



UWA STUDENT GUILD  
The University of Western Australia  
M300, 35 Stirling Highway | Crawley, WA 6009  
(08) 6488 2295 | hello@guild.uwa.edu.au  
facebook.com/UWASStudentGuild | @UWASStudentGuild

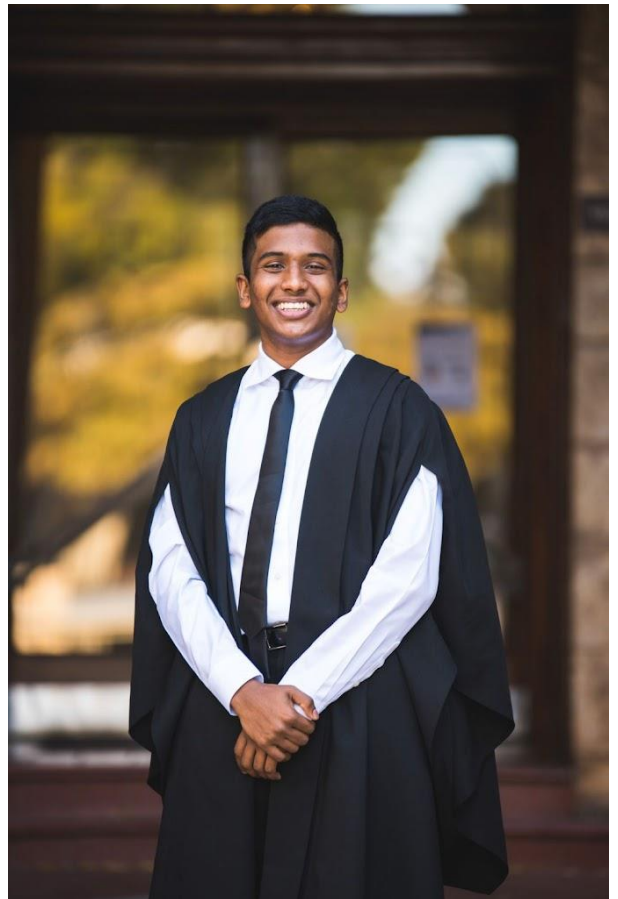
## Guild President's Report 2023 Guild Ordinary General Meeting (04/10/2023)

### **Introduction**

It is a pleasure to report to the 2023 Guild's Ordinary General Meeting. Throughout 2023 it has been a privilege to serve UWA students as the 110<sup>th</sup> Guild President.

My focal point, as the university's peak student representative, has been acting as the student voice in university decision making. Secondly, as the head of the Guild as its own independent organisation, I have focused on providing services and amenities to the entire student cohort. My motivation in these duties has always been to enhance students' university experience, both on and off campus, and ensure everyone has access to the resources that they need to achieve their best.

This year has been an extremely busy year for the 110<sup>th</sup> Guild Council. I would like to congratulate all the members of the 110<sup>th</sup> Guild Council and all the other students involved with the Guild for their commitment and hard work in improving the student experience at UWA. As our terms come to an end, I am excited to share the work that has been undertaken by the 110<sup>th</sup> Guild Council in 2023.



### **Engagement**

This year, the Guild's main goal was to increase student engagement on campus and bring back the numbers we saw prior to the COVID pandemic. As more students got involved with campus activities and engaged with the Guild, we believed it would help students to meet new people and make new friendships allowing them to have a more enjoyable and memorable experience at UWA.



We aimed to foster this engagement in multiple ways this year:

- i) **Increased Club Grants by \$25,000.** The increase in club grants aims to provide extra opportunities for the 121 clubs to engage with even more students throughout the year. The Guild believes its clubs are the lifeline of campus engagement, and hence why it has taken these steps to encourage clubs to pursue different avenues to connect with students.
  
- ii) **Introduced Tav Wednesdays.** This is a weekly event organised by the Guild and UDub Radio station held at The Tavern. The event aims to bring students together and provide them with a platform to socialise, network, and unwind after a long day of classes. The Tav Wednesday events have been highly successful in 2023, and well attended, with more and more students through the doors each week. I'm proud to say we've managed to hold the momentum throughout the year, and this weekly event has had a positive financial impact on the Tavern.
  
- iii) **Theme Weeks.** The Guild Departments including Women's, Pride, Access and the Public Affairs Council (PAC) held multiple Theme Weeks through out the year to celebrate and represent students from all around campus. These weeks were heavily attended by students. The following Theme Weeks were held by the Guild thus far;
  - Fringe Week by PAC
  - Pride Week by the Pride Department
  - Access Week by the Access Department
  - Research Week by the Postgraduate Students' Association
  - Faith Week by PAC
  - Women's Week by the Women's Department
  - National Volunteering Week by the Guild Volunteering
  - Social Impact Week by PAC
  - Wellbeing Week by the Wellbeing Department
  - Sustainability Week by Environment Department

iv) **Sundowners**

After a few years' hiatus, Sundowners were brought back this year with more than 10 clubs getting involved in the week-long event on Oak Lawn. The aim of Sundowners is to provide freshers with a safe and enjoyable platform to socialise and meet new friends. The Guild understands the importance of creating an inclusive and secure environment on campus for all students, and that is why the event was redesigned, catering to everyone with the inclusion of security and fencing at the event. The Guild believes that these initiatives are vital for the holistic development of students and will continue to work towards promoting student engagement on campus.

v) **Increasing Social Media Engagement**

This year the Guild utilised its social media platforms quite well especially the Instagram handle of the Guild. We focused on a style of creating content that is more relevant and relatable for the average university student, so that it encourages students to reach out and engage with the Guild more often.

Our number of followers on Instagram have increased by 3,600 people this year, with overall engagement for 2023 increasing by 52.3% compared to 2022.

vi) **Screening of the Matildas Semifinal Game at the Tavern.**

The recent Matildas match (Australia vs England Semifinal match, as part of the FIFA Women's World Cup) was televised live in the Tavern and saw about 450 students through the doors that afternoon and evening. It must be noted that the students who showed up to attend the event, at relatively short notice, definitely brought a sense of community and inclusion to the Tavern for all those who attended it.



vii) **Spring Feast 2023**

In September we, organised the Spring Feast Festival which aims to celebrates the cultural diversity at UWA. We had over 10 external food vendors, 20 cultural clubs and over 100 students perform various cultural performances at the event. The event was well attended with an estimated student attendance of more than 4000 students. This event reiterated the inclusivity and the community sense we do have here at UWA.



These are just a few initiatives we have carried out during the year to achieve our goal of enhancing the student experience and improving campus engagement. Our Student Departments, Guild Councillors, Guild Affiliated Clubs and Faculty Societies have organised multiple inclusive events and initiatives that have made students feel a better sense of belonging in the UWA community.



So far this year, the number of Events organised by the Guild, Clubs and the Faculty Societies year to date in 2023 is 1771.

Furthermore, the following notable Guild events are yet to take place this year;

- Cruickshank-Routley Memorial Guild Ball
- Relay 4 Life Fundraiser in collaboration with the Cancer Council.
- Guild Halloween Party

**Student Assist**

Since the beginning of the year up to July 2023, Guild’s Student Assist team has supported 1,198 students facing either Welfare, Academic or Financial struggles. It can be understood that with the current economic climate in the country more students are facing more financial and welfare related issues.

The usage of the Food Pantry service has significantly increased as well, during the year compared to 2022. In Semester 1 of this year 363 students used the service compared to just 59 students in Semester 1 of 2022. This significant rise in its usage has introduced new budgetary pressures to Student Assist and the Guild, and we are looking for alternative sources to keep funding this essential service.

The Student Assist team has collaborated with all the Student Offices across campus to organise a Food Drive among staff. We have received numerous donations from various locations on campus, courtesy of the University staff. Similar initiatives have also been implemented in the University administrative buildings. Additionally, the UWA Marketing team included a post in their staff newsletter, requesting donations for Student Assist.

SERVICE	January-July 2023
ACADEMIC ADVOCACY	634
FINANCIAL	96
WELFARE	468
<b>TOTAL CASES YTD</b>	<b>1,198</b>

As a Guild Council, we aim to work with key stakeholders across the campus and put all our efforts together to continue these services for students, especially in the current economic climate.

### **Containers 4 Change Initiative**

This year we introduced the Containers 4 Change Initiative to all our Guild Outlets (all Cafes, Tavern and the Refectory). The Guild partnered up with the City of Perth to bring this initiative onto campus and so far, this has been received well by the students. The funds raised by the initiative will be donated to the Food Pantry service of the Guild's Student Assist.

### **Guild Village**

#### ***i) Guild Masterplan***

The Guild worked with the architectural firm Taylor Robinson Chaney Broderick (TRCB) on finalising its new Masterplan. Many students were consulted in the process, ensuring we come up with the best design to cater to students' needs now and in the future. The Masterplan is designed to achieve the following 4 core goals:

- Improve the facilities for students to study, explore and experience UWA.
- Drive on-campus student engagement and support UWA's unique club and society culture. (In 2022 the Guild had over 121 clubs and societies and oversaw 3,000+ events at UWA.)
- Support the expected growth in student numbers and increasingly diversifying needs of the UWA Student cohort.
- Significantly improve accessibility requirements, lighting, safety for students, security and meet compliance requirements.



The Masterplan was presented to the UWA Senate at the July Meeting by Viknash VM (Postgraduate Students' Association President), Tony Goodman (Managing Director of the Guild)

and myself. There was a common agreement among the Senators that it is important for both the University and its students that a project of this scale should go ahead.

The Guild does not have the capacity to fully commit financially to funding all of the works listed in the Masterplan. At this stage the Guild is in discussions with the University for financial support to actualise these plans into reality and further improve the student experience at UWA.

**ii) *New Vendors in the Guild Precinct***

This year the Guild has managed to secure multiple external vendors in the Guild Precinct. We have introduced a new barber; a new pizza vendor and a new frozen yogurt outlet which will commence operations on the August 31. Further, we have observed that the usage of the Guild Village Precinct and its services have significantly increased this year compared to 2022.



**WA University Sector Review**

During the recent WA University Sector Review, the Guild was invited to make a submission regarding the discussion paper that was released on the 1st May 2023. We did an extensive amount of consultation among student leaders and UWA students before our submission was made, ensuring our views resonated with what our students at UWA really wanted out of a review of this sort.

I had the opportunity to meet with the Review Panel led by Emeritus Professor Sandra Harding AO (Panel Chair), in June. There were many conversations about international student enrolments, the influence of university rankings and discussions around the problems of the current systems.

**UNIVERSITY  
SECTOR REVIEW**  
UWA Student Guild Submission  
May 2023





Our submission to the panel can be viewed on the Guild's website: [www.uwastudentguild.com](http://www.uwastudentguild.com).

## **Venture**

Venture UWA stands as the Innovation Centre of the Student Guild, a visionary response to the transformative impact of automation and innovation on the global employment landscape. Venture emerged from a proactive collaboration between UWA students and the Guild, driven by the shared goal of equipping UWA's future graduates with the skills and mindset vital for the evolving world of work.

In the present year, Venture has made a profound impact, reaching out to over 1,400 students through its three flagship initiatives. The innovative spirit of Venture gave rise to the "Venture Starter" program, and the "incubator program". Venture Starter is tailored to students who are in the nascent stages of shaping their business concepts. The Venture Incubator program was launched to provide a platform for students with established businesses to propel their ventures to the next level. This saw the successful inclusion of 18 teams across these initiatives, receiving invaluable guidance from a global panel of 25 mentors. The internship program also took flight this year. This exceptional program not only granted students the opportunity to intern with our incubator entrepreneurs but also granted them access to exclusive workshops and hands-on experiences.

## **Plagiarism and Fraudulent Medical Certificate Campaign**

Recently, the Education Council of the Guild, led by Education Council President Holly Mellor, carried out a social media campaign on Plagiarism and Fraudulent Medical Certificates. It has been noted by the University that there has been an increase in the number of students engaged in activities that questions the academic integrity of the University. In response to this, our Education Council ran a campaign which focused on the consequences of such actions, offering advice on ways of avoiding situations that may increase the likelihood of students' making wrong choices. This was well received by students and was much appreciated by the University.



## **Student Legal Advice Centre (SLAC)**

The Student Legal Advice Centre (SLAC) is up and running this year and is a not-for-profit entity that aims to empower law students at the university and facilitate access to justice for all UWA students. SLAC will be providing legal advice to students in the areas of tenancy law, employment law, and workplace discrimination. The centre is located in the Guild Village and offers advice appointments of up to 40 minutes with a qualified lawyer.

Thus far this year there have been more than 20 students that have utilised the service, mainly in tenancy and workplace areas. The Centre is looking to further expand its services and secure more partnerships with external stakeholders to sustain its operations.

### **Student Safety on campus**

Following the National Student Safety Survey in 2022, this year's Guild Council have prioritised making sure all students are feeling comfortable and safe on campus, at all times.

To address the issue at hand, the Guild has introduced and implemented the following policies and practices in the last 12 months;

- Upgraded the Student Leadership Team to address more sexual harm mitigation and reporting mechanisms.
- Introduction of the Safer Events Officer for every club
- Introduction of the Sexual Health Hub on the Guild Website
- Expansion of the "Wellbean Volunteer" Program

Recently, the University launched the UWA's new Respectful Relationships online module. Respectful Relationships has been a collaborative effort between UWA Health Promotion Unit and the Guild over several years. As a Guild we encourage all our student leaders and students to complete this online module in order to gain a much better understanding of awareness of sexual harm and referral options for survivors.

From 2024, the Guild will make the module mandatory for all students taking part in the Student Leadership Training run by the Guild. Furthermore, we will advocate and work alongside the University to make it a mandatory unit for all students at UWA, so that we can educate all our students and create a more respectful and responsible student community.

### **Student Life Restructure**

During the year the University proposed a restructure to its Student Life Portfolio. 60 jobs were proposed to cut, and 37 new jobs were introduced creating a net loss of 23 jobs initially. During the initial proposal the Guild closely advocated alongside the NTEU and the UWA staff to make sure that their rights were protected, and they received the best possible working conditions. After a successful social media campaign, and the mobilisation of student leaders in the Guild Council and clubs and societies, the Guild was able to increase the attention on the matter significantly among the student body. The initial proposal was followed by the final proposal which reduced the job lost to 20. While we believe this was a step forward, as the Guild we will continue to advocate for better student services and staff conditions alongside the NTEU and make sure to hold the University accountable for their decision making, moving forward.

### **Relationship with the NTEU**

The Guild, as an activist body, has and will always advocate and fight for what is best for our students. This year we are working closely with the UWA branch of the National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU), to make sure that staff rights are protected and respected by the University during their discussions for a new Enterprise Bargaining Agreement. As the NTEU slogan states: "*Staff working conditions are student learning conditions.*"



## Updates to regulations and constitutions

This year, our Chair of Guild Council, Rob Whitehurst has reviewed and updated 9 regulations and constitutions within the Guild, including the Women's Department, Tenancy and Wellbeing Department to name a few. As many of the Guild Regulations had not been updated in years (with some last reviewed in 2013) we are very grateful for all of Rob's efforts. We are looking forward to going through the rest of our documents (Regulations, Rules, Constitutions and Terms of Reference) in 2023, and bringing them all up to date for better operation of the Guild in the future.

## Conclusion

I am proud to say the 110<sup>th</sup> Guild Council has been able to make a very positive impact on this campus throughout the year. Mentioned above are only few key highlights for the year, with many more projects and initiatives carried out by both our students and Guild staff members alike.

It has been a pleasure and an honour to have had the opportunity to serve as your Guild President this year. As a fellow student, I loved what I did, representing you and advocating for a better student experience for you. I am confident that the next few years are going to be exciting for the Guild and its members, and I wish the incoming council all the best!



**Geemal Jayawickrama**  
110<sup>th</sup> Guild President

