

## MPA submission for additional space on Clayton campus July 2019

### 1. The MPA

The Monash Postgraduate Association (MPA) is an independent incorporated association recognised by University Council as the representative body for all coursework (GPG) and research (HDR) postgraduate students in Australia. Services include: postgraduate lounge facilities; representation; advocacy; social events; day trips; sports programs; health and wellbeing programs; parents' support; and seminars & workshops. The MPA operates across all Victorian campuses and provides support to the Malaysia campus postgraduate community.

### 2. Postgraduate profile and growth on Clayton campus

The postgraduate population on Clayton campus has grown rapidly over the last few years and now represents 31% of the Clayton campus student population. The GPG load has grown significantly and the university plans to continue that growth, much of it now focused on Clayton campus.

<b>Clayton postgraduate profile 2019</b>			
Preliminary data extracted from Monash University pivot tables on 15 July 2019			
12,657	GPG 9302	F/T	On-campus 5344
		6573	Off-campus 1229
		P/T	On-campus 1636
		2729	Off-campus 1093
	HDR 3355	F/T	On-campus 2292
		2700	Off-campus 408
		P/T	On-campus 503
		655	Off-campus 152

### 3. Postgraduate expectations

The GPG cohort brings in a significant income to the university so it is important to ensure that the postgraduate student experience is relevant, targeted and of a high quality. Unlike undergraduates, the GPG cohort pay significant fees for their courses. They have high expectations of their university experience and are increasingly critical consumers, willing to take action if that experience does not meet their expectations.

The MPA services and facilities play a critical role in the postgraduate experience. Postgraduates want tailored facilities, services and support, and the MPA strives to meet those expectations.

#### 4. MPA's current space allocation on Clayton campus

On Clayton campus, the MPA occupy two separate spaces in the Campus Centre:

- **The MPA office**, rooms 1-48 to 1-58, next door to Monash Abroad. The office is approximately 187 sqm and comprises: a reception; 9 staff desks; 2 committee member desks (currently used by staff); a 20-seat meeting room; a kitchen and meals area shared by staff and committee members; and a storage room.

With the growth of the postgraduate population comes increased demand for MPA services. The MPA has recently increased their Clayton staff from 7 to 11 to accommodate the rise in the number of postgraduates seeking MPA services. There is no advocacy meeting room and no space for committee members to work.

- **The MPA lounge**, room 1-70 and 1-71, on the first floor, opposite the central staircase. The lounge is approximately 114sqm and comprises: A shared space with study tables and lounge chairs; three small-group meeting rooms; an electronic piano; and a small kitchenette.

There are 13,870 postgraduates registered for access to the MPA Clayton lounge. The average number of postgraduates accessing the lounge during semester ranges from 150 to 300 per day. The number of unique visitors in a single month is 760<sup>1</sup>.

The majority of postgraduates on Clayton campus are international full-time GPG. This cohort do not have allocated desks in their faculties and are heavy users of the MPA lounge for study purposes. Part-time GPG tend to be domestic and working full-time, so appreciate the 24/7 access as they mainly use the MPA lounge facilities after-hours.

The majority of HDRs have desks in their schools, and primarily use the MPA lounges for social purposes at lunch-times and after-hours. Overall, postgraduates tend to be relatively quiet even when socialising in small groups, so using the space for both social and study works surprisingly well.

The MPA runs limited social events in this space because it is too small to safely accommodate more than 50 attendees.

#### 5. MPA's current space allocation on Caulfield campus

The number of full-time GPG on Caulfield and Clayton campuses is comparable. However the facilities for GPG on Caulfield campus are far superior and include two postgraduate lounges, four postgraduate computer labs and a family-friendly study room. The MPA would like to replicate the Caulfield C2 space, which has proved to be enormously successful. The advantages of the C2 postgraduate lounge and office combination are set out below.

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<sup>1</sup> Based on swipe access data extracted 15 April – 15 May 2019

Features of C2	Advantages
<p>MPA office co-located with postgraduate lounge</p> <p>Office: 147 sqm Lounge: 529 sqm Total space: 676sqm</p>	<p>Provides staff oversight of lounge re responsible student use and safety.</p> <p>Facilities are better maintained as faults are identified and addressed immediately.</p> <p>Enables postgraduates to be informed about and have direct access to MPA services.</p> <p>Gives postgraduates a sense of home and belonging - combats isolation as they interact with staff daily and feel comfortable in the space.</p> <p>Enables basic kitchen supplies to be supplied and regularly topped up.</p>
<p>Advocacy meeting room</p>	<p>A small meeting room for advocates to meet with students, designed with two exits for safety.</p>
<p>Large study space accommodates up to 200 postgraduates</p>	<p>Provision of a 24/7 access, high-quality, well-maintained space addresses expectations of fee-paying postgrads.</p> <p>Postgrads appreciate having a space to study away from the undergraduates whom they may be teaching or tutoring.</p>
<p>Large kitchen with a wide-range of facilities such as microwaves and fridges</p>	<p>The majority of full-time GPG are living below the poverty line so having facilities to make and store meals is highly valued.</p>
<p>Designed in such a way that many social events can be accommodated within the space (within pre-advertised, restricted hours).</p> <p>Accommodates up to 400 students for a function.</p>	<p>MPA does not have to book and pay for space to run events and can therefore: offer more activities; offer free activities; and run small pop-up events at short notice in response to student requests.</p> <p>Postgrad groups can use space for free to run their own social events.</p> <p>Space can accommodate leisure activities such as a piano, a games console, stereo equipment to facilitate karaoke nights and films.</p>

The Caulfield C2 space has also demonstrated that if the facilities are attractive and appropriately advertised, they can be successfully located away from the main hub of the campus.

## 6. MPA's desired space allocation on Clayton campus

In summary, the MPA is looking for a space of approximately 680sqm on Clayton campus to accommodate both the Clayton MPA office and postgraduate lounge. This would enable the university to provide a high quality, postgraduate-specific facility in line with postgraduate expectations. It would also ensure that the two largest postgraduate populations on Caulfield and Clayton campuses were being provided with the same positive experience at Monash University.

For more information contact Jenny Reeder, MPA Executive Officer,  
Ph: 9905 3198, email: [jenny.reeder@monash.edu](mailto:jenny.reeder@monash.edu)