AUSA’s Semester One Report 2018
1. Introduction

This report reflects on Semester One 2018, which has been a busy and rewarding semester for AUSA. We have continued to run and expand our core services. These include running events and building community on campus, providing welfare and advocacy support to students, and representing students at the highest levels of the University. These services are run by students for students, and they are vital to the University community. We are proud of what has been achieved in Semester One, and are excited by what we have planned for the rest of the year.

This report begins by outlining key strategic successes and developments achieved in Semester One. It then provides an overview of AUSA’s Welfare, Advocacy, Class Representative programme, Events, and Buddies programmes.

We want to thank our Executive, our staff, the University, partners and our students for a successful semester. We are looking forward to continuing to work closely with the University and provide student services moving forward.
2. Key Strategic Successes

AUSA Advisory Board
AUSA has established an independent Advisory Board. This is a big step forward for our organisation. The Board is comprised of five external members with a diverse range of relevant experiences. These include legal, financial, strategic, business, and NGO experience. The Board sits above AUSA’s Executive in an advisory capacity, and will oversee and provide much needed consistency to AUSA’s management, finances, and strategic decisions.

Internal Structural Review
In Semester One we made a number of changes to AUSA’s structure. These include:

- Streamlined a number of roles in the Executive for 2019:
  - The Political Engagement Officer and Environmental Affairs Officer positions have been merged into a “Campaigns Officer”.
  - The Women’s Rights Officer role will now be held by an individual.
  - The Engagement Officer is being turned into a 20 hour per week Vice President position.
  - The Treasurer is being reduced to a 15 hour per week position.
  - The Administrative Vice President’s role is being reshaped, so that it oversees Executive management, policy and procedures rather than staff and events.
  - The Grafton Representative will be a “Satellite Campus Rep”.
- Reviewing AUSA’s structures and processes.
  - We have put plans in motion to hire a Consultant Manager for the remainder of the year to thoroughly review and make recommendations for AUSA’s structures and processes to increase efficiency and overall performance.
  - Our aim is to hire an Association Manager long-term, and have this role set up to be sustainable and effective for the future.
- Undertaking the largest Constitutional review in years.

Visibility on Campus
AUSA’s visibility on campus has improved markedly this year. With 20,000 members, we have the largest membership in years. This has been enabled through a better social media presence, larger and more high quality events, and working on being an ‘umbrella organisation’ in supporting and advocating for other faculties and students’ organisations.

Advocacy and Representation
AUSA has had a number of wins in terms of advocating and representing students this year. These include:

- Successfully advocating for changes to a number of policies for students, including the new Class Representative Policy and Guidelines and the new Assessment Policy and Procedures.
- Leading the Student Charter reform and Working Group.
- Presenting to Governmental Select Committees on Education Policy.
- Appearing in the media on issues that affect students.
In addition to this, we sit on the following committees:

- Council
- University Finance Committee
- Senate
- Education Committee
- Teaching and Learning Quality Committee
- Library and Learning Services Committee
- Student Consultative Group
- Discipline Committee and Discipline Appeals Committee
- Equity Leadership Committee
- Equity Community of Interest
- Students from Refugee Backgrounds
- Disability Program Advisory Group
- Early Childhood Education Reference Group
- Code of Conduct Working Group
- Student Charter Working Group
- University Honours Committee
3. Welfare

As the AUSA welfare service is independent and student-run, it is seen by students as a safe and accessible first port of call when they are in need. It provides diverse assistance in order to best respond to students’ needs. The scheme includes grants for hardship, textbooks, CAI materials, dental care, and Childcare. The welfare service also runs a foodbank. In Semester One 2018, the AUSA welfare service was able to help over 240 members of our student community through our various schemes.

The fact that AUSA is student run means that the welfare service is flexible and is able to stay effective in meeting students’ needs. An example of this is the CAI materials grant, which was a new innovation to recognise the unique needs of CAI students. After its success last year, it has been given its own permanent line in our welfare budget this year, to formally cement the grant moving forward.

The welfare services are expanding each year and demand for them is increasing rapidly, as it is becoming increasingly financially difficult to be a student in Auckland city. The operation of these programmes remains largely the sole responsibility of the Welfare Vice-President, despite the increase in demand and workload. We need the finances to take on a staff member for the operations to sit with moving forward, so we can continue to meet the needs of our students.

Hardship Grants

The Hardship Grant is the most significant of the Welfare services AUSA provides. It is funded by the sale of lost property, donations, AUSA’s other resources and money given to AUSA at the end of last year from the student emergency fund for the purpose of supporting its grants scheme.

In Semester One 2018 there were 62 completed applications, 51 of which were approved by the AUSA Welfare Committee. In Semester One successful Hardship Grants had a combined value of $13991. This is a dramatic increase from last year, in which the total amount awarded was $16000. In Semester One 2015, there were only 24 welfare grants approved.

Early indications are that the total value of grants in Semester Two will be higher than Semester One. In the first month of Semester One $2801 in hardship grants were awarded to 11 successful applicants. In contrast, in the first month of Semester Two $4850 in hardship grants have been awarded to 18 successful applicants. Some increase would be expected at the start of Semester Two, as it coincided with the end of a very cold winter in which energy bills would have been higher and the savings that students might have accumulated over Summer would now be depleted. However, the increase of over $2000 (or 36%) is much higher than was anticipated. This indicates that more students in need are becoming aware of the grant, which is increasing the pressure on the welfare fund.

The Welfare Committee may grant an applicant who meets the criteria up to $250 if the applicant has no dependents, and up to $400 if the applicant has dependents. The actual amount awarded depends on the Welfare Committee’s assessment of the applicant’s level of need. This assessment is based on
information provided in the application, including the applicant’s own break-down of their weekly budget, the applicant’s transaction history as shown in the bank-statement provided as part of the application, and any other information that the applicant includes in their application.

As the cost of living increases, the maximum amounts the committee is able to award to particular applicants will also need to increase. In particular, the impact of the regional Auckland fuel tax will likely be significant, as the cost of transport to and from University is frequently cited as a major expense for students, and many students who apply for the grant live well outside the city.

AUSA greatly appreciates the extra financial support we received from Campus Life for our Hardship Fund and foodbank supplies. This money has enabled us to be better supporting the many students who come to us who are struggling. We thank the University for this support.

Applicants for hardship grants also provide a useful demographic snapshot of the types of students making use of AUSA’s welfare services.
Foodbank

The foodbank is AUSA’s most used welfare support service. Every student is entitled to three food parcels per semester. The specific contents of food parcels is somewhat varied depending on stock in the foodbank. However, they tend to include canned tomatoes and vegetables, protein (e.g., tinned tuna), instant soup/noodles, pasta/rice, breakfast cereal, and some treat items such as biscuits or Shapes.

Over the past six years we have doubled the amount of food parcels we give away and are continuing on an upward trend. Semester Two last year we gave away 134 food parcels. In Semester One this year, over 160 parcels were collected by over 100 individual students.

Increasing accessibility and awareness of the foodbank was a priority for Semester One. From the second half of the semester food parcel collection forms have been available at AUSA Advocacy, Hinehuone, Queerspace, and Cultural-Space, in addition to AUSA reception and Womenspace. This dramatically improved uptake and usage of the foodbank.

We are also trialling having Grocery Only Countdown vouchers, which cannot be spent on alcohol or tobacco products, available at Te Tai Tokerau in order to improve the availability of AUSA support services to students who cannot access AUSA reception. In July of Semester One, ten $15 vouchers were sent to Te Tai Tokerau after the campus exhausted its supply of food parcels in just over a month. The trial at Te Tai Tokerau was successful as uptake of vouchers is at a faster rate than uptake of food parcels was. The trial has been expanded to the Epsom campus.

Textbook Grants

The AUSA and UBIQ textbook grant is run in equal partnership between AUSA and UBIQ, with each party contributing $3000 towards the grant ($1500 per semester). In semester one there were 27 grant applications, 17 of which were approved.
The Welfare Committee determines eligibility for a textbook grant by assessing the student’s financial situation and the necessity of the textbook (i.e. is owning the textbook compulsory for the course or does the student have reasonable access to it another way)

**CAI Materials Grant**

The CAI Materials Grant is available to students enrolled in CAI faculty subjects who cannot afford the necessary materials for their courses. Students are eligible if they are able to demonstrate that their financial situation is such that they cannot afford to purchase their materials and if they have a letter of support from their tutor, supervisor, or lecturer that the materials are necessary for the student’s study.

In Semester One three grants were awarded, for a combined value of $450. This is an increase from 2017, in which four grants were awarded all year.

**Dental**

The AUSA and Alpers dental grant is funded entirely by Alpers Dental. There are ten grants available per year. The grant includes a dental exam, x-rays, hygiene and up to $200 towards general dental treatment if required. The Welfare Committee assesses and applicant’s eligibility for the Dental Grant based on the applicant’s financial situation and the applicant’s own description of their dental situation. In Semester One, six grants were awarded.

**Childcare Grant**

The aim of the grant is to assist student parents who face financial constraints in relation to childcare so that they may be able to continue and excel at their studies. Grants may be extended to cover a full year if reporting requirements are fulfilled. In Semester One 2018 five Childcare Grants were awarded.
4. Advocacy

AUSA Advocacy provides independent and confidential support to all students at the University of Auckland. The key aim of the service is to support students who encounter problems in both their personal and academic lives. We assist them to resolve issues that may impact their ability to focus on their academic study. Students are assisted in the resolution of their concerns, including any actions or decisions taken by the University. We advise students about the relevant policies and procedures, both formally and informally. Advocacy Staff work collaboratively with University staff to provide support and education to students and other members of the University community.

We provide general information regarding student’s rights and responsibilities within the university environment. Students are assisted in the resolution of concerns or conflicts arising from actions or decisions taken by the University. Students are advised of policies and procedures to follow, both informally and formally.

Key Activities

- We recruited a team of 18 Student Advocate volunteers from Law school.
- We provided a comprehensive training session for Student Advocates which included presentations from the UoA Lead Counselor, the Proctors and a lawyer from Community Law.
- We continued to market and promote Advocacy with renewed marketing materials and a new brand.
- The Advocacy team continues to be busy working on cases, organising promotional activities and attending events throughout the University.
- Continue to collaborate with Campus Life to provide spaces for student parents to access.

Key outcomes

- The Student Advice Hub gave presentations to all postgraduate students at their inductions and Orientation events.
- We gave presentations about the service at all the key Orientation events for international students.
- We increased the visibility of the AUSA Advocacy service. For example, we:
  - joined faculty based events such as the AULSS Stress less stall.
  - attended Class rep training, Uniguide Training, Doctoral Morning Teas, Graduate inductions and the Tertiary foundation orientation.
- Advocacy staff have regularly attended the AUSA Welfare Committee meetings.
- The Advocacy team organised a Lost Property Coat sale when winter set in, raising $2200 for the Welfare Fund. These are long-term items that have never been claimed.
We have had many referrals from University staff including MAPAS, International Students Office, Counselling and health Services and the Proctor.

We have also referred a lot of students towards other services, such as hardship grants, textbook grants and food parcels.

The Advocacy Manager was invited by Campus life to attend a number of Faculty Student consultative meetings about the Code of Conduct development.

The Advocacy Manager also attended the Epsom Faculty SSCC meetings.

AUSA Advocates have supported several students at faculty meetings with staff about their academic conduct and allegations of plagiarism, and several students at Discipline Committee hearings. There has been an increase in students seeking advice before attending Discipline hearings and many had experienced delays with their hearings.

Key trends

The service continues to be well utilised by both undergraduate and postgraduate students and there is no evidence that ongoing increase in demand is slowing. There has been a 35% increase in student contacts compared to semester one 2016.

Many of the students who meet with us find university life stressful and demanding. They report that they are depressed and overwhelmed with continuous assessment that impacts on their ability to cope, and they are unsure where to turn. A University-focused strategy to support students’ wellbeing is urgently needed.

Common problems seen by the Advice Hub include:

- At the end of the first semester the Hub has seen a large number of students with issues regarding compassionate consideration or aegrotat applications. While often students have failed to understand the requirements, many feel that they have not been made sufficiently aware of available options, or have been given misleading or incorrect information by their lecturers.

- Mental health awareness continues to be a significant issue for many students we meet with. They often seem unaware of the services the University provides or are afraid to voice their concerns in case they are judged harshly. The Science Faculty was identified as a School where pastoral care is particularly important, as there are a lot of students who are new to New Zealand.

Academic issues and observations:

- A significant number of Postgraduate students have expressed concerns about more serious issues such as supervision. Some supervisors have not been following the Postgraduate Supervision Policy or terminating PhD’s without proper consultation with the student.

- Several students met with us to discuss their choice of degree. They complained that when they could have been told earlier the degree was not the right fit for them. There
therefore seems to be a gap in effective communication between the staff and the students regarding their performance earlier on.

● There are a number of issues that seem to particularly affect international students:
  o Many international students run into problems with tenancy contractual arrangements or misunderstanding what their rights are as a tenant.
  o Many International PhD students have found their programme more challenging than they anticipated and have struggled to maintain focus towards completion.
  o We have noted that international students in particular are struggling with financial hardship. Many of them have overseas loans which place pressure on them to succeed academically as well as financial pressure.

● There was an increase in accommodation cases at the start of Semester 1. We assisted several students to resolve a number of tenancy problems including tenancy agreements disputes at the end of the tenancy or breaking the tenancy agreement.

● There continues to be a significant number of students struggling financially, particularly if they have dependent children. Many students were not able to afford food, rent, and basic costs.

● There was also an increase in legal issues which we believe is due to students not knowing where to turn for legal support

● There are ongoing concerns by students in regards to the facilities at the Newmarket campus. They have complained that there is inadequate space for students to relax, meditate, pray etc.

Key Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Student Contacts (Cases + Enquiries)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
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<tr>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Student Contacts</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

When we record cases we sort them into 14 categories (note student enquiries are not sorted into categories). Below are pie charts showing the breakdown of the different issues heard across 2018.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A1: Undergraduate Academic Grievance</th>
<th>G1: Legal Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A2: Postgraduate Academic Grievance</td>
<td>G2: Financial Challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3: Enrollment</td>
<td>G3: Personal Crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A4: Coursework and Assessment</td>
<td>G4: Accommodation Predicaments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A5: Exams</td>
<td>G5: Government Agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A6: Other University Bodies</td>
<td>G6: Employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A7: Allegations of Plagiarism and Misconduct</td>
<td>G7: Harassment and Bullying</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Graph 2: Degree levels

May Degree Levels

June Degree Levels

Unknown

PG

32.4%

34.5%

19.1%

UG

53.2%

10.3%
Graph 3: Student type

March student types
- Unknown: 14.3%
- International: 11.7%

April Student Types
- Unknown: 30.0%
- Local: 50.0%

May Student Types
- Unknown: 33.8%
- Local: 47.1%
- International: 19.1%

Graph 4: Student by Faculty

March Faculties
- Other/Unknown: 38.0%
- Business: 2.6%
- Engineering: 11.7%
- Education: 3.9%
- Fine Arts: 2.6%
- Law: 6.5%
- Science: 20.8%

May Faculties
- Other/Unknown: 39.0%
- Business: 2.6%
- Engineering: 11.7%
- Education: 3.9%
- Fine Arts: 2.6%
- Law: 6.5%
- Science: 20.8%

June Faculties
- Other/Unknown: 32.8%
- Arts: 13.5%
- Business: 13.8%
- Engineering: 6.0%
- Fine Arts: 1.7%
- Science: 5.2%
- Law: 10.3%
- Education: 13.8%
4. Class Representation System

The Class Representation system is going from strength to strength. After a comprehensive review of the Class Representative system, in which class reps and general students were surveyed about the effectiveness of the system, we have made significant changes to the way the Class Reps programme is run. With our new Class Representative Coordinator and the new Class Representation Policies and Guidelines taking effect in 2018, the Class Representative system is improving in terms of the quality of training and support AUSA provides, the visibility and professionalism of the program, and engagement and receptiveness of AUSA to class representatives.

Class Reps in Semester One described their role as:

“Rewarding, challenging and eye-opening”
“An absolutely amazing experience”
“Exciting, fulfilling and fun”
“A challenging privilege and an honour”
“Connection, communication, and contribution”

Key Activities

In Semester One, we:

- Ran seven training sessions during the 3rd week of Semester One 2018 for 550 students. These included:
  - Three training sessions held at City Campus
  - Two training sessions held at Epsom campus and Grafton campus.
  - One-off training session for Graduate of Management Masters students.
  - Two new “advanced Class Reps trainings” for returning class reps. With CDES we developed these new modules, which focus on developing leadership and communication skills
  - A new “online training module” for class reps who couldn’t attend physical trainings.

- Provided ongoing support for class representatives with enquiries. A number of complaints were received during the semester. These are categorised as follows:
  - Group Services Administrators class rep process questions (Medium)
  - Course related issues (Medium)
  - SSCC enquiries (Medium)
  - Training enquiries (High)
  - Advocacy issues – referred to the advocacy team (Low)
  - General enquiries – (Medium)

- Issued Semester One Class Representative Certificates. This is a new initiative, and we gave out 634 hard-copy and soft-copy certificates to Class Representatives acknowledging them for their work.
• Communicated the new policy and guidelines changes to University staff (Director of Operations, Group Services managers, and Group Services Administrators).
• Improved class representation registration form to make the process more official, and to help reduce duplication of information.
• Increased the collaboration between AUSA and Group Services Administrators, with a particular emphasis on ensuring all required classes have Class Reps.
• Increased class representation information throughout the university via the university website and staff intranet.
• Created a new Class Representation Guide and updating training materials.
• Approved a plan to deliver Class Rep training at Manukau Institute of Technology (MIT) and Te Tai Tokerau campus in Semester Two.
• Updated the format of SCC meeting minutes template with action points paragraph. AUSA now also receives all SCC meeting minutes to better understand and support students with issues at the University.
• Created a University-wide Class Rep resource page to increase student and staff access to information.
• Updated the AUSA Class Representation website page. This includes a number of new features:
  ○ A ‘find my class rep’ function on the website;
  ○ A new Class Representation video

**Semester Two 2018 Objectives**

• Run a one-off training session at Manukau Institute of Technology and Tai-Tokerau campus.
• Plan an end of the year function for all 2018 Class Reps.
• Continue to implement some of the pending recommendations from the 2017 Class Rep report.
• Look into the possibility of attending some of the SCC meeting sessions.
• Continue to update the Class Rep resources, i.e. the training material, handbook, promotional material etc.
• Continue to monitor the progress of the new policy implementation across the university.
• Continue to monitor the usage progress and efficiency of the new Class Rep registration form.
• Look into creating a tool that can identify the courses that are without class reps so that AUSA can intervene.
• Continue to work with Class Reps to increase collaboration with the university staff during the semester by initiating a meet-up session with the staff in week six or seven to give an update of the course.
• Continue to encourage Class Reps to attend the SCC meetings.
• Continue to provide on-time support to all Class Reps via various channels, i.e. website, email, face-to-face, phone etc.
• Encourage Class Reps to organise a social event among coursemates at the end of the semester which in turn could contribute positively to the overall student experience.
### Key Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Reps by Department</th>
<th>Semester one 2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business School</td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Arts</td>
<td>351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Creative Arts &amp; Industries</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Education</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Engineering</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Law</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Medical &amp; Health Sciences</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty of Science</td>
<td>279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1108</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CLASS REP NUMBERS BY DEPARTMENT SEMESTER ONE 2018**

- Business School: 21.8% (241)
- Faculty of Arts: 31.7% (351)
- Faculty of Creative Arts & Industries: 7.8% (86)
- Faculty of Education: 2.3% (25)
- Faculty of Engineering: 1.2% (13)
- Faculty of Law: 6.4% (42)
- Faculty of Medical & Health Sciences: 6.4% (71)
- Faculty of Science: 25.2% (279)
### Class Rep Certificate Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CERTIFICATE REQUEST</th>
<th>NUMBERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ONLINE COPY (PDF)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>HARD COPY</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>634</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Events

One of AUSA’s strategic priorities and largest areas of growth has been running high quality and popular events on campus. AUSA has run a huge number of events to build student community in Semester One, including O Week, themed weeks and one-off events. We are building our reputation as a students’ association that puts on excellent events for its students, and we see this is a vital role of a students’ association on campus. This list excludes events specifically for international students, as they will be elaborated on in the “Buddy Programme” section.

O-Week:

O Week this year was bigger and better than ever. Key events this week included:

- Hip Hop Day with performances in the Quad.
- A performance by Savage to a packed Shadows Bar.
- A Talent Quest in Albert Park.
- Club performances on the stage in Albert Park throughout the day, to celebrate all that they bring to our student community.
- AUSA and Auckland University ran a massive Party in the Park which was just shy of 3,000 people. Baynk, Sachi and Melodownz featuring Bailey Wiley all performed, and Chase & Status headlined the event.
- 95bFm ran gigs in the park from 3pm, including a performance with Ladi6.

Themed Weeks:

Politics Week: This year we continued AUSA’s strong tradition of Politics Week run by our Political Engagement Officer George Barton. Politics Week aims to engage students in politics. This included running:

- Broke Students Brunches on various campuses
- A political debate, “MPs and DBs” MC’d by Wallace Chapman, preceded by a youth political wing debate.
- The #MeToo - It’s Time We Talked talk, with an array of trailblazing speakers discussing this important movement
- AUSA and CDES ran our annual Careers in the Public Sector evening, with over 20 organisations from across the Government, including The Human Rights Commission, MFAT, Treasury and The Serious Fraud Office. It was our largest Career Expo yet.
- Another political debate, where MPs debated the motion “We Students Have Confidence in this Labour-Led Government” at a large political debate in OGGB.
Cultural Week: AUSA runs a Cultural Week, aimed at celebrating the diversity of our student community. It aims to promote inclusiveness and increase the awareness of the different cultures on campus. Events included:

- Celebrating our Pasifika students through dances and a tutorial in the Quad.
- NTM ran a festival celebrating Maori Language, Art, dance and song.
- A Cultural Showcase, with performances from clubs such as Glee, Filipino Students’ Association, Han Cultural Club and more, plus free popcorn in the Quad.
- On one of the days, the Quad was filled with stalls and food trucks with food from around the world. There were fairy lights, bunting and live performances to make it even more festive.
- A Cultural Potluck Party, with a range of dishes as well as a photo booth to end the week.

One-Off Events

AUSA Summer Shakespeare Trust: For the first time ever, AUSA’s Summer Shakespeare Trust had a Winter edition. New Zealand’s famous Michael Hurst directed The Changeling, which was performed at four locations over a month, starting on campus and finishing on the North Shore. The play received critical acclaim from Craccum, UniNews and the New Zealand Herald.

Club Presidents Welcome: To kick off the year AUSA and the University ran our first Club President Welcome event at the Garden Bar in Shadows to provide students with the support and information they need to assist them in their roles. We had around 60 student presidents.

Easter Festival and giveaways: We handed out Easter eggs and hot cross buns across the City Epsom and Grafton campuses and also hid Easter eggs for the students. We even had a bunny suit! A big thank you to Hollywood bakery for their great hot cross buns.

Marvel Quiz: Aaron and Ros ran AUSA’s first Marvel Quiz in Shadows with 200 students taking part.

Two General Meetings: This year we have undertaken the largest update and improvement on our Constitution that we have had for several years, including updating clauses about clubs and discipline processes. Students also voted to give the referenda equal status to General Meeting decision-making, to ensure that students have maximum opportunity to participate in decision-making.

Dirty Bingo: To celebrate Sex Week and sex positivity AUSA ran its first Dirty Bingo with its hosts Barb, Raj, Colin and Juan from the Shady Acres Retirement Village. It was held in Shadows with over 100 participants.

Paint and Sip: Our Student Engagement Officer, Emily McDonald, ran another popular Paint and Sip in Shadows with 30 participants and the talented Isobel Gledhill as the instructor.

Crafternoon Teas: Our Women’s Rights Officers Ngaire and Jen have run two Crafternoon Teas in Women’s Space with tea, biscuits, painting, colouring-in and clay. They have each attracted around 50 students and been great for everyone’s wellbeing.
**Pride Parade:** This year AUSA and Auckland University were at the Pride Parade with stickers, t-shirts and the Auckland City Scoundrels brass band performing.

**Mardi Gras:** AUSA ran a massive Pride Mardi Gras Festival in the Quad, with popcorn, candy floss, games and rides, a bouncy castle, live music from Auckland City Scoundrels and stalls with organisations like End HIV.
6. AUSA’s Buddies Programme

The AUSA International Buddy Programme was created in 2017 to help ease the transition for new international students adjusting to the kiwi culture. The programme is free, and held each semester for new international students. AUSA was grateful to receive CSSF levy funding to take on a part-time Buddies Coordinator to run the Buddies programme this year, and she has done a fantastic job growing this international student care and support sector.

An AUSA Buddy is an existing domestic or international student that gets paired with a new international student to offer them support, guidance, and a friend when coming to terms with living in a different country. This program aims to support and build community for International Students who can struggle to adapt and enjoy their time at the University of Auckland. It was developed in response to a survey undertaken in 2017 that identified that international students can feel isolated, and lack peer-to-peer support at the University of Auckland. We aim to encourage social interaction, cultural immersion and help create enjoyable university experience.

The programme has greatly expanded in 2018. When the programme was established in Semester One 2017, 79 new international students signed up to take part. In Semester One this year, we had 231 new international students participating in the programme and 61 volunteers supporting students to have a better experience at UoA.

In addition to partnering up students with buddies, AUSA trained the buddies, provided support during the semester, and ran multiple events for all international students. These AUSA Buddy Programme Events included new engaging social events around the University’s International Orientation Seminar, with a Breakfast Bash, International Expo and Amazing Race.

To introduce international students to different New Zealand traditions, students were educated about ANZAC Day and a Happy Easter Bunny Buddy event was run. There has also been a Kiwi Movie Night and Chillax Day Out. Finally, a new recurring event called “Banter and Beyond” was created by AUSA in Semester One, where between 20 and 40 international students head along to a games evening once a fortnight to have fun, make new friends and feel connected.

This continues to be a popular programme, which we are excited to continue expanding.

Below are students’ comments from the Semester One feedback survey:

"Super cool idea and am definitely going to bring it up to my home university as well!

"Personally, my buddy made my life a lot easier by sharing his challenges that he had went through during his 1st semester at UoA. This helped me to tackle the challenges and struggles that I faced so far."

"Everyday going to university and attending lectures never really brings out the insight of oneself to talk and joke around as everyone only discuss the course and leaves. But after attending three buddy events, I actually met people and interacted with different groups of cultures and yummy
food which helped me gain my self confidence. Thank you Tatiane and other buddies for being so supportive.”

Sign Off

In Semester One 2018, AUSA has sought to serve our students to the best of our abilities, through our welfare, events, representation and advocacy initiatives. I am always grateful for the work of the staff and Executive at AUSA.

A special thank you to Temi, Tatiane, Jess, Luke, Brittany, Amokura and AUSA Advocacy for your contributions to this report.

Ngā mihi,

Anna Cusack