

Student Services and Amenities Fee Student Survey **2023 Report**





Background

This survey of students was conducted by the Office of Vice President (Students) and Registrar to collect feedback from students on their priorities for expenditure of Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) revenue in 2024. The survey also measures the current level of awareness amongst students of SSAF and feedback on the services which are currently supported by SSAF money.

Communication

Students were invited to complete the survey from the 16 June – 2 July 2023. A total of 13 245 students required to pay SSAF were invited to complete the survey by email with an individual survey link.*

As an incentive for students, those who completed the Survey could elect to go into the draw to win one of five \$50 gift vouchers. The survey completion time was estimated to take about three minutes.

The SSAF Survey was further promoted by:

- Email
- Blackboard login page announcement
- Social Media
- Student Associations

Survey Design

The survey questions are provided in appendix 1 attached to this report.

The survey included seven questions to measure current SSAF awareness and satisfaction amongst students.

The key question on SSAF spending priorities asked respondents to choose the % of SSAF they would allocate to each of the 19 allowable spending areas (choosing at least 5 different priority areas.)

Students were provided with examples of what could and couldn't be funded – this was made available on the SSAF website.†

Several free text questions allowed students to provide comments and suggestions on SSAF spending.

A summary of the response data and some qualitative comments are reported below.

Survey Response

A total of 430 responses were received. The response rate is 3.24% which is more in comparison to 2022. 730 students engaged with the link sent to them, but only 430 completed the survey.

*SSAF exempt students: International Offshore, Preparing for Success, Transition to Uni, Higher Degree Research, incoming cross institutional, incarcerated students, English language course, Undergraduate and Postgraduate Qualifying Programs, International SCU Sydney, SCU Melbourne and SCU Perth.

†<https://www.scu.edu.au/current-students/student-administration/fees-and-charges/student-services-and-amenities-fee-ssaf/ssaf-funding/#d.en.239812>

SSAF Awareness Results

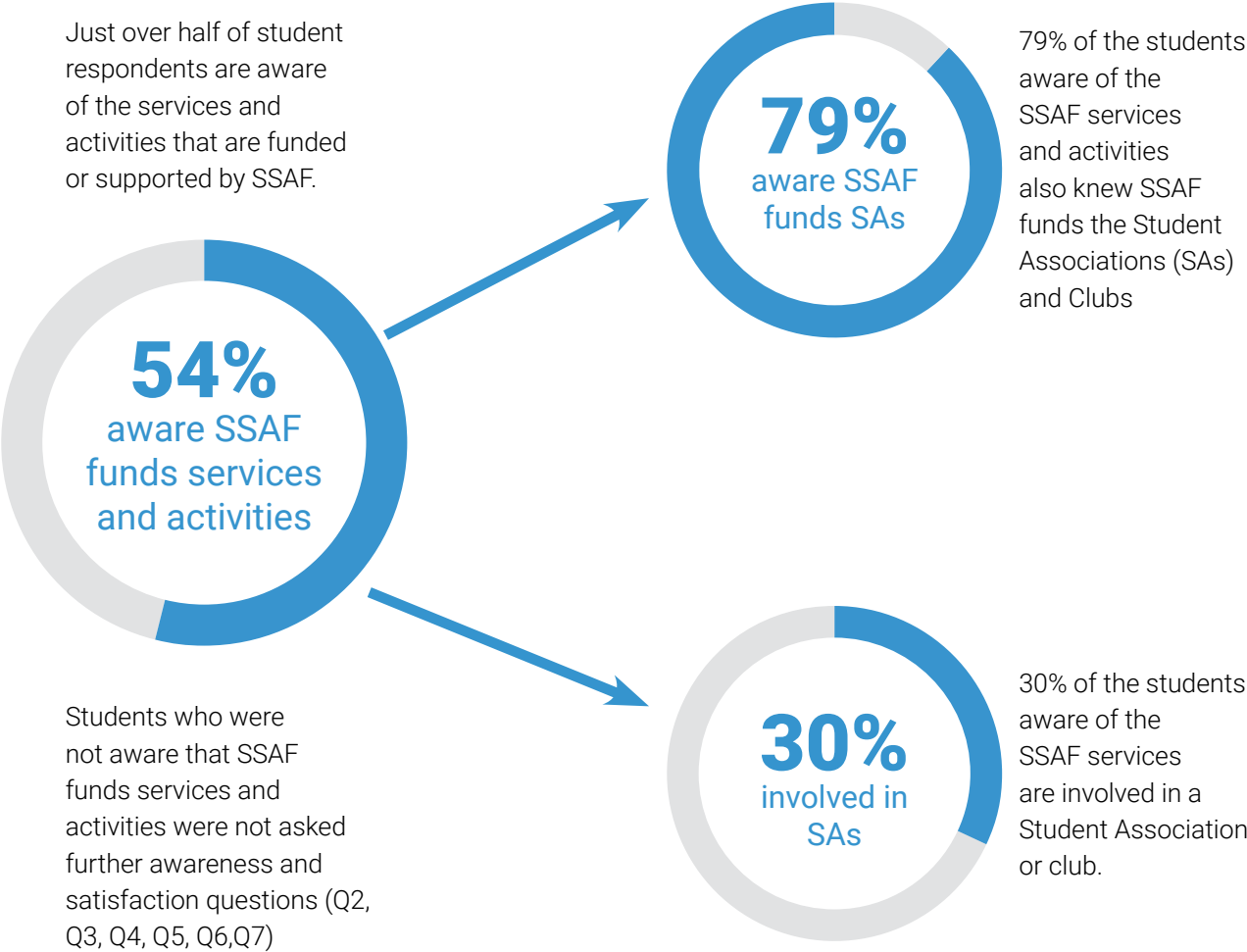


Table 1: Awareness of SSAF

	n	%
Are you aware of the services and activities that are funded or supported by SSAF?	430	100
Yes	231	54
No	199	46
Are you aware that SSAF funds your student associations and clubs?	231	100
Yes	183	79
No	48	21
Are you involved in any associations or clubs?	231	100
Yes	70	30
No	161	70

SSAF Service Usage and Satisfaction Results

Table 2 compares the service usage and satisfaction.*

92% of the survey participants reported satisfaction with the services funded through SSAF, with Orientation and Student Association led services and activities being most widely used. Summaries of the free text responses for each service are given below.

Orientation

Positive experience, satisfaction with the service, informative orientation, and supportive staff.

Unanswered questions, lack of engagement for online students, accessibility issues, and limitations based on personal circumstances.

Advocacy

Positive sentiments regarding the service and staff being helpful, caring, and well-staffed.

Limited availability of resources, No advocate on campus at CH resulting in disconnected experience

Careers and Employability services

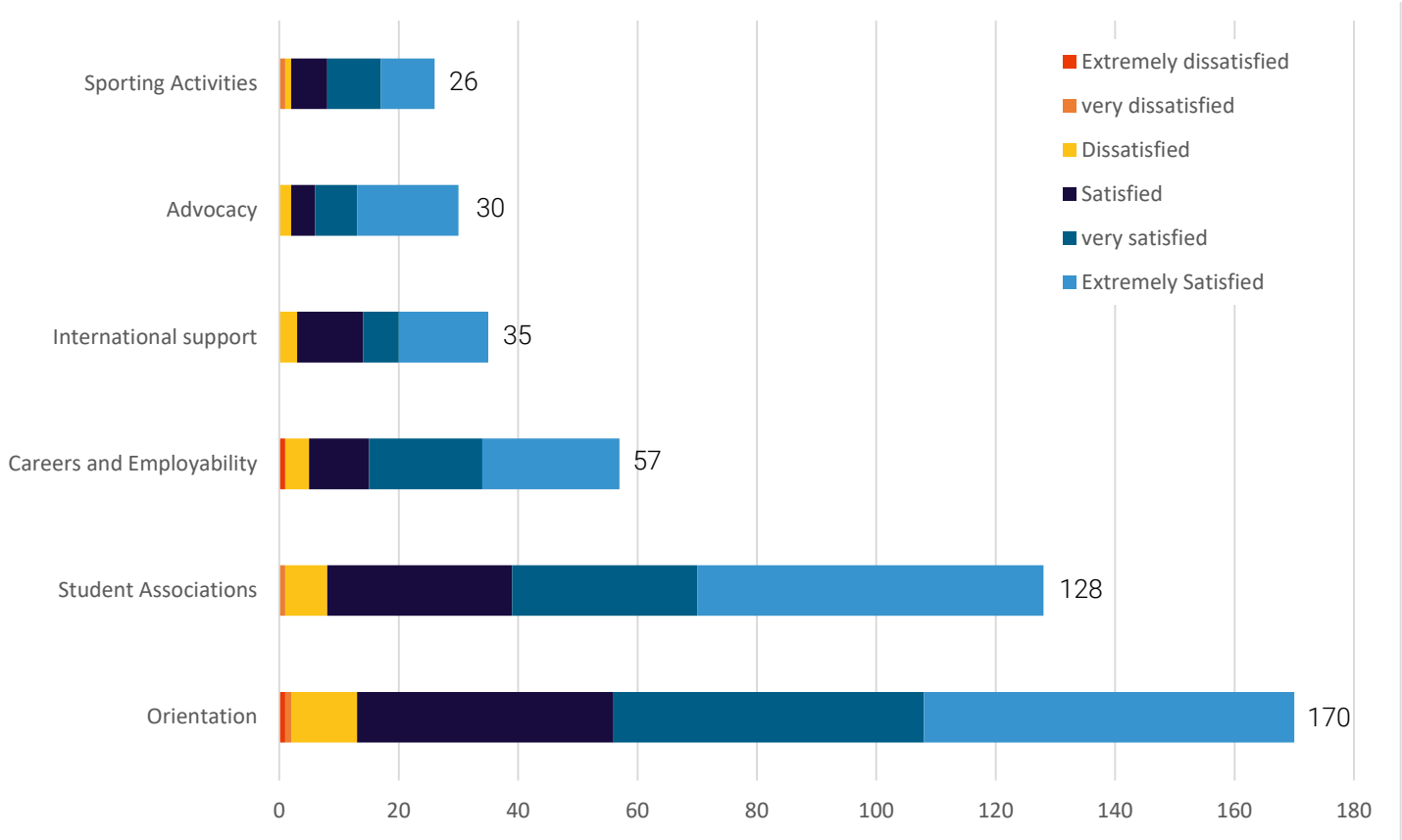
Great information and assistance with resumes and career plans, positive experiences with staff, and supportive services.

Lack of communication regarding applications, limited responsiveness from staff, and concerns about content relevance for non-UK students.

Student Associations

Student associations are helpful, fantastic and supportive. There are mentions of services such as food and drink vouchers, good communication, workshops, perks, and events.

Table 2 SSAF Service usage and satisfaction



Limitations in accessibility for online students, issues with advertisements, and schedules of events.

International Student Support

Overall positive sentiment towards SCU support for international students. It highlights the assistance provided in terms of financial and emotional support, as well as the quick response and helpfulness of the support services.

Sporting activities

Support received, which allowed students to participate in events with SCU and connect with peers despite studying remotely.

* Total number of respondents who indicated they used the service, divided by the satisfaction rating given to that service.

SSAF Student Priority Results

The key question (Q8) in the survey was framed as follows:

Under the Higher Education Support Act 2003 the University must spend SSAF on activity that aligns with Government guidelines. [Click here](#) to see examples of what could be funded under each guideline.

In this activity please indicate the % of SSAF you choose to allocate across the allowable spending areas. (Please choose at least 5 different priority areas)

Table 3 shows the average % allocated and priority rank to each category by the whole student cohort in this year's survey.

Table 4 compares how the overall average % allocations have varied between 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023.

The average percentage of allocated funds and equivalent ranks across the students' course location are shown in Table 5a with table 5b comparing the Top 5 priorities at each preferred delivery location.

Table 6 shows the results for Q10 where student were asked to select the preferred delivery location in relation to the priorities they gave in Q8. They were able to select multiple locations for each category if they wished. The preferred location for delivery loosely matches course location as shown in demographic profile of respondents.

Table 3: Categories as allocated by overall student cohort in 2023

Rank	SSAF category	% Allocation
1	helping students obtain employment or career advice upon graduation	13.9
2	promoting the health or welfare of students	12.1
3	helping students obtain employment while studying at SCU	10.9
4	providing food or drink to students on a campus	9.9
5	helping students develop skills for study	8.3
6	helping students with their financial affairs	7.8
7	caring for children of students	5.6
8	helping students secure accommodation	4.7
9	supporting the administration of a student club	4.3
10	supporting overseas students with welfare, accomodation and employment	4.0
11	providing libraries and reading rooms for students	3.3
12	providing legal services to students	3.0
13	supporting a sporting or other recreational activity by students	2.9
14	advocating students' interests in matters arising under the HEP's rules	2.1
15	giving students information to help them in their orientation	1.9
16	supporting an artistic activity by students	1.4
17	advising students about university rules, policies and procedures	1.2
18	helping students obtain insurance against personal accidents	1.0
19	supporting the production and dissemination of student media	0.9
20	supporting debating by students	0.8

Table 4: Overall SAFF priority allocations comparison between 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023 SSAF survey results

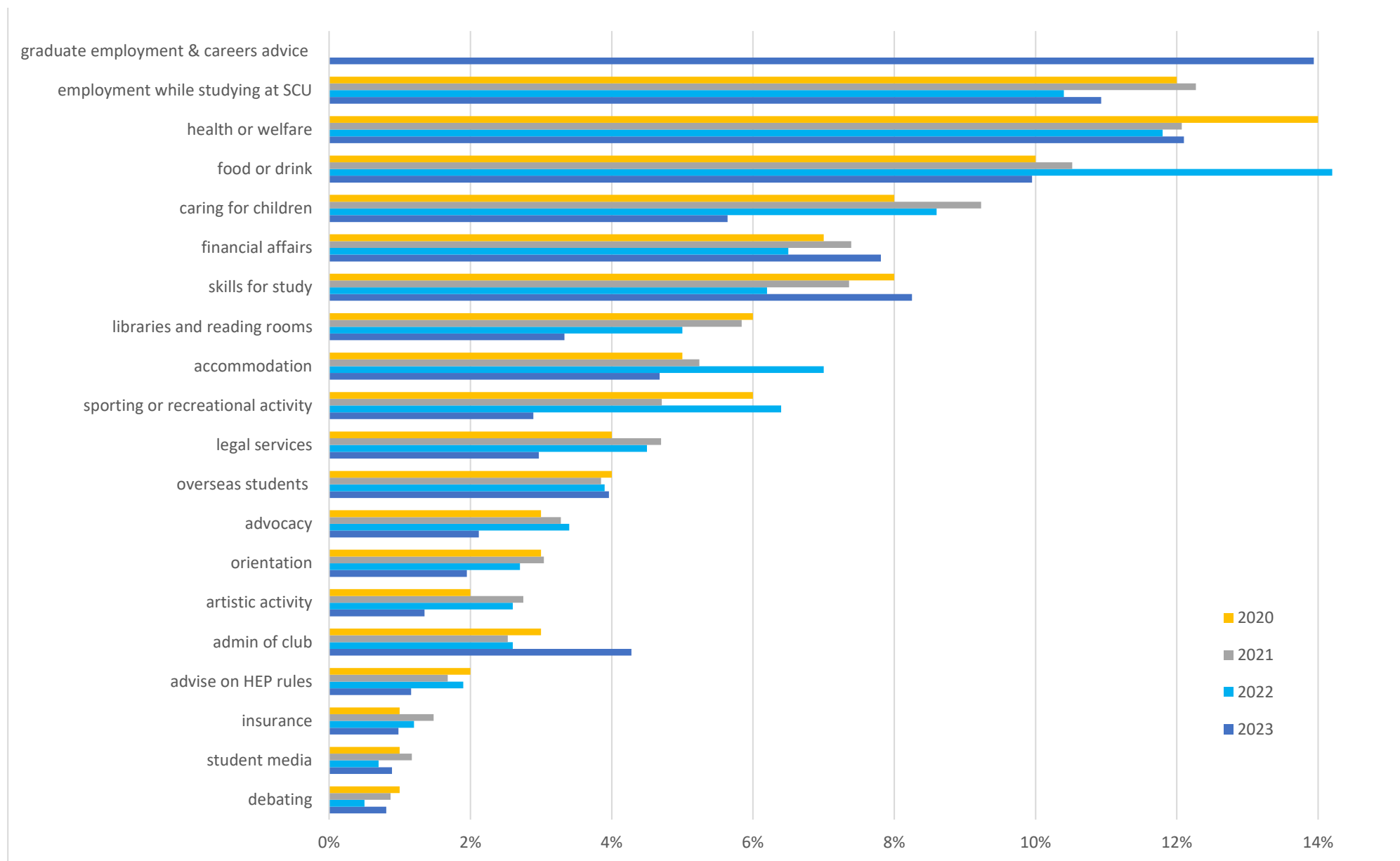


Table 5a: SAFF priority allocations by cohort (course location)

overall priority rank	SSAF category	% funds allocated by location					Priority rank by location				
		CH	GC	L	O	HS	CH	GC	L	O	HS
1	helping students obtain employment or career advice upon graduation	14.7	14.7	8.3	14.1	11.0	3	1	5	1	5
2	promoting the health or welfare of students	16.0	10.3	12.0	14.0	11.0	1	4	2	2	4
3	helping students obtain employment while studying at SCU	10.4	11.6	8.3	10.3	13.0	4	3	4	4	2
4	providing food or drink to students on a campus	14.7	13.0	12.3%	4.8	8.2	2	2	1	8	6
5	helping students develop skills for study	6.0	7.1	6.8	10.3	5.4	5	6	6	3	7
6	helping students with their financial affairs	4.6	7.2	9.9	8.5	11.1	7	5	3	5	3
7	caring for children of students	4.6	5.1	5.5	7.1	2.4	8	8	10	6	12
8	helping students secure accommodation	3.1	4.5	3.5	5.5	4.0	11	9	11	7	8
9	supporting the administration of a student club	5.2	3.7	6.2	4.3	3.3	6	11	8	9	10
10	supporting overseas students	2.2	5.4	2.5	2.5	13.1	14	7	14	11	1
11	providing libraries and reading rooms for students	3.1	3.9	6.5	2.3	2.5	10	10	7	13	11
12	providing legal services to students	1.3	2.3	3.4	3.9	4.0	18	13	12	10	8
13	supporting a sporting or other recreational activity	3.1	2.9	5.6	2.3	2.1	9	12	9	14	13
14	advocating for students under the HEP's rules	2.9	2.2	2.9	2.0	2.0	12	14	13	15	14
15	giving students information to help them in their orientation	2.0	1.8	1.8	2.3	1.0	15	15	15	12	17
16	supporting an artistic activity by students	2.3	1.1	1.8	1.3	1.0	13	16	15	16	17
17	advising about university rules, policies and procedures	1.3	1.0	1.4	1.3	1.4	17	17	17	17	16
18	helping students obtain insurance against personal accidents	1.7	0.7	0.2	1.0	1.5	16	19	20	19	15
19	supporting student media - production and dissemination	0.6	0.8	1.0	1.0	1.0	19	18	18	20	20
20	supporting debating by students	0.2	0.7	0.3	1.3	1.0	20	20	19	18	17

Mean of Q8 (priority % allocated) CH: Coffs Harbour & the National Marine Science Centre GC: Gold Coast & Coomera L: Lismore

O: Online/SCU online HS: Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane Hotel Schools

Priority ranks by location which are >3 higher than the overall rank are shaded grey

Priority ranks by location which are >3 lower than the overall rank are shaded blue

Table 5b: Top 5 SAFF priority allocations compared across course locations

Priority Rank	Coffs Harbour & NMSC (CH)	Gold Coast & Coomera (GC)	Lismore (L)	Online (O)	Hotel Schools (HS)
1	promoting the health or welfare of students	helping students obtain employment or career advice upon graduation	providing food or drink to students on a campus	helping students obtain employment or career advice upon graduation	supporting overseas students
2	providing food or drink to students on a campus	providing food or drink to students on a campus	promoting the health or welfare of students	promoting the health or welfare of students	helping students obtain employment while studying at SCU
3	helping students obtain employment or career advice upon graduation	helping students obtain employment while studying at SCU	helping students with their financial affairs	helping students develop skills for study	helping students with their financial affairs
4	helping students obtain employment while studying at SCU	promoting the health or welfare of students	helping students obtain employment while studying at SCU	helping students obtain employment while studying at SCU	promoting the health or welfare of students
5	helping students develop skills for study	helping students with their financial affairs	helping students obtain employment or career advice upon graduation	helping students with their financial affairs	helping students obtain employment or career advice upon graduation

Note: responses for the following locations have been combined - Coffs Harbour & the National Marine Science Centre / Gold Coast & Coomera / the Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane Hotel Schools



Table 6: Preferred service delivery location

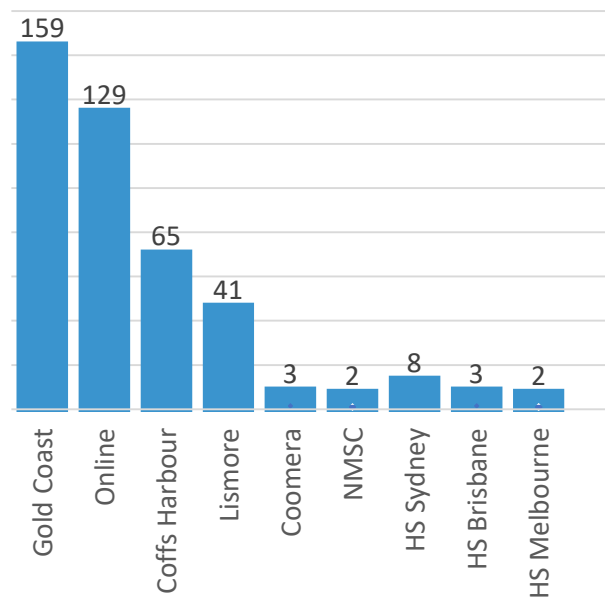
overall priority rank	SSAF category	GC	O	CH	L	HS-B	HS-M	NMSC	HS-S	C
1	helping students obtain employment or career advice upon graduation	109	66	57	26	3	2	2	2	1
2	promoting the health or welfare of students	128	83	57	30	3	1	1	2	0
3	helping students obtain employment while studying at SCU	103	78	69	36	4	2	1	3	1
4	providing food or drink to students on a campus	89	70	40	27	1	2	2	2	2
5	helping students develop skills for study	121	58	34	18	5	3	2	3	1
6	helping students with their financial affairs	60	31	29	15	4	1	0	3	0
7	caring for children of students	79	62	55	22	4	2	2	0	1
8	helping students secure accommodation	49	32	14	12	1	1	2	1	1
9	supporting the administration of a student club	25	29	13	7	1	0	1	0	1
10	supporting overseas students	31	31	17	12	1	1	0	0	1
11	providing libraries and reading rooms for students	68	39	31	19	3	2	0	1	0
12	providing legal services to students	58	50	22	15	1	1	1	1	3
13	supporting a sporting or other recreational activity	55	29	16	13	1	2	1	1	1
14	advocating for students under the HEP's rules	34	32	18	13	1	0	2	1	0
15	giving students information to help them in their orientation	57	30	50	18	2	2	0	3	2
16	supporting an artistic activity by students	38	37	24	16	2	2	1	4	1
17	advising about university rules, policies and procedures	21	12	28	9	1	0	2	0	1
18	helping students obtain insurance against personal accidents	19	16	11	7	0	1	0	0	1
19	supporting student media - production and dissemination	15	16	11	7	0	3	0	0	0
20	supporting debating by students	11	9	7	5	0	1	0	0	1

GC: Gold Coast O: Online/SCU online CH: Coffs Harbour L: Lismore NMSC: National Marine Science Centre C: Coomera HS-B: Hotel School Brisbane HS-S: Hotel School Sydney, HS-M: Hotel School Melbourne

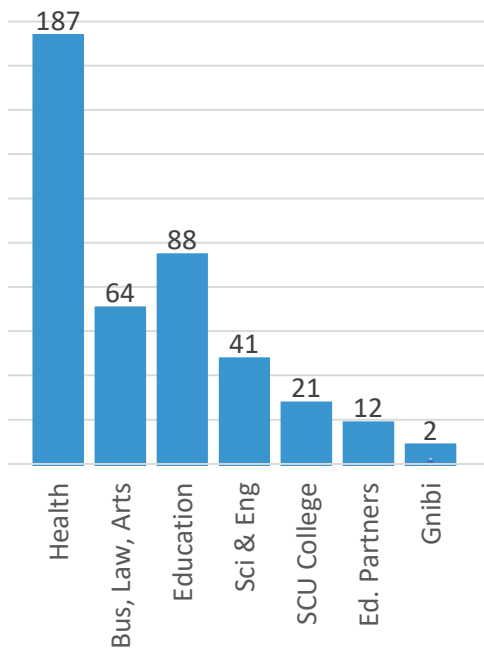
Demographic Profile of Respondents

The full demographics of the survey responses are shown below. Of the 430 participants who completed the SSAF survey, demographic profiles could be captured only for 415 participants. The survey responses are broadly representative of the student cohort with slightly higher proportional percentage of responses from - Commencing students, Gold Coast and Online students, and Faculty of Health Students.

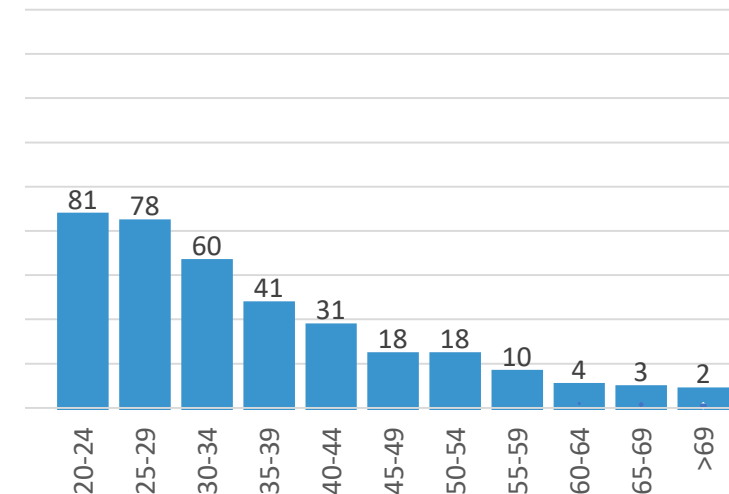
Number of respondents by location



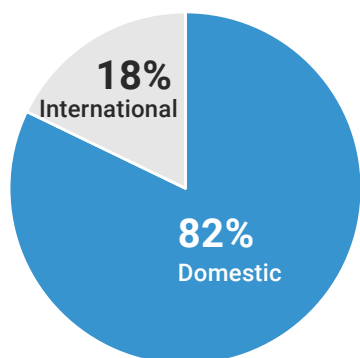
Number of respondents by faculty



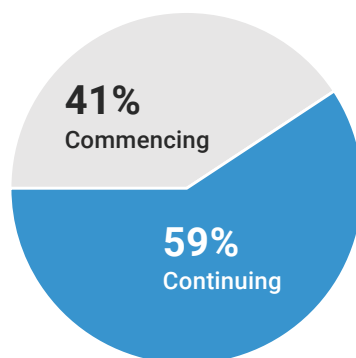
Number of respondents by age group



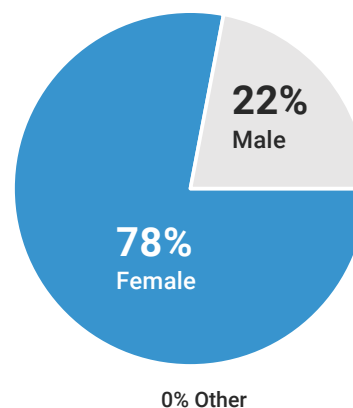
Residency



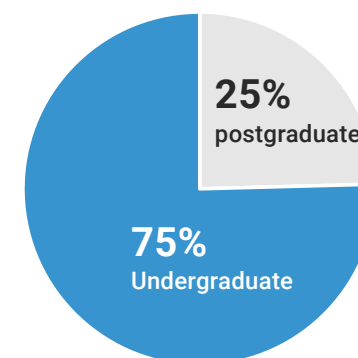
Cohort



Gender



Course Level

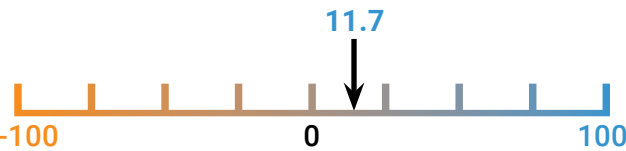


Summary of Qualitative Feedback

A sentiment analysis of the responses for Q11:

Please provide any suggestions or comments about the SSAF at Southern Cross University.

returned an overall positive/enthusiastic sentiment.



39% positive

Positive feedback contained comments voicing appreciation for the services provided and acknowledging the hard work of all involved.



7% negative

Recommendations for improvement were predominantly in terms of catering to the needs of online students, lowering fees for online students, and improving communication and transparency about the allocation of funds. Issues surrounding technology were also raised.



54% neutral/suggestions

The majority of comments included encouraging suggestions or neutral comments on how to spend SSAF.

Table 5 shows the responses to Question 11:

Table 5: Suggestions and Comments about SSAF at SCU

Perhaps a fun day like wednesday but every second friday too.
Help students with placements that's very important
I feel like online students often miss out on opportunities or support.
LEXSA has been a great support as an online student
I appreciate the opportunity to give regular feedback on allocation
The SSAF has provided some great things to the students, hopefully this can continue
They have been fantastic at Coastrs, Gold Coast campus
Glad to be a part of the SCU community
You all do a fantastic job and i look forward to seeing what new ideas you bring to the table.
I have used the student lounge on a couple of times and it's quite impressive to see the lounged stocked with food for students
I would like to say there could be more available to help us in the real world, and easier access to First Aid Courses or subsidised community courses. Thank you Lexsa for the free food!
Please employ more learning coaches as I struggle to find an apppointment at times
Respond to students mail fast

Feedback and Suggestions on Top 5 Priorities

1. Helping students obtain employment or advice on careers upon graduation

Collaborating with businesses

Resume writing, working with local employers to have opportunities emailed to scu to circulate Newsletters, emails

Have a career advisor on individual career plans and assistance for future employment.

2. Promoting the Health or Welfare of students

Offering referrals for mental health

Uni-card discounts at local businesses that promote health choices,

Wider variety of health practitioners on campus

Online counselling for students

Well days, craft and workshops

subsidised access to counsellors or psychologists

Better contact with distance students and ways they can care for themselves while studying.

3. Helping students obtain employment while studying at SCU

Helping to provide employment opportunities that wellposition students in their chosen career when they graduate

Help students find healthy workplaces

Jobs board on campus or online for internal vacancies

Assist with guidance to where to gain employment

Workshops offered at the end of each year with potential employers to visit and interact with students.

Linking up with volunteer programs to build CV

4. Providing food or drink to students on campus

Healthy food options which are affordable

Forget paella (every week?? why?) and implement low cost pantry items so students can keep feeding themselves during this cost of living crisis. work with local charities if needed to stock / supply low cost / free foods for students living below the poverty line. Other universities have been doing this since / before COVID hit - where is SCU on this matter?

Free lunches and groceries

More food and drinks provided daily for free, especially for students who are on campus every day during intensives

Milk and coffee/tea available in student lounge areas

More food stalls

More food truck don't need to be free but discounted, tacos, burgers, like a night food truck market will also invite community

5. Helping students develop study skills

Free access to Udemmy or coursera

More Learning Coaches

Promoting study groups

Access prior to course commencing for online module to assist with study skills

Have optional help lessons during orientation

Help with identifying & avoiding distractions, how to create effective study space, keeping track of strengths and weaknesses, making checklist and prioritising tasks, teach specific study skills that are often required at placements.

Free introduction sessions on how to write for academic purposes

Feedback and Suggestions for Student Associations

What services would you like your student associations to offer?

Better assistance in navigating SCU's enrolment and class procedures. Currently it is very confusing

More online events

Prompt replying on mail and dedicated support number to call

Enhanced learning opportunities, perhaps encourage study groups. University cooking classes and ideas of meal preparations, Wellness event ideas such as walking groups, cultural event ideas: poetry slams, art exhibitions, book clubs, cultural festivals to celebrate the diversity at the campus.

Wellness and self care among students: sleep hygiene, mindfulness and meditation sessions.

More stocked student lounges. Everything goes so fast

Student kitchen support, discount for course required training, lunch vouchers, wellness activities

More stress relief activities, animal therapy, more SCU merchandise

I like the lunch vouchers, that would be good more than one day a week. Subsidised printing services are great as well as the things like binding and wall planners. The student diaries were awesome, but they haven't done those for years

More online Competitions

More focus on helping student to get work placement, as the advertisement that is published highlight about work placement and students expected that they will get the help they need to start their career.

Maybe more consistent free food, as I know that I am struggling to get by, and it would be great if on uni days, I'm able to grab a sandwich, etc for free. (I appreciate the cereal and toast at B4 for this). I suppose just more options would be appreciated

Provide leisure activities for students to join and connect. Such as crafting, knitting, croche

More social events like the trivia but other stuff for other people

Yoga and wellness association where we have weekly meetings and go to the beach or do yoga at SCU and weekly tea in the early morning

Bring back the "ask the question" feature

Maybe more activities around mature aged students or those who work?

Appendix 1: Survey Questions

Survey Introduction

Student SSAF Survey This brief survey is your opportunity to tell the University about which services you see as the most important to receive an allocation of funding from the Student Services and Amenities Fee. What is SSAF?. This information will be used to inform spending priorities across Southern Cross University in 2024.

Your responses are entirely confidential. The results will be made available after the survey has been completed. No results will be reported which will identify individuals.

Questions

Q1: Are you aware of the services and activities that are funded or supported by SSAF?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If Yes continue to Q2. If No skip to Q8.

Q2: Which services have you used during the course of your study at SCU?
(select all that apply)

- ☐ Orientation
- ☐ Student Associations
- ☐ International Student Support
- ☐ Careers and Employability services
- ☐ Advocacy services
- ☐ Sporting Activities

Q3 How satisfied are you currently with the services and activities provided?

Slider provided for each service in Q2 0= Very dissatisfied 5= Very Satisfied.

Q4: Please provide reasons for the satisfaction / dissatisfaction you indicated above.

Free text box for each service in Q2

Q5 Are you aware that SSAF funds your student associations and clubs?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Q6: Are you involved in any associations or clubs?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Q7: What services would you like your student associations to offer?

Free text

Q8: Under the Higher Education Support Act 2003 the University must spend SSAF on activity that aligns with Government guidelines. Click here to see examples of what could be funded under each guideline.
In this activity please indicate the % of SSAF you choose to allocate across the allowable spending areas. (Please choose at least 5 different priority areas).

Enter percentage next to each spending area category

Q9: In relation to your top priorities selected in the question above: do you have any ideas or suggestions on new ways the priorities could be delivered?

Free text box provided for each spending area category

Q10: In relation to your top priorities selected: which of the following is your preferred location to access these services?

Preferred location tick box for each spending area category. Students could select all that apply.

Q11: Please provide any suggestions or comments about the SSAF at Southern Cross University.

Free text