANUSA executive candidates run against each other and hope one person gets voted in for each role – if not, they just work it out.

So why direct elections?

1. Direct elections will ensure that there is always an Editor for each major portfolio: news, content, television, art and radio.
2. Current Editors will not have to worry that their hard work will be cast aside when their term ends, as there will be a guarantee someone who wants the portfolio will take over.
3. Direct elections will ensure that successful candidates actually get the portfolios they want.
4. Direct elections will allow the members to decide which Editors look after which portfolios.

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5. Direct elections will help minimise the 'drowning out' of voices during election campaigns. Not everyone will be expected to talk about the newspaper, so members will be prompted to decide who is the best candidate for each portfolio, not just who are the best four candidates.
6. Direct elections will enable candidates to have fair debates. In 2016, every candidate was invited to a debate in the Woroni Officer where they were asked very general questions. It was unfair, and left some candidates embarrassed and without answers they had prepared for. Is it fair to ask an art candidate a question about policy? Or a radio candidate a question about news?

The amended section reads

7.3.1 *The Board of Editors has eight (8) members, including:*

- a) *the Editor-in-Chief*
- b) *the Deputy Editor-in-Chief*
- c) *the Managing Editor*
- d) *the Content Editor*
- e) *the News Editor*
- f) *the Television Editor*
- g) *the Radio Editor; and*
- h) *the Art Editor*

Change #7: Added 7.4.3.e.

Instead of simply reading out the amounts in each bank account at each Board meeting as outlined in (d), requiring the Managing Editor to write monthly reports will enable Board members to actually understand ANUSM (and their own portfolio's) financial position. This responsibility will also ensure the Managing Editor stays up to date with their books and financial records, which will be a blessing come audit time.

The amended section reads

7.4.3.e. *prepare and present a financial update to the Board at the conclusion of each term.*

Change #8: Deleted 7.5 'Duties of General Editors'. Added 7.4.4., 7.4.5, 7.4.6., 7.4.7. and 7.4.8.

To align with our direct election proposal, instead of reading 'duties of the general editors' specific editor roles have been added. This is to ensure more accountability on each editor to produce content relative to their portfolio. We have kept the definitions relatively broad so that Editors, in their respective portfolios, still have a lot of flexibility to make the portfolio their own.

The amended section reads

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7.4.4 Content Editor

The Content Editor is a General Editor of the Board. Subject to the Act, the regulations, this Constitution and to any resolution passed by the Association in general meeting, the Content Editor must:

- a) *provide assistance to the Executive Officers of the Association in the performance of their duties; and*
- b) *manage and supervise content sub-editors and contributors of the ANUSM news content, both in print and online.*

7.4.5 News Editor

The News Editor is a General Editor of the Board. Subject to the Act, the regulations, this Constitution and to any resolution passed by the Association in general meeting, the News Editor must:

- a) *provide assistance to the Executive Officers of the Association in the performance of their duties; and*
- b) *manage and supervise news sub-editors and contributors of to the news portfolio, both in print and online.*

7.4.6 Television Editor

The Television Editor is a General Editor of the Board. Subject to the Act, the regulations, this Constitution and to any resolution passed by the Association in general meeting, the Television Editor must:

- a) *provide assistance to the Executive Officers of the Association in the performance of their duties; and*
- b) *manage and supervise television sub-editors and contributors to the television portfolio.*

7.4.7 Radio Editor

The Radio Editor is a General Editor of the Board. Subject to the Act, the regulations, this Constitution and to any resolution passed by the Association in general meeting, the Radio Editor must:

- a) *provide assistance to the Executive Officers of the Association in the performance of their duties; and*
- b) *manage and supervise radio sub-editors and contributors to the radio portfolio.*

7.4.8 Art Editor

The Art Editor is a General Editor of the Board. Subject to the Act, the regulations, this Constitution and to any resolution passed by the Association in general meeting, the Art editor must:

- a) *provide assistance to the Executive Officers of the Association in the performance of their duties; and*
- b) *manage and supervise art sub-editors and the design contributors of all ANUSM's publications.*

Change #9: Added 'in their specific editor roles' to 7.5.

Adds clarity for the direct election amendments made in change #8.

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The amended section reads:

7.5 Election of the Board of Editors *The Board of Editors is a rotational committee. Except where the contrary intention appears, four Members of the Board shall be elected by the ordinary members of the Association every six (6) calendar months to replace four retiring Members of the Board in their specific editorial roles.*

Change #10: Added 7.5.2.

We want to make sure those who are elected to a specific editorial position fulfil the role that they were elected to. This system also allows a degree of specialisation to occur over the twelve (12) calendar months. This will allow editors to hone their editorial skills in one area of the association and in doing so produce and maintain a better quality of content.

The amended section reads:

7.5.2 *Once elected to the Board, Members of the Board may not bar from the Editorial role to which they were elected, with the exception of those that are internally elected to be Editor-In-Chief in the following election cycle.*

Change #11: Added 'three (3) specific Editor' and 'a separate ballot is distributed for' to 7.5.6.

Ensures a direct election system works.

The amended section reads

7.5.6. *With the exception of casual vacancies, if the office of the Managing Editor becomes vacant the immediate subsequent election is to be for three (3) specific Editor positions and the Managing Editor. The Board must ensure that a separate ballot is distributed for each Editor position.*

Change #12: Added 'four (4) specific Editor' and 'a separate ballot is distributed for' to 7.5.7.

Like the above change, this change in wording ensures that the direct election system works.

The amended section reads

7.5.7. *With the exception of casual vacancies, if the office of the Managing Editor becomes vacant the immediate subsequent election is to be for three (3) specific Editor positions and the Managing Editor. The Board must ensure that a separate ballot is distributed for each Editor position.*

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Change #13: Added 'c) be accompanied by a list of the positions that are vacant in the cycle' and 'g) be held on a separate poll for each Editorial position that is to be filled in that cycle' to 7.5.8.

Like the above changes, these added parts ensure that the direct election system works.

The amended section reads

7.5.8 Elections for the Board must:

- a) be held by online ballot open to all ordinary members of the Association;
- b) be accompanied by at least two (2) official notices of the election delivered to all ordinary members of the Association by email at least once each week in the Two weeks preceding the election;
- c) be accompanied by a list of the positions that are vacant in that cycle;
- d) be accompanied by prominent and informative notices posted at the primary thoroughfares at each College and in Union Court; and
- e) be held over the course of five (5) consecutive academic days.
- f) be held in the last week of the teaching period of the semester prior to vacancies being created.
- g) be held on a separate poll for each Editorial position that is to be filled in that cycle.

Change #14: Added 'a) be invited by email at least five (5) weeks prior to the opening of the poll. Invitation must be sent by the Returning Officer via email to all ordinary members of the Association'.

Ensures that only ordinary members of the association can be nominated to fill a vacancy on the board.

9.(a). *Be invited by email at least five (5) weeks prior to the opening of the poll. Invitation must be sent by the Returning Officer via email to all ordinary members of the association .*

Change #15: Added 'and is relevant to the Editorial role they wish to fill' to 9.(b).

Similar to Change #10 we want to ensure that applicants applying for a position can show they have the necessary skills in that area. Previously the requirements have been quite open-ended such that someone with only print experience could apply for T.V. editor. We want to limit this from happening. For example, under this new change if you apply for radio editor it would be expected you have a background in radio.

The amended section reads

9.(b). *Be made to the Returning Officer at least three (3) weeks prior to the opening of the poll and include the name, student number, year of study, on (10 example of written, video-graphic, photographic or multimedia work which is the original work of the nominee and is relevant to the*

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Editorial role they wish to fill, a short biography of two hundred (200) words or less, and any other submission the current board members deem necessary.

Change #16: Moved 9.(d) to its own line.

Ensures clarity of constitutional interpretation.

The amended section reads

7.5.10 *following the close of nomination period, each nomination is to be displayed online (excluding student number) during the two (2) weeks prior to the opening of the poll and be viewed online by all voting ordinary members of the Association prior to casting their ballots;*

Change #17: Re-worded 7.5.12.

Ensures that the direction election system works.

The amended section reads

7.5.12. *Ascertaining result of poll*

(a) Each poll is to be conducted by optional preferential vote

(b) The four (4) valid nominated ordinary members with the most votes in their respective polls following the distribution of preferences shall be declared elected to the board.

Change #18: Changed 7.6.1. to add a vote for EIC before end of election

We feel the board members who have been on the board for six (6) months will have a good and reasoned idea about who should be elected as the next Editor-In-Chief. Further, the EIC should be someone who has already spent a semester on the Board. This ensures they do not have to learn on the job and already have an understanding of what needs to improve and how policy and financials work.

As it stands the EIC is elected in the first Board meeting when the next terms begin. This means handover cannot occur until this meeting and that the outgoing EIC is often unable to give handover the attention it deserves. If the EIC was elected prior to the nomination period they would be able to shadow the current EIC for eight weeks before their new position took effect. This would ensure that the EIC gets a handover, which has not occurred properly in the past.

Electing the EIC prior to the election makes direct elections possible. If this were not the case, the board members would only know what three of the four available positions were.

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Change #19: Have made DEIC a roll that can be filled through a direct election

As it stands the role of DEIC is too look after the constitution and maintain records. Opening this up to direct election will allow those who are interested in constitutional interpretation an opportunity to fulfil such a role. Also, Deputy Editor-in-Chief is a role that can be learnt on the job, and that doesn't require a huge amount of handover. Due to DEIC having the lightest workloads of all the portfolios we envision this role will become the creative and flexible portfolio where candidates will be able to run with projects in mind.

The amended section reads

7.6.2. The positions for Managing Editor and Deputy Editor-In-Chief are filled through a direct election by members of the association.