

The James Cook University Student Association supports the introduction of the Student Services and Amenities Bill and the plan to allow our students to add the cost to a HECS debt which will minimise the impact of the fee while our students complete their degrees.

Since the introduction of VSU many facilities have been either shut down or reduced dramatically on our campuses.

Student non academic services and activities are an important part of University life and in particular play a very important role in Regional Universities where many of the students are from out of town, the non academic services and activities are a major part of their lives, and make a meaningful difference to the completion of their chosen degree.

As a Regional University we have seen a major decrease in the services and amenities that are on offer for our students. It is disheartening to see High Schools and Primary Schools with better all round student facilities than we have.

Student life is almost non existent on our campuses with very little on offer for the students. What little we are able to offer has to be done on a commercial basis making it less affordable for our students.

With the introduction of a minimum three hour engagement for casuals many students who relied on this income are now experiencing further financial impacts as the casual work availability declines in the area. It makes it even more important to provide them with lower cost activities and better facilities on campus to help improve their University experience. By introducing the fees it will enable us to provide better support, better environments and a more relaxing atmosphere on campus to study, allowing our students to complete their degrees and become a part of a better, brighter Australia.

Students are being forced to disengage from University life as there is no life on offer. The introduction of the Student Services and Amenities Bill will go a long way to improve this situation and allow us to determine what services and amenities are best suited to our campuses.

We also support the continuation of funding to Australian University Sport which is due for review at the end of 2010. Australian University sport plays a major role in supporting James Cook University Student Association with both funding and in kind support to enable our athletes to compete at a higher level each year.

William Huybregts, JCU Student President

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