



Arc @ UNSW Postgraduate Council Charter

Approved By	Postgraduate Council, Board
Approval Date	18 August 2011, 12 November 2013, 14 April 2014, 21 September 2015, 31 October 2016, 2 December 2019
Related Documents	Arc Constitution, Arc Regulations, Arc Student Representative Council Charter, Allowance Policy
To be reviewed	Annually

This Charter is designed to assist Office Bearers and Councillors fulfil and understand their duties as Office Bearers and Councillors of the Postgraduate Council (PGC) of Arc @ UNSW Limited (Arc). It is essential that members of the PGC read this Charter. This Charter must be read in conjunction with Arc's Constitution, Regulations and Allowance Policy.

1. What is Arc?

Arc was formed in 2007 at the University of New South Wales (UNSW) as the response to the implementation of Voluntary Student Unionism. Arc is a separate organisation to UNSW and has been constituted as a public company limited by guarantee. Arc is here for and led by students, to create supportive, enriching and vibrant communities. Arc encourages students to take part in a life changing university experience.

2. What is the Postgraduate Council?

2.1 The Role of the Postgraduate Council

As a public company, Arc is subject to the Corporations Act 2001. The Act clearly establishes that the Board is ultimately responsible for all matters relating to the operations of Arc.

The Postgraduate Council represents the postgraduate students of UNSW to the University administration, all levels of government, the local community and peak national representative bodies. Postgraduate student representation is provided through the PGC, individual Office Bearers and

Councillors. The PGC deals with all representation issues that are specific to postgraduate students, whose needs and student experiences are different to those of the undergraduate students.

The composition of the Postgraduate Council is set out in the regulations of Arc. The PGC is comprised of Office Bearers and Councillors. The Chair of the Board, the President of the Student Representative Council, and the Arc Canberra Committee President and Advocacy Officer are ex-officio voting members of the PGC. The Chief Executive Officer of Arc and the student members of the UNSW Council and UNSW Academic Board are ex-officio, non-voting members of the Postgraduate Council. The Presidents of the Art & Design Student Council, Inter-Residential Council and Student Representative Forum members may have a standing invitation to Postgraduate Council meetings.

Without intending to limit the general governance role of the Postgraduate Council, the specific or principal functions and responsibilities will include:

- Formulating strategies and campaigns, and ensuring that Postgraduate Council members work towards their implementation;
- Reviewing the Postgraduate Council annual budget;
- Liaising with the Student Representative Council;
- Recommending / determining the roles and responsibilities of Office Bearers; and
- Delegation of authority to the President, Office Bearers and Councillors,

On matters and student issues that are seen by the PGC to not be specific to postgraduate students (that is, they affect all students equally and whose effects are the same on both postgraduate and undergraduate students), the PGC will inform and liaise with the Student Representative Council to determine their position on these issues.

2.2 General Roles of the Councillors

The general role of the Councillors includes, but is not limited to:

- Representing students of the Councillors' electorates at PGC meetings by raising and discussing student issues;
- Recommending proposals to the PGC on issues affecting students;
- Ensuring Office Bearers of the PGC are fulfilling their duties as outlined in the Roles and Responsibilities of Office Bearers in this Charter;
- Promoting the activities and campaigns of the PGC to students of the Councillors' electorates;
- Actively participating in campaigns and events organised and/or endorsed by the PGC;
- Acting honestly and in good faith;

- Not making improper use of their position or of information obtained in their position;
- Exercising reasonable care and diligence;
- Not behaving in a belligerent, racist, sexist, queerphobic or otherwise discriminatory manner;
- Fulfilling their responsibilities as set out in this Charter; and
- Complying with the directions given under authority of this Charter, Arc Regulations and Constitution.

Councillors should not be requested to spearhead campaigns or events, except when:

- The campaign or event coincides with a Councillor's external commitments – such as their involvement with postgraduate societies or on university boards – and will therefore require the Councillor's time and labour regardless of the PGC's involvement;
- The campaign or event is understood to require minimal planning and labour; or
- The Councillor is in a unique position due to light study and/or workloads and is capable of completing the campaign or event without detriment to their work, study or life balance.

In the case of the latter two exceptions, the President should first determine that Officer Bearers are available to take over at any point, should the Councillor require respite.

2.3 General Roles and Responsibilities of Officer Bearers

The general roles and responsibilities of the Office Bearers include, but are not limited to:

- Acting as an advocate for students and/or issues within their relevant office;
- Submit a written report to each ordinary meeting of PGC;
- Attending Office Bearer meetings as scheduled by the President;
- Attending meetings of University committees and other bodies relevant to their Office, negotiated in consultation with the President;
- Supporting and assisting other Office Bearers with the running of events and campaigns as required;
- Communicating with equivalent Office Bearers at other Australian tertiary institutions and organisations, as appropriate;
- Being available to members of the student body for consultation about issues relevant to their Office;
- Acting honestly and in good faith;
- Not making improper use of their position or of information obtained in their position;

- Exercising reasonable care and diligence;
- Not behaving in a belligerent, racist, sexist, queerphobic or otherwise discriminatory manner;
- Fulfilling their responsibilities as set out in this Charter; and
- Complying with the directions given under authority of this Charter, Arc Regulations and Constitution.

In addition, Office Bearers will prepare a handover document to assist the incoming Officer Bearer for their role. This Document will be due thirty (30) days before the end of the term and outline:

- An outline of the role and key areas of responsibility
- Ongoing issues of which the incoming Officer Bearer should be aware
- An outline of issues experienced during the year and strategies employed to address them
- Key stakeholder relationships
- Key contacts
- Any other relevant information

In the event that two or more students share the role of Office Bearer, these Co-Office Bearers must meet with the President a minimum of once per semester to discuss the distribution of their tasks and duties.

Office Bearers of the PGC shall be deemed equivalent to senior staff when communicating with other Arc Departments.

It is expected that Office Bearers spend (5) hours per week average in fulfilling their role, in recognition of the honorarium they receive. This expectation is outlined in the contract presented to each Officer Bearer after their election and before they commence their duties.

If an Office Bearer takes a leave of absence for more than 6 weeks and is unable to perform his /her duties during this period or if an Office Bearer position becomes vacant, then PGC may delegate these responsibilities to another Office Bearer. For that duration the pay will be directed to the Office Bearer taking on the additional role. No Office Bearer could hold more than two positions at a time. In the abovementioned scenarios, any Office Bearer can hold two positions for a maximum period of 8 weeks.

2.4 The Specific Roles of the Office Bearers

The roles listed below for each office bearer are in addition to their roles as Councillors on the PGC (2.2) and Office Bearers on the PGC (2.3).

2.4.1 The Roles and Responsibilities of the President

The roles and responsibilities of the President include, but are not limited to:

- The responsibilities of Office Bearers as set out in this Charter;
- Acting as an advocate for all postgraduate students at UNSW;
- Being responsible for ensuring that Office Bearers and Councillors are fulfilling their roles and responsibilities as outlined in this Charter;
- Being engaged with issues arising within the PGC;
- Being kept reasonably informed on all matters which may be of interest to Councillors and/or Office Bearers,
- Approving the expenditure of the PGC with the monthly budget tabled in the PGC meeting to be approved by council with a clear majority;
- Convening and chairing PGC meetings;
- Establishing the agenda for the PGC;
- Being the official spokesperson for the PGC;
- Being the official spokesperson for the Arc in relation to postgraduate student issues;
- Being the major point of contact between the PGC and the Chief Executive Officer, the Chair of the Board, the President of the Student Representative Council and the Convenor of the Student Development Committee;
- Attending events and activity launches of the organisation, as appropriate;
- Attending significant activities, launches and meetings where appropriate;
- Communicating with students and considering suggestions for improvements to the PGC; and
- Attend all meetings with relevant University stakeholders such as Chancellery meetings.

The President of the PGC shall be deemed equivalent to a Manager when communicating with other Arc Departments.

2.4.2 The Role of the Vice President

The role of the Vice President is to provide leadership and coaching to the PGC team, to develop and lead flagship projects, to provide administrative support and co-ordination to the PGC team and assist the President in enacting the formal responsibilities of the PGC President role including, but not limited to, collecting and reviewing (by providing remarks and feedback) Office Bearer reports, scheduling monthly PGC meetings and preparing the draft minutes.

2.4.3 The Role of the Research Office Bearer

The role of the Research Office Bearer is to represent the interests of UNSW postgraduate research

students on the PGC by ensuring that the needs and wants of postgraduate research students are considered in all PGC projects, to take action to inform postgraduate research students about the PGC, its purpose and intent, and to serve the postgraduate research students at UNSW through the PGC.

2.4.4 The Role of the Coursework Office Bearer

The role of the Coursework Office Bearer is to represent UNSW postgraduate coursework students, to assist postgraduate coursework students with identifying the issues relevant to their studies, and to support the postgraduate coursework students through the difficulties that may arise by directing the students to the appropriate channels, people and bodies within UNSW and/or Arc.

2.4.5 The Role of the International Students Office Bearer

The role of the International Students Office Bearer is to represent the voice of International Postgraduate students at UNSW, to inquire into issues they are facing on campus and develop solutions for these issues, to develop and enrich their university and social lives as students, and to foster greater interaction between local and international postgraduate students.

2.4.6 The Role of the Equity Office Bearer

The role of the Equity Office Bearer is to voice and assist with resolving the equity related concerns of UNSW postgraduate students (both coursework and research) and primarily to assist postgraduate students with accessing the help they need in order to complete their postgraduate degrees free from equity based hindrances and harassment. The PGC Equity Office Bearer shall promote a campus wide culture of equity for all students. The PGC Equity Office Bearer shall also assist and liaise with any PGC and Arc related work (events, campaigns, projects and on-going provision of services).

2.4.7 The Role of the Women's Officer

The role of the Women's Officer is to facilitate postgraduate women's access to the PGC, to develop and coordinate workshops and events for postgraduate women, to support and encourage the involvement of postgraduate women students within the University's postgraduate environment and to liaise with the SRC Women's Collective and other women student representatives and networks.

2.4.8 The Role of the Events Office Bearer

The role of the Events Office Bearer is to organise events geared towards postgraduate students at UNSW, develop and maintain the PGC brand (and actively coordinate with the Arc Marketing Department on behalf of the PGC to do so), and assist other PGC office bearers and council members organise events tailored to their needs.

3. PGC Meetings

3.1 Frequency

Meetings of the Postgraduate Council shall be held once a month and at least 9 times in a year. Meeting times will be decided at the discretion of the President, in consultation with all Office Bearers and

Councillors.

3.2 Cycle

The monthly cycle for PGC meetings is:

ITEM	DAY
Reports finalised and sent to the Vice President	1
Agenda finalised by President	2
All papers circulated to PGC meeting attendees	2
PGC meeting	9
Draft minutes sent to President	18
Draft minutes sent to attendees	23

This is an indicative cycle, which needs to be tailored to each meeting. Papers that are not circulated to PGC meeting attendees by 2pm on the day prior to a PGC meeting will not be considered at the PGC meeting unless permitted by a majority of the Postgraduate Council.

If the Chair of the relevant PGC meeting is not present within fifteen minutes after the time appointed for the holding of that meeting, the Vice President shall assume this role for the duration of the meeting.

3.3 Chair and Conduct

Council meetings shall be chaired by the President. If the President is an apology for the meeting or not present within 15 minutes after the time appointed for the holding of that meeting, the Vice President shall assume this role for the duration of the meeting.

The Chair of the meeting will determine the degree of formality required at each meeting while maintaining the decorum of such meetings. As such, the Chair will:

- Ensure that all Office Bearers and Councillors are heard;
- Retain sufficient control to ensure that the authority of the Chair is recognised – this may require a degree of formality to be introduced when it is required to make progress;
- Take care that the decisions are properly understood and well recorded; and
- Ensure that decisions and debate are completed with a formal resolution recording the conclusions reached.

3.4 Apologies and Attendance at Meetings

Members are required to attend all meetings of the PGC unless there are exceptional circumstances that prevent them from doing so. Should a member be unable to attend a meeting apologies should be forwarded to the President and Vice Presidents as soon as practicable. If a council member does not attend 2 consecutive meetings and does not submit apologies then the president must ask for an explanation before considering dismissal of the member out of PGC.

Non-attendance without an apology will be deemed to be an absence from the meeting.

Members will be permitted to attend meetings via video or teleconference, with prior arrangement and approval from the President.

3.5 PGC Meeting Agenda

An agenda will be prepared for each PGC meeting by the President. The PGC meeting agenda will be as prescribed within the Charter.

3.6 PGC Papers

PGC papers must state whether any recommendation is to the Board or is to be approved by the PGC. Recommendations to the Board will go to the Board with the President's report, unless the PGC decides otherwise. Issues for the Board are dealt with by the Board according to the Board's agenda.

3.6.1 Issue Papers and Decisions of the PGC

There are three types of issue papers:

- *Matter for Noting*
 - These are items for the PGC to be aware of; however they are not discussed during the meeting unless they are flagged for discussion.
- *Matter for Discussion*
 - Issues that are put forth that are not asking for a decision but feedback on particular points. They generally are issues that have reached a point where further guidance by the PGC is required to continue
- *Matter for Decision*
 - Issues that are put forth with a recommendation; it is being suggested that a decision is made on these items at this meeting

There are four types of decisions that the PGC may make:

- *Recommendation to the Board:*
 - This may be used on any issue relevant to the PGC. The President will take the issue to the next Board meeting, unless the PGC requests another Board member to present the issue to the Board. The recommendation may need to pass through a subcommittee of the Board before being presented to the Board;
- *Resolution of the Council:*
 - The PGC may agree to a resolution to an issue which is binding;
- *Action:*
 - The PGC may direct an action is taken. Implementation is usually the responsibility of

the President; however the action may be directed at another Office Bearer or Councillor.

- *Note:*
 - The PGC may note an issue. No further action is taken.

3.6.2 PGC Minutes

Minutes will contain a brief reference to relevant PGC papers tabled, plus the official resolution adopted by Councillors. All decisions will be recorded in the minutes by means of a formal resolution. The exact wording of the resolution will be recorded in the minutes and whether the resolution was carried or defeated, but will not contain the number of votes. Councillors who dissent may ask to have their decisions noted in the minutes.

Minutes will be prepared in draft form by the Board Administration Assistant or Vice President and provided to the President for review. Once the draft minutes have been approved by the President, the President will circulate the draft minutes to all Office Bearers and Councillors. The Board Administration Officer will maintain a complete set of PGC papers at Arc's premises. These papers are maintained both for the organisation as a whole and the members of PGC individually.

3.6.3 Matters arising from the minutes

These items will normally cover any point from the previous minutes about which any attendee requires further information, or a progress report, and which will not be raised in the main body of the meeting.

3.6.4 President's Report

For every PGC meeting the President shall prepare a report. This report will contain:

- Relevant issues for PGC consideration or information;
- Meetings attended in capacity of President and outcomes; and
- Any other significant items.

3.6.5 Office Bearers' and councillors Reports

For every PGC meeting Office Bearers and councillors shall prepare a report. This report may contain:

- Any meetings attended relevant to their department or Collective in their capacity as a member of PGC;
- Past activities or initiatives with updates of any outcomes or participation statistics;
- Outcomes of department or Collective meetings;
- Any issues for consideration or information;
- Upcoming or planned campaigns or activities; and

- Any other significant items

3.7 Emergency contact procedures

As there is the occasional need for urgent decisions, Members of PGC should leave with the President or Board Administration Assistant any contact details, either for themselves or for a person who knows their location, so that all Members of PGC can be contacted within twenty-four hours, in the event that a ‘circulating resolution’ or other business is required.

4. Office Bearer and Councillor Induction

New Members of the PGC will undergo a full induction into their role on the PGC. Information conveyed to the new Office Bearer or Councillor shall include, but is not limited to:

- A copy of this PGC Charter, Arc Regulations, Constitution and Allowance Policy;
- The handover document prepared by the relevant outgoing Office Bearer;
- Details of the roles and responsibilities with an outline of the qualities required to be a successful Councillor;
- Background information on, and contact information for, key people in the organisation including an outline of their roles and responsibilities;
- An overview of Arc; and
- An overview of the Postgraduate Council.

5. Dispute Resolution Procedure

In the case that a member of Council has a dispute or disagreement with another member, they should follow the ‘Grievance Resolution Policy and Procedure’, ‘Workplace Harassment, Discrimination and Bullying Policy’ or ‘WHS Management Plan’ as appropriate. For clarity, the escalation flow should be as follows:

Issues relating to WHS and safety:

1. Informal resolution with the person(s) involved if appropriate
2. Matter reported to Arc WHS Committee (whsrepcommittee@arc.unsw.edu.au) or Arc HR (hr@arc.unsw.edu.au) for resolution.
3. Arc CEO for any appeals

Procedural issues or disputes relating to the operational functioning of the PGC:

1. Informal resolution with the person(s) involved if appropriate

2. Matter reported to the SRC President for resolution
3. Matter reported to the Administration Officer (Board & Committees) or Director of Business Administration.
4. Arc Chair for any appeals

Issues relating to bullying, harassment, discrimination or other misconduct:

1. Informal resolution with the person(s) involved if appropriate
2. Matter reported to the SRC President for resolution
3. Matter reported to Arc HR (hr@arc.unsw.edu.au)
4. Arc Chair for any appeals
5. Arc reserves the right to refer the incident to external mediation

The above procedural steps are a guideline of the actions which can be taken once a dispute has been identified. However, the individual circumstances and severity of each case can result in some steps being skipped.

According to the severity of the grievance, outcomes may include further training, official warning and/or suspension of allowance or removal from the council. In no circumstances will a member of the SRC other than the President formally receive or adjudicate a dispute between Council members.

Members of council can be removed from the council if they have been found by Arc to have acted contrary to the Arc Code of Conduct, Arc Policies and/or Procedures or section 3.3 of the UNSW Student Code of Conduct.

If an individual is alleged to have engaged in behaviour that constitutes serious misconduct, an investigation will take place and if proven, that council member may be automatically removed.

6. Conduct of Councillors and Officers

At all times Officers and Councillors are required to:

- Act honestly and in good faith;
- Not improperly use their position or information obtained in their position (for example for personal gain);
- Exercise care and diligence in their duties and in dealings with members of Arc @ UNSW;
- Observe standards of equity and respect in dealing with every member of the University community;
- Not act in any manner likely to bring the Council into disrepute; and

- Comply with the directions given under authority of this Charter, the Regulations or the Constitution.

7. Changes to this Charter

This PGC Charter is not a static document. It can be amended at any time by the PGC by resolution. This Charter should be reviewed annually.

Version	Date	Author	Approval	Sections modified	Details of amendments
[1.0]	18/8/11	PGC	PGC, Board		This is a new policy
[2.0]	16/7/13	PGC	PGC, Board		Councillor Rights & Responsibilities, Dispute Resolution Procedure
[3.0]	12/11/13	PGC	PGC, Board		Role of the Women's Officer added
[4.0]	14/4/14	Chair of Nominations & Remuneration Subcommittee	Board	Section 3	Insertion of 3.6 Apologies and Attendance at Meetings
[5.0]	21/9/15	PGC	Board	Section 2,3,4,6	Updated amendments to each section listed.
[6.0]	16/8/16	PGC	PGC, Board	Sections 2.1, 2.4.1, 2.4.2, 3.2, 3.6.2	General updates and amendments as listed. 2.1 Inclusion of the Student Representative forum members. 2.4.1 Removal of 'Student Development Department' and PGC Collectives/Departments. 2.4.2/ 3.2/ 3.6.2 Updates to VP duties.
[7.0]	07/11/2019		Board	Sections 2.3, 2.4.1, 2.4.2, 3.4, 3.6.5, 5	2.3. Addition of leave of absence clause and limit on number and duration of multiple roles 2.4.1 Update to President role to ensure accountability for expenditure; 3.4 Update to meeting attendance procedure

					2.4.3. addition to VP role for ensuring accountability of the PGC members 3.6.5. Addition of councillor reports ensuring accountability 5. Amendments to the procedure of Dispute Resolution
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