

University Computer Club

2020 Tenancy Reallocation Appeal



Dear Tenancy Committee,

Pursuant to § 59 of the Tenancy Allocation Policy (the Policy) and Governance rulings thereon, the University Computer Club (ucc) formally wishes to appeal the decision of the Tenancy Committee (Tenancy) to not renew its clubroom tenancy.

§ 59 of the Policy establishes the initial avenue of appeal for unsuccessful tenants in the event of a full clubroom reallocation. The section reads:

59. Unsuccessful tenants may appeal to the Guild Executive within 10 working days of the decision being circulated to all tenants. Any appeal can only be on the grounds that the tenant has met minimum compliance.

This section is also subject to a ruling by the Governance Committee that the reference to the “Guild Executive” should in fact instead refer to the Tenancy Committee. This interpretation was discussed in § 4 of the the 27 January 2017 Governance meeting ([link](#)):

Committee agrees that s59 should read “Tenancy Committee” instead of Guild Executive in order for subsequent clauses to make sense.

This interpretation was then noted as passed by circular in § 3 of the minutes of the 7 March 2017 meeting:

Business Completed via Circular: Tenancy Appeal Interpretation – Passed

In accordance with this interpretation, we address our initial appeal to Tenancy. If it is determined that the above interpretation is no longer applicable, then we request that the appeal is considered by the Guild Executive along the same grounds under § 59.

We submit ucc has indeed met minimum compliance standards set out in the Policy and thus has grounds for an initial appeal. We also submit additional details which we believe are relevant to the consideration of our appeal.

1 Grounds

The Policy sets out only one set of minimum standards of compliance, in § 44. This section details four conditions of compliance, all of which we submit ucc has upheld.

a. Whether the tenant in question has attended at least half of all Tenancy General Meetings held in the past Guild Year unless a written exception is given by the Tenancy Chair. Apologies will not be counted.

Last Guild Year, there were only three Tenancy General Meetings. A representative of the club was present at all of them. The authors can personally vouch for attendance of at least two of those meetings.

b. Whether the tenant in question has attended at least half of all Committee mandated clean-ups in the past Guild Year unless a written exemption is given by the Tenancy Chair. Apologies will not be counted.

ucc ran Busy Bees for all Tenancy-mandated cleanups last year. In addition to cleaning our room to the standard required, ucc also coordinated with some of the other Cameron Hall tenants to ensure the common spaces remained clean, even when Tenancy did not distribute a list of common area tasks to clubs.

c. Whether the tenant in question has passed at least half of all inspections conducted by the Committee at mandated clean-ups in the past Guild Year.

The club was inspected after each scheduled Busy Bee/clean-up and was found to meet or exceed satisfactory requirements on each and every occasion.

d. Whether the tenant in question has complied with all Guild and University Policies required of a Guild affiliated society.

The club abides by all Guild and University policies required of it. In addition we enforce all relevant Guild and University policies, and our own club rules, on our members. ucc has not had any action taken against it for breach of Guild or University policies during the tenancy.

2 Additional Considerations

In light of the letter received by us from Tenancy dated 6 March 2020 (the Outcome Letter), advising of our unsuccessful application, we would like to address some raised points and include additional detail that we were unable to provide previously due to the imposed page limit.

2.1 Negative Impacts on UCC

In the Outcome Letter, it was stated that the “foremost” of considerations in the allocation of clubrooms was the potential negative impact of rejecting a club’s application or renewal. As a club that has been established in its current room in Cameron Hall for 28 years (since 1992), ucc has developed a vibrant community centred around the opportunities a clubroom provides, and the infrastructure we are able to operate within it.

As a widely established club with an extensive membership base that considerably overlaps with clubs already occupying clubrooms, it was deemed unlikely that the capacity of UCC to realise the objects of their club would be hindered without a clubroom.

ucc is indeed a widely established club with an extensive member base. At the time of application, we enjoyed a membership of 268. However, this does not represent a “considerable” overlap with other clubs. For example, despite our close working relationship with Unigames and UniSFA, as of early 2020 (before O-week) of the 572 students who are a member of at either UCC, Unigames, or UniSFA; only 5% of members are a member of all three, and 12% a member of two of the clubs. In

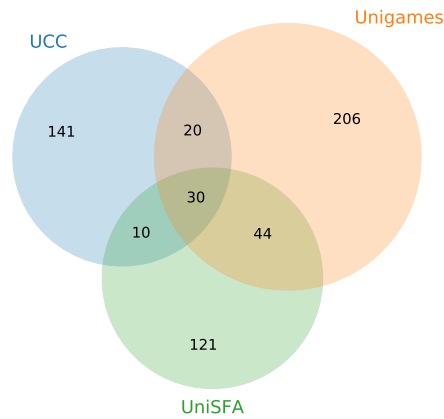


Figure 1: The overlap in memberbase between UCC, Unigames, and UniSFA

brief, 81% of these 572 students are *unique* to one club. This is clearly displayed in [figure 1](#). Since then, we have had 80 of our freshers walk into the clubroom and create accounts.

The Outcome Letter seeks to establish the above points to downplay the impact that losing our room would have on the club. However, it is the room which has allowed, and continues to allow, this extensive membership base to exist. There are many computer clubs at other universities around Australia which cannot offer their members the same level of experience and opportunity to learn, due to a lack of comparable space. Consequently, for those clubs, membership numbers and engagement are much lower.

2.2 UCC Objectives Relying on Clubroom Space

According to its constitution, ucc's primary objective is to advance computer science and technology. It does this through two main aspects: making available a large range of computer hardware, software and services to its members to use; as well as by fostering interest in computer technology by building a community of students who have something in common. Those aspects are the fundamental building blocks of the club.

Under § 56a, it is stated that for current tenants, the nature of the associate will be considered in the allocation process. We aim to demonstrate the nature of ucc is dependent on having a clubroom space.

ucc is particularly concerned by a couple of statements appearing within the Outcome Letter:

As stated in your application, members can access your club's infrastructure remotely.

Put quite simply, remote access to ucc's infrastructure is dependent on that infrastructure existing in the first place. Computing infrastructure of the type we operate has a number of important requirements to run: namely, adequate electrical power availability, adequate cooling, a high-speed dedicated network connection, and a secured location. Without a clubroom, that would not be possible and thus ucc's infrastructure could not exist.

The infrastructure the club hosts is not only a great learning opportunity in support of our objectives, but are also the means for the club to provide its services. Without the clubroom, most of the services ucc provides to the student community would not be possible.

... the wide accessibility of similar infrastructure across uwa's campus (ie. computer labs, communal club spaces, etc.) was unanimously deemed a functional equivalent that is amply suited to your club's needs.

Unlike asserted in the Outcome Letter, many of our services are not obtainable elsewhere on campus:

- i. ucc WiFi points which permit the ability to live-stream media, furthering our events and via club collaborations, the events of others
- ii. ucc machines are multi-user and members are able to perform systems administration tasks in an environment akin to those found commercially
- iii. Opportunities for members to use enterprise-grade digital infrastructure, such as user management protocols
- iv. Ability to gain hands-on experience with computer hardware, software, and (computer) networking that are difficult to obtain without internships, vacation work or graduate placements for students
- v. Obtaining permission to modify existing computers in the same manner as possible at ucc is not permitted by the University
- vi. The ability to access computers on a level that permits actions such as the replacement of graphics cards and/or other hardware to run hands-on "how to build a computer" sessions
- vii. Graphics cards that are important for software for students who do not have the ability to afford access to high-end computers

Whilst it is appreciated that all clubrooms are offered a space subject to the number of available spaces, under § 56c, it is also stated that existing tenants will further have the frequency of clubroom use considered in determining an application. The clubroom was opened (according to our electronic door records *363 days of last year*, making ucc possibly the most frequently-accessed clubroom on campus.

The ucc committee believes that the points under § 56 for current tenants were not fully considered in the Outcome Letter.

2.3 Issues and Breaches

2.3.1 Compliance Issues

@James Arcus we're sending an email saying "hey we were just doing final edits do we still need to submit by five or do you want it in 6 months?"

Another point raised in the Outcome Letter was 'compliance issues' raised by Campus Management and UWA that were stated to have a significant impact on the outcome of ucc's application.

The severity of these issues in relating to clubroom application is not clear. The timeline of events surrounding any reported issue is important to establish, particularly in the interest of fairness to all parties, and to enable appropriately deal with any issues. ucc notes that to date, it has received no

relevant communications from either the Guild or the University, advising us of any issues relating to the compliance of any part of the clubroom.

On receipt of this appeal, ucc requests that all relevant documents pertaining to these 'issues' that were deemed to hinder ucc's reapplication are forwarded to the current 2020 ucc committee. This will enable us to understand: what procedures were followed by Tenancy in relation to these issues, how Tenancy came to evaluate the incidents in question, and how the guidelines of the Policy have been fairly applied. @James Arcus we're sending an email saying "hey we were just doing final edits do we still need to submit by five or do you want it in 6 months?" Documentation of the incident(s) and/or issue(s) that detrimentally affected ucc's application should include:

- The date Tenancy was informed of the issue(s)
- The minutes from the Tenancy meeting held to address the issues
- Written evidence that ucc was notified
- Evidence of the communication of any consequences
- What steps were taken by Tenancy and ucc to resolve the issue

2.3.2 Instances of Misconduct

The Clubroom Tenancy Agreement (the Agreement) in § 3 clearly states that any issues regarding the clubroom, such as a breach of the Agreement, *must* be dealt with by Tenancy *within two weeks of being notified*, and that *any consequences arising as a result of the breach must be communicated following the meeting*.

If a breach is to be used against ucc's application, it is necessary for Tenancy to produce evidence of the formal process taken by Tenancy in regards to the breach. This would include written confirmation of the breaches, number of members involved and whether the incident was isolated or repeated.

ucc is currently unaware of multiple "instances" of misconduct by members. We are aware of a single incident that was disclosed in our application. Attributing an isolated incident to be representative of ucc as a tenant is not accurate, in particular as it was the opinion of Tenancy at the time that ucc's handling of the incident was satisfactory. They recorded at the time that the misconduct was by an individual, no further action needed to be taken, nor was any black mark to be held against the club.

2.4 Objectives of the Tenancy Allocation

In sum, the ucc committee does not believe the reasons provided in the Outcome Letter reflect a holistic approach to the guidelines in the Policy. We submit that the negative impacts on the club are far in excess of what was considered by Tenancy in the allocation process.

The objectives of the Policy under § 12 are:

- a. To maintain transparency and accountability of Guild processes.
- b. To provide the Guild with guidelines for the fair distribution of clubrooms and storage.

- c. To provide some degree of consistency in the clubroom and storage allocation process
- d. To ensure that associates with a need for clubrooms and storage have access

We hope that the detail in this appeal demonstrates the club's strong need of the room in fulfilling its objectives and serving the UWA student community.

Prior to the submission of this appeal, ucc entered into talks with SOC executive regarding the offer of a space for ucc within the Guild commercial space. Unfortunately, we were unable to gain much detail on the length and suitability of the offered space before this appeal deadline expires. It is hoped that since, as it appeared at that meeting, Guild recognises the importance of having a clubroom space for ucc, the current outcome will be reconsidered.

Fundamentally, our infrastructure requires a place for it to be able to exist, and the ability to directly access that infrastructure is the foundation of our club.

Once again, we thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely,



James Arcus
ucc President 2020



Timothy Chapman
ucc Vice President 2020

CC: Guild Executive
CC: UCC Committee