



RMIT UNIVERSITY STUDENT UNION: FIRST QUARTER REPORT

REPORTING PERIOD: 1 JANUARY 2015 – 31 MARCH 2015



PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Himasha
FONSEKA

In the first quarter of 2015 we welcomed back returning students and got a chance to meet the new members of our student body.

We participated in Orientation events across each metropolitan campus, targeting all cohorts of students from VCE through to post-graduate students. A particular highlight was the now annual Welcome Bash, which was held in the Alumni Courtyard. This event continues to be one of the biggest events on the RMIT social

calendar and we have received great feedback from students who attended and key stakeholders of the university.

We also held a suite of successful events in Week 4 under the banner of 'Re-Orientation Week', designed to raise awareness of RUSU's services and advocacy after students have had a chance to acclimate to University life.

We have seen paid membership on track for a bumper year, with our end of quarter result representing a 12% increase on our final figure from 2014. These results are very pleasing and show how we continue to demonstrate our value to the student body. We have also seen sharp rises in our social media engagement this quarter.

We are continuing to monitor matters arising from the New Academic Street development. We have worked closely with the University to provide temporary student spaces to replace those that are currently under renovation and will continue to keep an ongoing dialogue with the University to identify any issues arising that will have an unduly negative impact on students.

This quarter we have seen further uncertainty from the Federal Government over potential deregulation of fees and other matters relating to the funding of higher education. We will continue to follow these developments with interest and ensure that the voice of RMIT students is heard by relevant decision makers.

What follows is a detailed account of our activities this quarter that stands as a testament to the hard work of our elected councillors and staff.

Himasha Fonseca
President
RMIT University Student Union



ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

STANDOUT EVENTS

Orientation

Orientation 2015 was an extraordinary success for RUSU. Things kicked off in late January with the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) Welcome Day, followed by Vocational Education (VE) Welcome Day in mid-February. RUSU made a special effort to connect with these students as they began their unique RMIT journeys and featured in a lively festival-style event held on Bowen Street.

On February 24 and 25, RUSU went mobile and hit the road to welcome students on RMIT's Brunswick and Bundoora campuses. Students were greeted with a lively, thriving campus party, featuring food vendors, face painters, and RUSU clubs, departments and membership booths. A wide range of activities for every taste set the stage for RUSU to engage with record numbers of students on these campuses.

February 26 was RUSU's busiest day of the orientation period, with a full morning-to-night program of events to greet and entertain RMIT students on the city campus. The day began with a full-fledged festival on Bowen Street, courtesy of RMIT, and large numbers of RUSU staff, student representatives and volunteers to meet and greet new and returning students, share information about RUSU services and process high numbers of financial memberships.

Welcome Bash

The fun continued at the highly-anticipated Welcome Bash, RUSU's annual members-only orientation party, held on campus in the historic Alumni Courtyard. This year's all-ages, Hawaiian luau-themed event was the largest and most inclusive Welcome Bash to date: highlights included a functioning waterslide, performances by Polynesian dance troupe Nuholani, and all-day musical entertainment from local and student DJs, with a headlining performance by international electro house sensations Slice N Dice. The event reached full capacity of approximately 1,100 students within minutes, and feedback from all stakeholders - including security, university leaders, outside vendors and RMIT students was overwhelmingly positive.

Re-Orientation

In Week 4, RUSU hosted Re-Orientation. This was a week of introductory information, activities and events at a point in the semester when students are settled in and ready to get involved at RMIT. This year's theme was "Cirque du Re-O," and RUSU went all out making the week special for students. Running alongside Chill N Grill on the Brunswick, Bundoora and City campuses, students were treated to all kinds of carnival-themed freebies and activities to surprise and delight. Crowd favourites from the week included whimsical face painting, Mr. Whippy ice cream, raffle games with prizes, and the amazing magician Luigi Zucchini, alongside displays from various clubs and university partners. Cirque du Re-O on the city campus was the largest of the three Re-Orientation days, and RUSU truly brought the circus to Alumni Courtyard with circus performance workshops, an impressively realistic elephant on stilts, and a wide range of carnival-themed food vendors with a vintage twist, including custom fairy floss, fresh French pralines and gourmet iced tea, plus a RUSU members-only bar. Students genuinely enjoyed the festivities and participated in high numbers: Approximately 350 Brunswick students, 600 Bundoora students and 1,100 City students took part in Cirque du Re-O.

Re-Orientation Party

Re-Orientation 2015 was capped off with another of RUSU's annual traditions - the Re-O Party. This year's event was held at La Di Da, a popular venue in the Melbourne CBD, and showcased several talented RMIT student DJs alongside headlining acts Brynny and Jiggers. Around 600 students came out to party, and left hoping it wouldn't be too long before the next RUSU event!

MEMBERSHIP

4342 RMIT students became financial members of RUSU in the period up to 31 March. This was a massive start to our membership drive and puts RUSU well on the way to reaching our target of 5,000 financial members in 2015.



VOLUNTEERS

It is pleasing to see that word of mouth about our volunteer program is spreading. The demand by students to volunteer with us during this quarter has outweighed the volunteering opportunities we can provide.

The Volunteer Information Booklet remains as an introductory tool for students who have an interest in volunteering at RUSU. The booklet aims to answer questions students may have and talk about the programs structure along with all the benefits to them in being involved. The distribution of 1000 copies of the booklet resulted in a very strong response with 280 students registering their interest.

An online 'expression of interest' system remains in place to enable students to express their interest in volunteering and begin the process of induction and training. The online expression of interest form allows students to nominate the volunteering areas that catch their attention and tell us about any volunteering they have participated in in the past.

All newly registered volunteers are required to attend an organisational induction training session.

These sessions run for about 1.5 hours and are usually delivered in groups of up to 40 students. When required, small groups and individual sessions are offered and delivered. We have also offered five induction large scale training sessions during the first quarter.



One of our amazing volunteers



Volunteers working hard at Welcome Bash

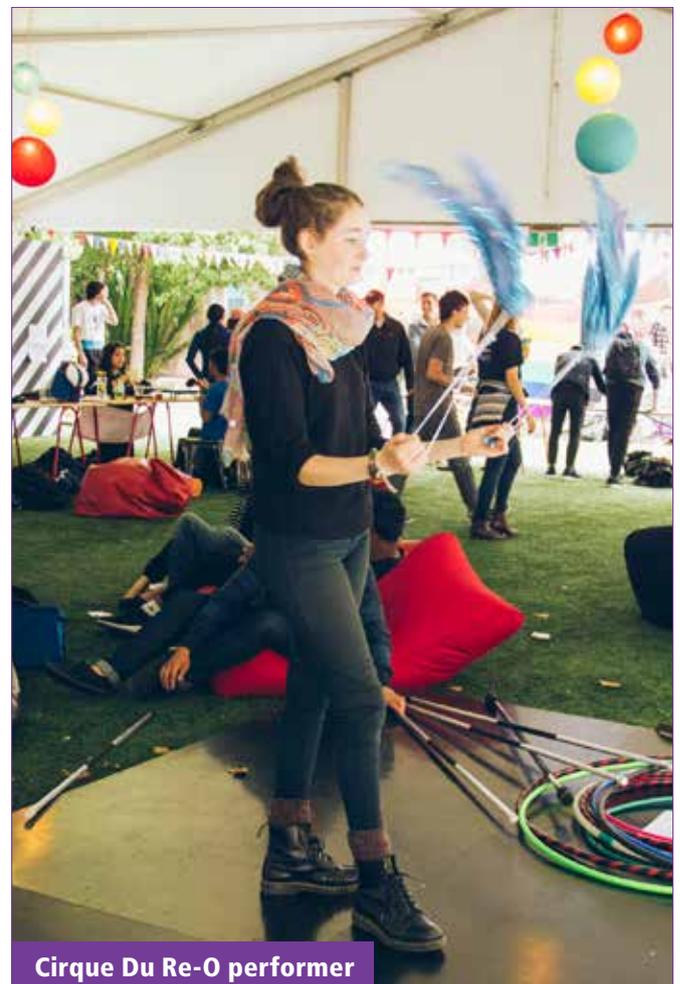
RUSU VOLUNTEERS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

First Quarter 2015

Recruitment	Oct-Dec	Year to date
Number of students registering their interest to volunteer during third quarter	280	280
Training	Completions	
Volunteers inducted	246	246
Volunteers trained in Food Handling Level 1	59	59
Volunteers trained in RSA	67	67
Volunteers trained in Youth Mental Health First Aid	-	-
Realfoods Cafe onsite kitchen & operations training	-	-
Volunteers trained in Community First Aid	-	-
Volunteers trained in manual handling	-	-

VOLUNTEER HOURS WORKED IN 2014

At the end of the fourth quarter, RUSU volunteers had contributed more than 1076.5 working hours to RUSU services.



Cirque Du Re-0 performer

ACROSS THE CAMPUSES

CITY

The RUSU Information Counter (Building 8, Level 3, Room 1) has been a very important 'go to' information and contact point for all RMIT Students. February and March proved to be extremely busy months, with many new students signing up for RUSU memberships.

The Admin volunteer program has continued to be very successful, with 16 volunteers staffing the office during the peak periods of the day. This program provides our volunteers with experience in administration and student-focused customer service. Seven RMIT student casuals were also employed to assist the Front Office during peak periods of the quarter.



Spectators at Cirque Du Re-O



Enjoying the sunshine at Welcome Bash

BUNDOORA

Staffing Announcement

In 2015, RMIT Link decided not to continue jointly funding the Bundoora Student Liaison Officer role at the Bld 204 Information Counter. This unfortunately led to a redundancy being offered and accepted by the Bundoora Student Liaison Officer, Patrick O'Keefe. Patrick has spent many years running the front counter in Bundoora and his contribution and service to RUSU will be very sorely missed, as will his helpful, caring nature. We wish him all the very best in his future endeavours.

As a result of the redundancy, student casuals are staffing the Bundoora front counter as a temporary arrangement.

Reduced funding now means that RUSU no longer operates at Bundoora West campus on Mondays and is currently operating on reduced hours on other days.

Weekly Barbecues

Every Wednesday, RUSU staff, student representatives and volunteers cook a free BBQ for students AT Bundoora West. For the first part of this quarter, RUSU's BBQ production stepped up a gear, cooking roughly 600 sausages, 200 veggie burgers and a small mountain of onions, with salad, sauce and bread.

Weekly BBQ lunches continue at Bundoora East every Tuesday outside Building 254.

Bundoora Building 204 Orientation Party

RUSU hosted a late afternoon/evening Orientation party in building 204 with free food, drinks and music and a chance especially for new students to meet new people and have some fun on campus.

Building 204 and 254 Coffee break

The free tea, coffee and milo service provided by RUSU in the kitchens of building 204 (West) and 254 (East) remain very popular. It is estimated that roughly 250 students use this service on a daily basis across both campuses.

Building 204 Information Counter

The number of student rights inquiries that are presented at the Information Counter in Building 204 is most notable. Inquiries are increasing. This trend has continued so far this year. Up to 10 students per day seek student rights advice from the front counter.

'Free Breakfast'

RUSU provides a free breakfast at Bundoora West, and also Bundoora East, with whole fruit, fruit salad, muesli, tea and coffee, and muffins provided each week. Approximately 100 students receive free breakfast on each campus per week.

Building 254 Kitchenette

The long awaited kitchenette in Building 254 was completed this quarter and is already being well used by students. Building 254 continues to be the 'Go To' place for students at Bundoora East with students loving the informal lounge area and free games on offer.

Bundoora Queer Collective

The Bundoora Queer Collective is continuing in 2015. The convenor of the collective has been doing a fantastic job in organising and promoting the lunches, as well as arranging a banner for the Queer Lounge, and plants to be put in the lounge.

CARLTON

The Carlton office has been cleared out so that the construction workers can commence work as per the developers and RMIT's schedule. As construction is still underway at the Carlton office, Building 57, services such as the free breakfast are being delivered out of the Building 80 foyer to ensure students do not miss out on this much loved and important program. Around 200 students per week are enjoying the free breakfast at Carlton.

RUSU hosted a Pop-Up Pub at the Carlton campus as part of the Orientation festivities for VE students. With perfect weather and a well-advertised event, students crowded into the Orr Street courtyard to enjoy drinks with their friends. The event reached a capacity crowd within 45 minutes of the event officially kicking off. Appropriately security had to turn some students away due to the OH&S requirements of the space.



Resident pirates at the RUSU Boat Party



Cirque Du Re-O fun



Cirque Du Re-O fun

BRUNSWICK

Brunswick BBQ's

The Brunswick BBQ's are in full swing. Every Tuesday RUSU cooks Halal sausages and vegan burgers for hungry Brunswick students. Cider is also available for free to members only. RSA best practice is employed with the BBQ's as some students need to return to class to operate sewing machines. Between members only and the restriction of service of alcohol, RUSU creates a fun, safe and relaxed environment for students enjoying the BBQ.

Brunswick Info Counter

The Brunswick counter continues to operate between the hours of 9:00am to 4:30pm, Monday through to Wednesday.

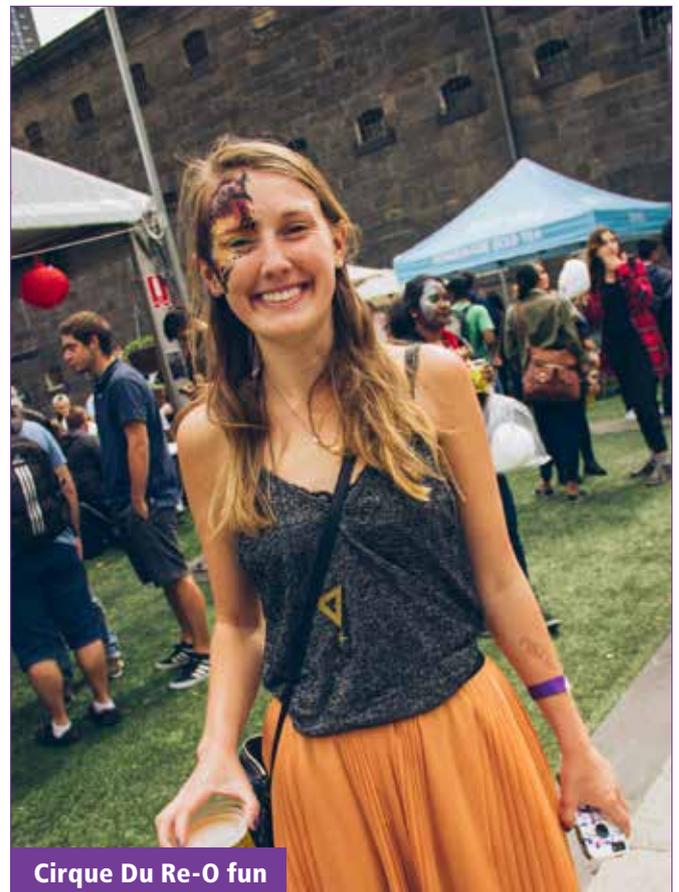
Brunswick Breakfasts

The breakfast continues to be a big success at Brunswick. This much loved, well received program has become so anticipated that students will queue before the program kicks off. Due to restrictions of allocated budget funds, students are allowed either a muffin or a cup of freshly prepared fruit. In rationing out the breakfast, we ensure we are reaching as many students as possible and as fairly as possible.

Brunswick Orientation Events

During this quarter there were to events held near the Brunswick campus. During the orientation week there was a drinks and food evening held at the popular 'Howler Bar'. This convenient location for Brunswick students saw a fantastic turnout and all who went had a great time.

Carrying on with the success of the O-Week event, RUSU put on a Re-O Week party, again held at the Howler Bar. Word had obviously spread of the success of the first event as students flocked to the event. Students from all campuses came to the party and had a great time.



Cirque Du Re-O fun

RUSU DEPARTMENTS

ENVIRONMENT

Orientation Day

Orientation Day was a resounding success for the RUSU Environment Department. The department again partnered with Greening RMIT to run a successful event on February 26. Activations included the distribution of packets of seeds to interested students as well as two 'pedal power' smoothie bikes on which students were able to make their own healthy smoothies. The department experienced significant social media growth following this event as well as many sign-ups requesting further engagement on the day.

RMIT Environment Network

The department attended the first meeting of the RMIT Environment Network bringing together student groups, clubs and societies focused on environmental issues. The purpose of the network is to facilitate collaboration between Environment Groups on campus. The first meeting was a success with several of the more prominent groups showing great interest in resource pooling into the future.

Greening RMIT Partnership

The RUSU Environment department has continued our ongoing partnership with student organisation Greening RMIT in Semester 1. Greening RMIT have continued to oversee the running of the Community Garden located on the balcony of level 10 Building 8 on the RMIT City Campus with great success.

Skill Shares

As part of our partnership with Greening RMIT the department has helped Greening RMIT to run a series of Skill Shares in the Community Garden over the course of the semester. These have been focused on everything from permaculture skills to bee-keeping. The events have been well attended and the department has received significant positive feedback from students.

RUSU REALFOODS

The RUSU Realfoods Café which sits within the purview of the Environment Department has gone from strength to strength following a complete restructure at the beginning of 2015. The department's partnership with coffee provider Coffee Nomad has significantly activated the level 4, building 8 cafeteria space complementing the work already undertaken by RUSU Realfoods and RMIT Student Engagement Teams. The Environment department is also pleased to confirm that the RUSU Realfoods Café remains entirely vegan.

Trading Periods

Realfoods was open 10.30am–4.30pm, Monday to Friday during semester.

The shop front closed late 2014 at the end of semester for the holiday period and re-opened for semester 1 trading on Monday 23 February 2015.

Volunteers and Casuals

Daily retail operations continued, overseen by our Realfoods Café coordinator and supported by a team of over 50 trained volunteers and 6 Student Casuals. Casuals are a valuable and highly necessary addition to the running of Realfoods, as their presence makes it possible for the Café coordinator to have some dedicated time set aside to work on administration, events planning, rostering and future planning. The casual staffing arrangements have also provided employment opportunities for RMIT students in a convenient on-campus location. Continuing with the tradition of the Realfoods café, all food is prepared onsite by the RUSU Realfoods Cook. The hours offered also fits well around study for current RMIT students. In addition to the paid hours casuals work, all of our volunteer hours are LEAD accredited.

Realfoods continued to provide hands-on hospitality and customer service experience to RMIT students and assist them in increasing their employment prospects, with most students requesting references from Realfoods for their resumes, and many reporting back that they have found employment.

Realfoods Volunteer Feedback:

University gets so stressful sometimes, coming in for my Friday shift is the highlight of my week, it really puts me in a positive mood – Kelvin Tran

There's a new shop opening right near my house, I was wondering if you could write me a reference, it would really be a great opportunity for me – Rachel Nixon

It's rewarding to hear of lasting friendships that have been built through volunteering at Realfoods. Another volunteer informed me that every second weekend he and his 'volunteer buddies' catch up. Many of our volunteers are new to Melbourne and having a support network plays an important role in a positive university life.

HIGHLIGHTS

This semester new roles have been developed for kitchen hand volunteers. This has given students that have an interest in food preparation an opportunity to practice and develop these skills, working closely under the direction of the Realfoods Cook.

Since operations commenced in February, various new items have been added to the menu including peanut butter and chocolate cookies, Anzac cookies and lemon curd vegan doughnuts. Daily we have a minimum of three delicious salads prepared freshly by our volunteers to complement our various curries that are bursting with flavour along with our selection of grains.

Our returning volunteers love the streamline structure of Realfoods and comment on how user friendly our new POS system is. This allows for volunteers to concentrate on building their customer service skills and other various operational skills they gain during their time at Realfoods.

RUSU INTERNATIONAL

The period from the 1st of January through to the 31st of March is generally a quiet time for the RUSU International Department. The RUSU's English Language workshops began in Week 3, with around 60 students enrolling in the 7 week program. These workshops aim to improve participant's conversational English skills in a caring, supportive environment whilst making new friends.

RUSU POSTGRADUATE

The RUSU Postgraduate department focused on social and academic engagement with postgraduate students. The department has created for the first time a social media presence by establishing a Facebook Department Page, fortnightly e-Newsletter mail outs, and an instagram account.

The postgraduate department has also focused efforts on advocacy and representation. The elected postgraduate officer attended campaign meetings with the Council of Australian Postgraduate Association (CAPA) and the Nation Union of Students (NUS) to discuss national issues such as fee deregulation facing post graduate students across the nation. Using these mechanisms/institutions and the student rights service, the department has worked hard to improve post graduate experiences and access to university services.

The HDR student rights officer has been assisting with a number of new HDR cases as well as continuing to support research students with complex, ongoing issues. The elected Postgraduate Officer worked individually with students and provided immediate advice and referrals to postgraduate students at RMIT.

Orientation Days

Orientation stalls for post graduate students were held on all campuses. The department had approximately 10,000 post graduate specific O-Books to distribute to postgraduate students, along with other free give-aways and promotional material.

Post Grad Speed Friending

Following on from the very successful 'Post Grad Speed Friending' event held in the previous year, the department decided to replicate the event and duplicate it's success with the intentions being to provide post graduate students a chance to socialise over a few drinks together in a uniquely differently way by speed friending instead of speed dating. Over 50 students attended the Post Grad Speed Friending event, where Post Grad O Books were distributed, laughter was had and new friends were made. It has been our biggest and most successful event this year.



Postgrad Speed Friending

RUSU WOMYNS DEPARTMENT

The Womyn's department ran an O-week stall with a great reaction from new Students. As a result of the success of the O-Week stalls, the Facebook page got 150 extra likes that week. Some of this success can be attributed to the advertising that occurred at the stall. The RUSU Womyn's 2015 Collective received 100 new membership sign ups.

International Women's Day

For International Women's Day (IWD) the Womyn's department ran a brunch. The attendance was great, and the first collective for the year ran immediately after the brunch. The new collectives discussed ideas for exciting campaigns and events for the department to run this year. To run in conjunction with IWD, the department ran an awareness campaign about the issue of gender pay gap. The department sold cupcakes at \$1 for men and 80c for women to highlight the discrepancy of wages between men and women as it currently stands.

Photo Campaigns

The Womyn's Department ran a very successful photo campaign, which received a lot of likes and shares on Facebook. The campaign centred on women holding up a white board that said 'I need feminism because...' and they filled in the blanks with their reasons. This campaign worked alongside the HEforSHE campaign.

Movie Nights

The Women's Department has been running fortnightly Movies nights on Thursday's in the Womyn's room. People come together, relax, have some snacks and watch a couple of movies. These events have been incredibly successful with attendance strong.

RUSU WELFARE & EDUCATION

It has been exciting times for the first part of the year in the Welfare and Education department. It has been a priority of the department to adopt the DanceWise program when running events. DanceWise is a Harm Reduction Victoria program that focuses on peer education through the dissemination of information about safer partying. They host safe chill-out spaces staffed by specialised Key Peer Educators (KPE's) at clubs, commercial and community events across Victoria, including music festivals ranging in size from 500-45000 patrons. DanceWise hosted a chill-out space at RUSU's annual Welcome Bash. Their team of KPE's had contact with more than 170 patrons both educating and enhancing the safety and enjoyment of party goers. We believe this has set the benchmark for future parties and contributed to the welfare of all students who attend RUSU events/parties.

Rally against Cuts and Deregulation

The RUSU Welfare and Education Department was represented at the NUS rally, starting at the State Library and marching to Parliament. There were some fantastic speakers and it was great to see the student body out in force to protest the federal government's budget announcement and the implications it will have for higher education.

Free Healthy Breakfasts

Thanks to the help of numerous student volunteers, the Healthy Breakfasts program launched again earlier this semester across all of the Melbourne based RMIT campuses. Every Week in excess of 1000 free "most important meals of the day" are being distributed to RMIT students, many of which would otherwise go hungry. Among other things yogurt & berry cups, muffins, fruit, muesli and tea have been on the menu.

CLUBS & SOCIETIES

RUSU CLUBS ACTIVITY

Affiliation

At the time of writing, RUSU has 49 fully affiliated clubs with another 34 clubs to finalise before the semester one deadline.

Brand new clubs to affiliate to RUSU for the 2015 calendar year to date are:

- » Catholics @ RMIT
- » RMIT School of Electrical and Computer Engineering (SECE) Club.
- » RMIT Business Information Systems Student Association (BISSA)
- » RMIT Student Association for Sustainable Systems (SASSE)

There are also another half a dozen new clubs that look likely to affiliate in the first semester.

RUSU welcomes all of our new clubs and looks forward to supporting their development and activities.

At this stage RUSU has fully affiliated 25 Academic, 11 Cultural, 2 Political, 5 Social and 6 Spiritual clubs. So far RUSU Clubs & Societies accessed over \$15,000 of the clubs departments annual funding budget.

Orientation

RUSU Clubs were out and about on all RMIT campuses during the RMIT Orientation Festival. We were especially excited to see 65 different clubs get involved in Clubs Day in week one, making it the most successful Clubs day so far. The feedback for students and clubs has been great, with many clubs signing up large numbers of new members.

Special mention goes to the following Clubs who were recognised for their extra special participation at the Clubs days:

- » Best Engagement Activity – Engineers Without Borders (Bike ‘n’ Blend)
- » Most Creative Stall Decorations – Iranian Club
- » Best Giveaway – RMIT Society of Women in Information Technology
- » Most new members – RMIT Asian Association
- » Crowd Favourite – RMIT University Sri Lankan Students Association
- » A special mention also for RMIT University Malaysian Association and Vietnamese International Students at RMIT who were very close in the Crowd Favourite votes.

The awards were handed out at a C&S Department Welcome event in week two, which gave our different clubs executives a chance to mingle and chat.

In addition to 65 clubs participating in the 2015 start of year RMIT Orientation Program, RUSU Clubs have been busy with their own welcome activities and launching their regular club programs.



Here's some of our Clubs have been up to in the First Quarter:

- » RMIT VISAR Warm Aussie BBQ Welcome where over 70 of their new members hung out on the Yarra one March Saturday afternoon
- » RMIT Asian Associations Let it Glow Paint Party on the 26th of March
- » Catholics @ RMIT's fortnightly Give a Little Love sessions in the RMIT Chapel.
- » RMIT University Malaysian Association (RUMA) hosted a Welcoming BBQ at Flagstaff Gardens and Makan night full of delicious Malaysian food in March.
- » RMIT Indonesian Students Association (PIIA) Makin Akrab camp in Marysville, competed in the OlymPIIA 2015 Sports Competition and the Alun Alun 2015 Visit Indonesia Welcome Event at the Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia.
- » RMIT Accounting Students Association Professional Networking Evening
- » RMIT Chess Club regular meetings and strategy sessions
- » RMIT Law Students Society held its AGM, put out its first newsletter for 2015 and ran Moot skills and training sessions.
- » RMIT International Studies Association helped students buy and sell second hand books by setting up a book shop and worked on members networking skills at their bi-weekly club drinks.
- » RMIT Games Manga and Anime Society held weekly meetings and Anime Screenings as well as a Quiz for Members.
- » RMIT Aerospace Students Association got their members excited about the RMIT Space Week guest lectures; Humans to the Red Planet in a Decade and The First Man on the Moon: Why Neil Armstrong. They also let students know about free tickets to the Air Show.
- » RMIT Electric Racing members hung out with the Chief Engineer of Red Bull Racing Australia Mark Dutton.
- » RMIT SASSE held a welcome BBQ and Officially affiliated to RUSU in March
- » RMIT AYCC planned with members what they want to do in 2015 then partied into the evening, before hosting a Documentary Screening on the Great Barrier Reef
- » RMIT PERMITSS got around Greening RMIT's Skill Sharing session on Bee Keeping and held their AGM.
- » RMIT Association of Pharmacy Students hosted a Smith and Nephew wound care course at Bundoora
- » RMIT League of Legends, re branded as the RMIT League of Gaming and hosted a five verse five ARAM tournament in February
- » RMIT Australia China Youth Association held a Movie Night and meet and greet BBQ for members
- » RMIT Bangladeshi Association celebrated their countries involvement in the Cricket World Cup and invited members to get into the spirit of the competition.

And many more clubs held Meetings, BBQs and other welcome events over the months of February and March.

Special Event Grants

Special Event Grants are a way for the C&S department to provide a little extra funding so clubs can create opportunities that are above and beyond standard on campus events. The application for these grants is competitive, with clubs needing to show how receiving the grant fits within an ethos of community building at RMIT. In the first quarter only one grant was awarded, to the RMIT Asian Association, to help fund their Orientation Camp.

RAA Orientation Camp catered mostly to first year students as well as other new members. It provided an opportunity for first year students to meet and bond with others in a safe, social and supported environment. During the camp RAA also provided information to the campers about RUSU and other services and support available at RMIT. These types of events greatly support the transition on new students to university life and create social networks within the university that students rely on throughout their studies and beyond.



VISAR Swap Meet



The VISAR Crew



VISAR Basketball fun

C&S Staff Developing A New Communications Strategy

This year the C&S Department launched a new multi-level training and communications program for its clubs and the wider RMIT Community. We identified that people and our clubs need to be able to get different levels of information about who we are, how clubs run and more specific events or legal information. As such RUSU clubs now communicates externally with all stakeholders in one of four ways:

1. **C&S** Introductory flyers at front counters and events with basic who we are who you are information
2. **C&S** Handbooks and associated training sessions for clubs which cover all essential information including – affiliation, how to run the club day to day, events, promotion and important contacts. Training sessions mirror the handbook and provide a chance for club executives to ask C&S staff questions.
3. **C&S** Resources Page on website providing more detailed information for interested people and for clubs access to forms, up to date information about room bookings and more.
4. **C&S** Executive Drive only access for club executives with even more information, broken down into helpful folders. The idea of this was to ensure handbook and website content was contained to must know information while more detailed or complex or time specific information would be kept available but limited to just executives who wished for the extra information. The access to the drive is emailed out to all clubs at completion of affiliation.

By breaking down our communication we hope that we can better target individual needs as opposed to overwhelming them with irrelevant content.

So far we have run half a dozen training sessions and the feedback has been really positive. The plan is to survey club executives at the end of the year as to how they have found navigating the new platform.

A copy of our handbook can be found at:
www.su.rmit.edu.au/assets/Uploads/Club-Logos/CS-Handbook/Clubs-Handbook-2015A5.pdf



ClubEvent bar

STUDENT MEDIA

CATALYST

Catalyst has hit the ground running this quarter with two great issues to start the year. We have had a great response from students, staff and people outside RMIT on our new look design. We've also had to replace stock regularly as magazines are flying off stands across all of the campus. We've also managed to expand our city distribution to places like Mr Tulk, Little Bird and Paperback Books. Unfortunately on campus distribution of Catalyst hits some roadblocks. Two of our stands have gone missing. Access to building 80 continues to be restricted despite repeated discussions with Property Services. The biggest issue the magazine group is facing is RMIT's paperless policy. With regret, this hinders submissions to the magazine as we can't access a large proportion of the city campus population.

We've had great success with the newly designed website. It's a much-improved site both to use and to simply look at. We also now have full control of the website. The original developing firm from previous years is now used only as a hosting service.

RMITV

Industry Engagement and Employment

RMITV - Student Community Television Inc. replicates a professional media production experience which translates to member success in the media industry. The summer period saw active members Antonio Cafasso, James Gormley and Nicholas Stevens employed by Tennis Australia to cover the Australian Open 2015. Other recent successful transitions and achievements of RMITV members and alumni include:

- » Andrew Fenaughty – ABC (Casual, Director)
- » Nina Weiss - Airbag Productions (Full Time, Office Manager)
- » Mike Young - Intrepid Productions (Full Time, Online Editor)
- » Francis McKenna – RMIT Televisions Studio (Casual, Live Television Audio Operations Instructor)
- » James Gormley – RMIT Television Studios (Full Time, Studio Technician)
- » Nicholas Stevens – RMIT Television Studios (Casual, Studio Technician)
- » Matthew Dunham – RMIT Television Studios (Casual, Studio Technician)

New Volunteer Managers

At the beginning of the year RMITV's new General Manager, Jess Junor commenced her position. A current RMIT Student, Jess is studying the Bachelor of Communication (Media) and Diploma of Language (French). A motivated and capable RMITV member, Jess has worked within the media industry on various projects and has been involved with 31 Questions (Floor Manager), Spines (Location Supervisor), and Live On Bowen (Production Manager). As General Manager Jess is eager to foster a strong community with RMITV members, RMIT Student Union, and the wider RMIT University Network.

RMITV Management Team also welcomes Alex Zemtsov as Technical Manager to the team. Alex is a recent graduate of the Bachelor of Communication (Media) at RMIT and is now a freelance videographer and editor. As Technical Manager he brings a grounded background of equipment knowledge and processes to the role. He has been involved in multiple RMITV productions from Spines, In Pit Lane, and Live On Bowen.

CURRENTLY IN PRODUCTION & CURRENTLY BROADCASTING RMITV PRODUCTIONS

Live On Bowen

'Live On Bowen', RMITV's flagship program is a variety hour including interviews, music and stand-up comedy. Season 6 is currently in production and will air on Channel 31 on Monday nights at 8:30pm from 18th May.

In Pit Lane

In Pit Lane is RMITV's longest-running production. It has been running for 19 years and recently celebrated its 500th episode! The latest season is currently in production. From 23rd April, In Pit Lane will be broadcast live to channel 31!

Tough Times Never Last

'Tough Times Never Last' is an interview program where every guest has survived through a difficult time and shares their experience with host Michael Kuzilny. Currently in production of its 13th season, it is filmed weekly in the RMIT Television Studio. Tough Times will air on Channel 31 later this year.

Melbourne Q

'Melbourne Q' is a game show designed to entertain and educate new international students about Melbourne, as well as test the knowledge of existing Melbournians. Season one is currently in production. The crew of around twenty film in the RMIT Television Studio on Monday nights for twelve weeks.

The Assenders

'The Assenders' is a sitcom about Melbourne-based wannabe comedians searching for success. Season one is currently in pre-production and will air on Channel 31. It is a location-based production focused around training up new producers (known as Assistant Producers). Doing away with the loudest-voice-is-the-only-voice methodology the program also concentrates the production process on building a creative writers room model that allows for students and other members to be involved with any stage of the process.

Follies of Youth

'Follies of Youth' is the first ever RMITV-produced webseries! This drama follows the lives of a group of young friends in Melbourne. Season two is currently in post-production and will be released intermittently via the website: www.folliesofyouth.com



Photography at Welcome Bash

SOCIAL MEDIA & PUBLICATIONS

Facebook – 12,115 Facebook Likes

Facebook still serves as our number one social media engagement tool, and our presence on the platform continues to grow stronger, with over 2,000 new likes this quarter. Facebook serves as a platform for event advertising for both RUSU events and for Clubs and Societies, and allows students to interact with RUSU via wall posts and photo tagging and to RSVP to events (giving RUSU an idea of numbers beforehand). Post-event photo galleries also continue to be a major drawcard for students on the Facebook platform. Popular events on Facebook this quarter included Pop-up Pub, Welcome Bash, Chill 'N' Grill and the Re-O Week events.

Website

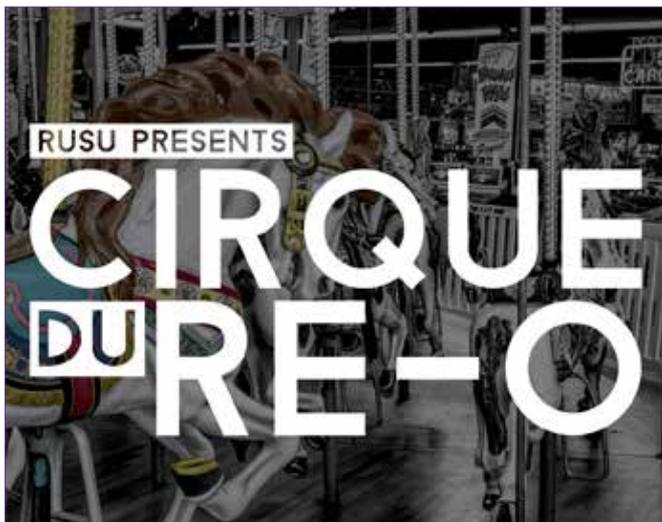
RUSU's site continues to be a great platform for delivering news, updates and information about RUSU events and activities. Our ever-changing front page advertises all the latest events.

Newsletter

RUSU's newsletter continues to be popular, with over 4,871 subscribers to date, and a readership engagement rate of around 60 per cent, which is far higher than the average. To date, there have been 5 issues so far in 2015, providing students with the latest news and information on upcoming events and activities.

Other Social Media

RUSU's presence on other social media, including both Twitter and Instagram, remains strong, with our Twitter account having over 1,780 followers. However, RUSU recognises that it does not use these social media avenues to their full potential, and we are keen to exploit these further throughout 2015. Live hashtags for Twitter and Instagram at Welcome Bash 2015 did not have the uptake that we expected from the student body.



PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

The RUSU Media Department produces a wide variety of publicity materials for RUSU departments, events and clubs. To ensure their suitability over a broad range of printed and digital media, publicity materials are always made in a range of formats. Some highlights this quarter include:

Welcome Bash

The biggest event of the RUSU calendar, this year's Welcome Bash had a Hawaiian Luau theme that was fun, colourful and tropical. The design included retro-style graphics and a surfer-girl aesthetic to give a relaxed, summer holiday vibe.

Cirque Du Re-O

A daytime, circus-style event fair featuring circus performers, sideshows, magic and carnival food, the Cirque Du Re-O was a popular and fun event. Branding was designed to be minimalist and cool, with the suggestion of the circus in the imagery but without being garish.

Pop-up Pub

An increasingly popular event with a relaxed vibe that has been ongoing for several years now. The Pop-up Pub's signature Beer Can branding has remained consistent since the beginning of 2014, in order to provide continuity and brand recognition amongst the student body.



REPRESENTATION & ADVOCACY

COMPASS

There were 55 student drop-ins at Compass throughout January, February and March. During this period Compass volunteers staffed the drop in space four days per week. The volunteers are also assisting with the RUSU English Language Workshops that have commenced this semester. Compass volunteers are helping out in these classes 4 times per week. The volunteers are as wonderful as always.

22 new volunteers were recruited from the Social Work, Youth Work and Psychology programs and will be trained during April.

The first quarter has been a busy time with regards to the professional development of the Compass Project Officer. This has included:

- » Attending the 'Acceptance and Commitment Therapy' two day training seminar.
- » Initiating the process of becoming a Mental Health Accredited Social Worker.
- » Attending the Safe Communities Workshop on Stalking on Campus.

A new initiative of the Compass Drop in Centre and the Compass Project Officer was the development and implementation of a mental health presentation. This was delivered to the College of Business teaching staff, the Student Rights team at RUSU and the Disability Liaison Unit. Another presentation is scheduled to occur in May. From initial response and feedback, the talks have been very well received.

A special presentation was made to International Students studying Social Work to provide them with an understanding of what opportunities are available at RMIT and also in the broader community.

REPRESENTATION

RUSU Orientation Talks

RUSU reached 3,500 new RMIT students through participating in O'talks this quarter. RUSU representatives and staff conducted 21 O'talks presenting information about getting involved in events, volunteering, RUSU membership and participating in orientation events

Appeal Committees Reps

RUSU has supported students on the following RMIT hearings:

- » 3 Student representatives sat on 15 Student Conduct Board hearings
- » 2 Student representatives sat on 7 University Appeals Committee hearings.
- » 3 Student representatives sat on 11 College Appeal Committee Hearings



RUSU Clubs Day

Student Voice

RUSU elected student representatives provided a student voice on a range of RMIT Committees during this quarter. These included but were not limited to:

- » Academic Board
- » Bundoora Campus Advisory Committee
- » Equity and Diversity Committee
- » Monthly Catch Up Meetings with the Dean of Students
- » NAS Strategic Users Meetings
- » Orientation and Transition Steering Group
- » Policy and Programs Committee (renamed Education Committee)
- » SEH Student Services Meeting
- » Student Experience Advisory Committee
- » Student Staff Consultative Committees (SSCC's)
- » Science Engineering Health College Board

New Vice Chancellor

Members of the RUSU Secretariat attended a lunch to welcome the new Vice Chancellor, Martin Bean.

The RUSU President and General Secretary have met with the new Vice Chancellor several times this quarter. RUSU is impressed at how accessible the new Vice Chancellor has been and his receptiveness to RUSU's input on improving the student experience at RMIT.

RUSU Internal Meetings

Elected student representatives have been supported and resourced to manage RUSU as a student controlled organisation, including:

- » 3 Student Union Council Meetings
- » 8 Secretariat meetings
- » Student representatives gaining governance experience on internal Student Union Committees, such as Staffing Committee, Finance Standing Committee and Student Rights Group Monthly Meetings
- » Elected student councillors supported to act work as governors and managers.

Presidents Conference

The National Union of Students hosted the annual President's Summit at Sydney University. President, Himasha Fonseka, and General Secretary, Ariel Zohar, attended and met with their counterparts from around Australia to compare services offered. They also participated in a range of seminars and media training workshop.



Queer Collective members in full colour

STUDENT RIGHTS CASE STATISTICS

The Student Rights team started the year with a planning day to maximise their efficiency at managing peak periods of student demand for the student rights service. This included the development of new planning resources to help Student Union staff work together during peak periods and to help students navigate RMIT processes.

Members of the Student Rights team also spoke at 9 RUSU Volunteer Inductions, to promote the Student Rights Service to RUSU volunteers and to talk about the role students can play on appeal hearings at RMIT. Student rights officers were also performing outreach at O Week and Re-Orientation. Student rights officers were invited to and gave many orientation talks in lectures throughout the first few weeks of semester. This involved presenting to students from all three Colleges, on multiple campuses and included both Higher Education and TAFE student talks. Student rights officers were also on each campus performing outreach during Re-Orientation and they participated in the RMIT Mates Program, introducing RUSU services to new students.

A student rights officer gave a presentation to selected College of Business staff with a staff member from the Disability Liaison Unit regarding student mental health. The College of Business has asked that this presentation be given again to more College staff members.

Student Rights Officers have attended a meeting with Student Records to consult with them regarding RMIT's proposed plan to cancel student enrolment due to debt. The Student Rights Department has also met with the RMIT Counselling team, in conjunction with the Welfare Department and Compass.

Finally a student rights officer attended the RMIT Safer Community Workshop.

Thank you so much for this thorough letter. I definitely could not produce such a professional piece as you did. I really appreciate the effort that has been made...Once again, thank you! – Student feedback

Thank you for your support with my two appeals. I appreciate the work you put towards understanding my case and for being there to discuss my issues in what was for me a confronting situation. – Student feedback

I would like to thank you for all your hard work and for backing me all the way. Your support and encouragement will stay with me for a long time. – Student feedback

I'm the Team Leader of the RMIT Mates program. Thank you very much for meeting with our mentees and being a part of the event. Some mentees expressed how much they appreciated knowing who, where you are, and what you do. – Student feedback

PROBLEMS CREATED

Problems created during the last quarter	Number
Discipline (University Level)	
Academic Misconduct (Plagiarism)	1
General Misconduct	3
Discipline (School Level)	
Academic Misconduct (Plagiarism)	1
General Misconduct	2
Complaint	
School Level	10
University Level	5
Uncategorised	
Admin Issue	1
Admission Issue	3
Appeal Against Assessment	18
Assessment Issues (other)	4
Disability	3
Enrolment Issue	7
Equitable Assessment Arrangements (EAA)	1
Exclusion	21
Fees Issue	5
Leave of Absence (LOA)	2
Mental Health Issue	6
Other issues	8
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPA)	2
Remission of Debt	8
Show Cause	4
Special Consideration	8
Supplementary Exam Request (Pass by Compensation)	1
TOTAL	132

PROBLEMS SOLVED

Problems outcomes during the last quarter	Number
Appeal Against Exclusion University Appeals Committee	
Appeal Dismissed	1
Appeal Upheld	3
Exclusion Withdrawn by School Before Hearing	12
Fee Remission	
Fee Remission Approved	2
Fee Remission Not Approved	1
Special Consideration Granted	
Deferred Exam	2
Late Withdrawal Without Academic Penalty	3
Special Consideration Not Granted	1
Appeal Against Special Consideration University Appeal Committee	
Appeal Dismissed	1
Appeal Upheld	1
Special Consideration Granted Without a Hearing	1
Complaint Outcome	
Alternative Resolution Reached	2
School Level Complaint Resolved	2
University Level Complaint Dismissed	1
Late Enrolment Outcome	
Late Enrolment Achieved	2
Referral Internal	2
Compass	2
Counselling Service	6
Disability Liaison Unit	4
Housing Services	1
International Student Services	2
Legal Service	2
Student Well-Being	4
Study And Learning Centre	1
Appeal Against RPL/RPL Issue College Appeals Committee	
RPL Appeal Dismissed	1
Contacted School Issue Resolved	
Contacted Academic Administrator	1
Contacted Course Coordinator	5
Contacted Head of School	2
Contacted Lecturer/Tutor	1
Contacted Program Manager	1

Problems outcomes during the last quarter	Number
Other	
Advice Given – Student Able to Proceed With Case Themselves	20
Other Outcomes	9
Student Doesn't Want to Pursue the Case	6
Discipline/Plagiarism Meeting Case School Level	
Student Given a Fail For All or Any Part of any Assessment	1
Leave Of Absence (LOA)	
LOA Granted	1
Discipline Board Hearing Academic Misconduct	
Case Dismissed in Favour of Student	3
Student Reprimanded	1
Appeal Dismissed	0
Appeal Upheld	2
Fee Issue Outcome	
Issue Not Resolved	1
Issue Resolved	2
Appeal Against Assessment (AAA) College Appeals Committee	
Appeal Dismissed	2
Appeal Upheld	1
Informal Review of Assessment Resolution	1
Discipline Board Hearing General Misconduct	
Case Dismissed in Favour of Student	1
Other Penalty	1
Show Cause Outcome	
Show Cause Approved by PAB	2
Phone Advice Given	12
Email Advice Given	25
TOTAL	124
Student Cases Opened During Last Quarter	88
Student Cases Closed During Last Quarter	83

RUSU GOVERNANCE, ADMINISTRATION & SERVICES

RUSU's operations are supported by the Governance, Administration and Finance staff. Some key projects during this period include:

- » Assisting and resourcing RUSU student representatives in meetings with RMIT University
- » Regular Meetings with RMIT University and Property Services regarding; Design of the Bld 57/Bld 5 temporary RUSU offices, Realfoods, Coffee Nomad, NAS & Storage, Bundoora East Kitchenette, Bundoora Bld 204 (Bundoora) and Building 514 (Brunswick)
- » Assisting student representatives with strategic consideration of RUSU operations at Bundoora campus
- » Managing the temporary relocation of RUSU Student Rights Service due to NAS Early works (Bld ,8 lvl 3) and impacts of NAS Early works on RUSU Bld 8 operations
- » Negotiation and planning regarding RUSU Realfoods Café for 2015
- » Preparation of Scope of Works for Coffee Nomad (Building 8, Level 4)
- » Reporting on SSAF Funded projects
- » Preparation of the 2014 financial audit
- » Financial planning associated with the RMIT Grant being provided in one lump sum in 2015
- » Finance Standing Committee meetings held monthly including reporting on the RUSU Compliance checklist
- » Providing advice to the RUSU management on IT related issues.
- » Providing first point of contact Student Rights advice for RMIT students (both on shore and off shore)
- » Attending Student Rights planning day and coordinating Student Rights Team meetings
- » Working with Student Services Group to set up a new meeting room for students and staff in Building 8, lvl 4
- » Assisting RUSU management with addressing any OH&S issues
- » Conducting OH&S assessment for RUSU (Bundoora) Offices
- » Coordinating recruitment of RUSU student causal staff for 2015
- » Training and Inducting for new RUSU and Realfoods Staff

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

RUSU SSAF FUNDING 2015

RUSU Funding from RMIT for 2015 is made up of the following:

- » \$2,270,498 (Base grant) and
- » \$553,500 (SSAF Committee Grants) and
- » \$36,483 (One off special payment for 2015 – non SSAF)
- » **2015 TOTAL GRANT: \$2,860,481**
- » **2015 GRANT RECEIVED TO DATE: \$2,860,481**
- » **SSAF Component of 2015 Grant: \$2,823,998 (for SSAF reporting purposes)**

The 2015 RMIT/RUSU Deed Agreement has been signed. The 2015 grant was received as a lump sum payment in February. This upfront payment will enable RUSU to generate additional income to supplement the grant.

In order to meet legislative requirements, the RUSU financial reports match expenses with “allowable items”. Please note that Table 1 below is based on SSAF Allowable items and expenditure of SSAF funds on these areas. It categorises the SSAF expenditure from the Base grant and SSAF Committee projects into the allowable items. This table does not include activities and services funded by non-SSAF expenditure.

RUSU also receives some funding from other sources. While some of the activities funded through these sources are reported on in the narrative section of this quarterly report, due to the overlap with other representative, advocacy, administrative, governance and publicity functions of RUSU, expenditure on these projects is not included in the expenditure reported below as it is not SSAF funded.

Table 2 reports on the specific grants approved by the SSAF Committee.

RUSU is committed to continuous improvement of our financial systems to ensure we both work within our budget provisions as agreed through our funding agreement and to satisfactorily achieve our annual audit of statutory accounts by a registered company auditor.

**TABLE 1: RUSU SSAF GRANT EXPENDITURE ON ALLOWABLE ITEMS:
1 JANUARY – 31 MARCH 2015**

Allowable Item	Item Description	YTD Expenditure (SSAF Funded)
Giving students information to help them in their orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation specific events • Re-Orientation Events 	\$17,715
Caring for children of students	Nil	\$0
Providing legal services to students	Nil	\$0
Promoting the health or welfare of students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All activities and events from advocacy and welfare collectives: Queer, Womyn's, Post-Graduate, Environment, Welfare, Education • Campaigns, events, honorariums, programs, marketing • All Compass Centre, programs and staff • Healthy Eating SSAF Grant 	\$41,404
Helping students secure accommodation	Nil	\$0
Helping students with their financial affairs	Nil	\$0
Helping meet the specific needs of overseas students relating to their welfare, accommodation and employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All activities and events from International student department and International Support SSAF Grant 	\$5,268
Helping students obtain employment or advice on careers	Nil	\$0
Helping students obtain insurance against personal accidents	Nil	\$0
Helping students develop skills for study, by means other than undertaking courses of study in which they are enrolled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Induction programs/Student Representative Professional Development • Volunteer Program + program staffing • Student Engagement Officer • Student Union Council Elections • Secretariat Honorariums • All of SUC campaigns 	\$72,215
Providing libraries and reading rooms (other than those provided for academic purposes) for students	Nil	\$0
Supporting the production and dissemination to students of media whose content is provided by students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RMITV operations, honorariums, special projects, productions, training, website • RMIT Flagship Program • Catalyst magazine operations, student honorariums, publication (online and print) • Communications/Graphic Designer Staff 	\$27,229

**TABLE 1: RUSU SSAF GRANT EXPENDITURE ON ALLOWABLE ITEMS:
1 JANUARY – 31 MARCH 2015 (CONTINUED)**

Allowable Item	Item Description	YTD Expenditure (SSAF Funded)
Providing food or drink to students on a campus of the higher education provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campus specific events and marketing (all campuses) • RUSU Realfoods 	\$28,529
Supporting a sporting or other recreational activity by students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major events and intervarsity recreational activities and competitions • Activities and Events Collective including administration, student honorariums, marketing and staff support 	\$41,046
Supporting an artistic activity by students	–	\$0
Supporting debating by students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grants paid to debating club are included with clubs reporting. 	\$0
Supporting the administration of a club most of whose members are students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administration, grants, equipment and support to student run clubs and societies • Clubs and Societies Staff and other support 	\$49,036
Advising on matters arising under the higher education provider's rules (however described)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administration and Support staff members: Administration, Governance and Finance • 5 x Information counter staff and operations (including Bundoora East and SSAF Project) 	\$170,748
Advocating students' interests in matters arising under the higher education provider's rules (however described)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Rights Officers • Student Advocacy materials, campaigns, research and training for staff and student representatives on committees 	\$128,244
	YTD SSAF Expenditure	\$581,434
	YTD 2015 SSAF Funds Received	\$2,823,998

**TABLE 2: 2015 SSAF COMMITTEE GRANT FINANCIAL REPORT:
1 JANUARY – 31 MARCH 2015**

Program Title	Grant Amount	Expenditure Jan–March	Comments
RUSU Volunteer Program	\$155,000	\$32,228	
Compass – funding a welfare information and referral drop-in space	\$115,000	\$22,567	
RUSU Flagship Production (Live On Bowen) and RMITV training program	\$40,000	\$1,846	
RUSU International Student Support – conversation classes and city tours	\$27,000	\$4,145	
Bundoora Common Lunch Hour (including SRO and BE)	\$72,000	\$5,659	
RUSU Orientation Package	\$50,000	\$17,715	Re-O Week invoices still to process
RUSU Free Healthy Breakfasts (including nutrition and sustainability awareness)	\$60,000	\$387	Program commenced but awaiting invoices
Postgrad Support Program (including SRO)	\$34,500	\$4,242	
TOTAL	\$553,500	\$88,789	

RUTSU
RMIT UNIVERSITY STUDENT UNION