SYDNEY POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

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Framework for Student Representation

Overview

Student representatives at SPI are elected by the student cohort to serve a 12-month term on the SPI Academic Board. Student representatives at SPI are responsible for representing the interests, issues, and opinions of their student cohort on governing bodies and participate in the decision-making process to improve the learning experiences of all SPI students. This includes providing the annual student report which is presented directly to the Academic Board and other governing bodies through reports to voice key the issues facing students and recommendations for improvement.

In addition to representation on governing bodies, student representatives may organise initiatives in collaboration with SPI academic, managerial, or academic staff such as social gatherings to promote and foster friendly, equitable relationships amongst the community or extracurricular training sessions to improve students' skills. The responsibility of ensuring that student feedback is provided and collected is particularly important as student surveys are carefully considered and used to improve SPI. Finally, student representatives are the voice of the SPI student community, and in this capacity, have a responsibility to ensure that the reputation of their community and the Institute is not tarnished.

Key Responsibilities:

The following list is not exhaustive but outlines several key responsibilities which student representatives must fulfil as part of their role:

- Contribute to decision making and governance to improve students' lives at SPI
- Represent the needs, key issues faced and opinions of the SPI student cohort
- Foster, facilitate and improve the positive student experience at SPI
- Represent the student cohort at events, such as Orientation Week
- Connect with students and foster a sense of community and equality
- Keep in close contact with relevant governing bodies and academic staff
- Discuss strategic issues with management
- Make recommendations and observations based on SPI students' interests
- Improve the reputation of SPI through representation
- Organise events for students
- Discuss and deliberate with relevant SPI staff and bodies as part of the decision-making process
- Compile and present the annual student representative's report
- Promote student feedback surveys and feedback collection
- Communication of important or key information, including promotion of SPI events

Further information, applicable to all members of the Academic Board and including the student representative, can be found in the SPI Governance Charter.

Elections and the Electoral Process

The election of SPI student representatives will be held annually **during the final trimester** of the academic year. Specific dates for the election schedule will be included on the SPI Student Calendar and communicated to students via email and on the SPI website. Students will then be able to nominate themselves or their peers for the student representative role: *Student Representative for the Academic Board.* Additional roles may be added in the future. Students will be able **to nominate one student for each role**. Nominations will be registered through the nomination form provided.

Following the nomination process, the nominees will be formally announced as candidates and be given a **2-week window for campaigning**, wherein they will make their pitch to the cohort. Students may campaign on behalf of a candidate but must not allow such activities to disrupt others' learning. Social media platforms, leaflets, digital content, and stumping are all permissible forms of campaigning. Note that, whilst cordial and respectful debates or discussions amongst candidates and their supporters are encouraged, SPI will not tolerate harassment or bullying.

Special elections may be conducted where the incumbent resigns or is unable to continue their duties. This by-election will take place with a **1-week campaign window** instead and the elected winner will serve for the remainder of the term. Additionally, by-elections may be held if an election results in a tie.

Votes may be cast within a **1-week window** to allow all students an opportunity to participate. Votes will be cast through an online portal. Following the counting of the votes, the results of the election will be announced exactly **1 week from the last day of voting**.

Eligibility

The following eligibility criteria apply for student representative nominees:

- The nominee must be an enrolled SPI student during the electoral process and for the full duration of their term
- The nominee must not have been found guilty of any of the following:
    - Breaches of SPI Policy or Procedures
    - Breaches of the SPI Student Code of Conduct
    - Academic and Non-Academic Misconduct
    - Bullying, Harassment or Abuse of others
- The nominee must have a satisfactory or passing academic performance to ensure that the additional responsibilities can be managed alongside their academic workload
- The nominee must have a satisfactory attendance record
- The nominee must not have been involuntarily removed from such a role in the past

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