



Second Quarter Report 2010

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Queer Representative

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#### **PART ONE: CONSTITUTIONAL DUTIES**

*Section 32.13.2 of the Otago Students' Associations constitution states that the Queer Representative is responsible for representing the interests of queer students within the Association, the University and the Community. It also states that they (Queer Rep) will facilitate quality representation of queer students and pursue projects of benefit to queer students.*

Again, for this section of the report, I'm not going to go into specific detail about what I've done this quarter. I will however, use this section to indicate how I have engaged with the queer students, a part of the job which I think is very important in ensuring quality representation. I have written another article in the Otago Daily Times. This article outlined the potential impacts of VSM on the queer student community. I have also kept students up to date on what I've been doing through the UniQ monthly newsletter and have been regularly attending UniQ meetings. I have been in regular contact with the Queer Support Coordinator and have maintained a good working relationship with him. The Queer Support Coordinator is a very important person to communicate with as they are a first person contact for queer and questioning students wanting support, so they are able to inform me on relevant issues affecting queer students.

#### **PART TWO: EXECUTIVE OFFICER POSITION DESCRIPTION DUTIES**

##### **GENERAL DUTIES:**

**2.1 All Executive Officers are expected to assist as volunteers for OUSA events and functions, including, but not limited to (2.1.2, 2.1.3, 2.1.3 and 2.1.4):** While I have not assisted any Orientation events due to obvious reasons (there has been no orientation this quarter), I assisted the events crew with Healthy Lifestyles week by giving out muesli bars and scrogen in the Hunter Centre to promote healthy eating. This was quite successful as it was lunchtime and people were more than happy to receive free food. I also helped out with the hall of residence swimming competition at Moana Pools. I helped with set up and pack up, and was a time-keeper throughout the racing. I also got to shoot the starter-gun once!

OUSA has held one SGM this quarter, Shonelle and Imogen organised it and delegated me the job of being BBQ master. It was cool because I got to watch Kitty from events be all like "do you want a free sausage?" student walks up ready to get a sausage "Well get inside then if you do" student looks disappointed (this does not sound nearly as cool in this report as it did in real life).

**2.2 Within reason, Executive Officers are expected to be available for Executive meetings, national conferences, national and local campaigns, Executive training and Executive planning:** I have attended all but one exec meeting this 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter. I wrote a VSM submission as part of the anti VSM campaign.

**2.3 All Executive Officers with control of budget lines are expected to maintain detailed budgets for their cost centres, and not significantly exceed their budgeted expenditure:** Due to certain expenses not having gone through yet (receipts were in my wallet for a very long time), I had to calculate what I had spent so far myself when James asked for a expenditure summary and forecasted budget for June. I am so far under budget but

have realised that money will have to be taken from my campaigns line and put into my events line (pending Queer Film Festival).

## QUEER REPRESENTATIVE DUTIES

**15.1 Promote through campaigns, education and other initiatives, an environment within OUSA and on campus that is supportive of Queer students:** I helped Jamie, the Queer Support Coordinator, with the Queerest Tea Party. This involved organising the music, set up and two interviews, one interview with Harriet on Radio 1, and another with Jamie on Channel 9. The channel 9 interview was extremely beneficial as it enabled the greater Dunedin community to see what supporting the queer community actually involves (Dunedin has very little in terms of community organisations designed to specifically cater for the needs of queer people).

For International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHT), I liaised with the library and organised for a resource board filled with books and AV material to be displayed in the main entrance to the library. I was also able to display a couple of posters that I had made up for Diversity week, through their TV screen.

**15.2 Work towards the elimination of bigotry and intolerance towards Queer students within OUSA and on campus:** For IDAHT on May the 17<sup>th</sup>, I wanted to run a poster campaign that made people more aware of some of the specific issues facing queer students. This poster campaign ended up consisting of three posters, each with a concerning statistic on same-sex attracted youth and trans people. While I don't want everything I do to focus on all the potentially bad aspects of being queer, I hoped that with these posters, non-queer students would stop and think about why stats such the ones I had shown existed. I also organised for Jamie to do a speech in the Main Common Room during the day.

**15.3 Work on issues specific to Queer students at the University of Otago, including but not limited to...**

**15.3.1 (academic issues), 15.3.2 (welfare issues), 15.3.3 (other issues):** Neal, the previous years' Queer Rep, had started a survey in 2009. I have liaised with him on finalising the survey and will be doing a presentation about the survey with Neal at the upcoming UniQ and NZUSA conferences. I think this survey is important as there has been no large scale survey dedicated to New Zealand queer tertiary students, in and out of the closet. This survey will also gather opinions of non-queer students and will hopefully end up giving universities more information on specific issues facing queer students. Kudos to Neal!

Following up from the accommodation issue, I finally got in contact with Adele from the accommodation office and she said that they couldn't put a queer-friendly option on the University accommodation website. I felt like they didn't really understand where I was coming from so I have started to draft a quick online survey specifically focusing on accommodation issues so I can gather information and write a proposal.

**15.4 Maintain a good working relationship with the Welfare Officer, proactively bringing issues to her or his attention, and meeting with her or him on a weekly basis:** I have been in regular contact with the welfare officer. I got her opinion on how I should go about getting uni-sex toilet signs on disabled toilets and information on website survey hosting thingies. Claire also emails me when something queer related comes to her attention, which is cool.

**15.5 Maintain a good working relationship with UniQ, sharing information and ideas with them when appropriate:** I have been keeping in contact with the UniQ collective regularly either by attending their meetings or by writing quick reports. I have organised transport and accommodation for the UniQ collective

and I to the UniQ conference being held in the beginning of July. I have allocated some money out of my budget line to help out with some of the costs which the UniQ collective cannot pay for themselves.

**15.6 *Be involved in campaigning and lobbying on issues affecting Queer students:*** The poster campaign I ran on IDAHT highlighted issues specific to queer students. I am also in the process of writing two proposals – one for disabled toilets to be allocated as uni-sex toilets and one for the accommodation issue highlighted above.

A member of the queer student community is making short documentary on the experiences of Dunedin queer students. This was initially filmed for the IDAHT campaign and I was interviewed as the queer rep.

**15.7 *Organise and run events of specific interest and relevance to Queer students:*** I held a queer film screening with nibbles during diversity week in the Evison lounge at clubs and socs. This went well minus the technical difficulties, which seems to be a theme in my life as the queer themed quiz that I held on IDAHT was also plagued with technical difficulties. I will now be doing practice runs before events relying on technology (\*sings\* *ay oh, I'm tired of using technology...*). However, this did not seem to bother people and the quiz ended up going relatively well and people seemed to have fun. I wanted the quiz to be fun but also educate people on some queer general knowledge and specific issues. I think it is important to note that I came up with all the questions myself, a process which involved a lot of research and was a very time-consuming activity. The quiz was held in the Gazebo lounge and I was quiz master, which meant that people had to hear me sing. I'm sorry if this offended anybody.

**15.8 *Represent Queer students on University and OUSA committees, as required by the Association:*** With Presant's resignation, I took his position on the Clinical Governance Committee. Ari and I had a meeting with someone from student health about what the committee was all about. Unfortunately she told us that the next meeting would happen while I was away, which didn't really matter because Ari would be here, but then there was actually a meeting before the date she had given us and Ari and I had only a days notice and had made other plans. So, not too happy about their communication with Ari and I, but hopefully this will not continue as I hope to raise my concerns with health professionals training in regards to queer awareness .

I have also been attending Welfare Committee meetings although I missed the last two due to a busy schedule and I have attended one Quality Advancement Committee meeting although will be away for the next one (Ari will still be able to attend this however).

**15.11 *Work not less than ten (10) hours per week:*** I have consistently worked more than 10 hours a week.

### **PART THREE: GENERAL**

I have been part of the Governance Working Party (GWP) this year. This has involved looking into various different types of governance structures. I have undertaken interviews with a number of people. During these interviews I took notes on their opinions of the current structure, its' strengths and weaknesses, and what changes they think would benefit OUSA and students. It also involved meeting with other members of the GWP and discussing ways in which we could best engage with students, represent and govern. I have also met up with a number of queer students to get their opinions on the proposed changes. I think this is important because in the end, I'm representing the queer student community and I have to take into account what they feel is beneficial and potentially limiting about the proposed structural changes.

I am part of the Fair-trade My Uni steering committee which has entailed attending meetings and assisting with the running of events. I played an important role in running the "hard grind" fair-trade fortnight event on campus. I organised for an industrialised sized grinder to be used for the grinding and ground coffee for most of the event. I also helped with the film screening of flow at the Apollo theatre. This entailed booking



the venue looking for the film online, shopping and preparing the food and venue. I also prepared the excel sheet with names and email addresses of those who want to receive the fortnightly newsletter and created a departmental list of the University for John to start contacting them.

The first two quarters have involved me mainly running events and running poster campaigns. I plan on focusing more on proposals and lobbying for the next two quarters.