

Alumni Chapter Handbook



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Message from the Alumni Office

Dear USQ Alumnus,

Thank you for your interest in setting up a new USQ alumni chapter within your country or discipline.

Alumni chapters play an important role in fostering a lifelong and mutually beneficial relationship between the University and our alumni. Chapters are a great way of keeping in touch with fellow USQ graduates and friends in your region or area of interest, building social and professional networks, while at the same time furthering the reputation of your University.

The Chapter Handbook covers essential information and provides guidelines for you to establish and operate a successful USQ alumni chapter. If you have any questions regarding chapter setup or support please contact the Alumni Office at alumni@usq.edu.au or visit the Alumni website at www.usq.edu.au/alumni

Yours sincerely

USQ Alumni Office

Toowoomba campus



Springfield campus



Fraser Coast Campus



1 WHAT IS A CHAPTER?

1.1 Definition

An alumni chapter operates as a formal, organised group of alumni wishing to conduct an ongoing program of activities.

Chapters usually consist of members who share a common interest and may be organised as:

- regional (country, city, region, campus or international education partners);
- residential college;
- faculty or discipline area;
- professional or industry area; or
- special interest.

There is a structured process for the establishment of an alumni chapter, which includes approval by the USQ Alumni Relations Advisory Committee.

1.2 Focus

Being part of an alumni chapter is an excellent way to strengthen connections with fellow alumni and the University. The specific focus of an individual chapter can vary, but may include:

- networking and building social, professional and business relations with other USQ alumni;
- having regular social gatherings;
- keeping in touch with friends from USQ;
- providing support to current USQ students; or
- creating a support network in regional or isolated areas;
- raising funds for a scholarship.

Regardless of focus, chapters all have an overriding objective to act as ambassadors for the University of Southern Queensland in the community and promote the reputation of the University.

1.3 Operation

The formation of a new chapter is usually initiated by an alumnus of USQ who expresses an interest or identifies a need for a particular chapter in their area. All chapters operate through their own committees and within the guidelines of the USQ Alumni Chapter Handbook. Chapter committees are responsible for recruiting members and organising events and activities dependent upon the interests of their members.

The USQ Alumni Relations Advisory Committee will approve the establishment of individual chapters, while the Alumni Office provides support in setting up and the ongoing operations of chapters.



2 STARTING A CHAPTER

2.1 Contact the Alumni Office

Once you have decided to start a new chapter the first step is to contact the Alumni Office with as much of the following information that you can provide:

- your name and details
- do you have two or three other alumni who are committed to establish this new chapter along with you?
- do you know any other USQ alumni in your area?
- purpose and focus of the chapter such as who it will appeal to:
 - those living in a certain region,
 - those who studied with a specific faculty or international education partner or
 - those who stayed at a residential college, etc;
- nature of the chapter, for example purely social focus, professional networking group, a combination, etc; and
- types of activities or events that the chapter will run.

2.2 Support from the Alumni Office

The Alumni Office will advise you of any alumni chapters currently functional in your area, and can help you identify alumni in your location, discipline or special interest area and provide them with your contact details.

Once you have identified 10 people willing to be actively involved in establishing an alumni chapter or committee, you will need to decide what to name your chapter, and then complete and submit the “New Chapter Application” form. The name of your chapter should give a clear indication of the purpose or nature of the chapter so that prospective members can decide whether the chapter relates to them. The Alumni Office requires that the name contains ‘USQ’.

The proposed chapter name is considered as part of the approval process. Once approved, this official name is to be used in all correspondence and on all publications (printed and digital).

2.3 Set up a temporary committee

The next step is to set up a temporary committee to establish the new chapter. A minimum of four committee members who take on the roles of Chair, Deputy Chair, Secretary and Treasurer is recommended. Please see section 3.4 for Alumni Chapter Executive Committee suggested roles and responsibilities.

In addition, chapters that are education or campus based, or represent a department/area within the University, or represent an international education partner, should ideally have either a relevant Faculty or University liaison staff member on the committee, or regular contact with the Faculty or University department of the area they represent. You may consider approaching a former lecturer or other USQ staff member you have dealt with previously to invite them onto your committee.

2.4 Gaining approval

The USQ Alumni Relations Advisory Committee will consider the application, seek clarification on any item if necessary, and formally approve the new chapter.

If you require any further information on the process or any assistance with completing the New Chapter Application Form, please contact the Alumni Office via email alumni@usq.edu.au.

2.5 Recruiting members

Once the new chapter has been approved by the USQ Alumni Relations Advisory Committee, the task of recruiting members begins.

Alumni chapters, via their committee, are responsible for recruiting members from among USQ alumni in their particular area. A good place to start is to use your contacts and those of the core group of people who were involved with the initial application. The Alumni Office will also assist in contacting relevant alumni that match the profile of your chapter to seek expressions of interest.

An ongoing membership of at least 10 chapter members, including committee office bearers, should be maintained.

If membership drops below 10, the Alumni Office at USQ will decide with the Chapter Committee whether to recruit more members or dissolve the chapter.

3 RUNNING THE CHAPTER

3.1 Chapter objectives

Regardless of whether chapters are education, region or interest based, they all aim to achieve the following objectives:

- further the reputation of USQ;
- develop a mutually beneficial relationship with the USQ Alumni Office and the University through networks, events, etc; and
- conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the goals and objectives of the USQ Alumni Office and the high standards of the University.

These objectives and responsibilities should be discussed at the first meeting to ensure that all members are aware and in agreement.

3.2 Meetings

Regular chapter meetings allow for better communication and planning. The frequency of the meetings may depend on how many activities or events are planned for the year or how geographically dispersed chapter members are. Try to seek agreement from members at this first meeting and establish a schedule of meetings for the year.

The first meeting of a new chapter is important in setting the tone of the chapter. The types of activities that may happen at this first meeting include:

- confirmation of the roles and duties that are required;
- election of people to key positions and executive committee;
- clarification of chapter's relationship to the USQ Alumni Office and chapter objectives;
- decision on whether a constitution is necessary;
- decision on how frequently to meet;
- establishment of a process for chapter members to provide suggestions and feedback to the committee;
- discussion of types of activities or events the chapter will run; and/or
- planning of the first event or activity and discussion of future events.

3.3 Committee Elections

An elected committee is required for the ongoing operation of the chapter. The elected committee is responsible for establishing and monitoring annual budgets and activity plans, and reporting to the USQ Alumni Office. The University has developed the following guidelines for committee elections:

- first elections must be held within 12 months of the formation of the chapter;
- nominations should be called for each committee position;
- a minimum of four committee office bearers are required, including Chair, Deputy Chair, Secretary and Treasurer;
- all chapter members will be invited to participate in the voting on each committee position;
- the nominee with the highest number of votes for each position will be appointed for a period of 2 years;
- where only one nomination for a position is received the nominee is automatically appointed to the position for a period of 2 years;
- the results should be announced, and the hand-over of the committee made, as soon as the results of the election are declared;
- committee election results will be communicated to the USQ Alumni Office within four weeks; and
- where a committee office bearer resigns their position during their two year term, a fresh election for that position should be held.

Chapter chairs and elected committees serve for a term of two years. They shall stand down on finishing the term, but will be eligible for re-election.



3.4 Roles and responsibilities

An alumni chapter is required to have an executive committee which acts as advocates of USQ. A minimum of four committee members is recommended. The only requirement is that all committee members must be USQ alumni.

CHAPTER CHAIR

As Head of the chapter committee, your role is to act as an advocate for USQ and lead, motivate and organise local alumni in order to meet the goals of your chapter. Your primary responsibilities may include:

- Act as primary liaison with the Alumni Office;
- Chair Chapter Committee meetings;
- Plan annual goals and alumni activities for the chapter;
- Call elections for new representatives as required; and
- Other duties as determined by the chapter.

DEPUTY CHAIR

- Perform the duties of the Chair in the Chair's absence;
- Provide general advice and assistance to the Chair; and
- Other duties as determined by the chapter.

CHAPTER TREASURER

- Manage financial matters such as;
 - paying chapter bills as they arise
 - receive chapter monies if applicable
 - open and report on chapter bank accounts (there should be two office bearers signatories)
- Manage budgets and reports for chapter events;
- Present financial reports at chapter meetings;
- Maintain financial records for the chapter; and
- Other duties as determined by the chapter.

CHAPTER SECRETARY

- Provide secretarial support including preparing meeting agendas and distributing minutes of chapter meetings;
- Manage correspondence for the chapter;
- Keep a file of all agenda, minutes, event arrangements and any other related paperwork;
- Maintain chapter members' contact details and provide to the Alumni Office; and
- Other duties as determined by the chapter.

Roles can be combined or shared amongst more than one committee member, depending on the particular circumstances of the chapter. Please note these are USQ suggestions on roles and activities within these roles. Each chapter committee members are able to determine their own committee functions and responsibilities that are applicable to their particular committee. USQ does not monitor or manage roles and responsibilities for each chapter position.

3.5 Activities and events

Each chapter should organise at least one or two activities per year. An annual activity plan should be developed by the chapter committee and include the following:

- the chapter's vision or objectives;
- a brief description of the year's activities, including the purpose of the activities and the expected outcomes; and
- a calendar of events.

Suggestions for activities and events include:

- networking functions;
- seminars or lectures;
- dinner with guest speaker;
- family/social outings such as theatre visit, golf tournament, picnic, quiz night;
- reunions with other USQ alumni;
- fundraising events for USQ scholarships; or
- community service activities.

While the full program might not be finalised at the first meeting, it is useful to plan the first event to maintain the enthusiasm of those who have come along. Chapters may charge attendance fees for events or may choose to charge an annual membership fee that covers the cost of activities for chapter members.



Sri Lanka Alumni Chapter Inauguration Ceremony



Malaysian Alumni Get-together



Singapore Alumni Chapter Meet-up Session



The Federation of Australian Alumni Association Hong Kong Annual Ball 2010

3.6 Managing Chapter membership

It is important to maintain an accurate list of chapter members in order to keep track of membership and to be able to effectively communicate with chapter members. The most efficient method of communication with chapter members is email, however there may need to be an agreed process for contacting members who do not have access to email.

At various stages and depending upon the size and objectives of the chapter, active recruitment of new members may be a priority. The Chapter Committee may develop a policy or an action plan for recruiting new members. For example, chapters may choose to hold a specific recruitment event where current members are encouraged to bring along new members. The Alumni Office can also assist with sourcing potential new members for chapters.

3.7 Reporting to the USQ Alumni Office

The Chair of each chapter is a member of the Alumni Relations Advisory Committee and will provide regular reports on the activities of the chapter in the following circumstances:

- information on the chapter for inclusion on the USQ Alumni website;
- inform immediately when there is a change to the chapter committee;
- submit drafts of advertisements, publications and other promotional material for authorisation and approval when using the USQ logo;
- forward copies of meeting minutes and resolutions;
- provide details of committee office bearers and the details of chapter members (excel spreadsheet format) every six months in July and December;
- submit an annual report, including funding and financial reports (such as chapter bank statements) by end of December each year;

The annual report is presented to the Alumni Relations Advisory Committee and should include the following:

- chapter's overall vision or objectives;
- a description of the year's activities and achievements;
- list of proposed activities for the year;
- any changes to the format or nature of the chapter from the original chapter application;
- any assistance or clarification required from the Alumni Office; and
- a financial report.

Please forward this information to the Alumni Office at alumni@usq.edu.au as soon as it is available.

4 OPERATION GUIDELINES

4.1 Code of Conduct

Individuals on alumni chapter committees are obliged to carry out their activities in line with the following code of conduct:

1. A committee office bearer must act honestly, in good faith and in the best interests of the alumni chapter, committee and University as a whole.
2. A committee office bearer has a duty to use care and diligence in fulfilling their role, and in the exercise of any powers attached to that position.
3. A committee office bearer must use the powers of office for a proper purpose, in the best interests of USQ alumni as a whole, and not for any personal gain.
4. A committee office bearer must not make improper use of information acquired as an alumni committee member.
5. A committee office bearer must avoid situations in which his/her private interests, whether pecuniary, personal or otherwise, might reasonably be thought to create an actual or perceived conflict of interest with their duties to the alumni chapter committee. Potential conflicts of interest must be declared to the alumni chapter committee and the committee will determine whether there is a conflict
6. Personal information, for example, alumni membership data, received by a committee office bearer in the course of their duties must be treated as confidential. It must not be disclosed unless that disclosure has been authorised by any individual concerned or is required by law.
7. A committee office bearer should not engage in conduct likely to bring discredit to the reputation of the University.
8. A committee office bearer must not seek to represent the University in any public forum without prior permission of the USQ Alumni Office.
9. A committee office bearer must not enter into any contract or arrangements with third parties that use the name of, or have association with the University of Southern Queensland without the prior permission of the University.

4.2 Breach of Code of Conduct

If a chapter member does not abide by the above-listed Code of Conduct, has acted in an immoral or unethical manner, or takes action that may compromise the University's reputation, they will be notified that their actions will be discussed at the next Alumni Relations Advisory Committee (ARAC) meeting. The USQ ARAC will investigate any suspected or reported breach of the Code of Conduct. The ARAC will be responsible for the decision to keep or withdraw the current representative. If ARAC agrees that a breach has occurred, they have the authority to resolve the complaint with the individual. Actions may include:

- a formal letter of caution, advising the individual that any subsequent minor violations may lead to more severe consequences;
- request for a formal apology in writing;
- request for resignation from committee position or chapter membership

4.3 Insurance

In certain circumstances the activities of University volunteers may be covered by the University's corporate insurance policies. All chapters must contact the Alumni Office prior to organising major events that make reference to the University, or involve University staff, or that use the University facilities or premises.

4.4 Use of USQ logo and name

The USQ logo and name are proprietary to the University. Any use of the USQ name or use of the USQ logo requires the express prior written permission of the University. Any unauthorised use of the name and logo will be prosecuted by USQ.

The Alumni Office has designed some templates for each chapter such as a logo, letterheads, business cards and nametags for chapter activities.

If you would like to discuss this issue further or require any clarification, please contact the Alumni Office at alumni@usq.edu.au

4.5 Legal liability

Chapter committee members are not authorised agents of USQ or the Alumni Office and should not represent themselves as such at any time. No chapter committee member may enter into any contract or arrangement on behalf of, or for, the University. Chapter committee leaders cannot speak officially on behalf of USQ but can speak officially on behalf of the alumni chapter they represent. Individuals are required to avoid conflict with regard to the sole promotion of their own business.

The University is not in a position to provide legal advice to chapters, whether in Australia or overseas. The USQ Alumni Office encourages all chapters to seek independent, local legal advice in their own locations before entering into contracts. Any chapter that engages in any activity that brings the University into disrepute will be instructed to stop operating immediately by the University. Illegal activities will be prosecuted.

5 SERVICES FROM THE ALUMNI OFFICE

The Alumni Office is the first point of contact at USQ for all questions, guidance, support or clarification of matters relating to the chapter. All chapter committee members and representatives are welcome to contact the Alumni Office at alumni@usq.edu.au. The Alumni Office supports chapters in the following ways:

- investigate how many USQ alumni live or work in your area;
- provide advice and written guidelines on establishing and running the chapter;
- assist with chapter member recruitment via the USQ alumni database;
- assist in promoting chapter events and activities through the USQ alumni database and website;
- promote the chapter at any relevant USQ event, such as graduations, orientation, USQ Open Days and through various USQ social clubs;
- raise awareness of chapters amongst USQ's overseas education partners and agents;
- publish articles about chapter activities in alumni publications to increase awareness amongst USQ alumni;
- provide templates and logos for the chapter's use;
- assist with the development of and provide a dedicated web page for each chapter on the USQ Alumni website www.usq.edu.au/alumni;
- provide an annual allocation of funds for specific chapter activities. These funds can be accessed via an application process.

5.1 Promotion of events

The Alumni Office is available to provide assistance in the promotion of chapter's events and activities. This may take the form of:

- advice on ways to generate publicity in your local area;
- emails to members of the USQ alumni database for the purposes of recruiting prospective chapter members or promoting events; and/or
- listing chapter events on the USQ Alumni website and e-newsletter, as well as the staff newsletter USQ News, if applicable.
- In order to facilitate this process, please submit a written request to the Alumni Office at least four weeks in advance, detailing the type of assistance you need and when.

5.2 Recruitment of members

The Alumni Office will provide support to chapters in recruiting new members. To access this service, simply forward a request to alumni@usq.edu.au stating the profile of the members, including geographic location, field of study, etc, and include the name and email address of the main contact person within the chapter.

The Alumni Office will organise for an email to be sent to relevant USQ alumni, informing them of the chapter and asking them to make contact if interested. Details of USQ alumni will not be released to chapters in order to protect the privacy of graduates.

5.3 Website

The USQ Alumni website has space available for each chapter to maintain a homepage, to advertise events and activities, and to promote participation in their chapter. These pages are managed by the USQ Alumni Office, with content supplied by the chapter. Chapters may arrange to set-up and run their own websites, which should be linked from their USQ Alumni homepage.

5.4 Funding

The University allocates an annual budget AUD500 to each chapter to support the following year's activities. The Alumni Office will consider providing funds for activities that meet the following objectives:

- connect alumni to the University and to each other;
- promote future alumni engagement with the chapter and the University; or
- support the chapter's activity plan.

Chapters are encouraged to pursue their own sources of funding, such as charging fees for attendance at events. Chapters interested in approaching corporations or businesses for potential sponsorship must coordinate their request with the USQ Alumni Office in order to preserve USQ's corporate relationships. Although the University helps you set up a new chapter and will continue to remain involved, we aim for all alumni chapters to become self supporting over time. Contact the Alumni Office on alumni@usq.edu.au for further information.



UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND • NEW CHAPTER APPLICATION FORM

Proposed name of Chapter:**Chapter type (please tick the relevant category)**

- regional _____
- faculty or discipline area _____
- residential college _____
- professional or industry area _____
- special interest _____

Brief outline of why you would like to establish a Chapter:**Do you have a USQ representative (other than Alumni Office staff) supporting this application?**

- no yes, please specify _____

Your details (or those of the key contact person)

Name _____

Position _____

Postal Address _____

Phone *Business* _____ *Mobile* _____

Preferred email _____

Please return this form to:

BY POST:

University of Southern Queensland Alumni and Advancement Services Office, Toowoomba, QLD 4350, Australia
or E: alumni@usq.edu.au or F: +61 7 4631 1995

want to know more?

T +61 7 4631 5340

E alumni@usq.edu.au

W www.usq.edu.au/alumni