


## Your Postgraduate Student Representative Council and You

Helping you to negotiate your postgraduate study



### What is a postgraduate representative council?

- A postgraduate representative council is an independent association which represents the interests of postgraduate students both within the university and the wider community
- A postgraduate representative council sits outside the scope of the university. The people who make up the general staff and the council members are not employees of the university. A postgraduate student association retains information about students separate to the university
- Funding for postgraduate representative councils come primarily through student payments to the university (separate from course fees), for example, at Usyd, SUPRA's funding comes out of a proportion of the Student Services Amenities Fee (SSAF)
- Postgraduate representative councils act as the 'educated voice for students' concerns'. Their staff consist of council members, who are postgraduate students elected by the general student population to their roles, professional administrative staff and caseworkers
- You are automatically covered by your postgraduate representative council simply by being a postgraduate. This means you can access help at any time for FREE.

### Roles of postgraduate representative councils

- **Information** – this can be through the production of newsletters, guides, education seminars, information on websites etc.
- **Advice** - individual casework can be provided to students at no cost. This advice is provided by trained professional caseworkers. Some councils have solicitors who provide legal advice.
- **Advocacy** - this can be provided on an individual basis, on behalf of groups or on behalf of the postgraduate student population as a whole. This can be at university level, state level or federal level

### What we can help with specifically

- **Academic:**
  - Show cause
  - Special consideration
  - Supervision difficulties
  - IP law issues
  - Plagiarism/academic misconduct issues
  - Appeals

### What we can help with specifically

- **Non Academic:**
  - Tenancy
  - Harassment, discrimination and bullying
  - Finances
  - Employment
  - Disability
  - Centrelink

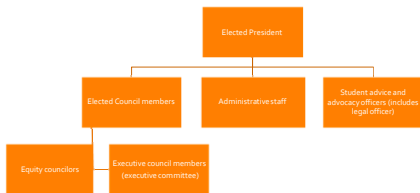
And the list goes on.....

We also provide referrals to other services, including counseling services and academic support .

### Links (and a bit of fun too)

- Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA) <http://supra.net.au/>
- Macquarie University Postgraduate Representative Council (MUPRA) <http://www.mupra.com/about>
- UNSW Postgraduate Council (PGC) <http://www.arc.unsw.edu.au/advice-representation/postgraduate-council>
- Monash University Postgraduate Association (MPA) <http://www.mpa.monash.edu.au/>
- 'Thesis Whisperer' (Postgrad forum) <http://thesiswhisperer.com/>
- Piled Higher and Deeper (comic series) <http://www.phdcomics.com/comics.php>

## What does a council look like?



## Individual portfolios

Some councilors are elected to individual portfolios which relate to identified groups within the postgraduate student population. Portfolios held by SUPRA councilors include:

- Women's office
- Queer officer
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander officer
- International officer
- Disability officer
- Rural and regional officer

## So you want to get involved?

- Contact councilors or staff, let them know your ideas, concerns and/or grievances
- Attend council meetings – they are open to the student postgraduate community to attend
- Be on the look out for events and come along to meet council and other postgraduates
- Nominate to become a council member yourself

We are only as good as the engagement we receive from people like yourself