

17 June 2005

To the members of the Employment, Workplace Relations and Education Committee,

I submit my assessment to the likely effects of the legislation on the provision of student services, particularly for the University of the Sunshine Coast Student Guild.

The University of the Sunshine Coast Student Guild currently provides five staff, that are not students and are independent of the board of directors to operate the functions of the USC Student Guild including management, financial accounts, sporting and event management, education advocacy and welfare referral. Two of these staff members assist the student directors in rolls that are currently not being replicated by the University, namely sporting support, organisation of events for students, and education advocacy and support for students. Legislative changes will see these five staff loose employment, and funding for sport and education severely limited.

Unless this legislation's introduction carries additional financial support for the University, there is the possibility of the sporting teams currently in existence being forced to disband. Soccer is especially popular among the students, both domestic and international students, and provides a multicultural student gathering. It would disadvantage all students if there were to be no, or limited opportunities to play sport at campus.

Another service provided by the USC Student Guild is academic advocacy. This service is important to students, as it can mean the failure to complete university studies if there have been problems with course-work. The academic advocacy support offered includes acting on behalf of students when talking to University staff, and providing support to students when they are using the University's procedures to appeal against a grade, or are facing discipline action. This service provides a watchdog for students so that they are treated fairly by University staff, and have support when raising concerns with the University. It would be recommended that additional support be provided to the universities so that a staff member may be employed to assist students with academic concerns through advocacy on their behalf.

Many international students use USC Student Guild services, most notably the only ATM on campus, the student common room, academic advocacy, the sporting teams, and the event nights. Without these services international students may choose not to study at USC, as there would be no non-academic resources that could be utilised. With fewer international students on campus, the Australian students will loose a chance to interact with a diverse range of students from multiple cultures, a gain insight in other nations.

It is possible that the University without additional government support will not replicate the services that are lost owing to these changes. This will see students have less support on campus, and a lack of extra curricular activities.

I ask that the above points be taken into consideration,

Dan McIntyre
Past President of the USC Student Guild 2003-2005
Graduated 2005