Changes proposed:
This briefing outlines a proposal for changing the voting and non-voting membership of Guild Council to create a decision making structure more representative of the wider student body. The changes are set out as follows:

1. Promoting the International Students’ Service (‘ISS’) Director from a standing invitee to a voting member of Guild Council
2. Promoting the Postgraduate Students’ Association (‘PSA’) President from a standing invitee to a voting member of Guild Council
3. Promoting the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students’ (‘ATSIS’) Officer from a standing invitee to a voting member of Guild Council
4. Restructuring the remaining ‘standing invitee’ list such that:
   a. The Welfare, Environment, Queer, Sports and Residential Students Department positions become ‘non-voting’ members of Guild Council to clarify that they can and should actively participate in the activities of Guild Council and its Committees
   b. The Immediate Past President and Senate Representative positions remain standing invites

Introduction- competing factors of Board vs Council style governance

Two styles of governance

- In the Eastern states, student organizations are usually split into:
  - a ‘Union’ which has a significantly higher budget and runs events, catering etc; and
  - a ‘Student Representative Council’, or ‘SRC’, which represents students to the University and national bodies and provides welfare and advocacy services to students.
- Typically, Unions are run by a board with corporate-style governance (fewer voting members, mostly independent directors, very few office-bearers, usually a co-opted professional or two), while SRCs are run by a Council with representative-style governance (more voting members, lots of office-bearers and representatives of specific demographics such as International, Indigenous etc).
- The Student Guild at UWA has a ‘merged structure’, and as a result needs to accommodate both of these competing styles of governance
- Other ‘merged style’ student organisations tend to focus much more on the representative style governance. For example Murdoch, Curtin, La Trobe, Melbourne and ECU all have significantly more voting members of their ‘board’ (often called a Senate) from discrete demographic groups. This includes voting representatives for International, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and (in the case of Murdoch) Postgraduate students.

The current situation at UWA

- At present, Guild Council is very much a representative style structure. It includes voting members who represent Women, clubs, faculty societies and sporting bodies. However, unlike most other ‘Councils’ or ‘Senates’ we do not have a voting member to represent the needs of International, Postgraduate and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students.
- In 2013 all 20 voting members of Guild Council are coursework, domestic and non-Indigenous students. The PSA has no voting representative on Council. We are the only representative body in Western Australia and possibly the nation where this is the case.
- Most of the commercial aspects of the Guild are not actually dealt with by Guild Council, but rather a small, more ‘corporate-board-like’ committee of Guild Council called the “Finance and Planning Committee”.
  - This committee has six student members and has Guild professional staff and the potential for co-opted external professionals to provide advice in a non-voting member capacity.
How the proposed new regulations achieve both strong corporate governance and representation:

- Creating three new voting positions to represent International, Postgraduate and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students will make Guild Council more representative and will facilitate swift progress towards the vision of ‘comprehensive representation’ outlined in the UWA Student Guild Future Directions paper.
- Strengthening the role of the ‘Finance and Planning Committee’ through a broader ‘Strategic Resources Committee’ with an additional co-opted member position will improve our governance arrangements for commercial services, budgeting and capital development.
- Creating a new ‘Governance Committee’ to focus on the role of ordinary Guild Councilors in overseeing the strategic direction, asking difficult questions and conducting regular reviews. Moreover, it will have a strong emphasis on good corporate governance and encouraging members of Council to practice due diligence.

1. Promoting the ISS Director from a standing invitee to a voting member of Guild Council
   
   **How is the position elected?**
   
The position of ISS (International Student Service) Director is currently elected annually during the UWA Student Guild General Elections. One must be an international student studying at UWA in order to be eligible to run for, or vote for the position.

   **Why does the position need a vote?**
   - In 2013 no international student was represented on Council.
   - The International Students’ Service and the UWA International Centre have both provided strong and proactive support for ISS Director to become a voting position.
   - International student numbers will inevitably grow well into the future and make up a significant proportion of the Guild’s membership base (currently over 20%)

2. Promoting the PSA President from a standing invitee to a voting member of Guild Council
   
   **How is the position elected?**
   
The position of PSA (Postgraduate Students’ Association) President is currently elected annually at the PSA’s Annual General Meeting. These elections are conducted in accordance with section 7 of Guild Regulations and with the PSA’s election regulations approved by the Statutes Committee and Guild Council.

   **Why does the position need a vote?**
   - In most years there are no voting members of Council who are postgraduate
   - The Guild has a ‘merged structure’ where postgraduates and undergraduates are both represented by the Student Guild. This is quite rare, and at other similar structure like Murdoch (which recently merged) there are voting positions for the postgraduate branch of the student organization.
   - Postgraduate student numbers will inevitably grow well into the future and make up a significant proportion of the Guild’s membership base

3. Promoting the ATSIS Officer from a standing invitee to a voting member of Guild Council
   
   **How is the position elected?**
   - The position of ATSIS Officer has not been ‘officially’ elected for a significant period of time, and has, by convention been the President of the WA Student Aboriginal Corporation (WASAC).
   - However, WASAC recently passed constitutional changes for the ATSIS position to be separate and to hold a position on the WASAC Committee as the ‘Guild Representative’. 
- Under these new changes, an ATSIS Officer will be elected by an ordinary meeting of Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander students in October.
- This election will be conducted in a similar manner to the PSA elections, and will be compliant with section 7 of the Guild Regulations (concerning the election of departmental officers).

**Why does the position need a vote?**
- The Guild and WASAC plan to significantly improve the engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students within the Guild’s decision making structure.
- However, the current ‘standing invite’ is seen by many as tokenistic and is insufficient to actively engage an Indigenous student representative with the decision making of Guild Council and its Committees.
- Under the reformed committee structure there will be a significant emphasis on engaging with cultural diversity and promoting Indigenous culture. An example of this is the creation of the new Equity & Diversity Committee of Guild Council. However, an active voting representative will be needed to facilitate this emphasis.
- Most other representative structures around the nation have voting members representing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students.
- We have not had an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander student hold a voting position on Guild Council for a significant period of time.

4. **Why the remaining ‘standing invite’ list should be restructured**
- As it currently stands the regulations are somewhat unclear about what role standing invites play on Guild Council, especially with respect to holding positions on Guild Council Committees as ‘members of Council’ and moving motions at Guild Council.
- The Senate Rep and Immediate Past President should be genuine standing invitees as they are not expected to be actively involved in the operations of the Guild.
- However, the other representatives are actively engaged in the operations of the Guild and many represent groups covered under the ‘comprehensive representation strategy’. Examples of this include the Residential Students’ Department President and the Queer Officers.