

YOUNG LIBERAL
RESEARCH REPORT



The Student Tax

Unfair. Undemocratic. Unnecessary.

*A report on the Student Services and Amenities Fee with
recommendations to the Government for a more accountable and
transparent scheme.*



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Forewords

Young Liberal President, Claire Chandler

Since its introduction in 2011, the Young Liberal Movement of Australia has been a fierce advocate for everyday students on the issue of the Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF). For almost five years, we have seen this unfair tax imposed on all university students to pay for services that they don't necessarily use. And if they refuse to pay, our universities have the power to bar them from completing their degrees.

Given the role that Young Liberals played in the introduction of voluntary student unionism in 2006, it is not surprising that the Movement has fought strongly for the abolition of SSAF; this notion is an established policy within all state and territory Young Liberal divisions and has been debated at numerous Federal Councils.

Not only have we fought for this idea in principle, but we have also had a number of Young Liberals campaigning at individual university campuses to encourage greater transparency in terms of how SSAF is spent and highlighting some of the ridiculous (at best) and politically loaded (at worst) initiatives that have been funded by this Student Tax.

In this report, we establish that SSAF has not been spent appropriately, has not achieved its desired outcomes, and has not made academic life any easier for students. Young people should be free to go about their education without being forcibly heaped with the financial burden of supporting student organisations and services.

I am proud to lead a Movement committed to abolishing SSAF or, at the very least, encouraging our legislators to enact a more transparent framework around the levying of it. Make no mistake, SSAF is simply compulsory student unionism by stealth and should, for the benefit of all university students, be repealed to allow for a freer – and financially cheaper – university experience.

Young Liberal Patron, Senator Eric Abetz

I first got involved with Liberal Students on campus because of the unfair and inequitable requirement to join a student union in order to obtain marks each semester. While my university days are long behind me, and Compulsory Student Unionism was abolished, the unfairness and inequality of the situation I faced is now being faced yet again by university students courtesy of the Student Services and Amenities Fee. A rose by any other name smells just as sweet. And Compulsory Student Unionism by any other name still stinks.

The worst part is that students have little to no say in how their money is spent or even the option to seek to abolish its collection on campus.

As Employment Minister, I was honoured to lead the charge for greater accountability and transparency for trade unions. It's disappointing to see that the waste, mismanagement and maladministration in some student unions is on par with some trade unions.

This should be addressed. The Young Liberal Movement has always been prepared to stand up for what it believes in and it's good to see them do so in this case.

I commend Claire Chandler and the Federal Young Liberals for being prepared to tackle this important policy issue by making sensible recommendations to the Government.

Overview and Summary of Recommendations

The Student Services and Amenities Fee is a great big student tax costing Australian students more than one hundred million dollars every year. That's one hundred million dollars going straight to student unions in an unfair, undemocratic and unnecessary manner, payable by a cohort of the population that can least afford such an impost.

This report includes polling commissioned in 2013 showing that only one in five students support the Student Tax, while 52% don't believe that they are getting value for money.

New figures revealed by the Department of Education in April this year show that more than \$311 million has been taken from university students since 2012 and funnelled into student unions. There have been countless revelations of waste and mismanagement by student unions, including spending Student Tax funding on food and alcohol, as well as on affiliation fees to the politically motivated National Union of Students. Despite this, there have only been seven departmental investigations, most of which inexplicably found that the allowed expenditure was within the bounds of the legislation.

This report also examines oft-repeated claims that an abolition of the Student Tax would see a decrease in the number and quality of student services. In a case study provided on a campus where the Student Union decided not to accept Student Tax funding, there was a significant increase in student activities and services provided. Figures also show that during the period of Voluntary Student Unionism (VSU), there was only a very small impact on funding for student services staff at universities.

The Student Tax hits struggling students the hardest, while benefitting those students who are better off and therefore have more time to engage in activities and the services that it funds.

Australian students deserve better and should be able to have confidence in the system. This report outlines the evidence and makes the following recommendations:

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: That the Student Services and Amenities Fee be abolished.

Recommendation 2: That the Act be immediately amended to allow for greater accountability and transparency in the operation of the SSAF, including campus plebiscites on whether it should be levied, disclosures on all SSAF expenditure, and a one page annual report provided to all fee-paying students detailing how their Student Tax has been spent.

Recommendation 3: That the Education Minister should commission an inquiry into the use of funds raised by the SSAF to ensure that all funds are being spent in line with the requirements in the Act.

What is the Student Tax?

For most of their history, Australian universities had been “closed shops” – students had to become members of their student associations (commonly known as student unions or guilds) in order to be able to enroll and complete their tertiary education. This suited the political left, which for decades monopolised student politics in this country, using student associations as training grounds for generations of future politicians and unionists, and as cash cows for left-wing political causes and campaigns.

All students, regardless of their political beliefs (or lack thereof) were forced to pay for it all through their compulsory student union fees, in fear of having their academic results withheld.

In 2006, the Coalition Government, fulfilling a long-standing commitment, amended the *Higher Education Support Act*, ending compulsory student unionism and abolishing compulsory up-front student union fees. The philosophy of VSU influencing these amendments had two prongs: first, students’ right to a tertiary education should not be predicated on membership or payment of a fee to a student union, students should be free to join or not join student associations, and second, that they should be able to choose which activities of their student association they support financially.

In a blatant breach of Labor’s pre-election commitment “*not... to go back to the pre-voluntary student unionism world*”¹, in October 2011 the Labor Government, with the support of the Greens, passed the *Higher Education Legislation Amendment (Student Services and Amenities) Bill 2010*. The Bill re-introduced compulsory student fees under the name of SSAF, to be administered by universities and spent on the provision (including through third parties, such as student associations) of specific non-academic services including sporting and recreational activities, employment and career advice, student health and welfare, legal and financial advice, food service and other services.

While a commitment to VSU and opposition to compulsory fees are still established Coalition policy, the Labor/Green SSAF regime remains in place at most Australian universities.

Currently, students have to pay \$290 per year in SSAF, indexed annually. According to information revealed in responses to Questions on Notice from the Department of Education in April 2016, this amounts to more than \$100 million every year.

How are students affected?

Each year, more than 350,000 students are charged the \$290 Student Tax, indexed against inflation.

The Student Tax is inequitable amongst students as it is levied regardless of income (like the UK poll tax) and regardless of whether the services that it funds are accessed by tax paying students on campus. It is a regressive tax that does not accommodate low-income students or those from indigenous or disadvantaged backgrounds. Furthermore, the Student Tax is levied regardless of whether students have the ability to actually use the services provided by the fee, meaning students who study by correspondence (an increasingly more prevalent educational model) receive no bang for their buck.

¹ Gavin Moodie, “Government remains reticent about VSU”, *The Australian*, 27 August 2008, <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/government---reticent---about---vsu/story---e6frg6n6---1111117307642http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/government---reticent---about---vsu/story---6frg6n6---1111117307642>

To put this in perspective, the current rate of the Student Tax is more than a weekly Youth Allowance or AusStudy payment for most students.

Annual Student Tax	Weekly Youth Allowance ²	Weekly AuStudy Allowance ³
\$290	\$216.60	\$216.60

In comparative terms, the Student Tax for most students translates to:

- 2 weeks' rent
- 29 bottles of wine
- 144 bottles of beer
- 48 pizzas
- 72 cups of coffee
- 230 litres of petrol

Of greater concern, at many universities, students are barred from graduating from university or unable to access their academic results in the event that they do not pay the Student Tax. All too often, this forces students to decide between food, petrol and other necessities or paying the Tax. Even once paid, students have witnessed their Student Taxes exploited or wasted by student unions time and again.

This is a grim reality, and students clearly know it, with an overwhelming majority of students opposing the current Student Tax arrangements. In 2008, two years after the abolition of compulsory unionism and compulsory fees, an Australian Democrats' Youth Poll⁴ indicated that 59% opposed any change to voluntary student unionism. These numbers speak for themselves.

These sentiments are supported by a 2013 Galaxy Research study on student fees among a representative sample of tertiary students throughout Australia, including in both capital city and regional areas.

The study found that:

- Only around one in five students support SSAF.
- A staggering 70 percent of students (67 percent, or two thirds, in regional areas) believe that compulsory fees should only be charged if a majority of students at a tertiary institution votes in favour of fees. Only 14 percent (and 11 percent in regional areas) support the current system, whereby universities charge fees without students having a say in the matter;
- Only 57 percent of students (and 44 percent in regional areas) are aware that they are paying compulsory student services fees. Of those, only 12 percent have a good understanding of how their money is being spent by their university;
- 52 percent of students don't believe they are getting value for money from their fees, while a mere 20 percent (and 22 percent in regional areas) – that's only one in five – think they do; and

² Single, with no children, 18 years or older and required to live away from parental home

³ Single, with no children, living away from home

⁴ <http://www.ipa.org.au/sectors/the-global-financial-crisis/publication/1657/shorts>

- 53 percent of students are in favour of abolishing SSAF; only 15 percent in regional areas are opposed to abolition, well below the national average of 21 percent.

This Galaxy polling reveals the full extent of SSAF’s widespread unpopularity.

Australian students don’t believe the current arrangements offer them value for money and they want to see the end of compulsory fees. As a second best, they want to be given a say in the decision to levy them. Interestingly, anti-SSAF sentiment is even stronger in regional universities, which proponents of compulsory fees inappropriately, and ironically, use as a case study for their necessity.

The most recent data made available in response to Questions on Notice asked by our Young Liberal Federal Patron, Senator Eric Abetz, the SSAF funding collected by universities was:

- \$85.1 million in 2012
- \$114.9 million in 2013
- \$111.0 million in 2014

Based on the figures provided, we project that at least \$98.1 million was collected in 2015 (with final figures from the Department of Education not scheduled to be released until the start of the next financial year).

Similar projections, using a very conservative model, show that at least \$95 million could be collected in 2016:

State	Amount of SSAF that could be collected
Total New South Wales	\$27,733,657.00
Total Victoria	\$27,184,136.00
Total Queensland	\$16,353,883.00
Total Western Australia	\$9,413,516.00
Total South Australia	\$6,295,842.00
Total Tasmania	\$1,958,747.00
Total Northern Territory	\$620,368.00
Total Australian Capital Territory	\$2,989,581.00
Total Multi-State	\$2,493,449.00
Total National Figures	\$95,043,382.00

What is the Student Tax spent on?

While the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* does not provide a limited list of items for which the Student Tax can be spent on, the Act expressly provides a list of items not prohibited. This list includes:

- providing food or drink to students on a campus of the higher education provider;
- supporting a sporting or other recreational activity by students;
- supporting the administration of a club most of whose members are students;
- caring for children of students;
- providing legal services to students;
- promoting the health or welfare of students;

- helping students secure accommodation;
- helping students obtain employment or advice on careers;
- helping students with their financial affairs;
- helping students obtain insurance against personal accidents;
- supporting debating by students;
- providing libraries and reading rooms (other than those provided for academic purposes) for students;
- supporting an artistic activity by students;
- supporting the production and dissemination to students of media whose content is provided by students;
- helping students develop skills for study, by means other than undertaking courses of study in which they are enrolled;
- advising on matters arising under the higher education provider's rules (however described);
- advocating students' interests in matters arising under the higher education provider's rules (however described);
- giving students information to help them in their orientation; and
- helping meet the specific needs of overseas students relating to their welfare, accommodation and employment.

While many of these items are noble in their intent, there are numerous examples of student unions stretching these allowances well beyond the boundaries of what is appropriate. For example, it was reported in 2012 that the Australian National University Student Union used SSAF funds to purchase cupcakes, a jumping castle and on a party at Mooseheads nightclub. While this matter was investigated by the Department of Education, the expenditure was found not to have breached the Act.

In addition, last year at the University of Western Australia, the Student Guild run a series of highly-controversial and politically-motivated events, including an *'Unhappy Birthday Christopher Pyne'* festival that attracted criticism from many students. The events appeared to have been funded by Student Tax funds but further student investigations were inconclusive and no concrete information was revealed by the Guild.

In October 2015, the University of Newcastle Labor Club breached the legislative requirements by using SSAF revenue for the production of posters promoting an on-campus event featuring local Labor party guest speakers.

Student unions that administer Student Tax funding often have minimal scrutiny and accountability, and can be prone to gross financial mismanagement. For instance, in 2014 it was revealed that the University of Western Australia Student Guild had been defrauded more than \$800,000 in finances syphoned away from the Guild to an employee over a three-year period from 2011.

While the Guild commissioned a full financial audit and there was one dismissal, the incident demonstrated unwillingness within the Guild to take strong action. The fact that such large scale theft was only uncovered after three years demonstrates a lack of accountability and transparency within student unions that could equally be applied to rorting Student Tax funds.

Historically, examples of waste and mismanagement by student unions include:

- In 2008, the University of Melbourne Student Union (UMSU) ripped \$2,000 from its limited Activities budget to fund an art show titled "From Beards to Badges – a history of the University of Melbourne Student Union (UMSU)";

- In 2008, UMSU also donated \$500 to the legal defence of a man accused of assaulting police officers and damaging a police station during a riot on Palm Island;
- In 2009, UMSU slashed the budget of its Clubs and Societies by \$18,000 (24%) in order to fund a \$15,000 increase in its donation to the radical National Union of Students (an increase of 30%).
- In 1999, the University of Queensland Student Union spent up to \$110,000 producing an edition of the student magazine *Semper Floreat* focussing on the word “c**t”, as well as the so called “c**t quilt”, sewn by feminist activists from smaller squares with graphic (in both senses of the word) designs representing the activists’ genitalia.
- In previous years, one of the Presidents of the Queensland University of Technology (QUT) Guild has used student fees to hire a sports car for himself for the duration of his term.

National Union of Students

While the Act does specifically forbid the spending of Student Tax funding on supporting a political party or the election of public officials, student unions have been creative in their approach to this legislative requirement by supporting political campaigns on particular issues. Unsurprisingly, these campaigns readily align with left wing political movements, while stopping just short of specifically endorsing political parties or officials. The single best example of this are the fees provided to the National Union of Students by individual student unions each year.

The National Union of Students has been plagued by gross financial mismanagement and factionalism for decades. Run by a series of clashing left-wing factions that stretch from Labor Right (Unity) through to the Marxist ‘Socialist Alternative’ left, decision-making is often halting and incoherent at best. However, the thing these groups have been united on is their shared commitment to spending their resources on attacking conservative governments, with the NUS having been responsible for a spate of highly contentious and violent attacks on Parliamentarians, in addition to other violent protests.

National Union of Students budget information shows that in 2016, they expect to receive \$375,000 from student unions, largely aimed at funding their highly politicised campaigning. The vast majority of accreditation fees paid to the National Union of Students are Student Taxes collected by student unions – fees paid by students of all political persuasions, not just of one.

In 2009, the University of Sydney SRC paid for delegates to attend the NUS national conference, totalling \$11,500. At that conference, internal bickering between the various factions saw the conference unable to reach quorum, and as a result, policies were debated for only one hour and the election of office bearers was unable to take place. As such, \$11,500 from a single student union was wasted on a conference that achieved absolutely nothing.

Furthermore, in 2010 and 2013, the NUS ran a campaign during the Federal election called ‘Abbott’s Heaven Your Hell’. This was a blatant political campaign against Tony Abbott and the Liberal Party, run during an election period, designed to manipulate the voting decisions of students. This was despite Young Liberals elected to the NUS executive expressing concerns that such a campaign would not resonate with the broader student population.

We contend that the NUS is an ultra-left wing fiefdom, jealously guarded by a left wing political movement that seeks to push a highly political and extremist social agenda.



Student Services

A further false claim from proponents of the Student Tax is that any change to the current arrangements would see a reduction in student services. Historical information relating to the period between July 2006 and the introduction of the Student Tax in 2012 outlines the year on year changes to the student services made available.

	Student Services Organisation Units	Independent operations	Total	Student Services OU's annual change	Independent operations annual change	Total annual change	Context
2000	2275	1268	3,543	2.20%	5.40%	3.32%	
2001	2207	1097	3,304	-2.99%	-13.49%	-6.75%	
2002	2349	1112	3,461	6.43%	1.37%	4.75%	
2003	2,680	1,095	3,775	14.09%	-1.53%	9.07%	
2004	2,732	1,394	4,126	1.94%	27.31%	9.30%	
2005	2,934	1,454	4,388	7.39%	4.30%	6.35%	
2006	3,158	1,528	4,686	7.63%	5.09%	6.79%	VSU introduced July 2006
2007	3,316	1,324	4,640	5.00%	-13.35%	-0.98%	Bond joins staff data collection, 31 student services staff, 46 independent operations
2008	3,694	1,614	5,308	11.40%	21.90%	14.40%	Increase largely driven by Monash and 2 other unis
2009	3,883	1,862	5,745	5.12%	15.37%	8.23%	
2010	3,853	2,010	5,863	-0.77%	7.95%	2.05%	
2011	3,735	1,873	5,608	-3.06%	-6.82%	-4.35%	
2012	3,856	1,811	5,667	3.24%	-3.31%	1.05%	Student Tax commences
2013	4,116	1,674	5,790	6.74%	-7.56%	2.17%	

Source: Department of Education and Training, Staff: selected higher education statistics, various years

Attached to this report is a case study from the Queensland University of Technology (QUT) that refused to accept funds raised by the Student Tax and nonetheless managed to dramatically expand student services – an approach that has now been adopted by other universities.

Transparency

The Student Tax is regulated under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* that has specific requirements around the expenditure of monies collected. Our concerns with the current framework are two-fold. First, there have been countless anecdotal examples of waste and mismanagement of these funds that are rarely investigated. Second, the list of allowable expenditure is very broad and has been used to purchase such things as food and drinks and even to throw wild parties.

The department monitors the use of SSAF revenue and its compliance with the legislation, including by:

- requiring participating Higher Education Providers to provide an annual compliance certificate signed by the Vice-Chancellor or Chief Executive Officer confirming that SSAF revenue was raised and expended in accordance with the legislation;
- reviewing the websites of participating HEPS, particularly their reports on actual SSAF expenditure, to ensure that the rates of SSAF and the expenditure of SSAF revenue are consistent with the legislation; and
- establishing a public inbox which enables anyone concerned about a potential breach of the SSAF legislation or guidelines to raise their concerns directly with the department. All the concerns raised with the department are investigated.

Despite assurances from the then-Gillard Government that there is a robust transparency framework in place, only seven investigations have been launched by the Department of Education since 2012 most of which came back all clear. The department's investigations have included:

- In June 2012, it was alleged that the Australian National University Students' Association (ANUSA) had used SSAF funding to purchase jellybeans for a free give away.

Outcome: The department confirmed that no SSAF revenue had been used to purchase the jellybeans.

- In August 2012, it was alleged that the ANUSA had misspent SSAF funding on a function.

Outcome: The department reviewed these claims and determined that no breach of the Act or associated Guidelines had occurred. ANUSA received SSAF funding from the university for food and drink and to support student orientation which are unbelievably allowable expenditures under HESA (subsection 19-38 (4)(a)).

- In May 2013, it was alleged that the University of Newcastle breached the legislative requirements by funding the Newcastle University Students' Association and by supporting Peer Assisted Study Sessions.

Outcome: The department confirmed that the purposes to which the university had allocated SSAF revenue were allowable under the Act. The support of the Students' Association was considered consistent with the intent of subsection 19-38 (4)(c) of HESA which allows for 'supporting the administration of a club most of whose members are students'.

The Peer Assisted Study Sessions were considered consistent with 'helping students develop skills for study, by means other than undertaking courses of study in which they are enrolled' (subsection 19-38 (4)(o) of HESA).

- In April 2014, it was alleged that Charles Sturt University breached the legislation by using SSAF revenue to establish Ally, a programme for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex students.

Outcome: The department determined that the purposes to which the university had allocated SSAF revenue were allowable under subsection 19-38 (4)(f) of the Act as promoting the health or welfare of students.

- In August 2014, it was alleged that the University of Melbourne Student Union breached the legislative provisions by using SSAF revenue to support the Labor Party's launch of its higher education policy.

Outcome: The department confirmed that no SSAF revenue had been used for the event.

- In October 2015, it was alleged that the University of Newcastle Labor Club breached the legislative requirements by using SSAF revenue for the production of posters promoting an on-campus event (BBQ) which featured local Labor party guest speakers.

Outcome: The department determined that this case could be interpreted as a breach of subsection 19-38 (2)(a) of HESA, which states that: 'if the higher education provider pays a person or organisation an amount paid to the provider as a student services and amenities fee, the provider must make the payment on condition that none of the payment is to be spent by the organisation to support ...a political party.'

The alleged breach was fully investigated by the University of Newcastle, which determined a potential breach may have occurred. In order to avoid the potential of such breaches occurring in future, the University of Newcastle changed the way in which funding for student clubs and societies is distributed. These new procedures ensure that specific club functions or events (irrespective of the purpose or membership of the club) must meet stricter conditions for approval, in advance of any funding.

These requirements are severely inadequate. Most students who pay their Student Taxes are unable to investigate any breach of expenditure through the published mechanisms, nor would they have confidence in the aforementioned systems to protect against waste, mismanagement or corruption.

In circumstances involving more than one hundred million dollars of students' money, we firmly believe a good starting point would be considering the same transparency and accountability requirements that apply to either trade unions or to companies under those relevant laws.

Conclusion and Recommendations

On every meaningful level, we contend that the Student Tax is bad for the very same students that it claims to assist. It is unfair, undemocratic and unnecessary. Fundamentally, the right to a tertiary education should not be predicated on payment of a compulsory Student Tax.

Evidence provided in this report shows that the Student Tax can be abolished with no negative impact on the Government's Budget bottom line and examples have been provided demonstrating that, in circumstances where student unions have opted out of Student Tax funding, students have in fact enjoyed tangible benefits.

Recommendation 1: That the Student Services and Amenities Fee be abolished.

Late last year saw a notice of motion put to the Senate Chamber to reform the levying of the SSAF and increase transparency. Despite it being the current policy of the Federal Government to repeal the Student Tax, all Liberal Senators – bar Senators Abetz and Bernardi, who voted in support of reform – abstained from the vote.

On that basis, in this important election year we urge the Government in the strongest terms to support students by returning to their pockets some \$290 a year.

If recommendation 1 cannot be achieved, we then recommend that SSAF only continue with recommendations 2 and 3 implemented.

Recommendation 2: That the Act be immediately amended to allow for greater accountability and transparency in the operation of the SSAF, including campus plebiscites on whether it should be levied, disclosures on all SSAF expenditure and a one page annual report provided to all fee-paying students.

That said, we are realistic about the Government's ability to move quickly towards a full repeal of the legislation and accordingly would urge the Government to take immediate steps to improve the accountability and transparency of the Student Tax. These measures should include:

- An amendment to the Act to require that a majority of students on any given campus vote in support of SSAF being levied on an annual basis, so that each student can have a say on whether it should be levied;
- Disclosures, similar to those required by the AEC, on all material – including promotional material for events funded by SSAF – that clearly discloses that funding is being used for that purpose; and
- Providing a one page annual report summarising aggregate expenditure to all fee-paying students, somewhat similar to the report provided by the Australian Tax Office to all taxpayers. This should include a full disclosure of any spending on alcohol, food and events.

Recommendation 3: That the Minister commission an inquiry into the use of funds raised by the SSAF to ensure that all funds are being spent in line with the requirements in the Act.

The current processes that are in place for the accountability and transparency of SSAF expenditure are inadequate and rely largely on reports to an email address. There is no formal regulator, nor a serious approach taken by the Department of Education.

Given that we are talking about more than one million dollars each year, we strongly recommend that the Minister for Education commission a review of SSAF spending including full-scale financial spot audits and rigorous checking of annual disclosures.

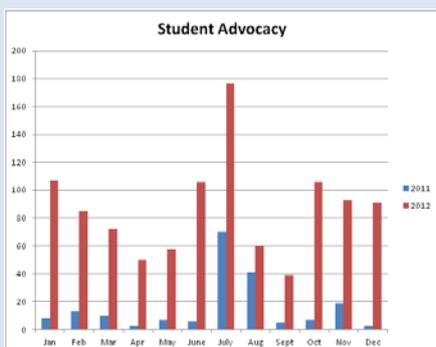
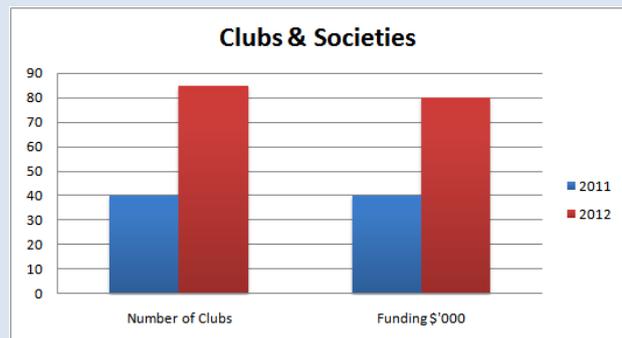
A further consideration by the Department for further law reform in line with the requirements for trade unions or companies should also take place.

Case Study – QUT Guild

In late 2011, Queensland University of Technology students emphatically elected a team to run the QUT Guild which ran on an explicitly anti-SSAF platform. Upon its election the new Guild made a conscious decision to not access the SSAF monies that had been collected by QUT. This team inherited a \$387,000 deficit in the Guild budget from the previous administration, which ran \$800,000 losses yearly and due to a risky investment portfolio had lost the Guild some \$5 million.

Yet in just one year, the new team, armed with their strong anti-SSAF mandate, not only managed to return its finances to surplus but also:

- Increased both the number of affiliated student clubs and the size of the funding pool available to them by over 100 per cent (in 2015 the club funding has increased by a further \$100,000, and the number of clubs now stands at 100);
- Increased the sports program from two social sports with 80 participants to over 1,600 participants spread across 10 sport disciplines;
- Commissioned a completely new student magazine with 25,000 copies circulated;
- Introduced a new website;
- Renovated a number of commercial outlets, including the student bars with significantly reduced beverage prices; and
- Hosted multiple new community events throughout the year, including IDAHO, Shave for a Cure, community markets, and breaking the Guinness World Record for the largest toga party in the world.



Again without the need for student fees, the Guild now runs a 24/7 academic hotline, a dedicated Student Rights Hub, and various exam support stalls, in the process achieving some of the most impressive academic appeal outcome figures in Australia. The number of students seen by the Guild for advocacy in 2012 was more than five times that of 2011 – achieved with only a third of the previous staff (or one twelfth (1/12) of all the staff employed pre-2006, during the Compulsory Student Unionism era).

Most importantly, QUT Guild achieved all this without the need for student taxes. Through sound financial management that stopped pervasive waste and mismanagement, better utilised existing resources, streamlined services, and concentrating on the real demands of the constituency the Guild represents.

Student Tax by Campus

	Number of All Students (first half 2015) ⁵	Estimated SSAF 2015 Collections ⁶	Projected SSAF 2016 Collections ⁷
New South Wales			
Charles Sturt University	10,508	\$2,268,981.00	\$ 2,133,124.00
Macquarie University	14,440	\$3,076,788.00	\$ 2,931,320.00
Southern Cross University	4,079	\$877,519.50	\$ 828,037.00
The University of New England	5,122	\$1,104,246.00	\$ 1,039,766.00
The University of New South Wales	21,084	\$4,445,941.50	\$ 4,280,052.00
The University of Newcastle	13,112	\$2,941,438.50	\$ 2,661,736.00
The University of Wollongong	12,283	\$2,613,039.00	\$ 2,493,449.00
University of Sydney	23,033	\$4,773,697.50	\$ 4,675,699.00
University of Technology Sydney	15,092	\$3,090,301.50	\$ 3,063,676.00
Western Sydney University	17,866	\$3,661,086.00	\$ 3,626,798.00
Total New South Wales	136,619	\$28,852,824.00	\$ 27,733,657.00
Victoria			
Deakin University	17,383	\$3,553,192.50	\$ 3,528,749.00
Federation University Australia	5,070	\$951,951.00	\$ 1,029,210.00
La Trobe University	14,370	\$3,046,972.50	\$ 2,917,110.00
Monash University	28,805	\$5,870,865.00	\$ 5,847,415.00
RMIT University	22,819	\$4,826,464.50	\$ 4,632,257.00
Swinburne University of Technology	10,707	\$2,214,069.00	\$ 2,173,521.00
The University of Melbourne	24,280	\$4,886,095.50	\$ 4,928,840.00
Victoria University	10,479	\$2,272,627.50	\$ 2,127,237.00
Total Victoria	133,912	\$27,622,023.00	\$ 27,184,136.00
Queensland			
Central Queensland University	5,669	\$1,124,623.50	\$ 1,150,807.00
Griffith University	17,554	\$3,657,225.00	\$ 3,563,462.00
James Cook University	7,558	\$1,677,390.00	\$ 1,534,274.00
Queensland University of Technology	18,313	\$3,801,798.00	\$ 3,717,539.00
The University of Queensland	20,595	\$4,367,220.00	\$ 4,180,785.00
University of Southern Queensland	6,585	\$1,357,141.50	\$ 1,336,755.00
University of the Sunshine Coast	4,287	\$851,136.00	\$ 870,261.00
Total Queensland	80,561	\$16,836,534.00	\$ 16,353,883.00

⁵ Data provided by the Department of Education

⁶ Estimates based on student levels in 2015 and eligibility to pay SSAF

⁷ Projections based on 2015 estimates

Western Australia			
Curtin University of Technology	18,283	\$3,827,752.50	\$ 3,711,449.00
Edith Cowan University	8,997	\$1,938,651.00	\$ 1,826,391.00
Murdoch University	8,855	\$2,018,874.00	\$ 1,797,565.00
The University of Western Australia	10,238	\$2,327,110.50	\$ 2,078,314.00
Total Western Australia	46,372	\$10,112,388.00	\$ 9,413,516.00
South Australia			
Flinders University	8,485	\$1,782,280.50	\$ 1,722,455.00
The University of Adelaide	10,937	\$2,364,219.00	\$ 2,220,211.00
University of South Australia	11,591	\$2,492,490.00	\$ 2,352,973.00
Total South Australia	31,014	\$6,638,989.50	\$ 6,295,842.00
Tasmania			
University of Tasmania	9,649	\$1,939,294.50	\$ 1,958,747.00
Total Tasmania	9,649	\$1,939,294.50	\$ 1,958,747.00
Northern Territory			
Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education	7	\$1,287.00	\$ 1,421.00
Charles Darwin University	3,049	\$605,533.50	\$ 618,947.00
Total Northern Territory	3,056	\$606,606.00	\$ 620,368.00
Australian Capital Territory			
The Australian National University	8,311	\$1,719,432.00	\$ 1,687,133.00
University of Canberra	6,416	\$1,336,549.50	\$ 1,302,448.00
Total Australian Capital Territory	14,727	\$3,055,767.00	\$ 2,989,581.00
Multi-State			
Australian Catholic University	12,283	\$2,446,801.50	\$ 2,493,449.00
Total Multi-State	12,283	\$2,446,801.50	\$ 2,493,449.00
Total National Figures	468,194	\$98,111,227.50	\$ 95,043,382.00

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