



# ALSA Candidate Statements 2019/20

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# ELECTION PROCEDURE

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ALSA Elections are conducted in accordance with the ALSA Constitution.

## Overview:

- A 75% majority vote is required to allow a student that will not be a law student in 2020 to run for an executive or committee position.
- No proxy votes have been received.
- Each ALSA affiliated law students' society and association will hold two votes, and ALSA committee members will each hold one vote.
- Optional preferential voting applies to all positions.
- If only one candidate is running for a position, they will run against a vote of no confidence which requires a majority of votes to succeed.
- A person may nominate from the floor for any position which has not received a nomination, i.e.:
  - Competitions Officer
  - Careers Officer
  - Education Officer (Higher Education)

# PRESIDENT

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## Margaret Cai

**University/LSS/LSA:** University of Technology Sydney  
**Law Student in 2020:** Yes  
**Email:** margaretsecilacai@gmail.com

I am a fifth year Law and Communications student at the University of Technology Sydney, and the current Vice President (Administration) of ALSA. In my current role, I have developed an astute knowledge of ALSA's internal and public processes and a clear vision for its future.

My previous experience as both a Conference competitor and an LSS Council delegate has been integral in shaping a broad understanding of ALSA's immediate stakeholders and the way it functions as an organisation.

I am committed to leading ALSA in cementing itself as the pre-eminent law student stakeholder in Australia. This demands an express advocacy strategy. Here, I see potential measures to include:

- Committing to regular thought leadership pieces and drafting responses to relevant public consultations
- Strengthening the advocacy imperative on both the Committee and Council by introducing formal commitments or by-laws on participation in ALSA advocacy projects
- Proposing quarterly or biannual joint meetings with the European Law Students' Association, Asian Law Students' Association and New Zealand Law Students' Association with initiative updates and knowledge-sharing
- Re-assessing ALSA's committee structure

This year, I have exercised continuous pro-activity in my tenure. In a Vice President (Administration) role which is traditionally defined by the performance of reactive duties (taking minutes, responding to LSS correspondence, organising meetings), I have reframed the Council focus to include skills-based workshops and instigated a redrafting of the Constitution. The integration of new scenario planning and best practice sessions throughout February and July Councils have also been complemented by the creation of ALSA's first Topics Digest and first set of Best Practice Guides.

I have demonstrated an eagerness to improve the internal and institutional processes of ALSA's committee. I have compiled a concise handover for future Council convenors and a Council minutes' template, and intend to spend the lead-up to our final Council creating an intuitive handover guide of all the ALSA officer positions for knowledge retention within the committee's database. This will make the day-to-day operations of the committee more efficient and serves as a necessary springboard for the attainment of tangible outcomes externally.

I am a responsive leader - motivated by the continued dialogue surrounding ALSA's purpose and objectives. I seek to enter my second year as an ALSA executive with

renewed focus, optimism for our capability to influence policy, and ultimately, a mandate for continued change.

**Nominator 1:** Gabi Lubrano (UTS Law Students' Society)

**Nominator 2:** Danny Baker (Murdoch Student Law Society)

# VICE PRESIDENT (ADMINISTRATION)

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## William Vu

**University/LSS/LSA:** University of New South Wales  
**Law Student in 2020:** No  
**Email:** will.vu96@gmail.com

Hi, my name is Will and I am running for Vice President (Administration) in 2020. I have had the pleasure of serving with the ALSA Committee this year as Sponsorship Officer, and having seen the work the Association has done I believe I can continue to contribute.

If elected to the role, there are three key focuses I would work on during my term.

1. Transparency with Council: Marge has done substantial work this year to improve our internal record keeping and administration. In 2020, I will focus on transitioning to further transparency with Council. This would primarily be set around providing timelines and key progress updates on action items from Council meetings or for Committee projects beyond the Council Reports and Bulletins.

2. Sharing further resources: Marge has developed several documents as part of ALSA's internal record keeping and administration. Some LSS/As have also asked for other sample or template documents, such as a template sponsorship prospectus. I will work with the rest of the Executive and Committee to identify template documents that can be uploaded to a Dropbox to share with Council, similar to our Problem Question Bank.

3. Knowledge retention: As our terms are only for 12 months, knowledge retention between each year is crucial. Marge has already developed a handover document, and I will work to ensure these are updated regularly throughout the year.

The Vice President (Administration) role is one that requires initiative as well as a good understanding of a student run organisation. On the former, I have demonstrated this by publishing the first ALSA Best Practice Guide, redesigning and redrafted our Sponsorship Guide and drafting our first ever Sponsorship Agreement. I have also had five years of being a part of student run organisations, including three years with the UNSW Law Society and a year as its Co-President. I hope to bring my wealth of knowledge and experience to this role and continue to contribute to ALSA.

**Nominator 1:** Natasha Hartano (UNSW Law Society)  
**Nominator 2:** Ben Fong (UTS Law Students' Society)

# Claire Marron

**University/LSS/LSA:** University of Canberra  
**Law Student in 2020:** No  
**Email:** claire.marron@gmail.com

In nominating for this position I reflected on the strong work that the current VPA has put in to the review of the Constitution, By-Laws and council, and the way in which ALSA has changed and grown. This is a critical time for ALSA as we begin to move forward into ALSA for the future. The 2019 Committee have begun the process of evolution, taking on board the views of the Council room, however change is never a quick process and I strongly believe in the benefits of consistency in Committee for this critical time of transition.

I believe I have a necessary understanding of the operational components of ALSA to fulfil the obligations of this role moving forward. In particular, I believe that my project and events management background will be of assistance to the organisation of Council and Committee moving forward. I also personally really enjoy minute taking which is a benefit!

In terms of the wider portfolio, while I am lacking in my actual IT abilities, I have had the pleasure this year of seeing the scope of work that this position undertakes and the knowledge that those in this position bring. On the other hand, I have been involved in ALSA competitions in various capacities, and after reviewing by-laws and talking to the current officer, believe I have an understanding of the scope of this work moving forward.

**Nominator 1:** Claire Osborne (Canberra Law Students' Society)  
**Nominator 2:** Sophie Whittaker (UOW Law Students' Society)

# VICE PRESIDENT (FINANCE)

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## Amanda Guruge

**University/LSS/LSA:** University of Canberra  
**Law Student in 2020:** No  
**Email:** amanda.guruge@icloud.com

My name is Amanda Guruge and I am the current VPF of ALSA. I am a final year JD student at the University of Canberra and a tax consultant at an accounting firm by trade. As someone who had not had any exposure to ALSA prior to nominating for an executive position this time last year, it was all foreign to me. But after working with a great committee for the last 9 months, I can see the value in a body such as ALSA and the impact it has on students.

Unfortunately, when I stepped into the role, there was a lot of catch up to do in terms of our financial obligations. We have only just caught up, and by the end of my current term expect to have the organisation ahead of its obligations. This has meant that change I would have like to have implemented took a back seat. I would like the opportunity to run as VPF for one last term to make the change I wasn't able to this time round.

In the role this year, little things I have managed to do include:

- Creating an ALSA Budget (and sticking to it)
- Changing our accounting procedures to from cash to accruals
- Tried different ticketing platforms with the help of Amy (IT) and have listened to feedback received
- Automated invoicing with the help of Amy (IT)
- Made changes to the Finance and Scholarship by-laws
- Created better record keeping processes
- Liaised with the 2020 Conference Convener to create a 2020 Conference budget earlier than prior VPFs

What I would like to do:

- Set up credit card/debit card payment facilities for all invoices (in addition to direct deposit)
- Create a tender for a new accountant
- Create a comprehensive, live handover book that details the processes and simple guidelines for using Xero and understanding key accounting principles
- Move to electronic signing within the Executive (where possible)
- Work-on the current ALSA Budget and Conference Budget templates to ensure consistency in future years
- Create a Council budget template and collate information from prior years to pass on to Council Conveners

As a passionate tax consultant/law student I understand the importance of the VPF's role in ensuring the smooth running of the organisation. I believe my experiences from work, seeing how other NFP's operate (especially the accounting aspects) makes me an ideal candidate for the role.

**Nominator 1:** Claire Osburne (Canberra Law Students' Society)  
**Nominator 2:** Lauren Skinner (Australian National University Law Students' Society)

# Grame Thompson

**University/LSS/LSA:** Western Sydney Law Students' Association  
**Law Student in 2020:** Yes  
**Email:** alpharia@gmail.com

After nearly 30 years of running my own business selling, developing, and marketing a diverse range of ITC services of networking, multimedia, design, data mining and finally digital forensics, I become a law student with 2020 being my final year

I have also volunteered as P&C treasurer; implemented one of the first Work for the Dole programs training participants in IT, and business skills; helped implement a Salvo's OOSH Care from scratch; and ran a Lifeline Bookstore on weekends tripling sales. I am equally a proud dad with a lovely and understanding wife of 28 yrs.

For the last two years, I have enjoyed the honour of being the Treasurer of Western Sydney Law Students' Association where I have met some outstanding students and have helped, with the other executives to create realistically a new, financially stable and viable entity.

This was achieved by going to an online accrual accounting system; implementation of financial governance policies and procedures; set-up of a merchandising system as well as online ticketing; and, renegotiating of venue contracts when minimum numbers not reached - producing a more favourable outcome for all.

Though my proudest achievement is playing a role in incorporating the new association as well as having it being accepted as a charity via the ACNC.

From my understanding the VP-Finance of ALSA is not (or should not be) just about keeping the accounts in balance. It is about providing oversight and making sure all executives are up to date on finances to execute appropriate decisions. It is ensuring the proper systems and processes are in place to govern transactions in a straightforward, efficient, and transparent manner. It is understanding and contributing to both strategic and everyday planning with all other stakeholders (Executives, Officers, Suppliers, and Sponsors). It is also about monitoring for and mitigating any financial risk.

Above all that though, it is to be a part of a small dedicated team that at its core is about law students Australia wide and making sure that their organisation, because it is theirs, gives them the best professional association possible with limited resources.

I believe my existing and eclectic skillsets mean that I am equipped to being not just the VP-Finance of ALSA but a part of the team that ALSA absolutely is. Where I can bring my experience together within that team and play a role in ALSA's future strategic plans going forward.

**Nominator 1:** Ali Dawes (Southern Cross University Law Student Society)  
**Nominator 2:** Johnny Nguyen (Western Sydney Law Students' Association)

# Aaron Payne

**University/LSS/LSA:** Griffith University Law Society  
**Law Student in 2020:** Yes  
**Email:** president@guls.org

Hi! For those of you I haven't met, my name is Aaron and I hail from the Griffith University Law Society in sunny Queensland, and I am nominating to be ALSA's Vice President (Finance). Primarily I think I would be an excellent candidate for this role because, unlike most law students, I have a strange affinity for numbers and excel spreadsheets. Let me tell you more about my experience below.

I am currently President of my LSA, and last year served as the Vice President (Finance & Sponsorship), which is a substantively similar role to ASLA's VP Finance. In addition to that, I have also served as the Treasurer of a number of other on campus club, like the United Nations Student Association and have also served as the Treasurer of Griffith's Student Representative Council Board. Each of these roles required a keen financial eye, to ensure that budgetary targets were being met and that our financial accounts and records were well maintained.

In addition, I have also served as the Under-Secretary-General (Finance and Sponsorship), a fancy name for Treasurer, of the Brisbane Model United Nations Conference. As an incorporated association (which I'm sure many of you were familiar with), the Conference was required to report on additional levels of detail, as well as submit to audits as required. Later when I served as the Co-Secretary-General of the Conference, as well as Co-Secretary-General of the Asia-Pacific Model United Nations Conference, I had a supervisory relationship over the Finance teams, to ensure the records were accurate, well-kept and to ensure we complied with the regulatory framework. This included the preparation of BAS statements, payments of relevant tax and preparing documentation for audits and annual general meetings.

In the workplace, I am also responsible for the management and accounting of our global office budget. This requires compliance with a complex series of rules to ensure spending is occurring within the specified guidelines, and with the constraints of our budget. In addition, I am required to conduct the record keeping for this budget, which requires all expenditure to be acquitted and justified against an online tool.

I hope that tells you enough about my financial skill, but feel free to ask me any questions your heart desires. Look forward to seeing you all soon!

**Nominator 1:** Jack Bristed (Queensland University of Technology Law Society)  
**Nominator 2:** Maggie Hawkins (University of Queensland Law Society)

# VICE PRESIDENT (EDUCATION)

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## Madeleine Goodsir

**University/LSS/LSA:** University of Notre Dame, Sydney  
**Law Student in 2020:** No  
**Email:** [madeleine17goodsir@hotmail.com](mailto:madeleine17goodsir@hotmail.com)

My name is Madeleine Goodsir and I am currently in my final year of a combined Arts/Law degree at the University of Notre Dame, Sydney. Over the past 9 months I have worked on the ALSA Committee as the Higher Education Officer. During my time in this role I have experienced first hand the opportunities available for growth both for ALSA and within this portfolio. Accordingly, my vision is to re-vitalise the Education Portfolio in order to strengthen ALSA's commitment to advocate for the interests and concerns of Australian law students. I believe that this is more reflective of ALSA's mission and the concerns of the members it seeks to represent. I envisage that this would involve obtaining a mandate from Council directing the focus of ALSA's advocacy initiatives and allow the Education Portfolio to engage in thought leadership (with our media partners) and submissions to law reform commissions and government.

I would be suitable to lead the Education Portfolio through this next chapter as I am committed to improving the advocacy focus of the organisation and hold institutional knowledge to lead this process. I have also shown initiative during my time on the ALSA Committee by assisting in the formation of international partnerships and the establishment of the International Law Journal as well as drafting the Inclusion and Diversity Guide. Finally, my organisation of Conference Cup demonstrates my genuine passion and excitement for this organisation.

**Nominator 1:** Athena Krisanaleela (Notre Dame Sydney Law Society)  
**Nominator 2:** Ben Fong (UTS Law Students' Society)

# COMPETITIONS OFFICER

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This position will be open to nominations from the floor.

# IT OFFICER

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## Amy Shao

**University/LSS/LSA:** Western Sydney Law Students' Association  
**Law Student in 2020:** Yes  
**Email:** 18407945@student.westernsydney.edu.au

In my time as the 2019 IT Officer, I have made contributions in each of the various ALSA portfolios. I have experience in using Google Suite, the platform utilised by the ALSA committee, and extensive experience with Windows, in particular, Microsoft Excel. My key deliverable this year was the hugely popular and incredibly user friendly 2019 Conference App.

I'm always willing to collaborate with other portfolios, and I'm particularly interested in using innovative methods to automate processes and increase efficiency, thereby decreasing the need for manual intervention and freeing up other committee members' time. In my tenure as the 2019 IT Officer, I have saved the 2019 VP (Finance) over 150 invaluable hours by automating the generation of invoices, which is otherwise a very time consuming process. In addition, I also set up immediate auto-responses on forms in order to eliminate the need for the Committee and Executive to have to constantly check and reply to emails.

I've also worked closely with the Marketing Officer this year to create and design the website during the rebrand, and utilised technologies like mail merge to create customised certificates for all entrants to the various competitions (which would otherwise have been created manually).

If elected, I would like to work towards implementation of online elections, saving the New Zealand delegation the time consuming task of counting the votes cast by the Councillors, and allowing instant\* election results.

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\*mere puff.

\*\* <https://www.rapidtables.com/convert/number/binary-to-ascii.html>

**Nominator 1:** Nicholas Tsekouras (St Patrick's Law Students' Society)  
**Nominator 2:** Jamie Impson (Griffith University Law Students' Association)

# MARKETING OFFICER

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## Lily Shen

**University/LSS/LSA:** Australian National University  
**Law Student in 2020:** Yes  
**Email:** lily.shen@live.com.au

My name is Lily Shen, and I am currently a third-year student at the Australian National University studying a double degree in Law and International Security Studies. I would love the opportunity to serve as Marketing Officer in the 2019–20 ALSA Committee, as I believe I have the passion, skills and experience necessary to fulfil and exceed ALSA’s marketing objectives in the coming year.

In the past two years, I have directed marketing in four ANU student societies over a diverse range of disciplines, including the Australia-China Youth Association at ANU, Robogals Canberra, Language Diversity at ANU and, this year, the ANU Law Students’ Society. Through these roles, I believe, I have developed many skillsets that will be beneficial to serving as ALSA’s Marketing Officer. I have experience in managing social media platforms, distributing electronic newsletters, designing graphics, publications and merchandise. I have worked closely with sponsorship directors in managing our contractual marketing obligations, and with event organisers in planning and running publicity campaigns for society events.

This year, as ANU LSS’s Publicity Director, I hold primary responsibility for managing our Facebook page, one of ANU’s biggest society pages with over 5,000 followers. This involves responding to messages, scheduling and spacing out posts, working with the marketing team at the ANU College of Law, and creating graphics and publicity campaigns according to what our committee needs. With eight portfolios in our committee that run a huge number and variety of events, this role has also involved maintaining a consistent, but nuanced social media image for the ANU LSS, in managing the balance between the ‘professional’ for our more formal, corporate events, and the ‘personable’ (but still classy) for our more informal social events.

I have first-hand experience in how demanding a role marketing can be, especially in balancing quite a few of my student society roles concurrently. I have excellent time management skills and am extremely responsive to committee communications and requests – I understand how hectic event organisation can be, which is why I always make sure there is flexibility to accommodate last-minute changes and demands on marketing.

I believe that many of the lessons and skills I have learnt in my marketing roles can be used to help ALSA in this coming year, if I am elected Marketing Officer. Thank you for this opportunity, and I am more than happy to answer any questions you might have.

**Nominator 1:** Grace Lee (Australian National University Law Students’ Society)  
**Nominator 2:** Thulasie Venkatraman (Australian National University Law Students’ Society)

Due to a lack of clarity in the phrasing “two members of any ALSA affiliated LSS or LSA” in the nominations form, discretion has been used under clause 104.10 to allow this nomination to be deemed valid.

# SPONSORSHIP OFFICER

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## Jack Bristed

**University/LSS/LSA:** QUT Law Society  
**Law Student in 2020:** No  
**Email:** [president@qutlawsociety.com](mailto:president@qutlawsociety.com)

As Vice President in 2018 and then President in 2019, sponsorship has been a key component of my role within the QUTLS. In both years, my team and I were able to obtain sponsorship above and beyond the budgeted amount, which in turn provided much needed benefits to our law student body. I have a strong work ethic and dedication to law students and I look forward to assisting ALSA now and in the future.

**Nominator 1:** Aaron Payne (Griffith University Law Society)  
**Nominator 2:** Jamie Impson (Griffith University Law Students' Association)

# CAREERS OFFICER

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This position will be open to nominations from the floor.

# EDUCATION OFFICER (HIGHER EDUCATION)

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This position will be open to nominations from the floor.

# EDUCATION OFFICER (STUDENTS AND COMMUNITY)

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## Michael Brown

**University/LSS/LSA:** Southern Cross University Law Student Society  
**Law Student in 2020:** Yes  
**Email:** [mick.brown14@outlook.com](mailto:mick.brown14@outlook.com)

My name is Michael brown and I have been a member of the SCULSS committee for 2 years as both the BACHELOR of Justice and Legal Studies Representative (2017/18) and the Vice President Administration (2018/19). I am a mature aged student who studies via online enrolled in a double degree of LLB/BLJS. Having engaged in management roles in relation to my past employment for over 20 years I have been able to develop good multi-tasking skills and time management skills and would love the opportunity to work in this role to further develop my skills.

**Nominator 1:** Maxine Hayes (Southern Cross University Law Student Society)  
**Nominator 2:** Sophie Precians (University of New England Law Students' Society)