

Student Organisations Procedure - Recognition

Section 1 - Key Information

Policy Type and Approval Body	Governance – University Council
Accountable Executive – Policy	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
Responsible Manager – Policy	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience and Employability)
Review Date	29 September 2029

Section 2 - Purpose

(1) This Procedure establishes the requirements for the recognition of student-led organisations by the University.

Section 3 - Scope

(2) This Procedure applies to all student-led organisations, including those seeking formal University recognition.

(3) Provisions for the affiliation of student clubs are outlined in the Student Organisations Procedure – Clubs.

Section 4 - Key Decisions

Key Decisions	Role
Approval or withdrawal of recognition – Type A organisations	Council
Approval or withdrawal of recognition – Type B organisations	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

Section 5 - Policy Statement

(4) Refer to the [Student Organisations Policy](#).

Section 6 - Procedures

Part A - Recognition Categories

(5) The University may recognise two categories of student-led organisations:

- a. Type A organisations that meet the definition of a student-led organisation under the [Higher Education Support Act 2003](#) and the [Higher Education Support \(Student Services, Amenities, Representation and Advocacy\)](#)

[Guidelines 2022](#) (SSARA Guidelines);

- b. Type B organisations that are recognised by the University but do not meet the statutory definition of a student-led organisation.

(6) Both types of student-led organisations must represent and advocate for the interests and experiences of all or part of the student body at any or all of the campuses of the University, including online.

Part B - Application Process

Application Requirements

(7) Applicant groups seeking recognition must submit a formal application, via email, addressed to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), and include:

- a. a constitution or founding document that outlines the organisation's governance structure, democratic election or appointment process, membership rules and dispute resolution process;
- b. a statement of purpose clearly defining the organisation's objectives and intended contribution to student representation or student experience;
- c. evidence of a register of members and minutes of at least one general meeting;
- d. a statement of intent to meet the obligations of any contract or agreement with the University.

(8) Applications for recognition for a Type A student-led organisation must also align with the requirements set out in the [Higher Education Support Act 2003](#) and the [SSARA Guidelines](#).

Assessment of Applications

(9) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) will assess applications against evidence that:

- a. the proposed governance structure and arrangements will allow the organisation to make appropriate decisions independently of the University;
- b. the organisation has the capacity to comply with any contract or agreement entered into with the University;
- c. applications for Type A student-led organisation recognition meet the requirements set out in the [Higher Education Support Act 2003](#) and the [SSARA Guidelines](#).

(10) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) may request additional information from, and/or meetings with, the applicant group in considering an application.

Recommendation and Decision

(11) For Type A student-led organisation recognition, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) will review applications and provide a recommendation to University Council.

(12) University Council is responsible for the approval or refusal of recognition of Type A student-led organisations.

(13) For Type B student-led organisation recognition, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) will determine the outcome of the application.

Outcome of Applications

(14) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) will aim to notify applicants of the outcome:

- a. for Type A student-led organisation applications, within 20 business days following the University Council

meeting at which the application is considered;

- b. for Type B student-led organisation applications, within 20 business days of receipt of a complete application.

(15) Where approval and recognition is granted:

- a. the organisation will be formally recognised as a student-led organisation;
- b. the organisation will be assigned a recognition category (Type A or Type B) in accordance with this Procedure;
- c. in the case of Type A organisations, the University may issue a Funding and Service Agreement and license.

(16) Where recognition is not granted:

- a. reasons for the decision will be provided;
- b. the applicant group will be given the opportunity to address identified issues;
- c. one re-submission may be made within the same calendar year.

Recognition Status

(17) Recognition confirms that the organisation meets the University's requirements for recognition as a student-led organisation under this Policy and Procedure.

(18) Recognition is ongoing, subject to compliance with the Student Organisations Policy, this Procedure and any applicable agreements.

(19) The University will maintain a register of recognised student-led organisations and will conduct an annual review of the register.

Part C - University Support

Consultation and Representation

(20) The University will support all recognised student-led organisations through the following measures:

- a. regular consultation on academic and administrative policies and other matters that affect student learning and experience. This may occur via formal participation of students on University committees as appropriate;
- b. accepting the right of recognised student-led organisations to make representation to the University through the Vice-Chancellor, the Vice-Chancellor's designated representative/s and appropriate University committees regarding matters affecting the student body;
- c. recognising that the President (or equivalent) of a recognised student led-organisation is designated as a student under the [La Trobe University Act 2009](#) (under Section 3 paragraph [b]) and granting associated entitlements (see [Enrolment Procedure – Variations](#) [for Leave of Absence entitlements] and [Assessment Procedure – Adjustments \[including Special Consideration\]](#)).

Funding

(21) Recognised student-led organisations are eligible to receive Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) funding.

(22) Funding decisions are made by University Council, following endorsement from the Student Support Sub-Committee and the Senior Executive Group.

(23) Detailed funding arrangements, including obligations and reporting requirements, are governed by the terms of any Funding and Service Agreement or other applicable agreement.

Part D - Governance and Accountability

(24) All recognised student-led organisations must:

- a. comply with all applicable legal compliance obligations and not do anything that may cause the University to breach its own;
- b. maintain accurate records of meetings and financial transactions;
- c. maintain risk, fraud prevention and financial control procedures;
- d. cooperate with University oversight relating to safety, wellbeing and financial integrity and compliance;
- e. ensure appropriate insurance arrangements are in place to cover activities/operations.

(25) Type A recognised student-led organisations must, in addition:

- a. meet the obligations set out in the [Higher Education Support Act 2003](#) and the [SSARA Guidelines](#) and any Funding and Service Agreement with the University;
- b. publish annual audited accounts.

Part E - Withdrawal of Recognition

Voluntary Withdrawal from Recognition

(26) A recognised student-led organisation may voluntarily withdraw from recognised status by providing:

- a. written notice of dissolution to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic);
- b. final audited financial statements and an asset register within 30 days of the dissolution resolution.

(27) A recognised student-led organisation may apply to transition to a student club if they remain small but viable, subject to the requirements of the Student Organisations Procedure – Clubs, and with the approval of the Director, Student Engagement and Inclusion.

University Withdrawal of Recognition

(28) Recognition of a student-led organisation may be withdrawn where one or more of the following conditions are met:

- a. serious or repeated breaches of University policy or legislative requirements;
- b. financial mismanagement and/or insolvency;
- c. engagement in conduct that constitutes a criminal offence;
- d. engagement in conduct that has caused, or is reasonably likely to cause, serious damage to the reputation of the University;
- e. the student-led organisation fails to meet governance, reporting, over at least two consecutive reporting periods.

Insolvency and Financial Distress

(29) Where a student-led organisation becomes insolvent, or is reasonably suspected of being insolvent, it must notify the Director, Integrity and Partnerships as soon as practicable.

(30) The Director, Integrity and Partnerships may require the organisation to provide further information or take specific actions to manage risks arising from insolvency and may initiate withdrawal of recognition in accordance with this Procedure.

Decision Making Authority

(31) For Type A student-led organisations, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) will review the circumstances and provide a recommendation to University Council.

(32) University Council is responsible for the decision to withdraw recognition of Type A student-led organisations.

(33) For Type B student-led organisations, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) is responsible for the decision to withdraw recognition.

Notification and Effect of Withdrawal

(34) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) will notify the organisation in writing of the outcome of any withdrawal decision and the effective date.

(35) Upon withdrawal of recognition the following must take place within 30 days of the effective date:

- a. all University-allocated or SSAF-funded assets must be returned to the University;
- b. unspent SSAF funds revert to the University for redistribution in accordance with funding rules;
- c. all confidential information of the University must, at the University's election, be returned to the University or destroyed in accordance with the University's instructions.

Part F - Monitoring and Review of Organisations

Monitoring and Annual Review

(36) The Director, Integrity and Partnerships will conduct an annual review of recognised student-led organisations. Organisations may be asked to provide evidence that they are continuing to meet the requirements for recognition.

(37) Continued recognition of student-led organisations is subject to:

- a. compliance with applicable laws and relevant University policies;
- b. maintenance of effective governance and financial management;
- c. appropriate conduct and safe operation of all activities;
- d. in the case of Type A recognised student-led organisations, continued compliance with any Funding and Service Agreement or contract.

Outcomes of Review

(38) Following a review, the Director, Integrity and Partnerships may:

- a. require remedial actions within a specified timeframe;
- b. initiate a process for withdrawal of recognition in accordance with Part E of this Procedure.

Decision Making Authority

(39) Where the review identifies significant or ongoing non-compliance:

- a. for Type A student-led organisations, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) will provide a recommendation to University Council regarding continued recognition or withdrawal;
- b. for Type B student-led organisations, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) may determine the outcome.

Part G - Organisations' Right to Review of Decisions

(40) Applicant groups and recognised student-led organisations may request a review of a decision made under this Procedure where they consider that the Procedure has not been correctly applied.

(41) This review process does not apply to:

- a. decisions of University Council, including decisions relating to the approval or withdrawal of recognition of Type A student-led organisations;
- b. decisions made under any contract, including Funding and Service Agreements;
- c. the merits of the decision.

(42) Requests for review must be submitted in writing to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience and Employability) within 20 business days of notification of the decision.

(43) The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience and Employability) will determine the outcome of the review and may:

- a. confirm the original decision;
- b. require that the decision be reconsidered in accordance with this Procedure.

(44) Organisations who are dissatisfied with the outcome of any review may lodge a complaint with the University Ombudsman under the provisions of the [Ombudsman Statute 2009](#).

(45) Organisations that remain dissatisfied after all University processes have been exhausted may choose to lodge a complaint with the [National Student Ombudsman](#).

Section 7 - Definitions

(46) For the purpose of this Procedure:

- a. Type A organisations: organisations that meet the definition of a student-led organisation under the Higher Education Support Act 2003 and the [Higher Education Support \(Student Services, Amenities, Representation and Advocacy\) Guidelines 2022](#) (SSARA Guidelines).
- b. Type B organisations: student-led organisations that are recognised by the University but do not meet the statutory definition of a student-led organisation.

Section 8 - Authority and Associated Information

(47) This Procedure is made under the [La Trobe University Act 2009](#).

(48) Associated information includes:

- a. [Higher Education Support Act 2003 \(Cth\)](#) and the [Student Services, Amenities, Representation and Advocacy Guidelines 2022](#) (SSARA Guidelines) made under that Act.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	7th October 2026
Review Date	29th September 2029
Approval Authority	University Council
Approval Date	7th October 2026
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Manager - Policy	Naomi Dempsey Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience and Employability)
Enquiries Contact	Student Experience & Employability