

Submission

to

Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education
Legislation Committee

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

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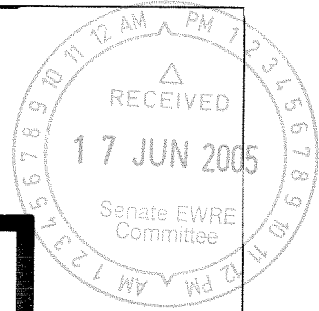
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Student Guild
Griffith University Gold Coast

BRIEFING PAPER

Prepared for
Senate Employment, Workplace Relations
and Education Legislation Committee

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

Griffith University Gold Coast
Student Guild

16 June 2005

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Introduction

The Federal Minister for Education, Dr Brendan Nelson has introduced a Bill into the House of Representatives to provide for voluntary membership of student unions, prevent universities from imposing and collecting a services and amenities fee and imposes penalties on universities for non-compliance.

The Bill's formal title is "Higher Education Support Amendment (Abolition of Compulsory Up-front Student Union Fees) Bill 2005.

The major concern for the Griffith University Gold Coast Student Guild is that this legislation will result in a major reduction (and loss) of services/benefits (direct, associated and future) to the students and university community of this campus.

The following paper presents an overview of the present situation and what we believe to be the realistic ramifications this legislation shall have on the Griffith University Gold Coast Student Guild Members and the University Community.

Establishment

On 30 July 1992, the first student organisation at the then Gold Coast University College of Griffith University was established by Order In Council as a Body Corporate under the Griffith University Act. The Gold Coast University College of Griffith University Student Representative Council – Constitution is currently being changed to reflect the current Griffith University Act of 1998 where at Division 3 Gold Coast Student Guild 39 (1) the Act states “The Gold Coast Student Guild is established”

Organisational Status

Griffith University Act 1998

Division 3. – Gold Coast Student Guild

39 Establishment

- (1) The Gold Coast Student Guild is established
- (2) The student guild
 - (a) is a body corporate with perpetual succession; and
 - (b) has a common seal’ and
 - (c) may sue and be sued under its corporate name.

40 Membership

The persons who are eligible to be members of the student guild are-

- (a) students studying at the Gold Coast campus of the university; and
- (b) persons eligible for membership under the student guild’s constitution

41 Role

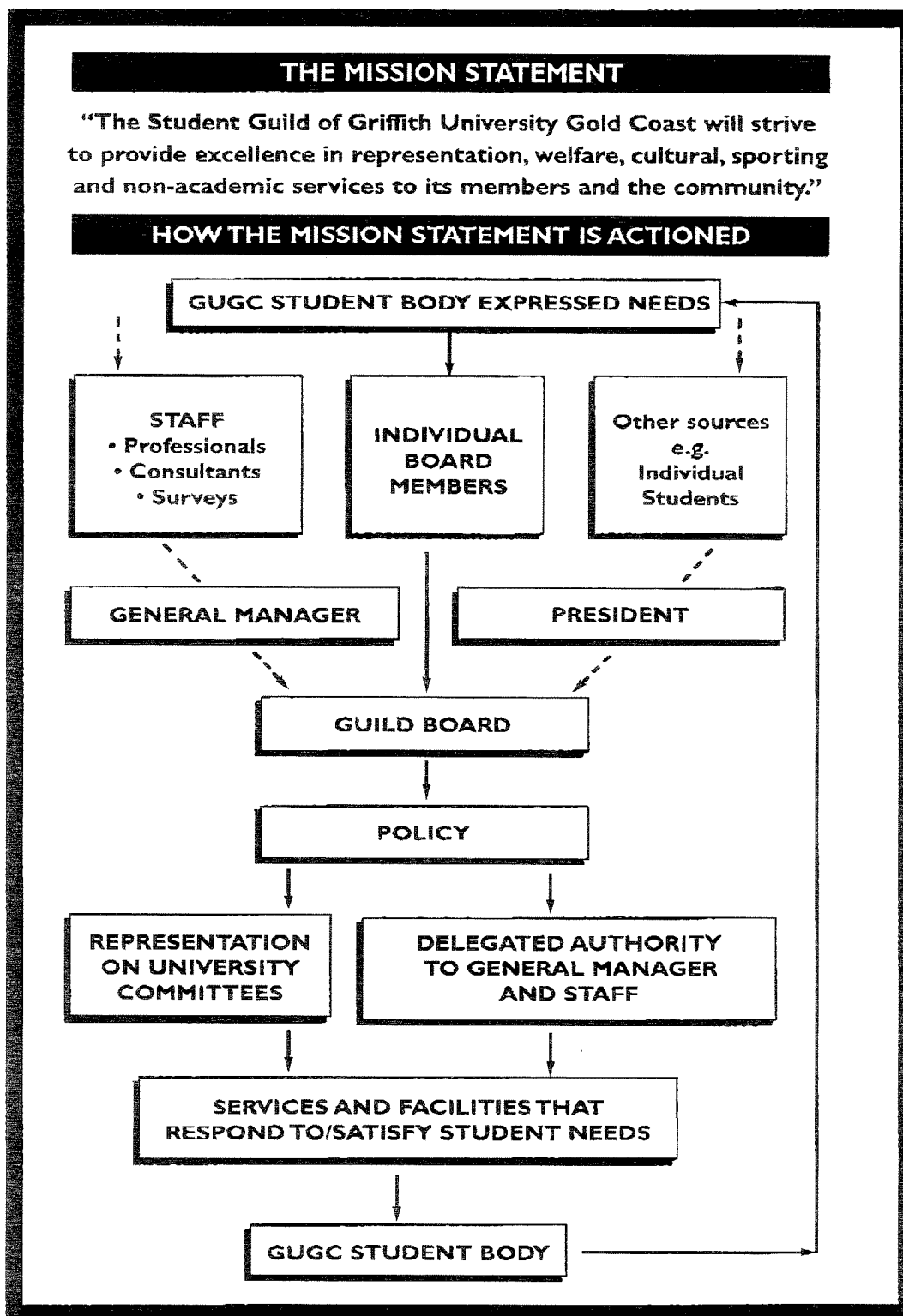
- (1) The student guild has the role and powers stated in its constitution.
- (2) The student guild also has the role and powers decided by the council.
- (3) However, the student guild is not the employee or agent of the council.

42 General powers

Without limiting section 41, the student guild has all the powers of an individual, including, for example, the power to acquire, hold, dispose of and deal with property.

43 Constitution

- (1) The student guild must have a written constitution.
- (2) The student guild’s constitution, and each amendment of the constitution must be submitted to the council for approval.
- (3) The constitution or amendment has no effect until approved by council.



Key Strategic Issues

- Representing the rights and interests of all Griffith University Gold Coast students
- Supporting student development
- Strengthening the Guild's (and the university's) interests and image in the community
- Enhancing the university community's lifestyle and wellbeing
- Continually building on our physical infrastructure
- Conserving our environment
- Developing and managing commercially successful business operations
- Providing quality organisational management and leadership

What We DON'T Do

- The Constitution prohibits the Guild from representing the political and religious interests of students.

Part 2

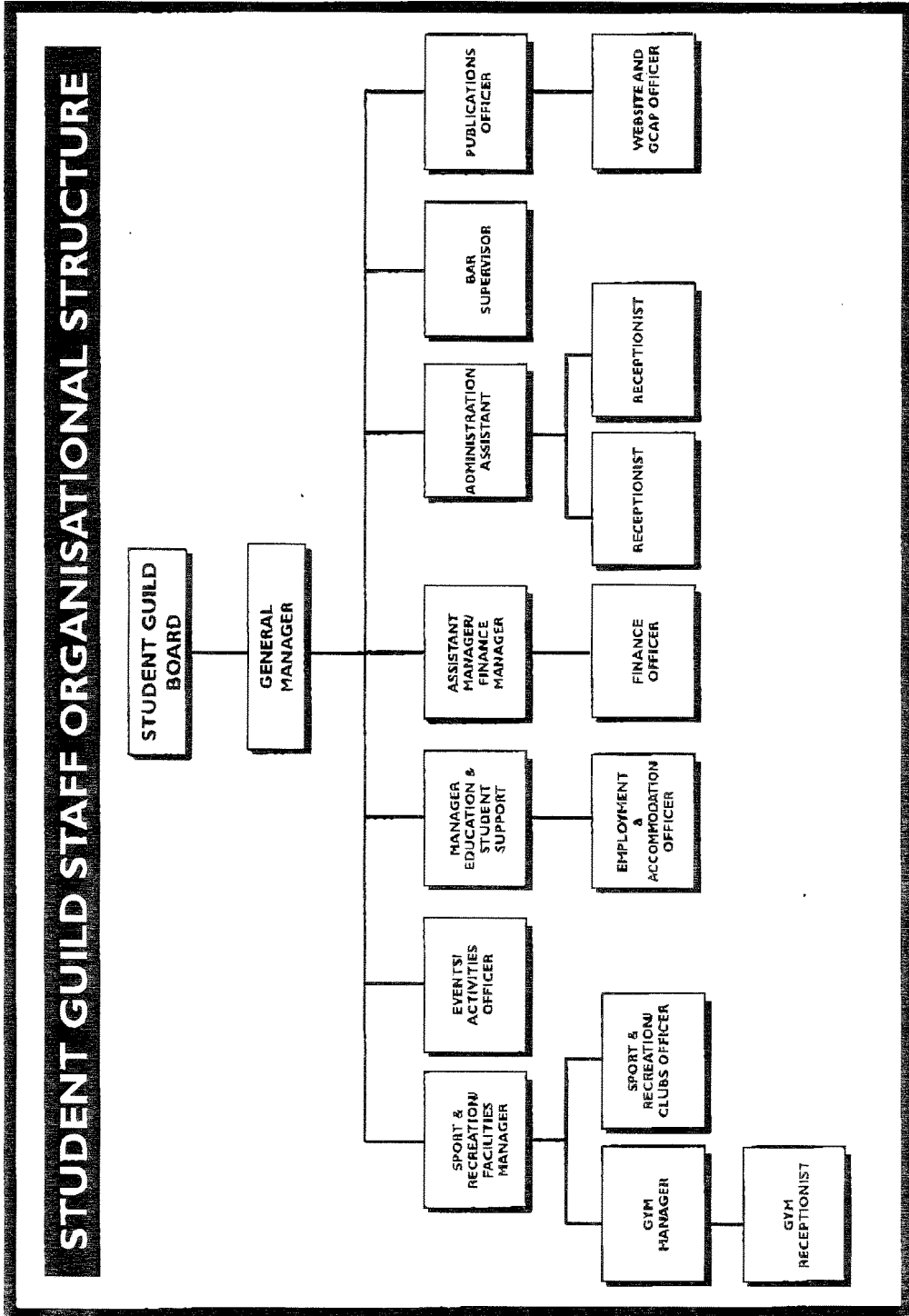
Objects

4) *To represent its members in all matters affecting their academic, social and cultural interests, with the exception of their religious and political interests.*

- Griffith University Gold Coast is **NOT** a member of the National Union of Students (N.U.S).

The Guild and Griffith Community

Since inception, the Guild has established an excellent rapport with the University and this has resulted in both organisations benefiting from each other's development. The key to the past and future success of the Griffith University Gold Coast lies in continuing to provide relevant quality services to its members in consultation and negotiation with the university and its community.



Consequences of V.S.U. to Gold Coast Student Guild

Overview

The introduction of VSU will result in the following consequences:

- ◇ A significant number of services/benefits provided by the Guild to GUGC students will cease to exist;
- ◇ An extensive non academic Facilities and Commercial Development planning program will cease to exist;
- ◇ 12 Full time, part time and 35 casual staff of the GUGC Student Guild will be retrenched on or before 31 December at a cost of \$300 000.
- ◇ The deterioration and non-replacement of existing sporting, recreation and leisure capital items over the short and medium term.
- ◇ Griffith University's community commitment and obligations will be compromised.
(Potential wider ramifications to the University itself have not been included in this document).

Current Situation

In the current situation the Student Guild has the following sources of income

- ◇ Compulsory Student Guild Fee \$2 million/annum - \$128.00/semester – full time student.
- ◇ Commercial Entity Income (including rents, leases and commissions) \$800,000/annum
- ◇ Income towards services provided \$1million/annum
- ◇ The current total income for the GUGC Student Guild is \$3.8 million/annum

Within this income base the GUGC Student Guild operates under its varied structure and departments and provides the following services/benefits to students.

Direct Services

Cultural Services

Cultural activities are provided to build within the student body a clearly identifiable sense of the Griffith University Gold Coast campus culture. Services include:

- ◇ Orientation Week Activities
- ◇ Annual Cultural Competitions and Awards
- ◇ Special Information Days (eg Health week)
- ◇ Clubs and Societies-Funding and administrative assistance
- ◇ Movie nights
- ◇ Conferences and special events
- ◇ Events and live entertainment
- ◇ Queensland Department of Health Programs (Drink Smart, Drink Spiking Awareness)
- ◇ Volunteer Incentive Programs
- ◇ Club Management Training Programs
- ◇ **Total Expenses \$330,000 (2004)**

Student Issues Services

Student Issues services covers a broad spectrum of services to handle a multitude of student issues and needs from reception services to specific student advocacy issues. These include:

- ◊ Reception Services
 - Fax service
 - Film processing
 - Laminating
 - Phone cards
 - Loans of sport equipment
 - International post packs
 - Bike and personal Lockers
 - Centrelink
 - 18+ cards
 - EFTPOS facilities
 - Emergency loans
 - Lost property
 - Intercampus Bus Service
 - Second Hand Textbooks
 - Notice boards
 - General Information Checkpoint (Stats)
- ◊ Advocacy- individual and collective representation of students' issues (academic and non academic) to the university (stats)
- ◊ Independent advice on academic and administrative matters
- ◊ Insurance processing-student personal accident plan
- ◊ Cooking facilities
- ◊ Representation on University Committees
- ◊ Annual Student Guild Scholarships
- ◊ Tax Return Advice and support
- ◊ Professional Counselling Advice
- ◊ Professional Legal Advice
- ◊ Administration, funding and support for Post Graduate Student Association (GCAP)
- ◊ Equity textbook scheme
- ◊ University equity grants
- ◊ Editor in Residence
- ◊ Research Methodologist
- ◊ Statistician
- ◊ Domestic and International Conference Grants
- ◊ GCAP Scholarships
- ◊ **Total Expenses \$715,000 (2004)**

Reception Statistics Semester Two – 2004

HOURLY TOTALS SECOND SEMESTER 2004

TIME	No. RECORDED
8.30am to 9.00am	145
9.00am to 10.00am	1399
10.00am to 11.00am	1438
11.00am to 12.00pm	1488
12.00pm to 1.00pm	1382
1.00pm to 2.00pm	1192
2.00pm to 3.00pm	1113
3.00pm to 4.00pm	843
4.00pm to 4.30pm	349
4.30pm to 5.00pm	169
TOTAL	9518

SERVICE TOTALS SECOND SEMESTER 2004

SERVICE	No. RECORDED
Accommodation	285
Bus Service	370
Emergency Loans	115
Fax	90
Film Processing	389
Incoming Calls	3414
Lost Property	550
Miscellaneous	1670
Movie Tickets	294
Request to see staff	981
Sport Equipment	583
Tickets	777
TOTAL	9518

Sporting Services

Sport services are provided to enable students to compete in a wide variety of sporting areas at all levels in the university and community sporting arenas. Sport services include:

- ◊ Sporting Facilities
 - Tennis courts
 - Basketball courts
 - Beach volleyball courts
- ◊ University Blues Awards
- ◊ Annual Sporting Awards
- ◊ Intramural and lunchtime sport
- ◊ Supply of sporting uniforms and equipment
- ◊ Sporting Clubs-financial and administrative assistance
- ◊ Intersarsity, state and national sporting events-organisation and funding
- ◊ Sport scholarships
- ◊ Club Management training program
- ◊ Sports Officiating and Coaching Courses
- ◊ Sporting Insurance
- ◊ Senior First Aid Courses
- ◊ Recreational Courses
- ◊ Funding, administration and coaching of university sporting teams for local competitions
- ◊ **Total Expenses \$345,000 (2004)**

Publication Services

Publication services provide students with information, and resources to assist in their management of their day to day university commitments.

- ◊ Website
- ◊ Monthly Student Magazine
- ◊ Wall planner
- ◊ Student Diaries
- ◊ Information brochures
- ◊ Information posters
- ◊ Annual Report
- ◊ **Total Expenses \$210,000 (2004)**

Accommodation and Employment Services

- ◊ An accommodation and employment officer provides a contact point for prospective employers and landlords to provide accommodation and employment opportunities for students. *(In excess of 400 new and existing employers registered. 961 jobs were filled)*
- ◊ International students are provided with an international airport pick up and initial accommodation upon arrival in Australia. *(687 international students utilised service.)*
- ◊ Student tutoring database is available to all students. *(173 students listed on database)*
- ◊ **Total Expenses \$103,000 (2004)**

Facilities

Planning and maintaining suitable facilities and commercial services to cater to the varied needs of the students (and staff) is a challenging and rewarding role within the Guilds charter.

- ◊ Commercial Tenants
 - Travel Agent
 - Computer Shop
 - Bookshop
 - Credit Union
 - Hairdresser
 - Coffee Kiosk
 - Coffee Shop and Cafe
 - Catering Services
- ◊ Licensed Bar
- ◊ Function Venue
- ◊ Health and Fitness Centre
- ◊ Group Exercise Room
- ◊ Social and Meeting Areas
- ◊ Meeting Rooms
- ◊ Student Representative Offices
- ◊ Barbeque and Outdoor Social Areas
- ◊ **Total Expenses \$1,425,000 (2004)**

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Associated Services

Non-Academic Facilities and Commercial Development Planning Program

The purpose of this program is to continually provide sufficient facilities and commercial space to cater for the university's future student enrolments. The program involves project management, design and construction elements for the planning development and creation of these facilities. The program is managed and coordinated by the Guild's management and professional staff in conjunction with the University development team and appointed consultants.

To the present day the program has planned and developed the following facilities. The associated table indicates the costs met by the Student Guild.

- ◇ The current commercial building
- ◇ The Guild Administration building
- ◇ Sporting Facilities
- ◇ The Licensed Bar
- ◇ The Health and Fitness Centre
- ◇ Four on-campus and one off-campus catering outlets Licensed Bar
- ◇ All existing facilities require constant upgrading and maintenance. Capital planning is also provided for the future replacement fixtures, fittings and equipment

Yearly Maintenance Levy paid to University - \$106,737 (2005)

Expenditure to date on Facilities

	Prior to 2002	2003	2004	2005
The Link Building (Capitalised)	\$4,115,974	\$129,041		30,565
The Link Building (Expensed)	\$910,000			
Koala Café Catering Outlet Extensions			\$703,429	
Two Tennis Courts	\$58,775	\$14,600	\$18,062	
Basketball/Beach Volleyball Courts	\$22,000	\$15,000		
Coffee Cellar (Part of Visual Arts Building)	\$31,404			
Natures Bar (Catering Outlet Clinical Sciences Building)		\$440,513	\$59,804	
Medical and Oral Health Catering Facility				\$550,000
The Bombshelter and BBQ area	\$75,000	\$22,514		

Future Plans

Future Plans Include:

- ◊ Essential commercial extensions to cater for increasing student numbers
- ◊ Café/Wine Bar in proposed Administration Building
- ◊ Sports precinct on Smith Street land
- ◊ Commercial space at proposed residential colleges

PROPOSED EXPENDITURE	2006	2007	2008	2009
Commercial Area Extension	\$1,500,000			
Administration Building Wine Bar		\$400,000		
Refurbishments Bar and Gym Equipment		\$340,000		
Commencement Smith Street			\$1,500,000	
Group Exercise Space Sports Precinct (Oval)		400,000		

2006 Proposed Projects

The Link Commercial Area

The Guild has held discussions with university personnel in regards to extending the existing commercial area to cope with the increased demand from students. Preliminary designs have been made (although these have been suspended due to the legislation). The Link Building was completed in 1995 when there were 3,831 students at the Gold Coast - there are now 10,899 students.

Due to these numbers and our assured future increases, it has now reached the stage where the commercial precinct needs to be extended. The campus bookstore is inadequate to meet the demand that now exists. We also need to provide extra commercial space for additional tenancies, such as a much needed post office and chemist store. The planned expenditure on the above extensions for 2006 is in the vicinity of \$1,500,000.

2007 Proposed Projects

Coffee/Wine Bar in new Administration Building

For the new administration building that is planned for the university entrance near Parklands Drive the, Guild is negotiating for the inclusion of an upmarket coffee shop/wine bar - the estimated expenditure for this was in the vicinity of \$400,000.

Refurbishment of Uni Bar

The Uni Bar by this point will be 5 years old and will require refurbishment and upgrading. The estimated cost has been budgeted at \$100,000.

Commercial Space at Proposed Residential Colleges

\$200,000 will be needed to outfit suitable facilities to complement residential college life.

Replacement of Fitness Equipment

By 2007, elements of the fitness equipment at the gymnasium will need replacing/ upgrading - the current cost of the existing equipment was \$211,000, therefore it is expected that new updated and innovative equipment will cost in the vicinity of \$240,000

2008 Proposed Projects

Oval/Sports Precinct at Smith Street

The Smith Street Sports Precinct will be closer to becoming a reality at this point and it is proposed that the Guild's, initial project would be a Sports Oval costing a minimum of \$1,500,000.

2008 and Beyond

Student numbers will be approaching 15,000 and with Smith Street developing the Student Guild would continue with elements of its sports precinct with tennis courts and initial planning for an indoor recreation centre.

VSU - The Predicted Situation

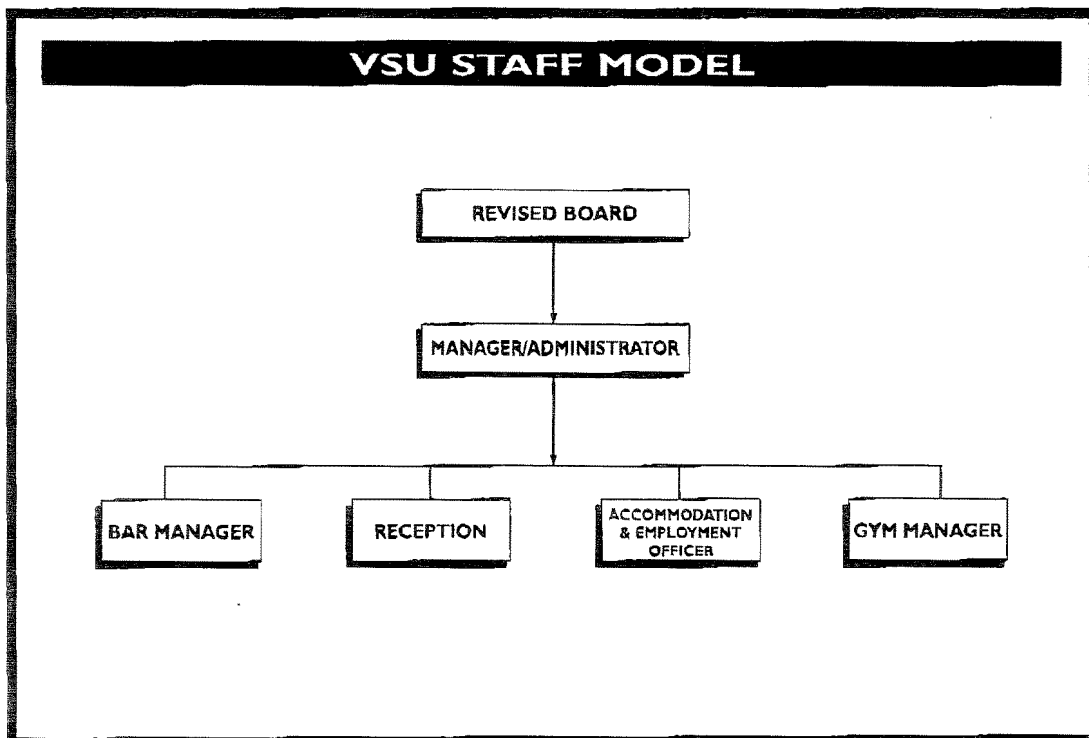
Under the proposed VSU situation, the Student Guild will have the following sources of income:

1. Voluntary Student Guild Fee: \$135,000/annum (This figure is based on 5% of student population paying the current fee {as per the information provided by the 1994 WA experience})

2. Commercial Entity Income (including rents, leases and commissions):
\$800,000/annum

The VSU predicted total income for the GUGC Student Guild will be
\$935,000/annum

With this income, it is predicted that the GUGC Student Guild will be organised under the following structure and provide the following benefits to only students who have voluntarily paid the Student Guild Fee (who will be known as GUGC Student Guild members):



Direct Services (V.S.U.)

Accommodation and Employment Services (Members Only)

- ◇ An accommodation and employment officer providing a contact point for prospective employers and landlords to provide accommodation and employment opportunities for students
- ◇ International students will be provided with an international airport pick up and initial accommodation upon arrival in Australia
- ◇ Provision of a student tutoring database

Student Issues Services (GUGC Student Guild Members Only)

- ◇ Reception Services
 - Fax service
 - Film processing
 - Laminating
 - Phone cards
 - Loans of sport equipment
 - International post packs
 - Bike and personal Lockers
 - Centrelink
 - 18+ cards
 - EFTPOS facilities
 - General Information Checkpoint

Cultural Services

- ◇ Nil

Sporting Services

- ◇ Non-maintained sporting facilities
 - Tennis courts
 - Basketball courts
 - Beach volleyball courts

Publication Services

- ◇ Annual Report

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Facilities (*Differential pricing will be implemented where GUGC Student Guild members will receive discounted prices*)

- ◇ Commercial Tenants
 - Travel Agent
 - Computer Shop
 - Bookshop
 - Credit Union
 - Hairdresser
 - Coffee Kiosk
 - Coffee Shop and Cafe
 - Catering Services
- ◇ Licensed bar
- ◇ Function venue
- ◇ Health and fitness centre
- ◇ Group exercise room
- ◇ Social and Meeting Areas
- ◇ Meeting rooms
- ◇ Barbeque and outdoor social areas

Associated Services (V.S.U.)

Non Academic Facilities and Commercial Development Planning Program

- ◇ Nil

Maintenance and upgrading of existing sporting, recreation and leisure facilities and equipment

- ◇ Nil

Services/Benefits Lost As a Result of VSU

As a result of the predicted loss of income the following services/benefits will no longer be available to the students.

Direct Services

Publication Services

- ◇ Website
- ◇ Monthly Student Magazine
- ◇ Wall planner
- ◇ Student Diaries
- ◇ Information brochures
- ◇ Information posters
- ◇ Annual Report

Student Issues Services

- ◇ Reception Services
 - Emergency loans
 - Lost property
 - Intercampus Bus Service
 - Second Hand Textbooks
 - Notice boards
 - General Information Checkpoint
- ◇ Advocacy- individual and collective representation of students' issues (academic and non academic) to the university (stats)
- ◇ Independent advice on academic and administrative matters
- ◇ Insurance processing-student personal accident plan
- ◇ Cooking facilities
- ◇ Representation on University Committees
- ◇ Annual Student Guild Scholarships
- ◇ Tax Return Advice and support
- ◇ Professional Counselling Advice
- ◇ Professional Legal Advice
- ◇ Administration, funding and support for Post Graduate Student Association (GCAP)
- ◇ Equity textbook scheme
- ◇ University equity grants
- ◇ Editor in Residence
- ◇ Research Methodologist
- ◇ Statistician
- ◇ Domestic and International Conference Grants
- ◇ GCAP Scholarships

Sporting Services

- ◇ University Blues Awards
- ◇ Annual Sporting Awards
- ◇ Intramural and lunchtime sport
- ◇ Supply of sporting uniforms and equipment
- ◇ Sporting Clubs-financial and administrative assistance
- ◇ Intersarsity, state and national sporting events-organisation and funding
- ◇ Sport scholarships
- ◇ Club Management training program
- ◇ Sports Officiating and Coaching Courses
- ◇ Sporting Insurance
- ◇ Senior First Aid Courses
- ◇ Funding, administration and coaching of university sporting teams for local competitions

Cultural Services

- ◇ Orientation Week Activities
- ◇ Annual Cultural Competitions and Awards
- ◇ Special Information Days (eg Health week)
- ◇ Clubs and Societies-Funding and administrative assistance
- ◇ Movie nights
- ◇ Conferences and special events
- ◇ Events and live entertainment
- ◇ Queensland Department of Health Programs (Drink Smart, Drink Spiking)
- ◇ Volunteer Incentive Programs
- ◇ Club Management Training Programs

Associated Services

Non Academic Facilities and Commercial Development Planning Program

Future Plans

- ◇ Essential Commercial extensions to cater for increasing student numbers
- ◇ Wine Bar in Administration Building
- ◇ Sports Precinct on Smith Street Land
- ◇ Commercial Space at Proposed Residential Colleges

Maintenance and upgrading of existing sporting, recreation and leisure facilities and equipment

- ◇ The constant cleaning and maintenance of all current facilities. The Capital planing program provided for the future replacement fixtures, fittings and equipment

The Student Guild Position

The preceding information clearly points to the demise of the Guild's provision of services, benefits and support that are needed and offered to the students of Griffith University Gold Coast and the university community. The ramifications to future non-academic facility and commercial area development is also drastically affected.

It is agreed that this is a complex issue with differing ideological arguments and points of view. The harsh reality of the ramifications of the legislation are not being considered nor acknowledged.

The most effective alternative for all is proposed by the Australian Vice-Chancellors Committee and this is to have a Compulsory Student Services Fee. This fee would be administered by the University with policies and procedures negotiated with the individual Student Organisations.

The Government's concerns regarding funding of political elements can be negated by appropriate stipulations/regulations.

The provision of approved services, associated budgets and standards would be a matter of discussions and direction.

The Griffith University Gold Coast Student Guild supports such a model and trusts that this common sense practical alternative can be negotiated and implemented.