

Students

Priority: To make USC the destination of choice for students from within the region and a magnet for international students.

Strong Demand

Student demand in 2005 for university places weakened across Australia. Despite this, figures published by the Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC) indicated strong demand from students wanting to study at the University of the Sunshine Coast in 2006. At the end of December 2005, students' first preference applications had risen approximately 30 percent, with overall preferences up by around 18 percent on the previous year. This demand for places appears to have been achieved by the introduction of a range of new programs and an effective communication strategy.

Communications Strategy

Communication between the University and the community increased to ensure prospective students were adequately informed of study options. Five student Ambassadors were trained within the school liaison team and attended 97 school-based events in 2005. The Keep PACE program provided information sessions for schools leavers and mature age students returning to study. Seventy-nine school Guidance Officers and Career Advisers attended GO Day on campus, and Courses for Careers Day in August attracted approximately 2,400 people. Seventeen academic staff and 19 administrative staff attended TSXPO and the Sunshine Coast Careers' Expo. The Admissions and Recruitment Officer attended 12 career markets from Rockhampton to Lismore.

Demand for information communicated via the website increased by approximately 20,000 unique visitors per month between the end of 2004 and the end of 2005. The number of pages on the site increased from 991 in December 2004 to 2,928 in December 2005.

■ Establishing, in partnership with other parties where appropriate, a range of amenities to attract and support both domestic and international students

Library Facilities

Research in regional universities was given a \$5 million boost through the Regional Universities Building Research Infrastructure Collaboratively (RUBRIC) Project to develop better research infrastructure into digital repositories. The University of the Sunshine Coast was one of the universities to benefit. The funding will be used to create an open access digital repository for University theses and research outputs, which will improve staff and community access to the work of University of the Sunshine Coast researchers, research institutes and centres.

Masters Club Opens

A Masters Club for postgraduate Business students was opened on campus by Mr John Prescott, Chair of the Australian Submarine Corporation and the Sunshine Coast Business Council, and former head of BHP Billiton.

Sports Complex

In 2005, the University unveiled plans for a \$6 million sports complex to be built on campus. Plans include an indoor stadium and outdoor playing fields.

English Language Program Computer Lab

A new English Language Program computer laboratory opened in 2005 to provide students with the opportunity to practise their English skills in a technologically advanced and interactive environment. The laboratory features 19 personal computers with flat-panel monitors and a range of multimedia hardware, including a data projector, multimedia headsets and a VCR/DVD combination.



The Masters Club opened to postgraduate business students.



A new computer laboratory enables students to practice their English skills in a technologically advanced and interactive environment.



In Semester 2, 2005, a third of students in the International Communication course were from overseas.

GO Program 2005 Destination

Country	Students
China	2
Costa Rica	1
Finland	1
France	2
Germany	9
Italy	3
Japan	12
Korea	2
Sweden	2
Thailand	1
USA	13
Total	48

GO Program Length of Stay

One semester	31 students
Two semesters	13 students
Short term program	4 students

■ Developing a range of programs which meets the needs of a large number of students, complemented by a set of distinctive programs, including those based on the characteristics and needs of the region

New Programs in 2005

The University recognises that it must provide students with a range of programs to meet their career needs. To this end a number of new academic programs introduced in 2005 proved popular. As a result, and despite 2005 being one of the most challenging years to date in relation to student demand for university places, the University came very close to meeting its funded load target (refer to page 12).

The 18 programs introduced in 2005 to meet student demand and provide relevant professional qualifications were:

- Bachelor of Business (Financial Planning)
- Bachelor of Business (Human Resource Management)
- Bachelor of Education/Bachelor of Arts
- Bachelor of Education/Bachelor of Business
- Bachelor of Education/Bachelor of Science
- Bachelor of Regional and Urban Planning
- Bachelor of Science (Exercise Therapy)
- Bachelor of Science (Health Promotion)
- Graduate Certificate in Climate Change Management
- Graduate Certificate in Coastal Environments Management
- Graduate Certificate in Creative Writing
- Graduate Certificate in Environmental Management
- Graduate Certificate in International Business
- Graduate Certificate in Wetlands Management
- Graduate Diploma in Creative Writing
- Graduate Diploma in International Business
- Master of Information Technology by research
- Master of International Business

Programs of the Future

Planning commenced on a range of additional programs, (refer to page 9) and a new core course entitled *Environment, Technology and Sustainability* to be introduced in 2006 (refer to page 20). New disciplines such as psychology, social work, legal studies, paramedical studies and allied health programs will be introduced in 2007.

■ Preparing and supporting graduates to create or find satisfying and appropriate employment, particularly in the region

Work Integrated Learning

As is clear from the University's graduate attributes (refer to page 20) and its increased commitment to Work Integrated Learning (WIL) (refer to page 22), the employability of graduates is an institutional priority. During 2005, an external review was conducted into the University's provision of vocational information and support to undergraduates. An Internships Working Group was formed to provide guidance to the project. The recommendations of the external review will be fully implemented in 2006.

■ Preparing graduates with life skills

GO Program

Providing students with opportunities to develop life skills is seen, by the University, as particularly important. Overseas study is viewed as a means of enabling students to broaden their horizons, develop an understanding of different cultures, form new friendships and networks, and refine language skills.

In 2004, the University's international exchange program was reviewed and renamed the GO Program (Global Opportunities Program) and 25 travel grants of \$2,000 were provided to offset study costs. In 2005, the GO Program was promoted heavily to students resulting in 48 students travelling to 11 countries for one or two semesters. Returning students are, on the whole, more confident and independent, and have more comprehensive general knowledge.

Competing Nationally

The Faculty of Business 'Students in Free Enterprise' (SIFE) team competed at the SIFE Australian Regional Competition in Sydney. In preparation for the competition, the six members of the SIFE team spent 2005 working on a number of projects across the Sunshine Coast, including the presentation of 'budgeting made easy' and 'business planning' workshops to the Nungeena Aboriginal Corporation for Women's Business. Following the Sydney competition, University

of the Sunshine Coast student Brenton Tickner was one of only five Australian representatives invited to Toronto, Canada, to participate in an international HSBC Financial Literacy Forum and the 2005 SIFE World Cup. Mr Tickner, who completed a Bachelor of Business (Management) in June 2005, is now working as Marketing Coordinator - Strategy at the Hyatt Regency Coolum after completing work experience with that organisation as part of his studies.



SIFE Team, left to right: Tyrone Zafir, Melissa Sheridan, Brenton Tickner (back row), Ged Melrose (front), Nicole Thompson and Amanda Rowlands.

Table 2: GO Program 2005 Grants

Type of Grant	Number of Grants	Value
USC Overseas Study Grants	25	\$2,000 each
UMAP Grants	2	\$4,000 each
Cheung Kong Grants	3	\$5,000 each
JASSO	4	Airfare, Yen 80,000 per month, plus Yen 25,000 travel preparation subsidy
Japanese Institutional	5	Scholarships range from Yen 20,000 – 80,000 per month
Hessen Exchange Program	9	\$2,400 each

Table 3: Main Destinations, USC Australian Bachelor pass and honours graduates, 1999–2005 (%)

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Available for full-time work	70.5	71.3	69.5	75.5	66.2
(a) Working full-time	55.1	56.1	53.7	62.3	71.9
(b) Working part-time, seeking full-time work	23.4	24.3	27.1	22.1	18.5
(c) Not Working, seeking full-time work	21.6	19.6	19.2	15.6	9.6
Studying full-time	19.0	15.5	18.5	13.2	20.1
Working part-time, not seeking full-time work	6.8	7.2	6.2	7.8	8.9
Not working, seeking part-time work	0.8	2.3	1.9	1.0	0.7
Unavailable for work or study	3.0	3.8	3.9	2.5	4.1
Number of respondents	237	265	308	204	269

The percentages shown in (a) (b) and (c) are a breakdown of those available for full-time employment.

Source: 1999–2004 GCA published tables, 2005 derived from USC final 2005 GDS file

Indicators of Success

■ Proportion of QTAC applicants from within the region who list USC in their preferences

In Semester 1 2005, 1124 students enrolling at the University cited a permanent home address in the Sunshine Coast region. This represented 66.7 percent of total enrolments in that period.

■ OP scores of students

The following table shows the number of offers made for first semester 2005 by OP score.

Offers by OP Range

2005 OP Range	Offers	%
1–5	144	9
6–10	483	30
11–15	700	43
16+	299	18
Special entry	4	0

■ Graduate employment rates

The percentage of those in full-time work (of those available for full-time work) improved significantly from 62.3 percent in 2004 to 71.9 percent in 2005, an increase of 9.6 percent. (Refer to Table 3.)