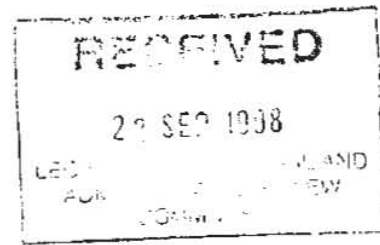




Submission No 32
Spec 14.1



Ms Kerry Newton
Research Director
Legal, Constitutional and Administrative
Review Committee
Parliament House
BRISBANE QLD 4000

21 September 1998

Dear Ms Newton

The Minister for Education invited the University on 28 August 1998 to comment on the recent strategic review of the Ombudsman's Office. The attached table summarises the comments that the University wishes to make against individual recommendations of the strategic review.

Yours sincerely

Professor R D Gibson
Vice-Chancellor

Queensland University of Technology

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Number	Summary of Recommendations	Comments
R1	PLCAR have more substantial scrutiny of Annual Reports from Ombudsman forming part of report of PLCAR	
R2	Ombudsman to convey material of more strategic nature to PLCAR	See R12 for related comment
R3	At beginning of new parliament, Ombudsman to discuss corporate plan and future directions with PLCAR	
R4	Processes recommended for handling estimates of the Ombudsman	
R5	Reminder of Cabinet Handbook re policies and legislation	It is believed that this is not directly relevant to the University's internal grievance and dispute procedures which are accessed by University staff and students.
R6	Ways to make community and government agencies aware of the role of Ombudsman	
R7	Ombudsman to work closely with State departments, agencies and local governments	
R8	State and local governments to establish contact officers for Ombudsman complaints	To date, any correspondence from the Ombudsman would generally be addressed to the Chancellor and referred appropriately for attention from the Vice-Chancellor's office. This recommendation would impact on, but would be not incompatible with, recommendations made in this University's current procedures and a recent internal review of the internal staff dispute and equity grievance procedures.
R9	Ombudsman invited to government units as observer and adviser on new policy initiatives	It would appear that this recommendation would not affect QUT as it refers specifically to government departments. However, if it is deemed otherwise, then it would be an unrealistic expectation and the burden on the staff of the Ombudsman's office would be onerous. In any event, the intent of this recommendation is not incompatible with the manner in which this University approaches its development of policy and procedures.
R10	Units of government to establish internal complaint handling procedures	This recommendation does not, as it stands, impact on this University but, in any event, would not be incompatible with the University's current procedures and a recent internal review of the internal staff dispute and equity grievance procedures.
R11	Ombudsman to institute formal program of secondments	Any approach made by the Ombudsman's office to this University to explore the possibilities of staff secondments would be welcome.
R12	Ombudsman to carry out Client and Agency Satisfaction surveys every 2 years	It would be helpful if any new performance indicators for the Ombudsman's office include a recommended maximum time period for any investigation of, say, 6 months from date of receipt in order to expedite matters. In this respect, it is noted that there is a recommendation to implement early intervention techniques to the receipt of matters in that office.

Number	Summary of Recommendations	Comments
R13	Ombudsman to make more use of "Own Motion" investigations	This is not inconsistent with the techniques employed by this University to identify, for example, areas of systemic discrimination, poor client service and so on. The Student Focus Project is an example of the manner in which the University responded to a review of systems impacting on client service.
R14	Ombudsman to remain open to entrepreneurial opportunity and pursue those relevant	
R15	Ombudsman to construct new performance indicators	
R16	Performance indicators to be incorporated into a new reporting regime	
R17	Performance indicators to include an "early intervention" category	
R18	Ombudsman should focus on early intervention management	See R12 above.
R19	Ombudsman to introduce a more open management style	
R20	Work of Ombudsman should be divided into State and local jurisdictions with regular conferences scheduled	
R21	Ombudsman to introduce formal training/staff development programs	
R22	Ombudsman to instigate a review of the classification of positions	
R23	Ombudsman to delegate more responsibility to staff	
R24	Ombudsman to review visits procedure	
R25	Ombudsman to conduct complete, realistic inventory of capital and recurrent requirements	
R26	Ombudsman to reconsider Management and Work Practices of the Office	
R27	Ombudsman able to recruit 2 more staff on conditions reforms implemented	
R28	Government to cease using "Ombudsman" in title of other appeal bodies and mechanisms	While this University is about to recruit for the position of Student Ombudsman, this recommendation clearly refers to government appeal bodies and would not apply. The position title is not unique to this University, and it would always be used in full in order to minimise any potential risk of confusion with the government's office.

