Attachment 2

SOUTHERN CROSS UNIVERSITY

PROPOSAL FOR NEW STUDENT GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Version 31 May 2012

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1. BACKGROUND

1.1 Preparation of report

This report has been prepared by Southern Cross University ("**SCU**") for provision to SCU students for consultation with SCU students.

1.2 Current student representation

SCU currently has 4 student associations:

- LEXSA (Lismore and External Students Association) Incorporated NSW INC9891828, ABN 79 216 280 715 ("**Lexus**");
- Southern Cross University Coffs Harbour Students' Association Incorporated NSW Y2333440, ABN 44 732 282 288 ("**Coffs SA**");
- CoastRs Incorporated NSW INC9886929, ABN 47 919 544 221 ("**CoastRs**"); and
- CRUX (Southern Cross University Postgraduate Student Association) Incorporated NSW INC9880357 ABN 16 447 031 300 ("**Crux**").

1.3 Reasons for alternate student governance structure

SCU wants to implement an alternate student governance structure due to the concerns that SCU has with the existing student association structure, the need for SCU to comply with new legislation, and to address concerns that have been raised by students in a recent survey.

a) Problems with existing student association representation

In any student association model, it is critical that the student voice is truly represented, engaged with the university, and active with the student community. In the current environment, student representation has a number of issues as follows:

i. organisational maturity varies greatly across groups;
ii. duplication of administrative capacity across the groups means more dollars are expended on carrying out similar tasks at multiple points; and
iii. difficulty in truly accessing the student voice on key governance, service and policy matters by SCU.

Overall, however, the biggest concern that SCU has is the value that SCU and students alike currently receive in this environment.

b) Legislative change

A further reason for SCU to implement a new student governance model has arisen as a result of the Commonwealth Government passing, in October 2012, the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (Cth) ("**the Act**"). The Act enables Universities to levy an annual services and amenities fee ("**SAAF**") to facilitate the provision of specific non-academic and non-political services that will support and enrich the student experience. The *Student Services, Amenities, Representation and Advocacy Guidelines* ("**Guidelines**") were made pursuant to the Act. The Guidelines set out the *National Access to Services Benchmarks* ("**Services Benchmarks**") and the *National Student Representation Protocols* ("**Representation Protocols**").

The Services Benchmarks state that higher education providers must consider the varying and differing circumstances of the enrolled student body in determining what would be a reasonable and appropriate level of support at a particular campus, considering factors such as student cohort and campus location (2.2.5 of the Services Benchmarks).

The Representation Protocols are aimed at ensuring transparent and equitable representation for students in the SAAF environment and state that higher education providers must provide enrolled students with the opportunity to participate in a process to democratically elect student representatives. Student representatives must be students enrolled at the relevant higher education provider and must be elected by students, with at least one representative elected from each of undergraduate students, postgraduate students and overseas students (international onshore). In meeting this obligation, higher education providers must meet the necessary and reasonable cost of conducting valid and transparent polls for this purpose (3.2.3 of the Representation Protocols).

Higher Education Providers are to be compliant with the Services Benchmarks and Representation Protocols by January 2013.

c) Feedback from students in SAAF Survey

SCU has approved a SAAF schedule and will charge the fee from Session 2 in 2012.

In March 2012, SCU conducted an online SAAF Survey ("**Survey**") to give students the opportunity to provide advice about the services and amenities they see as most important. The Survey required students to prioritise funding across a total of nineteen legislated spending areas.

The results of the Survey have now been collated by the University, and were discussed with the existing student associations at a meeting on 14 May 2012, and then made available to all students on the SCU website from 15 May 2012.

The results of the Survey indicated (amongst other things) that external students do not consider that it is fair that they have to pay SAAF and that international students have identified different spending priorities to other student cohorts.

SCU is concerned about the extent of student discomfort with SAAF, and about international student spending priorities, and wants to do everything within its power to ensure that students are sufficiently consulted with in relation to SAAF spending.

1.4 Consultation with students about alternate governance model

On 14 May 2012, representatives from SCU's Student Services group (including Professor Andrew McAuley) met with representatives of the 4 existing student associations to discuss the results of the SAAF Survey and to indicate that SCU intended to send an email poll to all external and international students to determine whether they wanted their own separate student representative bodies.

On 18 May 2012, SCU emailed all enrolled external and international students at SCU to ask them whether they wanted their own student representative bodies. This email poll was open for students to respond until 28 May 2012.

As part of the email poll to external and international students, the existing student associations were provided with an opportunity to insert their own background information / counter-narrative to be sent as part of the e-mail poll. One of the four existing student associations chose to insert words surrounding their own perspective.

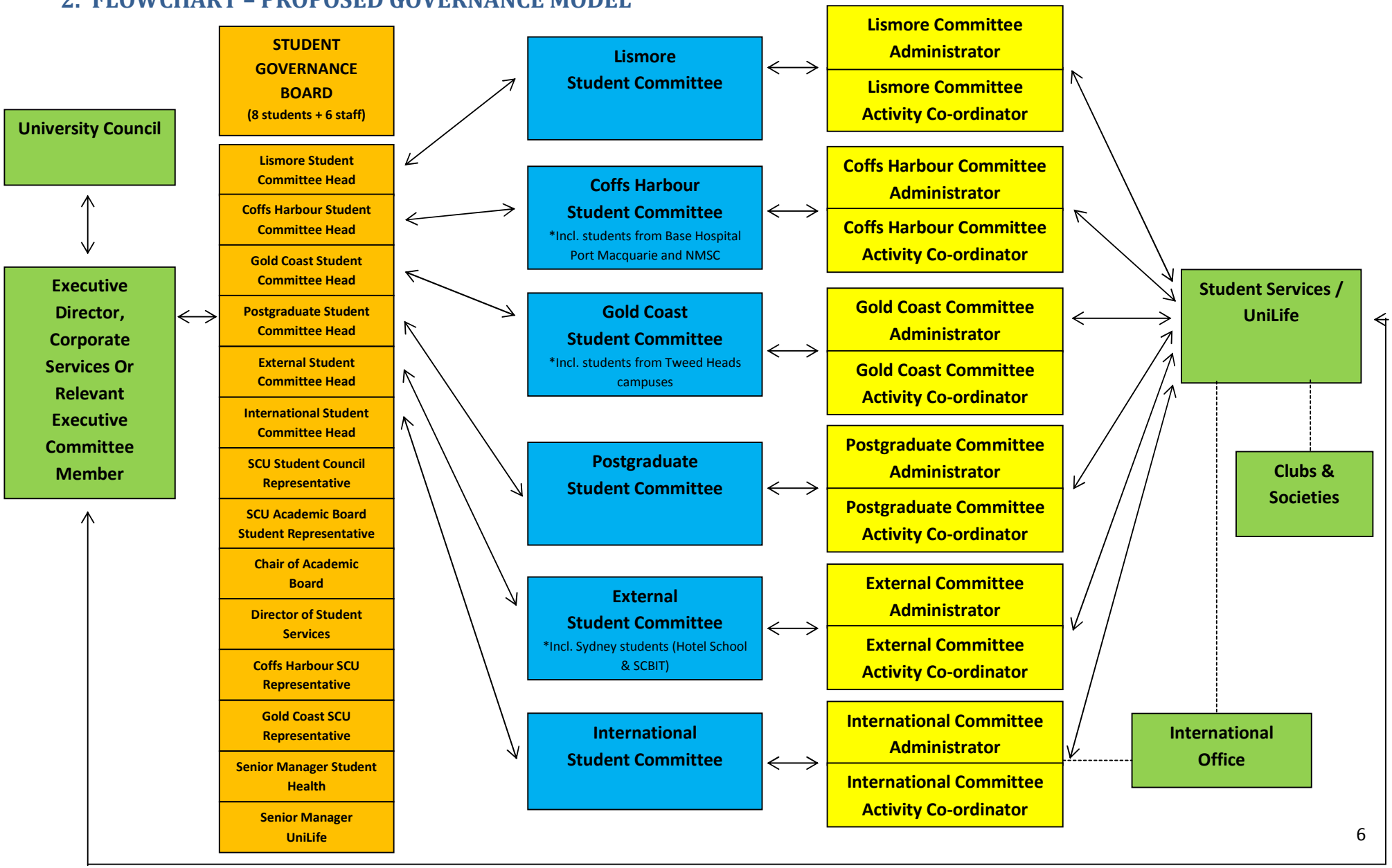
The results of the email poll to external and international students indicate that they want their own separate representative bodies. SCU therefore proposes that this alternate student governance structure be presented to the student body.

SCU will then consult with the student body in relation to the alternate student governance structure.

Parts 2-5 of this reports set out the proposed alternate student governance structure.

Part 6 of this report sets out the proposed process for new student committee elections.

2. FLOWCHART – PROPOSED GOVERNANCE MODEL



3. STUDENT GOVERNANCE BOARD

3.1 Role

Advises the Executive Director of Corporate Services or Relevant Executive Committee Member ("**EDCS**") about how SAAF and non-SAAF student services monies should be spent (i.e. not a voting board).

3.2 Structure and membership

14 members (8 SCU students + 6 SCU employees):

- Lismore Student Committee Head
- Coffs Harbour Student Committee Head
- Gold Coast Student Committee Head
- Postgraduate Student Committee Head
- External Student Committee Head
- International Student Committee Head
- SCU Student Council Representative
- SCU Academic Board Student Representative
- Chair of Academic Board
- Director of Student Services
- Coffs Harbour SCU Representative
- Gold Coast SCU Representative
- Senior Manager Student Health
- Senior Manager UniLife

3.3 Meetings

a) The Student Governance Board is to meet at least quarterly.

b) At least one meeting each year must be held at each campus (Lismore, Coffs Harbour, Gold Coast)

c) Meetings do not need to be attended in person, i.e. other technologies may be utilised as appropriate (if those services are available).

d) A quorum for a meeting is 9 members (6 SCU students + 3 SCU employees).

e) The meetings are to be chaired by the EDCS.

f) The EDCS will appoint a secretary of the Student Governance Board to send notices of meetings and agendas, take minutes at meetings and attend to administrative enquiries.

g) If a member is unable to attend meetings, they may appoint an alternate elected position holder from the student committee (SCU students) or work group (SCU employees) to attend.

3.4 Reporting

Prior to the end of each calendar year, the Student Governance Board is to prepare an annual report for the EDCS about how SAAF monies should be spent in the following calendar year.

3.5 Funding

SCU will be responsible for meeting the reasonable travel expenses of members attending Student Governance Board meetings.

3.6 Rules

The Student Governance Board is to comply with the Rules of the Student Governance Board and Student Committees (to be drafted following consultation with the student body).

4 STUDENT COMMITTEES

4.1 Role

a) Identify, advance and promote the interest of their student cohort at SCU;
b) Promote the participation of their student cohort in, and the consideration of, matters affecting their interests;
c) Afford a recognised means of communication between their student cohort and the academic and administrative arms of SCU, including communication with the Student Governance Board and their relevant Student Committee Administrator / Committee Activity Co-ordinator;
d) Provide input, direction and assistance into the coordination of activities and events;
e) Publish hardcopy or electronic communication to their student cohort from time to time, e.g. website, blog, journal, flyer, newsletter, newspaper or other publications.

4.2 Structure and membership

a) 6 Student Committees: 3 by campus (Lismore, Coffs Harbour, Gold Coast) + 3 by type (Postgraduate, External, International).
b) All enrolled students at SCU (as defined in part g below) are able to elect to be a member of a Student Committee.
c) It is not compulsory for students to nominate for a position on a Student Committee or vote for those who have nominated for positions on a Student Committee.
d) Students can only be a member of 1 Student Committee (e.g. if a student is a Lismore based Postgraduate student, then he/she must choose to either nominate and/or vote for the Lismore Student Committee or the Postgraduate Student Committee).
e) SCU will arrange (and meet the costs of) an online voting process for all enrolled students to:
    - nominate themselves for a position on that Student Committee (7 in total); and
    - vote to elect the 7 position holders for each Student Committee.
f) Online nominations to be a position holder on each Student Committee are scheduled to be open from 6-20 July 2012 and online voting for election of students to these positions on the Student Committee is scheduled to occur from 23 Jul – 3 August 2012.
g) To be eligible to nominate themselves for a position and/or vote on a Student Committee, a student must be currently enrolled at SCU, have studied at least a part-time load within the 12 months prior to their nomination and not be employed by SCU at a time fraction of 0.5 or more. This means that a student does not have to be enrolled in units or load in the study period in which they are nominating for election.
h) At the first meeting of the Student Committee (scheduled for the week commencing 20 August 2012), the 7 elected Student Committee position holders will hold a vote amongst themselves to determine which of them will hold the following roles on the Student Committee:
    - Head

- Deputy Head
- Elected Member
- Elected Member
- Elected Member
- Elected Member
- Elected Member

i) The position holders are limited to two consecutive terms of office as an elected member in any elected position. A term of office equals 1 year.

j) The 7 elected position holders may vote to name the titles/portfolios for the 5 Elected Members according to the representation needs of their student cohort, e.g. indigenous, disability, equity, sport, mature age, women's issues, lesbian/bisexual/gay/transgender/intersex. These titles/portfolios are at the discretion of the Student Committee membership as different Student Committees may have different needs (e.g. the International Student Committee may not require an indigenous Elected Member or the Coffs Harbour Student Committee may not require a mature age Elected Member).

4.3 Meetings

a) The 7 position holders of each Student Committee will meet at least quarterly each year.

b) At each meeting of the Student Committee, the Student Committee Administrator will be present, and will act as Treasurer and Secretary for the Student Committee.

c) Additional meetings of the Student Committee may be called throughout the year as required following agreement between the Committee and SCU.

d) The Student Committee Administrator, in their role as Secretary of the Student Committee, will be responsible for sending notices of meetings and agendas, taking minutes at meetings and attending to administrative enquiries.

e) Minutes of every meeting of the Student Committee are to be submitted to Student Services within a week of each meeting.

f) A quorum for a meeting is 5 Student Committee position holders, with at least the Head or Deputy Head in attendance.

g) The campus-based Student Committees (i.e. Lismore, Coffs Harbour and Gold Coast) will hold their meetings on their campuses.

h) The type-based Student Committees (i.e. Postgraduate, External and International) will rotate their meeting locations between the Lismore, Coffs Harbour and Gold Coast campuses (or as otherwise decided by those Student Committees).

i) Meetings do not need to be attended in person, i.e. other technologies may be utilised as appropriate (if those services are available).

4.4 Reporting

a) The Student Committee is to provide an annual written report, on behalf of their student cohort, to the Student Governance Board about how (i) their student cohort thinks the SAAF monies should be spent (ii) they have used funding on activities and events (iii) they have complied with their annual budget and (iv) their plan for the following year.

b) The Student Committee is to report to their respective Student Committee Administrator and Student Committee Activity Co-ordinator in relation to day-to-day activities and needs of their student cohort.

c) The Student Committee is responsible for managing the budget that is allocated to them for their activities. This management of the budget will be reported back to SCU through their respective Student Committee Administrator.

4.5 Funding

a) SCU will be responsible for meeting the reasonable travel expenses of Student Committee position holders attending agreed meetings.
b) SCU will provide the Student Committee with office space.
c) The Student Committees will have allocated Student Services GL codes within the SCU corporate finance system and reports on spending will be made to SCU as a whole via Student Services/UniLife to the Relevant Executive Committee Member.
d) SCU will ensure that Student Committee position holders receive annual training in leadership, management, compliance and governance responsibilities.

4.6 Rules

a) The Student Committees are to comply with the Rules of the Student Governance Board and Student Committees (to be drafted following consultation with the student body).

5 STUDENT COMMITTEE CO-ORDINATORS

5.1 Student Committee Administrator

a) Each Student Committee will be supported by a Student Committee Administrator.
b) A Student Committee Administrator may support more than one Student Committee.
c) Employed by SCU.
d) Reports to Student Services / UniLife for line management and works with their Student Committee Head(s) for day-to-day activities.
e) Role is Treasurer, Secretary and Communications for the Student Committee(s).
f) Monitors the performance of the Student Committee(s).
g) Direct liaison with the Director of Student Services and UniLife in relation to the performance of the Student Committee(s).
h) Position will be a HEW4.
i) Initially (while funding is being sorted out) this will be a casual contract to ensure continuity of service. However, eventually this will be an externally advertised position.
j) Aim to commence employment in early August 2012.

5.2 Student Committee Activity Co-ordinator

a) Each Student Committee will be supported by a Student Committee Activity Co-ordinator.
b) A Student Committee Activity Co-ordinator may support more than one Student Committee.
c) Employed by SCU.
d) Reports to Student Services / UniLife for line management and works with the Student Committee Head(s) for day-to-day activities.
e) Role is to co-ordinate student activities for the Student Committee(s) and to support the office bearers in the Student Committee(s).
f) Monitors the performance of the Student Committee(s).
g) Direct liaison with the Director of Student Services and UniLife in relation to the activities of the Student Committee(s).
h) Position will be a HEW4.
i) Initially (while funding is being sorted out) this will be a casual contract to ensure continuity of service. However, eventually this will be an externally advertised position.
j) Aim to commence employment in early August 2012.

6 STUDENT COMMITTEE ELECTION PROCESS

This procedure applies for the Student Committee elections for eligible enrolled students at the University [see 4.2g) for eligibility criteria].

The Student Committees are designed to represent key student cohorts - Lismore, Coffs Harbour, Gold Coast, International, External and Postgraduate Students.

Task	Detail	Date
1	a. **Publish call for nominations** on the SCU website, inform students via email and Student Roadshows. b. **Publish nomination forms** on SCU website with instructions to its use, including where the nomination form needs to be submitted. (Online submission only). Nominations must include a candidate photograph and CV.	6 July
2	**Open nominations for elections**: Receive and provide receipts for nomination forms (Online receipts only).	
3	**Provide advice to candidates:** Publish on the SCU website instructions on acceptable campaigning material, withdrawal procedures and information regarding the Student Committee.	
4	**Request electoral rolls from ITS:** All eligible undergraduate and postgraduate student names and emails current at the date of close of nominations.	
5	**Close of nominations for Student Committees**: by way of email and notification on the SCU website advise electors of the close of nominations.	20 July
6	**Verify eligibility of nominations**: Check the nominations against the final ITS electoral list and advice candidates if ineligible.	
7	**Collate candidate statements and photographs**: Verify that the candidate photographs and statements meet the requirements listed in the candidate instructions information.	
8	**Provide candidate statements and photographs to e-election provider (BigPulse)**: Email candidate information through to be displayed on election website.	
9	**Provide electoral roll to e-election provider**	
10	**Test of e-election provider voting website:** Test functionality to ensure accuracy of information on website.	
11	a. **Voting opens**: Voting takes place on e-election provider website b. advise electorate also via SCU website and via email	23 July
12	**Election reminder:** Email sent to all students again to remind them to vote	27 July
13	**Voting Closes**: Advice that voting has closed via the SCU website and e-election provider's election website.	3 August
14	**Receive Committee election results**: Results collected from e-election provider, check for quality of data.	
15	a. **Declare Committee election results**: Via email and SCU website b. **Advise successful candidates**: Inform successful and unsuccessful candidates of the results and advise successful candidates what the next committee step is including initial meeting dates c. **Advise Vice Chancellor of election results**: Draft memorandum of the full election results to SCU VC.	5 August