



Candidate Handbook

What is the Swinburne Student Association (SSA)?

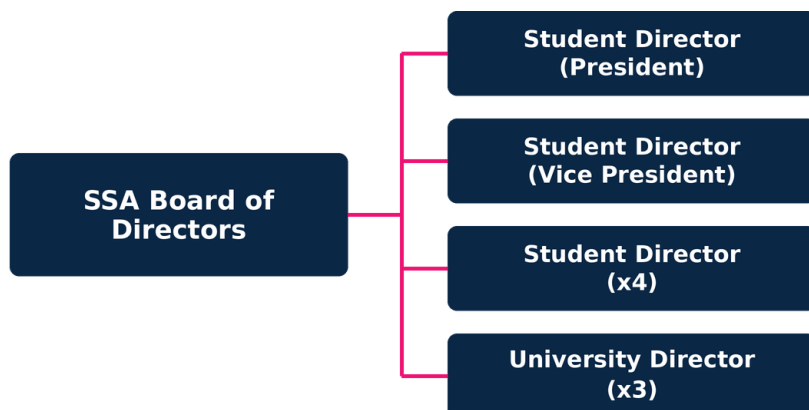
The SSA is an independent student-led body that is responsible for designing and delivering key student services at Swinburne University of Technology (SUT). These services range from advocacy, clubs and societies, sports and fitness, student wellbeing, and student leadership.

The SSA Board and Council Structure

The SSA is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of six elected Directors determined by Swinburne students and three University Directors appointed by the Vice Chancellor. The Board has responsibility for the strategic direction and oversight of the Association and is led by the President and Board Chair.

Student Directors are elected for a two-year term with half of the Directors elected on an odd calendar year and the other half elected on an even calendar year. All other student elected positions (including the President and Vice President) are elected on a one-year term basis.

The Board of Directors convene on a quarterly basis and set the direction of the SSA including consider management advice and make decisions on behalf of the organisation.



Finance, Audit, Risk, and Remuneration Committee (FARMRC)

The Swinburne Student Association's Finance, Audit, Risk, and Remuneration Committee (FARMRC) is an advisory body that supports the SSA Board of Directors by overseeing key areas such as finance, audit, risk management, and remuneration for the CEO and senior personnel. The Committee ensures SSA meets its compliance and assurance obligations, provides strategic recommendations to the Board, and maintains transparency and integrity in financial, governance, and risk-related matters.

FARMRC's responsibilities include monitoring financial reporting and audits, reviewing internal controls and risk management frameworks, and ensuring compliance with relevant policies and regulations. It also oversees CEO and executive remuneration, ensuring alignment with performance and organisational goals. The Committee consists of at least three members:

- the SSA President (as Chair),

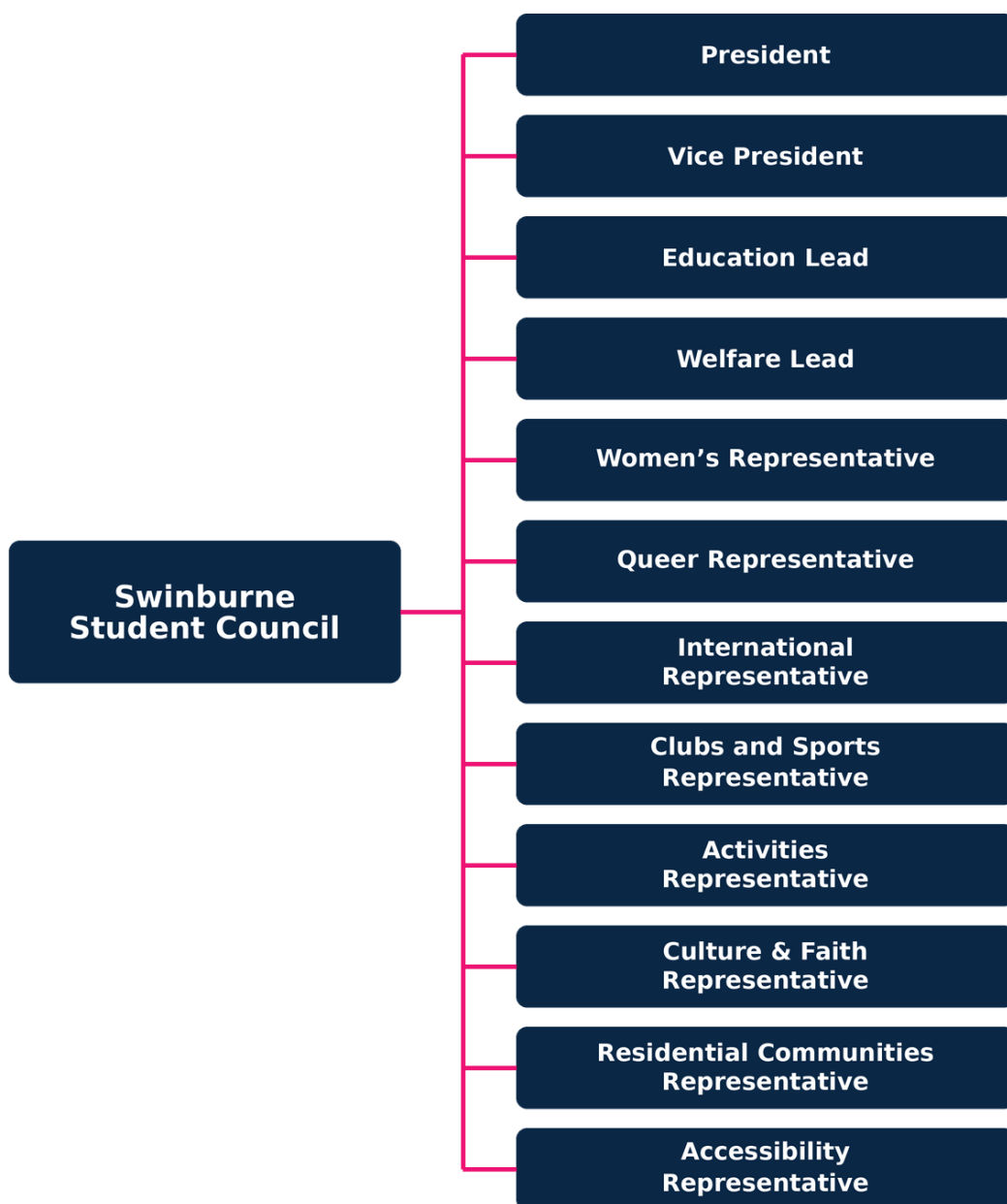
- the Vice President, and
- a Swinburne University Director.

The FARMRC meets quarterly, maintains strict confidentiality, and has the authority to seek information, engage experts, review audit outcomes, and make election-related decisions as per SSA regulations. A quorum requires at least one University Director and one Student Director. FARMRC plays a critical role in upholding strong governance standards and supporting the SSA's strategic direction.

The Swinburne Student Council (SSC)

The Board is supported by the Swinburne Student Council (SSC) – the student voice advisory body designed to provide advice and information about the Swinburne student experience to the Board.

The SSC is comprised of 12 members. The SSC meets monthly to advise the Board and provide feedback on the Swinburne student experience.



Student Directors of the Board and the Swinburne Student Council Members are elected at the annual elections set out in accordance with the SSA election regulations and Constitution.

Functions of the Swinburne Student Council (SSC)

The SSC exists to provide advice to inform the development and implementation of strategies, services and plans adopted by the SSA and SUT on student matters. The SSC's primary responsibilities are to:

- Engage with all students at Swinburne University.
- Assist with student events and activities.
- Communicate with students.
- Provide editorials in student newsletters and social media, and give speeches at events.
- Represent students and be empowered to be involved in university decision-making.
- Attend and engage in student forums and meetings.
- Advocate for student concerns.

The SSC Executive's primary responsibilities are to:

- *Receive and review feedback:* collect advice and feedback from the SSC to understand the needs and concerns of the student body.
- *Voting on decisions:* participate in the decision-making process by voting on SSC proposals and recommendations.
- *Ensure implementation:* oversee the execution of SSC decisions through coordination with the CEO and staff.

What are the benefits of becoming an elected Student Director of SSA?

Becoming an elected Student Director of the Swinburne Student Association presents a unique opportunity to shape the direction of the SSA and create an outstanding experience for current and future Swinburne students. It also provides a great opportunity to serve as a company director, an experience that will provide invaluable skills for your future career.

What are the benefits of becoming an elected Swinburne Student Council member?

Becoming an elected Swinburne Student Council Member offers a unique leadership opportunity. As an SSC Member, you will be in a leadership role for Swinburne students, help shape the student experience, advocate for student needs, and influence policies and initiatives that improve campus life.

The experience not only allows you to make a tangible impact during your term of office but also provides an opportunity to build valuable skills in leadership and communication that will be beneficial for your future career.

What is the difference between an SSA Student Director and an SSC member?

A Student Director sits on the SSA Board of Directors and holds legal and strategic responsibilities for governing the Swinburne Student Association. They make high-level decisions about SSA's direction, finances, and compliance, and must act in accordance with corporate governance standards under the Corporations Act.

In contrast, a Swinburne Student Council member focuses on student representation and engagement. SSC members organise events, advocate for student concerns, and ensure student voices are heard in university decisions. While Student Directors oversee the entire organisation from a governance perspective, SSC members are more involved in student issues and day-to-day advocacy. SSC members do not have the same legal responsibility and liability.

What are the responsibilities and role of SSA Student Directors?

SSA Student Directors are responsible for shaping the strategic direction of the SSA, providing invaluable experience in governance, decision-making, and strategic oversight. This significant role has a broad focus on guiding the organisation as a whole while meeting legally binding and enforceable responsibilities and duties.

Alongside the duties outlined in the SSA Constitution and SSA Election Regulations, SSA Student Directors are expected to bring personal commitment and attributes essential to effectively undertake their role.

Key duties under the *Corporations Act (2001)* include:

- Fulfilling their fiduciary duty to the SSA and its members
- Acting in good faith and for a proper purpose
- Exercising reasonable care and diligence
- Preventing improper use of their position
- Avoiding misuse of information
- Preventing conflicts of interest

What are the responsibilities and role of a Swinburne Student Council member?

In this role, you advocate for student needs, influence policies, and develop initiatives that enhance campus life. This position emphasises leadership, communication, and advocacy, allowing you to make a tangible, day-to-day impact on the student experience and to build essential skills that will benefit your career.

SSC members are responsible for promoting the SSA's objectives and are required to abide by the SSA Constitution and SSA Election Regulations. Their key duty is to offer leadership and engage actively in forums, panels and meetings.

Honoraria

SSA Board Directors and SSC Representatives are remunerated through honoraria in recognition of their contributions during their term of office. Honoraria are not automatic and are subject to active engagement and fulfilment of the responsibilities associated with the role, in accordance with the SSA Honoraria Handbook.

Representative Role Descriptions

President

The President is responsible for providing overall leadership and strategic direction for the Swinburne Student Association (SSA). This role ensures the organisation upholds its mission and values, advocates for students, and represents their interests at all levels. As the primary representative of SSA, the President fosters relationships with key stakeholders and oversees the effective functioning of the organisation.

Membership

- Chair and voting member of the Board
- Voting member of the SSC Executive
- Chair and member of the FARMRC

Key Responsibilities

- Provide strategic oversight and ensure alignment with SSA's objectives, constitution, and policies.
- Act as the official spokesperson and representative of SSA to key stakeholders.
- Collaborate with the CEO to manage operations and strategic initiatives.
- Promote student engagement by leading campaigns and advocacy efforts.
- Oversee financial and risk management with the FARMRC.

Vice President

The Vice President works in partnership with the President to lead student activities within the SSA. This role supports the SSC, ensuring its members function effectively and their roles are fulfilled. The Vice President acts as the liaison between the SSC and SSA staff and steps in to fulfil the President's duties when required.

Membership

- Voting member of the Board
- Chair and voting member of the SSC Executive
- Member of the FARMRC

Key Responsibilities

- Guide SSC members to ensure their roles are carried out effectively.
- Act as the main point of contact between the SSC and SSA staff.
- Lead the SSC Executive and ensure alignment with SSA objectives.
- Fulfil the President's responsibilities when delegated or in their absence.
- Work with the President to support key student-focused initiatives.

Student Director

Student Directors represent the broader student body within SSA and contribute to high-level organisational decision-making on the Board of Directors. This role involves active participation in Board meetings and supporting SSA events and activities where possible.

Membership

- Voting member of the Board

Key Responsibilities

- Attend and participate in Board meetings.
- Contribute to strategic decisions that guide the direction of the SSA.
- Maintain a strong understanding of student needs and concerns.
- Support SSA activities and events to engage with the student community.

Education Lead

The Education Lead represents the SSA and Swinburne students on educational matters, advocating for their academic interests and ensuring concerns are addressed. This role drives initiatives that support academic success and engagement.

Membership

- Member of the SSC

Key Responsibilities

- Represent and advocate for students' educational interests to SUT and other stakeholders.
- Contribute to strategic discussions on teaching, assessment and the student academic experience.
- Maintain a strong understanding of student needs and concerns.
- Support SSA activities and events where possible to engage with the student community.

Welfare Lead

The Welfare Lead represents the SSA and Swinburne students on welfare matters, advocating for their well-being and ensuring support needs are addressed. This role drives initiatives that promote student welfare and engagement.

Membership

- Member of the SSC

Key Responsibilities

- Represent and advocate for students' welfare needs to SUT and other stakeholders.
- Develop and implement welfare-focused initiatives.
- Organise and lead Welfare on Wheels and support welfare-related events.
- Promote and coordinate welfare initiatives such as R U OK? Day and Sexual Health and Guidance Week.
- Address student concerns related to work/life balance, cost of living, and stress management.
- Collaborate with stakeholders to enhance access to welfare services and resources.

Activities Representative

The Activities Representative consults on the planning and execution of events and activities at Swinburne, with a primary focus on student-led and driven initiatives organised by the SSC. This role works closely with SSA staff to ensure the successful delivery of events and activities, providing consultation on what students want to see and engaging them effectively.

Membership

- Member of the SSC

Key Responsibilities

- Work with SSA staff to support the planning and delivery of events and activities.
- Consult on student preferences to ensure events and activities align with their interests.
- Provide feedback on event communications, timing, and execution.
- Collaborate with SSC members to plan and conduct student-led initiatives.
- Represent the SSA and SSC at key events throughout the year.

Women's Representative

The Women's Representative represents and advocates for students who identify and live as women at Swinburne. This role is dedicated to supporting female students, addressing gender-related issues, fostering an inclusive campus environment, overseeing women's activities, and maintaining the Women's Room as a safe and welcoming space.

Membership

- Member of the SSC

Key Responsibilities

- Advocate for female students and address gender-related concerns within the university.
- Oversee and coordinate women-focused events and activities.
- Maintain and oversee the Women's Room, ensuring it is a safe and inclusive space for students.
- Collaborate with women-focused clubs, such as WiSTEM, Swinburne Women in Business Society, and Gender Agenda, to support initiatives.
- Represent the SSA at relevant events and forums that address gender equality and inclusion.
- Work with SSA staff to ensure women's voices are represented in campus activities.

Queer Representative

The Queer Representative represents and advocates for queer students, including allies, at Swinburne. This role is dedicated to supporting queer students, addressing LGBTQIA+ issues, fostering an inclusive campus environment, overseeing queer-focused activities, and maintaining the Queer Room as a safe and welcoming space.

Membership

- Member of the SSC

Key Responsibilities

- Advocate for the needs and concerns of queer students to SUT and other stakeholders.
- Oversee and maintain the Queer Room as a safe and inclusive space for queer students and allies.
- Work with the Ally Network, Gender Agenda club, and other queer-focused groups to support student initiatives.
- Lead and organise activities such as Pride Week, Wear it Purple Day, and IDAHOBIT.
- Collaborate with SSA staff to ensure queer voices are represented in welfare and campus initiatives.
- Build connections with useful networks such as Minus18 and Transgender Victoria.

Cultural and Faith Representative

The Cultural and Faith Representative is committed to fostering a respectful and inclusive environment for students of diverse cultural backgrounds and faiths at Swinburne. This role promotes cultural understanding, supports the spiritual needs of students, and ensures that events, resources, and communications are

Key Responsibilities

- Advocate for the needs and concerns of students from diverse cultural and faith communities.
- Provide feedback on events, resources, and communications to ensure cultural sensitivity and accessibility.

accessible and respectful to all cultural and faith communities.

Membership

- Member of the SSC

- Collaborate with the SSC to ensure all initiatives are inclusive and beneficial for students of various backgrounds.
- Work closely with the Multifaith Centre Coordinator to support faith-based and cultural initiatives on campus.
- Promote and support events and activities that celebrate cultural diversity and spiritual well-being.
- Advocate for the needs and concerns of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, working closely with the Moondani Toombadool Centre (MTC).

Accessibility Representative

The Accessibility Representative advocates for the rights and needs of students with disabilities at Swinburne. This role ensures the voices of students with disabilities are heard, promotes awareness of disability issues, and works to create an inclusive and equitable environment, collaborating with university staff, student groups, and external organisations to address barriers and enhance the student experience.

Membership

- Member of the SSC

Key Responsibilities

- Advocate for the needs and concerns of students with disabilities to SUT and other stakeholders.
- Consult on initiatives, events, and policies to ensure they are accessible and inclusive.
- Collaborate with university staff, including AccessAbility services, to address accessibility barriers.
- Promote awareness of disability-related issues through campaigns and events.

Residential Community Representative

The Residential and Community Representative represents the concerns and interests of students living in on-campus accommodation.

Membership

- Member of the SSC

Key Responsibilities

- Coordinate or contribute to student issues affecting students living in on-campus accommodation.
- Act as an advocate and point of contact with Swinburne Residential Services (including participating in forums or workshops).
- Work closely with and support Residential Advisors.
- Collect and share helpful and relevant resources for students living in on-campus accommodation.
- Provide project support around Foodbank and Flex by SSA supports for students living in on-campus accommodation.

International Representative

The International Student Representative is responsible for representing the unique needs and interests of international students at Swinburne. This role enhances the student experience by promoting inclusivity and addressing the challenges faced by international students, collaborating with key stakeholders, providing feedback on services and events, and fostering a sense of community among international students.

Membership

- Member of the SSC

Key Responsibilities

- Advocate for the needs and interests of international students to SUT and other stakeholders.
- Provide feedback on support services, events, and communications tailored to international students.
- Organise regular meetings with international student networks to discuss and address issues proactively.
- Promote and support initiatives that enhance the inclusion and well-being of international students.

Clubs and Sports Representative

The Clubs and Sports Representative advocates for students involved in clubs and sport at Swinburne. This role works to grow participation, supports club and sporting initiatives, and ensures students have opportunities to connect, compete and build community through the SSA's clubs and sports programs.

Membership

- Member of the SSC

Key Responsibilities

- Advocate for the needs and concerns of students involved in clubs, societies and sport to SUT and other stakeholders.
- Provide feedback on club support, sporting programs, facilities and grants.
- Collaborate with SSA staff to grow club and sport participation and engagement.
- Support initiatives that help students connect through clubs and sporting activities.
- Promote awareness of available clubs, sports, and the resources and services that support them.

Election Details

What positions are elected at the annual elections?

SSA Student Board Directors

- President (x1)
- Vice President (x1)
- Student Directors (x2) – the following year, the other 2 Director roles are elected for a two-year term.

The President and Vice President are members of both the Swinburne Student Council and the Board of Directors. No other members of the SSA Board or the SSC can hold office across both the Board and the Student Council. The President serves as Chair of the SSA Board, and the Vice President serves as Chair of the SSC.

Swinburne Student Council Members

- President (x1)
- Vice President (x1)
- Education Lead (x1)
- Welfare Lead (x1)
- Accessibility Representative (x1)
- Women's Representative (x1)
- Queer Representative (x1)
- Cultural and Faith Representative (x1)
- Activities Representative (x1)
- International Representative (x1)
- Residential Communities Representative (x1)
- Clubs and Sports Representative (x1)

The Education Lead leads the Council's focus on education matters, and the Welfare Lead leads the Council's focus on welfare matters.

Who is eligible to participate?

The SSA Electorate comprises all current Swinburne Students (as determined by the Electoral Roll), subject to any additional criteria set out under this Candidate Handbook.

All students in the SSA Electorate may nominate for a position within the SSA (subject to eligibility conditions set by the Returning Officer and election regulations). All students in the SSA Electorate will be eligible to vote.

A Swinburne Student who is a Director of the Company (other than the President or Vice President) is not eligible for election to or to hold the office of Swinburne Student Council Member.

A person who is an elected student member on the Swinburne University Council or an elected student member of Swinburne's Academic Senate cannot simultaneously hold office as the President or Vice President.

Certain eligibility criteria for roles

Women's Representative

Any student who identifies as a woman is eligible to nominate for this role.

Queer Representative

Any student who identifies as part of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual (LGBTQIA+) community, is questioning, or identifies with any other sexuality or gender identity outside of heterosexual or cisgender norms, is eligible to nominate for this role.

International Representative

Any student currently enrolled at Swinburne as an international student is eligible to nominate for this role.

Clubs and Sports Representative

Any current Swinburne student who is a member of an SSA-affiliated club, society or sporting club is eligible to nominate for this role.

Residential Community Representative

A nominee for this position must have lived experience (by residing in the Swinburne Student Residences) within six months of their nomination.

Election Schedule

- Notice of Election
- Nominations | Ticket Registration
- Application to set out a ticket
- Statement of Preferences
- Polling
- Declaration of Election
- Board Induction Training
- Commencement of Term of Office (or earlier where required by SUT)

Notice of Election

Nomination forms and all election materials are available on the SSA's website at www.swinburnestudentassociation.com.au. The Notice of Election will set out key dates and information in relation to the election.

Voting

Voting will be conducted wholly online for all students. Online voting will occur over a minimum of four days.

Important Documents

The rules governing this election are set out in the SSA Constitution and SSA Election Regulations. These documents and all other supporting documents are available for each student enquiring about or submitting a nomination form on the SSA elections page (available during the election period).