

Academics at Sydney's Macquarie University protest management's political censorship of the IYSSE

Our reporters
11 August 2023

The International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) continues to receive statements protesting the refusal of Macquarie University in Sydney to affiliate its student club despite having met all stipulated requirements.

Given the IYSSE's complete exposure of management's fraudulent pretext for denying its club official status, management's decision stands exposed as blatant political censorship of a socialist and anti-war voice on campus.

Add your signature to the nearly 600 others on the petition demanding that the IYSSE be affiliated, and send in your own letters of protest to management, copied to the IYSSE so they can be posted at the WSWWS.

Below are the statements from two academics at Macquarie University, who will remain anonymous.

To Student Engagement, Inclusion and Belonging,

As a lecturer at Macquarie University, I protest the political censorship being conducted against the IYSSE.

Student clubs are an important part of life on campus, promoting the cultural and academic interests of students. Preventing the registration of a club, which has met your own requirements, is an attack on the democratic rights of students.

The reason given to oppose registration is non-existent. Supposedly, student engagement does not wish to have two clubs with the same purpose; they can be amalgamated.

Why do you have both the Macquarie Overseas Vietnamese and Vietnamese Students Association? In medicine, registered clubs include: Medicine Society,

Medical Science Society, Medical Society (Postgrad) and MQ Surgical Society. Other examples of significant overlap can be given.

Is there in fact an overlap between the IYSSE and the Macquarie Socialists, as you claim? No. These are political clubs, and the political differences—the class differences—have been made as clear as day. The IYSSE represents the international working class and is a Trotskyist club. Macquarie Socialists articulates the interests of the upper middle class and defends capitalism. On every issue facing young people, there is a fundamental difference between the IYSSE and the Macquarie Socialists.

Why is the affiliation being blocked? The reason is not difficult to determine. The IYSSE is an anti-war club; in fact, it is the only anti-war club on campus. No other organisation opposes the US-NATO proxy war against Russia in Ukraine. The IYSSE explains that the way to oppose war is to turn young people to the international working class on a socialist perspective of international socialism. The IYSSE is unique in fighting for this perspective.

The IYSSE has a long record at Macquarie University. It has been a registered club on campus since 2010, and was only deregistered in 2022 by an anti-democratic decision by Student Engagement to insist that every club go through a re-registration process.

The IYSSE has, in their May 2023 AGM, met all the requirements to be a registered club. The delays, extending over 2 months, in registration have already been an attack on the democratic rights of students. There is a clear decision now to be made by you: register the IYSSE.

To the Macquarie University management,

As a Macquarie University educator, I add my voice to the demands being raised by students, academics, IYSSE members and workers across Australia and internationally for you to affiliate the International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) as a student club at Macquarie University.

Your Student Engagement, Inclusion & Belonging administrators have claimed that the IYSSE and the Macquarie Socialists club share “the same aim and purpose” and is using this as a basis for refusing to affiliate the IYSSE.

This claim has been refuted by the IYSSE, who have explained very clearly the political differences between the two groups. Furthermore, the Macquarie Socialists have also publicly rejected the claim that they share the same aim and purpose as the IYSSE.

As the IYSSE wrote in their letter of July 5, “The assertion that we have the same aims as Macquarie Socialists, you will recall, was the sole justification you gave for rejecting our affiliation. It has now been entirely refuted by all parties involved. The only institution that falsely claims that we have the same aims is your own. Aside from the complete impropriety of a university management body adjudicating on the politics of student organisations, your previous assertions are now entirely untenable.

“We therefore demand that you immediately rescind this position and affiliate our club forthwith.”

Given that both clubs have declared that your decision to block the IYSSE’s affiliation was based on a completely false assertion, why are you still refusing to affiliate the IYSSE?

It is clear that your Student Engagement, Inclusion & Belonging team have made this anti- democratic decision, declining a valid application for affiliation, on political grounds since the IYSSE has followed the guidelines to the letter.

One can only conclude that the university is seeking to silence the only genuinely socialist and anti-war club on campus, with a long record of activity and meetings at the university.

This anti-democratic act must be opposed.

The IYSSE is the only youth organisation in the world fighting for the unity of the international working class on a socialist perspective directed against war.

The IYSSE also provides a forum for students to engage in open and critical discussion on social, political, economic and scientific issues that are largely absent from public discussion but that are enormously important to young people. Students should be able to explore different political perspectives, as they seek answers to important questions like war, climate change, democratic rights, poverty and inequality. Universities should serve as spaces for diverse perspectives and robust intellectual exchange.

In the University’s strategic framework, we say “We believe learning, enquiry and discovery improves lives; we conduct ourselves ethically, equitably, and for mutual benefit...” The decision to not reaffiliate the IYSSE does not align with these broad principles. If the University values enquiry and discovery, and wishes to act equitably and ethically, it must reaffiliate the IYSSE.

I call upon Macquarie University to rescind its decision to not affiliate the IYSSE and to uphold democratic principles and respect the rights of its students. It is critical for the university to provide an inclusive and open environment that encourages intellectual diversity, fosters democratic engagement and empowers students to shape a better future through informed and active participation.

A concerned academic

We call on all readers to support the fight to defend the IYSSE at Macquarie University by sending letters of protest over the rejection of the IYSSE’s affiliation to the Student Engagement, Inclusion and Belonging division of university management at studentgroups@mq.edu.au, and CC_iysse.macquarie@gmail.com.

Get in touch with the IYSSE to find out how you can be involved:

Email: iysseaus@gmail.com

Facebook: [facebook.com/IYSSEaustralia](https://www.facebook.com/IYSSEaustralia)

Twitter: @IysseA

Instagram: @iysse.aus



To contact the WSWs and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

[wsws.org/contact](https://www.wsws.org/contact)