University of Southern Queensland
Springfield Campus
Operational and Governance Plan
V1.0
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Introduction

1. USQ is establishing a campus in Springfield’s Education City in Brisbane’s South West corridor. The blueprint for the Campus was approved by the VCEX on 1 Dec 04 and is as follows:

   The blueprint for the USQ Springfield Campus is for it to be the campus of choice for school leavers and mature age students in Brisbane’s South West corridor for both undergraduate and postgraduate programs. It will do this by offering high quality, responsive teaching based on the theme of ‘community centred – career focused’. The Campus will also attract significant numbers of international students through its suite of courses. All programs will offer the ability for students to fast track their studies. The Campus growth is to be consistent with the concept of the University City and it will form an integral component of the life long learning continuum envisaged to be provided by the Springfield Education City. The Campus will cater for 1500 students within five years of opening growing to 3000 within eight years and reaching 5000 by year twelve.

2. The USQ Council approved the progression of the Campus on 27 April 2004 based on the business goal of:

   USQ’s business goal in establishing the Springfield Campus is for the Campus to become commercially viable within the short to medium term. The Campus would be expected to reach a break-even position within two to three years, and thereafter to return positive earnings well in excess of the commercial cost of capital for USQ.¹

3. A number of academic goals were also identified and were approved by the VC as part of the Project Management Plan (PMP) on 2 Feb 05. These are attached at Annex A.

Aim

4. The aim of the Springfield Campus Operational Model is to define the organisational, financial and reporting structures required to provide an appropriate environment to allow the achievement of the Campus Business and Academic Goals and the Campus Blueprint.

Operational Principles

5. There are three key operational roles that must be performed by the executive integral to the Campus. These are those of a Head of Campus, the Chief Academic and the Business Manager. Due to the need for appropriate skill sets and

¹ Currently 5.5%
experience, it is not anticipated that these responsibilities could normally be met through one individual. It could also be the case in the initial stages of the Campus, that the Chief Academic is also a faculty Associate Dean. The structure of the hierarchy and allocation of responsibilities will be for the VCEX to examine and USQ management to approve. Throughout this Plan, where activities are attributed to the Campus Director, these can be delegated to either the Chief Academic or Business Manager as appropriate, should these positions exist.

6. In addition to these functions there will also be an ongoing project management task for at least the next 15 years. It is unlikely that it will require a dedicated project manager once the Campus is operational.

7. With regards to the operation of the campus, the following fundamental principles are proposed but may be modified pending the approval of the PD for the Campus Director:

a. Responsibility and accountability for operational decision making in relation to Springfield is to be vested with the Campus Director who reports directly to the VC and is a member of the Vice-Chancellor’s Committee and Vice-Chancellor’s Executive Committee.

b. The Campus Director is ultimately responsible for achieving Campus academic and business goal.

c. The Campus Director is to have operational control (as defined later in the paper) over all staff and resources attributable to the Springfield Campus.

d. The Campus Director will ‘buy’ the provision of programs and staff from faculties and supporting services through Service Level Agreements (SLA).

e. The SLA is a means for gaining a common understanding of requirements and as a basis for addressing issues, it is not be used a means for withholding funding to faculties.

f. Faculties are primarily responsible for the provision and quality control of academic staff, programs and assessment.

g. The senior faculty representative on the Campus will be an Associate Dean and will the prime interface between the faculty and Campus Director.

h. USQ Springfield is to be run as a discrete business unit with its own operational and project budgets.

i. All expenses attributable to USQ Springfield are to be paid out of the Springfield budget.

j. All income associated with USQ Springfield, although collected corporately, is to be attributed to Springfield for the sake of determining whether the Campus is meeting its business goals.
k. Faculties and Operational Units are quarantined from losses as these are all contained with the USQ Springfield business unit.

**Campus Business and Strategic Planning**

8. The Campus Director will be responsible for developing a Campus Business Plan by June of each year covering the campus operations and operational budget for the following year. This is to be done with input from the appropriate Deans and Heads of Service Departments. The Campus Business Plan is to be endorsed by the VCEX and approved by the VC. The Campus Business Plan is to contain a range of KPIs that will be reported on to the VC at the end of each semester.

9. The Campus Director will also be responsible for preparing a Campus Strategic Plan covering the Campus and program development, an updated business case financial model and project budget for the coming five years. The Springfield Campus Strategic Plan is to be prepared with input from Deans and Heads of Service Departments. It is to be endorsed by the VCC and approved by USQ Council by as part of USQ strategic planning process.

10. The development of the Campus under the current and subsequent stages of the Project will be subject to a Project Management Plan (PMP). Additional stakeholder reporting requirements will be contained in the PMP. This reporting will be undertaken by the appointed Project Manager.

**USQ Springfield Community Advisory Group**

11. A USQ Springfield Community Advisory Group is to be established to provide an interface between local community, government and industry representatives. The Group will advise on issues relating to current operations and the future direction of the Campus. Decisions of the Group will not be binding on USQ but will be given serious consideration in the operational and strategic planning for the Campus. The Group would meet quarterly and be composed of:

   a. VC USQ Chair
   b. Campus Director
   c. Campus Business Manager
   d. Representative Dean from Toowoomba
   e. Ipswich Council local member
   f. 2 x Principals from major secondary schools
   g. Undergraduate student representative
   h. Post graduate student representative
   i. 2 x local industry representatives
   j. community based religious representatives (max x2)
   k. Community organisation representatives
Operational Control

12. Operational control for the purpose of this paper entails the following:

a. **Human Resources**
   i. scheduling;
   ii. Campus Director input into staff reports and leave recommendations;
   iii. application of Springfield specific workplace requirements within the context of the SLAs; and
   iv. appropriate tasking of staff to ensure the achievement of business and academic goals and the application of the campus theme.

b. **Physical Resources**
   i. Authorisation of usage for both USQ and non USQ users
   ii. Scheduling
   iii. Equipping
   iv. Maintenance
   v. Commercial usage
   vi. Security
   vii. Cleaning
   viii. Future requirement planning
   ix. Project management

c. **Financial Resources**
   i. Budgeting
   ii. Commercial payments

d. **Springfield Designated Academic Programs.** This will be done in conjunction with the (USQ) faculties.
   i. Market research
   ii. Proposal development (Associate Dean responsibility)
   iii. Business case analysis
   iv. Springfield acceptance (Campus Director responsibility)
   v. Co-sponsor with faculty through USQ Accreditation process
   vi. Achievement of theme
   vii. Monitoring achievement of SLA
   viii. Scheduling

e. **Commercial activities**
   i. Contract management
   ii. Contract development
   iii. Commercial facility usage

f. **USQ Springfield specific administrative processes**
   i. SOP development
   ii. Staff training
iii. Provision of all on-campus administrative support  
iv. Quality control  
v. Continual improvement

**Quality Control**

13. Quality control is primarily performed by the (USQ) faculties and operational units, it consists of the following tasks:

a. **Academic Programs**
   
i. Identification of potential new programs  
ii. Assistance in market research and business case development  
iii. Course and program development  
iv. Co-sponsor with Campus Director through USQ Accreditation process  
v. External accreditation (if applicable)  
vi. Gaining of CRICOS codes  
vii. Delivery in accordance with SLA  
viii. Assessment  
ix. Validation

b. **Human Resources**
   
i. Requirement and skills identification  
ii. Recruitment (with input from Campus director or nominee)  
iii. Performance reporting (with input from Campus Director)  
iv. Unsatisfactory performance rectification  
v. Workforce planning

**Springfield Specific Programs and Resources**

14. All on-campus programs conducted at Springfield will be designated as Springfield programs and will be the subject of a SLA and budgeted for in the Campus Operational Budget. All costs and income from these programs is to be notionally attributed against the Springfield budget for the purpose of determining the achievement of Campus business goals. Costs and income associated with other activities conducted at Springfield such as distance courses not covered by an SLA, seminars or on-campus activities for distance students are attributable to parent faculties. Where these activities are not a separate commercial venture, only variable costs such as administrative staff and consumables would be charged back to faculties. Where they were a commercial venture, such as a professional seminar, fixed costs such as rent would also normally be included.
Employment Arrangements

15. The Campus executive staff and Campus Administration personnel will be integral to the Campus and paid directly from the Operational Budget. All other personnel employed at the Campus will remain as members of their parent faculty or service department unit and paid by them via a funds transfer from the Springfield Operational Budget. A proposed Campus Organisational Structure is attached at Annex B.

16. Non-integral staff will in the first case, unless through a separate agreement, be subject to the workload formula of their parent organisation. Given that the Campus will seek to maximise cross-faculty co-operation in the delivery of programs, it would be desirable to have equity in workloads amongst all academic staff on the Campus. It is appreciated that this will be difficult to achieve. The SLAs will seek to gain as much commonality as possible.

17. All personnel employed at USQ Springfield are to be funded out of the Springfield budget for that element of their work attributable to Springfield Campus related activities. Full time or part time staff with 100% of their effort allocated to the Springfield Campus and located at the Campus are classed as Springfield designated employees. Other staff supporting and located at the Campus but not having 100% of their effort dedicated to the Campus, are classed as Springfield Shared Employees. This differentiation is important in relation to inter-campus travel entitlements and travel time allocation. These issues are covered in the Toowoomba-Springfield inter-campus travel policy and SLAs.

18. The Springfield budget will be responsible for funding ADL. In the initial stages of the Campus, Faculties and parent service departments will be responsible for funding conference travel and attendance. Research and professional development travel, directly related to employment at Springfield, will be funded from the Springfield budget unless otherwise agreed in the SLAs.

19. Subject to agreement with the Campus Director, it is acceptable for faculties to have Springfield Shared Employees located solely at Springfield but also supporting other non-Springfield faculty programs. The Springfield budget would only pay for that amount of effort attributable to Springfield.

20. It will be up to parent organisations to determine whether the SLA requirements should be achieved with Springfield Designated or Shared Employees. From Springfield’s perspective the preferred solution would be to utilise Springfield Designated Employees, however guaranteed quality of program or service delivery has a higher priority. This may necessitate the use of Shared Employees.

21. All non-integral staff are to be recruited, selected and reported on by their parent organisation. The relevant Springfield Associate Dean is to be included in all phases of the recruitment process for Springfield Designated and Shared academic staff. The Campus Director (or Chief Academic if not the same) is to be included in all Associate Dean and level C academic staff and above selections and invited to
participate in Level A and B. The Campus Administration manager is to be involved in all phases of recruitment for Level 7 general staff and above.

22. The Campus Director is responsible for the performance of the Campus, however the parent faculties and operational units are responsible for the quality of service provided. As a consequence, the role of supervisor for the senior staff on Campus will need to be retained by their respective parent organisations. This creates some difficulties in relation to performance management. To overcome this, the Campus Director is to be informed of performance issues pertaining to staff employed at Springfield and applicable to their work there. The Campus Director is to have the opportunity to input into the performance reports of all Springfield Designated and Shared Employees. Performance reporting still remains the responsibility of parent organisations.

23. Identification of unsatisfactory performance of Springfield staff could occur either through the Campus Director or their parent organisations. In the former case the Campus Director is to notify the designated supervisor in writing seeking rectification. Should the parent organisation identify unsatisfactory performance with one of their Springfield employees in relation to activities pertaining to their employment at Springfield, they are to notify the Campus Director of the occurrence and the steps being taken to rectify the problem. The Campus Director may become involved in remedial activities if agreed to by the parent organisation and if in compliance with the USQ policies. Should there be a disagreement between the Campus Director and the employee’s parent organisation over the classification of unsatisfactory performance and/or the remedial measures required this is to be referred to the VC.

24. The Campus Director is to have the opportunity for input into the position descriptions, selection and promotion of personnel who will be employed for the majority of their time at USQ Springfield. The extent of this will be determined on a case by case basis.

25. As a principle, to ensure that the Campus Director has the necessary academic support to implement the Campus theme and develop the Campus, academic staff are to allocate the proportion of community involvement to those activities on the Springfield Campus in line with the proportion of their salary being paid out of the Springfield budget. This can be modified by agreement between the Campus Director and appropriate Dean on a case by case basis. The Campus Director would be expected to allow Springfield academic and non-academic staff to attend developmental and social activities organised by parent organisations provided the effective operation of the Campus could be maintained. The extent and nature of these activities would be agreed in the respective SLAs.

**Staffing Levels**

26. Staffing levels are to be in accordance with accreditation requirements and the responsibilities listed in the position classification standards of the Certified Workplace Agreement. Staffing levels are to be recommended by the faculties and agreed with the Campus Director through an SLA who is then to bid for the
appropriate funds in the Campus Operational Budget. Should there be a disagreement between the faculties and Campus Director this is to be resolved by the VC. For 2006 the staffing levels are to be recommended by the Springfield Operational Planning Committee and approved by the VC.

27. During 2005 there is a requirement for each faculty to appoint a program co-ordinator who will be responsible for all aspects of planning, development, approval and accreditation of the faculty's programs. The program co-ordinators are anticipated to be existing USQ employees and during 2005, funding can be requested to be transferred to faculty budgets from the Springfield Project budget to cover that part of their time allocated to Springfield. Ideally program co-ordinators would also be involved in delivering their programs at Springfield but it is appreciated that this may not be feasible in all cases.

28. By no later than 9 Jan 06 each faculty is to have appointed and employed an Associate Dean (Springfield) at an academic level of C/D. The Associate Dean is to take over the role of program co-ordinator if not the same person. Associate Deans should expect to be heavily involved in new Springfield program development and theme related issues. Associate Deans can be employed on a shared basis should the workload not justify them being full-time Springfield designated employees. Funding for the appointment of an Associate Dean prior to 2006 is to be approved by the USQ PM if Springfield Project funds are to be used.

**Academic Program Issues**

29. The appropriateness and quality of the academic programs offered at Springfield will ultimately determine the success of the Campus. As the Campus Director is to be held accountable for Springfield’s success, there must be a right to be involved in the concept development, feasibility analysis, business case development and accreditation process for courses and programs to be offered at the Campus. In particular the Campus Director is to have the right to endorse or not endorse a business case based upon facility requirements, profitability, budget impact, consumer demand, HECS places and overall campus offerings.

30. Should a new program or course be agreed upon and subsequently accredited, faculties are responsible for developing and providing the course materials. Agreed costs are to be met from the Springfield Project Budget for those elements attributable to offering it at Springfield.

31. The Campus Director’s decision to not endorse a new program can be overridden by the VC.

32. Should an existing program be no longer commercially viable at the Springfield Campus, the Campus Director is to work with the Dean of the parent faculty to have it modified or discontinued in accordance with the USQ Planning and Quality Review process.

33. Due to the requirement to run a three semester on-campus teaching program and implement the Campus theme, there is a significant incentive for cross faculty
sharing of courses where possible. This is to be co-ordinated by the Campus Director in direct liaison with the faculties who are to assist wherever possible in this process.

Research

34. Generally, research is funded centrally and within Faculty budgets. Staff at Springfield must be able to compete for central funds and should also be able to compete for funds from their Faculty. Specific Springfield research, such as that sponsored under the Side Deed by Education City, or directly related to USQ’s involvement in Education City, will be managed by the Campus Director in conjunction with the PVC (Research) and relevant Deans.

Budget Processes

35. USQ Springfield will operate two separate budgets. There will be an operational budget which will commence in Jan 2006 and a project budget which operates currently and will continue as long as there are project expenses relating to the development of the Campus. The expenditures covered by each budget are as follows:

a. Project Budget:
   i. All costs associated with Campus construction, primarily being structural fitout.
   ii. All initial non-structural fitout costs
   iii. All costs associated with building purchase
   iv. All academic program development costs
   v. Any non-recurrent cost associated with the development of the Campus

b. Operational Budget
   i. All costs associated with the normal operation of the Campus such as operational staffing, administration, vehicle, rent, replacement of non-structural fitout items, maintenance, security etc.
   ii. All costs associated with the ongoing provision of academic programs including staffing, resources etc.
   iii. All costs of an ongoing nature

36. The operational budget will be funded from USQ central funds and bid for through the normal USQ budgetary processes. It will be financed through the allocation of HECS and Fee revenue attributable to the Campus based on a similar model that will apply to the faculties. This is primarily to account for the academic program provision. It will also be funded through corporate funds for costs such as rent, maintenance and body corporate fees which are not costs that faculties would be responsible for under existing arrangements and hence are not expected to be met under the existing faculty funding model.

37. Faculties will be required to provide accurate costs to USQ Springfield for the provision of programs for the coming year as part of this process. Once an SLA
covering the program has been signed by the appropriate Dean and the Campus Director, and the funds allocated by USQ, these funds will be transferred to the faculties.

38. There is scope for project funds to be transferred to the operational budget to cover any shortfalls although this should be avoided where possible. This will be through the use of those funds remaining after the establishment of the Campus for 2006 and the fitout of the level 4 in the latter part of that year. This requirement will prevent any major commitment for the development of new programs or initiatives for the Campus prior to funding becoming available in the next Phase unless approved separately as a sub phase to the current phase. The paying back of future surplus operational funds to reinstate the Stage One Project Budget will not be automatic and should not be anticipated.

39. Project funds will be bid separately and will be subject to the approval by USQ Council of a Business Case covering that stage of the Project. These funds may either be provided by a QTC loan or if more economical to do so, through USQ consolidated funds or by a mixture of both. Once an amount has been approved, USQ Springfield is to manage these funds within the scope of the approved business case with regular reporting expenditure against budget and forecast fund usage provided to Budget and Management Committee. Any use of contingency is to be approved by the VC as per the Project Management Plan. Any change of scope or requirement for additional funds beyond the contingency, within an already approved stage, will require the approval of a supplementary business case by USQ Council.

**Facilities**

**Costs**

40. Faculties and service departments will not be charged for the use of facilities by those staff undertaking USQ Springfield activities at Springfield.

41. Where faculties conduct major activities eg symposia at Springfield, it will be the norm that a facilities cost, covering at least the fixed and variable costs for the use of the facility, will be included as part of the registration fee. As the lease costs for Springfield Facilities are contained in the Operational Budget bid, these will have been met. These would be attributed against the Springfield Campus for accounting purposes but are a corporate income. Incremental costs, eg power and cleaning, would normally be reimbursed to the Springfield budget.

42. Where underutilised facilities are available at Springfield these are to be made available at no cost to faculties. The priority for these facilities will be to support Springfield programs, hence faculties must treat any non-Springfield related facility use as a temporary arrangement. Should faculties seek to arrange a permanent use of facilities for non-Springfield activities eg Toowoomba based distance programs conducted by non-Springfield staff, there will be full cost based budgetary transfer to the Springfield budget to cater for facilities used.
Priority of Use

43. The Campus Director is responsible for the prioritisation of the use of facilities at USQ Springfield. As a principle the order of priority is to be given to USQ Springfield activities, USQ commercial activities, non-USQ commercial users, non-commercial USQ activities, non-commercial student activities and non-commercial community activities. The priority of commercial users will be a function of each activity and the income produced.

44. It must be appreciated that some users may require long term contracts (12 month) eg religious groups utilising the Auditorium on weekends. The Campus Director via the Campus Business Manager is to liaise with faculties to ensure that conflicting requirements are managed without making use by external parties non-viable.

Conclusion

45. The contents of this Plan are designed to ensure that the Campus Director has the resources and control to exercise their responsibilities in achieving the Campus business and academic goals. The Plan is also designed to ensure that the Springfield is established and remains as a branch campus and does not attempt to duplicate or assume the responsibilities of the faculties and service departments. The Plan will need to be reviewed and updated once the Campus begins operating.

Professor W.J. Lovegrove  
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University of Southern Queensland

29 September 2005

Annexes

A. Springfield Academic Goals
B. Proposed Springfield Campus Organisational Structure
Springfield Academic Objectives

The following objectives are intended to support the achievement of the Campus Blueprint:

a. To develop a themed campus;

b. To develop a campus which fits with the overall philosophy of the Springfield development and that of the Springfield Educational City;

c. To build an academic profile which fills not only local needs but which will attract students from outside the region, including internationally. In particular, to make use of the opportunity to develop and introduce new programs, particularly those which will involve close cooperation with industry and commerce;

d. To consolidate and expand USQ’s effective student catchment by:

i. taking advantage of a substantial pool of students from this rapidly expanding master planned community;

ii. using the position to exploit the metropolitan markets of Brisbane and Ipswich, and to prevent competitors from gaining a foothold in the Springfield growth area;

iii. tapping into the demographics and population growth in the western corridor of Brisbane which is seen as a viable, economically sound opportunity within the natural catchment area of USQ; and

iv. using Springfield as a base for student recruitment from outside the local region, including internationally;

e. To use Springfield as a platform to attract students to the Toowoomba campus, thereby to fuel growth while improving the quality of students and, as a result of the improved quality, to reduce costs of recruitment, fall-offs and teaching;

f. To allow USQ to enhance its reputation and profile within both the Springfield and Brisbane communities, enlarging on its reputation as an on-campus learning institution;

g. To allow USQ to develop strategic alliances with potential industry and commerce partners based within the community precinct of Springfield and its environs;

h. To develop a high-technology centre which would enhance USQ’s capacity as a leader in e-learning, and further enhance its reputation as a distance education provider.