

# UQ Student Representation

## UQBS HDR Student Committee (Business School)

### **What are the main aims of the committee? Why is the student voice so critical in achieving these aims?**

The main aim of the UQBS HDR Student Committee is to represent our PhD cohort (approx. 150 students) in both formal events and informal events. Their leadership is important for informing our decision-making in the School and for building camaraderie and vitality amongst our student cohort. They are involved in a number of significant activities in the School including the quarterly

Research Committee meetings, the quarterly PhD-ECA workshops, and the annual Bootcamp, the annual mid-year colloquium, regular social events, and regular meetings held with the Postgraduate Coordinator. The UQBS HDR Student committee is absolutely essential to an effective PhD program. PhD students are a unique type of student at the University because they are being trained to become academic leaders. As a result, we need to give them independence, autonomy, and respect. We also need to provide them with



opportunities to challenge us and to drive their own agenda. None of this can be achieved without a high-quality HDR Student committee.

### **What benefits have staff members gained from effective student representation?**

We have been able to understand issues facing our students and solve them more quickly. We have also been able to forge stronger links between academics and students that helps us both. For issues that are particularly challenging, we have been able to reach a better appreciation of the complexities involved and how we can work together to address them. Overall, we can achieve much more with their support than we could ever do ourselves.

### **What kinds of responsibilities do the student reps have as part of their role? What strategies have you employed to carry out your duties effectively?**

Student Representatives (Reps) serve as the voice of their respective discipline's HDRs. They are responsible to lead the various discipline-based activities and events, bringing students from their discipline together, building collegiality and a sense of community. Reps are tasked to communicate and cooperate with their respective Discipline Coordinators and fellow students to ensure thorough communication (both, up and down) and understanding of the issues impacting their discipline. Discipline Reps are expected to attend committee meetings, contribute to the committee's decision making and participate actively in organising and running events and activities for all HDRs. The UQBS HDR committee has a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Creative and Advertising Director roles. These roles were formed organically based on collective strengths and preferences. Every role has a variety of duties, as well as the overarching purpose to serve the School and the HDR community. The complete list of duties for each role is documented and can be provided upon request.

### **Would you encourage other students to undertake representative roles?**

Many students ask this question! The answer depends on individual motivations. If you are the kind of person who values the opportunity to make an impact on the university and on others, often selflessly, then it's a perfect opportunity. There are so many benefits to reaching outside of the mundane aspects of doing a PhD, such as meeting many others, staff and students from all over the university. You are able to learn about how universities operate, how they are structured and the challenges to making changes to a large institution (and also how changes might have different impacts on different aspects of the institution). If you like being part of a team and helping future students to a better, brighter HDR process, you'll gain much fulfillment. But

the truth is that not everyone will value this type of opportunity. If your only aim is to have a linear process of study, this might be a distraction. But if you wish to understand a bigger picture (what a PhD is and what and how universities operate in the wider community) – this is really an incredibly rewarding opportunity. For most of us, it has been the most rewarding part of the journey.

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### **For further details, please contact:**

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