



Swinburne Student Association

# Candidate Handbook

**VERSION 3**  
**REVISED 16.OCT.25**

# Candidate Handbook

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## *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:

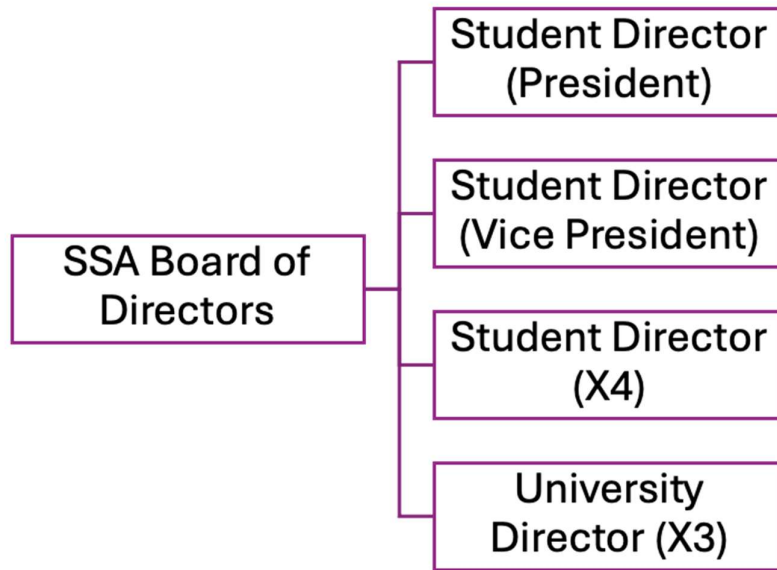
- the **SSA** President (as Chair),
- the Vice President,
- and a Swinburne University Director.

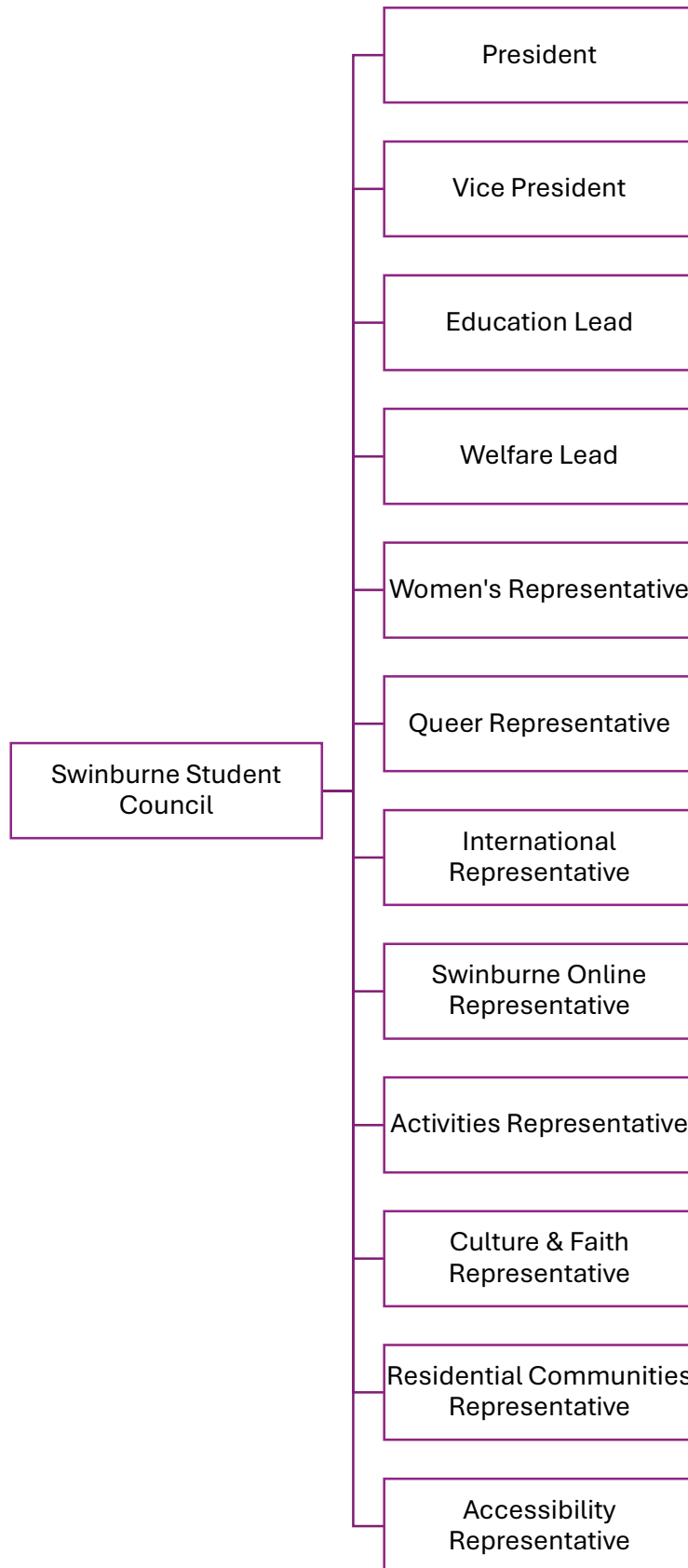
The **FARMRC** meets quarterly, maintains strict confidentiality, and has the authority to seek information, engage experts, review audit outcomes, and make election-related decisions as per **SSA** regulations. A quorum requires at least one University Director and one Student Director. **FARMRC** plays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

The 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 13 members across the Student Council Education Action Panel (**SEAP**) and the Student Council Welfare Action Panel (**SWAP**).

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.
- Editorials in student newsletters, social media, and give speeches at events
- Represent students and are empowered to be involved in university decision-making.
- Attendance and engagement 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.

### **Functions of the Swinburne Student Council Education Action Panel (SEAP)**

The **SEAP** will focus on the integration of feedback on education matters, including:

- Teaching mode (online, offline, hybrid)
- Access to resources and facilities
- Information Technology
- Classes and timetabling
- Administration

The **SEAP** shall be responsible for researching campaigns on student education matters and making recommendations to the **SSC** Executive for implementation either at **SSA** or **SUT**.

The **SEAP** will also be given access to and information on **SUT** education policy matters affecting students. Examples of areas could include:

- Assessment policy
- Group work
- Fairer assessments
- Exams
- Special considerations

### **Functions of the Swinburne Student Council Welfare Action Panel (SWAP)**

The **SWAP** will focus on the integration of feedback on welfare matters, including:

- Financial difficulties
- Mental health and wellbeing
- Accessibility
- Representation for the following categories: Women, Queer, Cultural and Faith, International, Swinburne Online, Accessibility and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

The **SWAP** shall be responsible for researching campaigns on student welfare matters and making recommendations to the **SSC** Executive for implementation at **SSA** or **SUT**.

**SWAP** will engage with the Swinburne students by running activities & events to promote student welfare and wellbeing.

### ***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 will be beneficial for your future career.

### ***What is the difference between a 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 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.

### Minimum Engagement Requirements for Honorarium

**SSA** Board Directors and **SSC** Representatives may be eligible to receive an honorarium in recognition of their contributions, as outlined in the **SSA** Honoraria Handbook. Honoraria payments are not automatic and are granted based on a representative's active engagement and fulfilment of key responsibilities throughout their term.

Student representatives must meet the minimum engagement criteria, which includes participation during Orientation Weeks and Launch Week, regular attendance at scheduled meetings, and meaningful involvement in **SSA** activities or initiatives.

Eligibility is assessed against documented hours of participation and attendance records. Honoraria amounts and specific thresholds are detailed in the **SSA** Honoraria Handbook and may vary depending on the role held (e.g., President, Director, or Representative). All claims are subject to review by **SSA** and must comply with the standards set out in the 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 **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. As the leader of the Swinburne Educational Action Panel (**SEAP**), this role drives initiatives that support academic success and engagement.

#### Membership:

- Member of the **SSC**
- Chair and member of the **SEAP**

#### 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 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. As the leader of the Swinburne Welfare Action Panel (**SWAP**) this role drives initiatives that promote student welfare and engagement.

#### Membership:

- Member of the **SSC**
- Chair and member of the **SWAP**

#### Key Responsibilities:

- Represent and advocate for students' welfare needs to SUT and other stakeholders.
- Chair and support the **SWAP** to 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**
- Member of the **SWAP**

#### 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**
- Member of the **SWAP**

#### 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 and **SWAP** to ensure women's voices are represented in campus activities.

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### *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**
- Member of the **SWAP**

#### 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 and **SWAP** to ensure queer voices are represented in welfare and campus initiatives.
- Build connections with useful networks such as Minus18 and Transgender Victoria.

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### *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 accessible and respectful to all cultural and faith communities.

#### Membership:

- Member of the **SSC**
- Member of the **SWAP**

#### 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.
- 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 to SUT and other stakeholders.
- Work closely with the Moondani Toombadool Centre (MTC) to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and initiatives.

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### *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. The Accessibility Representative collaborates with university staff, student groups, and external organisations to address barriers and enhance the overall student experience for students with disabilities.

#### Membership:

- Member of the **SSC**
- Member of the **SWAP**

#### 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**
- Member of the **SWAP**

#### 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.
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### *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. The International Student Representative collaborates with key stakeholders, provides feedback on services and events, and fosters a sense of community among international students.

#### Membership:

- Member of the **SSC**
- Member of the **SEAP**

#### 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.
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### *Swinburne Online Representative*

The Swinburne Online Representative is dedicated to advocating for the needs and experiences of students studying remotely at Swinburne University of Technology (**SUT**). This role ensures that online students are supported, connected, and engaged in university life by addressing their unique challenges and providing feedback to enhance digital learning experiences and access to services.

#### Membership:

- Member of the **SSC**
- Member of the **SEAP**

#### Key Responsibilities:

- Advocate for the needs and concerns of online students to **SUT** and other stakeholders.
  - Provide feedback on digital resources, online learning platforms, and access to support services.
  - Collaborate with university staff to improve the online student experience.
  - Support initiatives to foster connection and engagement among remote learners.
  - Promote awareness of available resources and services tailored to online students
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## Election Details

### *What positions are elected at the annual elections?*

#### SSA Student Board Directors

- President (x 1)
- Vice President (x 1)
- Student Directors (x 2) – The following year, the other 2 x 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 (x 1)
- Vice President (x 1)
- Education Lead (x 1)
- Welfare Lead (x 1)
- Accessibility Representative (x 1)
- Women's Representative (x 1)
- Queer Representative (x 1)
- Cultural and Faith Representative (x 1)
- Activities Representative (x 1)
- International Representative (x 1)
- Residential Communities Representative (x 1)
- Swinburne Online Representative (x 1)

The Education Lead is Chair of the **SEAP**, and the Welfare Lead is the Chair of the **SWAP**.

### *Who is eligible to participate?*

The **SSA** Electorate comprises of 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 the elected student members 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.

#### Swinburne Online Representative

Any student currently enrolled in a Swinburne Online course 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 at **SSA**'s website at [www.swinburnestudentassociation.com.au](http://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).