

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

A STRONG FUTURE FOR THE STUDENT VOICE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME AUSTRALIA



University of
Notre Dame
Australia



Notre Dame
Student
Association
(NDSA)



Student Association
of the University of
Notre Dame Australia
(SAUNDA)

CONTEXT

Over the past 30 years the student voice at the University of Notre Dame Australia has grown exponentially and helped shape the direction of the University. In 2020 the Sydney (Darlinghurst and Broadway) and Perth (Fremantle) Campuses have highly active and engaged Student Associations who are elected to represent the student voice. While the immense outreach and strength of these student representative voices can be attributed to countless hardworking students, it is clear that this strong student voice could not have been possible without the relationship between the students and the University. To ensure that the University's vision is grown collaboratively it is crucial that students act as partners and stakeholders, being involved in decision making processes that will impact the direction of the University and the student experience. The pursuit of this collaborative partnership should foster a strong student voice; enhancing the relationship between the University and the Student Associations and cultivating the growth and development of the University in all its capacities.

THE ROLE OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

The University of Notre Dame Australia (UNDA), The Student Association of the University of Notre Dame Australia Incorporated (NDSA), The Student Association of the University of Notre Dame Australia (SAUNDA) and the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) utilised Notre Dame's National Student Board throughout 2019 to discuss and workshop the role that students play within university decision making. This discussion led to the idea of developing this Memorandum of Understanding between the University and its students, represented by their respective Student Associations. This document would not only formalise the partnership between the University and Student Associations but provide a framework by which students can be involved in university decision making and functioning. The signing of this Memorandum is a formal recognition by all parties of the role students and student representatives play as partners and stakeholders within the University and the importance of protecting, acknowledging and listening to the voices of all students.

JOINT OBJECTIVES

To give this partnership between the University and the student body a direction and a vision it will be built on joint objectives that should be at the foundation of any decisions made within this relationship. These will ensure that the inevitable growth of the University is a collaborative process that actively involves the student body and their representatives. All parties should ensure that they equally contribute to these objectives:

- i. To use a collaborative and involved approach to continue creating a community in which students and staff are welcome and are able to shape the education, experience and culture of Notre Dame as a whole;
- ii. To involve students in developing, growing and implementing a central strategic vision for the University's future; and
- iii. To foster a community where student leaders are supported, recognised and acknowledged.

COMMITMENTS

This Memorandum outlines joint objectives and commitments between the University and the students. To ensure the strength and integrity of the joint objectives and realise the importance of the student voice, the below commitments and expectations will define the ongoing partnership between the University and the Student Associations and serve as an open framework for their ongoing collaboration.

In signing this Memorandum, the University and Student Associations are committing to ensure:

- i. Student representatives are actively involved in the University's decision making at all levels that directly affect the student body;
- ii. Collaboration with student representatives is sought at all times in the development of teaching and learning, the design and use of university facilities and engagement with the wider community;
- iii. There is an open channel of communication between the University and the student body acting as a conduit for suggestions, feedback and ideas;
- iv. There is a mutual respect of the views, beliefs and opinions of others;
- v. Student representatives feel safe and protected in seeking out and championing the student voice; and
- vi. The students and the University continue to celebrate and acknowledge the pursuit and achievement of shared goals and objectives.

MOVING FORWARD

With the hard work and ongoing solidarity of the Student Associations and the University, it is likely that these commitments and goals will evolve and adapt. Considering the University of Notre Dame Australia's rapid growth, this Memorandum is not a set of constraints on this growth but as a tool to strengthen the partnership between the University and the students. Beyond the development of this Memorandum, there is still much more work to be completed in recognising this partnership. As a result, in ensuring

its success, this document needs to be accompanied by continued education and community awareness amongst staff and students regarding this partnership.

THE UNDERSTANDING

The relationship of the Student Associations with the University must be built on a mutuality of trust and respect. Open lines of communication and an openness to genuine discussion and dialogue are vital. This partnership provides the University with the opportunity to effectively engage with students through their respective Student Associations. While the joint objectives are such that this is not an inherent relationship of opposition, there will likely be disagreement. However, the commonality of goals should always be recognised and drawn upon for the resolution of the conflict.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

By signing this Memorandum of Understanding, the parties agree that:

- (a) This framework comes into effect upon the signing by the Presidents of the Student Associations and Vice Chancellor of the University of Notre Dame Australia;
- (b) This Framework will remain in effect until it is reviewed and re-signed by the Presidents of the Student Associations and the Vice Chancellor;
- (c) This document may be reviewed and modified through mutual consent of the University and Student Associations;
- (d) The Student Associations and the University shall make continuous effort to fulfil and promote this framework to the University community; and
- (e) This framework may be terminated upon three (3) months written notice and justification by one party to another.

SIGNED ON BEHALF OF
University of Notre Dame Australia

PROFESSOR FRANCIS CAMPBELL
VICE CHANCELLOR

DATED:

SIGNED ON BEHALF OF
Notre Dame Student Association

SIGNED ON BEHALF OF
Student Association of the University of
Notre Dame Australia

OLIVIA TRAHAIR
PRESIDENT

DATED:

HELEN BEAINI
PRESIDENT

DATED: