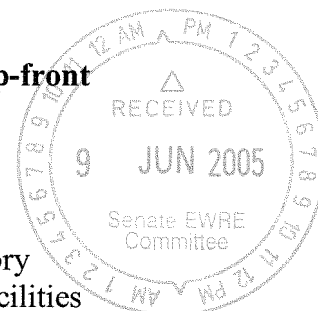


Higher Education Support Amendment (Abolition of Compulsory Up-front Union Fees) Bill 2005



1. Introduction

The government's VSU legislation conflates the separate issues of compulsory membership of a student body and a compulsory levy for the provision of facilities and services. There appears to be an assumption that funds raised by a compulsory levy must inevitably find their way to a student organisation, which uses the funds for political purposes. This assumption is incorrect. Griffith University currently operates a distinctively different model that offers an alternative approach.

2. The Griffith Model

In the Griffith model, the compulsory levy is split between the Student Representative Council/Postgraduates Association (30%) and Campus Life (70%).

Campus Life is a unit of central administration that reports to the head of administration. The unit is responsible for the provision of sporting facilities, organisation of sporting and recreational activities, food outlets, childcare, and student accommodation. The Campus Life share of the current levy amounts to \$218 for first year students (including a \$50 Capital Development Charge) and \$168 for later year students.

The division of responsibilities between Campus Life and the student bodies is set out in the table below:

Campus Life	Student Representative Council	Griffith Uni Postgraduate Students Association
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Academic Dress ▪ Accommodation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Off Campus ▪ Homestay ▪ International Support ▪ Residential Colleges ▪ Campus Activities ▪ Child Care ▪ Clubs and Societies ▪ Commercial Services ▪ Conference Coordination ▪ Food and Beverages ▪ Sport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Student Services/Assistance ▪ Activities ▪ Various Departments; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women's, Indigenous, Colleges Officer, Queer, Disabilities, Media, Education, Overseas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Student services assistance with; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Academic writing assistance ▪ Statistical and research methods assistance ▪ Work in Progress conferences ▪ Quarterly newsletter ▪ Representation of postgraduate interests to the university and government ▪ Social functions ▪ Annual research bursaries ▪ Assistance with grievance issues

This model has been in existence for 30 years.

While Campus Life is an administrative unit and its Director reports to the head of administration, there is provision for student input to the operations of Campus Life through the Campus Life Board. The Board has a membership of 14 with several elected student positions and a chairperson appointed by the University Council.

The role of the Board is one of governance, not management. The Board is supported by a number of advisory committees, which include:

- several childcare advisory committees;
- a sports and recreational committee;
- a commercialisation committee.

3. Impact

It is universally accepted that a University education should be broader than the academic program, students require a social experience which assists them in developing networks and provides them with life skills. Campus Life engages students by providing a number of social and competitive activities that bring significant benefits to students. These activities enable students to meet friends, cross cultural divides, learn about team work, co-operation and leadership, and enable students to maintain healthy and active lifestyles. These are significant benefits that produce well-rounded graduates.

The legislation as it currently exists will result in a funding loss of \$2.7 million dollars to Campus Life (an administrative unit of Griffith University), \$840,000 to the Student Representative Council and \$120,000 to the Post Graduate Association. As a consequence a number of services would no longer be provided as highlighted in the table below:

Campus Life	Student Representative Council	Griffith Uni Postgraduate Students Association
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Dress • Accommodation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Off-Campus- Homestay International Support Residential Colleges • Campus Activities- • Child Care • Clubs and Societies • Commercial Services • Conference Coordination • Food and Beverages • Sport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student • Services/Assistance- • Activities - • Various Departments,- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Womens- Indigenous Colleges Officer- Queer- Disabilities Media- Education- Overseas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student services assistance with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Academic writing assistance- -Statistical and research methods assistance- -Work in Progress conferences - • Quarterly newsletter - • Representation of postgraduate interests to the university and government- • Social functions - • Annual research bursaries • Assistance with grievance issues

Off Campus Accommodation

The Off-campus accommodation service provides assistance to students seeking accommodation off campus. Campus Life handles over 100 enquires each year.

Campus Activities

Campus Life provides a range of social and recreational activities on and off campus. In 2004, 233 events and activities were conducted involving 6752 participants.

Childcare

Campus Life operates two long-day childcare centres with a combined total of 116 full-time places. The unit also organises Before and After-School Care and Vacation Care. Additionally, a Family Day Care Scheme, which is supported and funded by the Federal Government, is licensed for 210 places and is also able to provide additional

places for JET (job, education and training) and respite care for children with additional needs. The mix of students and staff using these facilities varies each semester.

Clubs and Societies

Campus Life supports over 70 clubs and societies, organising a variety of events and activities across the campuses. Approximately 12,000 students are involved in these clubs and societies.

Sporting Facilities and Activities

Campus Life provides and operates the following:

- 4 ovals;
- 2 gymnasiums;
- 8 tennis courts;
- squash courts;
- a swimming pool;
- a multi-sports hall;
- netball courts.

These facilities are utilised by both the university and external community. In 2004 the facilities were booked for a total of 20,901 hours by students and the community and the gymnasiums received 152,485 visits.

Campus Life also organises University sport, in 2004 it supported 244 athletes in competing in inter-University and or representative sport.

Food And Beverage Services

Campus Life offers a variety of eateries for staff and students across the campuses as well as a range of vending machines. The unit also provides a function service to cater for any event, function or conference on campus. Due to the population base at some of our smaller campuses a number of food and beverage outlets may be forced to operate at severely reduced hours (3-4 hours maximum per day), close or be serviced through vending only.

The University may elect to contract out these smaller operations, however it will come at a price. The population base of our smaller campuses combined with a short trading period make these operations commercially unviable. Contractors therefore demand a management fee to run such operations. Such costs would be borne by the University.

4. Related Consequence

Assets – The University will be left with a number of designated assets totalling \$25,597,271 (primarily sports and childcare facilities) with annual fixed costs of \$935,355. The majority of these facilities cannot be converted to teaching or research space, consequently they become an additional cost to the University.

Facilities to attract or retain people on campus – Campus Life has contributed significantly to the look and feel of the university campuses by refurbishing and constructing a number of facilities. A total of \$14,281,696 has been spent in the last

10 years. These facilities attract both staff and students to the University and facilitate social interaction on campus, which aids in engagement and retention.

Redundancies – Approximately 52 staff will be made redundant at a cost of \$1,456,947.
