

# **Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) Report 2023**

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Tuesday, 11 June 2024

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Student Partnerships and Engagement

Status: Approved | Version: 1 | Date: 11 June 2024

## What is SSAF?

The Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) is a compulsory semesterly fee charged by most Australian universities. SSAF pays for non-academic services and amenities that don't relate directly to your program – everything from clubs, student events and career advisors.

The Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) helps to maintain and enhance important non-academic services and amenities that improve the university experience and support a wide range of student needs. It provides funding for things such as sporting and recreational activities, health and well-being services, employment and career advice as well as independent student representation structures. You can find more detailed information on the [Department of Education](#) website.

## SSAF Consultation

Federation University Australia values student voice and actively engages in consultation through our Student Senate, the University's peak representative student body which meets 6-8 times per year. The Student Senate gathers feedback and recommendations on various aspects of student experience, including but not limited to student amenities and services. This involves consulting with, and providing an avenue for, students to provide feedback and recommendations regarding:

- Student amenities and services.
- Federation University Australia's policies and procedures regarding student life.
- Student life for students based on campus, studying online or via distance education.
- Federation University Australia's physical, cultural and technological learning environments.

Through our consultation process, the Student Senate makes recommendations regarding the use and proposed use of proceeds from the student services and amenities fee (SSAF). Federation University Australia also actively seeks student input through surveys like the Student, Events and Activities Survey held in March 2023. This survey allowed students to share their preferences for SSAF-funded events and activities, guiding the creation of the Student Events Calendar. By engaging students in this way, we ensure their voices are heard and their needs are met, enhancing the overall university experience.

## In 2023, SSAF funds were spent on the following student-facing services, projects and activities:

- Student Orientation, Transitions and Retention Activities (across all campuses and virtually)
- Student Events and Activities to support retention, success and connection (on campus and virtually)
- Sport and Fitness Program – providing students with opportunities to participate in events and fitness activities, equipment, uniforms, support for elite athletes and prizes for participation in challenges and competitions.
- Support for student groups and clubs across campuses and virtually
- Social media and communications of SSAF related services and activities to students
- Improvement and maintenance of student amenities – Student Lounges
- Student Senate – Induction, training, promotion, merchandise and representative stipend
- Student Advocacy Services
- Careers and Employment Programs and Services

## SSAF Allocation 2023:

Key Area	2023 Total Allocation \$	2023 Total Actual Spend \$	Are services available online?	Estimated No. of students accessing services
1. Health Services	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2. Clubs or other associations	\$150,000	\$143,350	Yes	5,287
a. Sporting	\$10,000	\$12,716		
b. Internal student politics	N/A	N/A		
c. Gender, sexuality, ethnicity, race, or nationality-based	\$5,000	\$2,455		
d. Areas-of-study related e.g. law	\$15,000	\$12,741		
e. Other activities e.g. music, debate, chess	\$5,000	\$1,150		
f. Other	\$16,900	\$5,931		
3. Employment/career services	\$719,709	\$685,159	Yes	3,782
4. Legal aid	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
5. Other student amenities – Student Partnerships and Engagement Programs, including Student Events, Orientation and Activities. .	\$926,733	\$817,010	Yes	17,742
6. Student Senate Operations	\$92,888	\$115,410	Yes	26
7. Student Advocacy Service	\$470,294	\$472,945	Yes	852 formally, others have received initial advice without progressing to an appointment
8. Supporting a sporting or other recreational activity by students	\$233,900	\$212,257	Partially online	1,469
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,645,464</b>	<b>\$2,481,124</b>		

## SSAF Funded Services

### Student Partnerships and Engagement

- Student Orientation, Transition and Retention Activities were delivered across Federation’s higher education campuses and virtually which included 27 sessions and 7,450 participants.
- Student events and activities to support retention, success and connection were delivered across Federation’s higher education campuses and virtually.

- Our Sport program provided our students with opportunities to participate in events and fitness activities. We purchased new sporting equipment, uniforms, supported elite athletes and community[1]based teams and created challenges and prizes for competitions and participation. 1,463 students participated in our extra-curricular sports programs and activities.
- We provided support and funding to 38 student groups, clubs and societies across all campuses and virtually. A total of 282 events were held with 5,487 participants
- There were provisions for Student Lounge spaces and creating welcoming student friendly spaces.
- We provided SSAF focussed student communications including social media and promotion of services and activities.
- The Fed Falcons participated in the University Basketball League competition, this program created a strong connection to the University for students and staff and inspired a culture of excellence and high performance and included.
- The Fed Falcons participated in the University Basketball League, a National league hosted by UniSport Australia and endorsed by Basketball Australia with 39 students gaining the opportunity to play along with another 6 volunteering in off-court roles and hundreds of spectators watching in person or via the livestream. The engagement from the students involved in this program is at the highest level, it creates a strong connection to the University as students take great pride in wearing our colours and being a 'Falcon'. As a high performance program it inspires students and staff to a culture of excellence all while developing relationships that will last well beyond the duration of the degrees that are being studied.
- UniSport Nationals saw a team of 20 students represent the University on the Gold Coast in women's netball, men's basketball and taekwondo in the annual week long multi-sport event. Always remembered as a highlight of students university life, this event was no exception providing memorable experiences, and strong connections to each other and the University.
- We celebrated the extra-curricular achievements of our students at FedAwards.
- We planned and facilitated 191 staff and student group-run events with a total attendance of 10,207 students for the year.

In 2023, the Student Partnerships and Engagement team consisted of the following ongoing staff members across each of the Ballarat, Berwick and Churchill campuses (see below). Where possible work was campus neutral via TEAMS, phone or email.

1x Manager, Student Partnerships and Engagement in Ballarat (1.0 FTE)

1x Sports and Clubs Coordinator (1.0 FTE)

1x Coordinator, Student Partnerships and Engagement (1.0 FTE)

1x Student Engagement Officer in Ballarat (1.0 FTE)

2x Student Engagement Officer in Berwick (1.5 FTE)

1x Student Engagement Officer in Gippsland (1.0 FTE)

1x Student Senate Executive Officer (1.0 FTE)

1x Support Officer, Events (1.0 FTE)

## Student Senate

- The Student Senate held 4 student forums, 7 Senate Meetings, and representatives developed 20 motions, of which 17 were submitted to Federation University for suggested systemic improvements to improve the student experience across all campuses.
- The Student Senate sent two representatives to the National Leadership Forum in Canberra. The representatives met and listened to several important figures including; the Prime Minister, Anthony Albanese, Emily Scott from GiveOUT and, former Captain of the Australian Diamonds, Courtney Bassett.

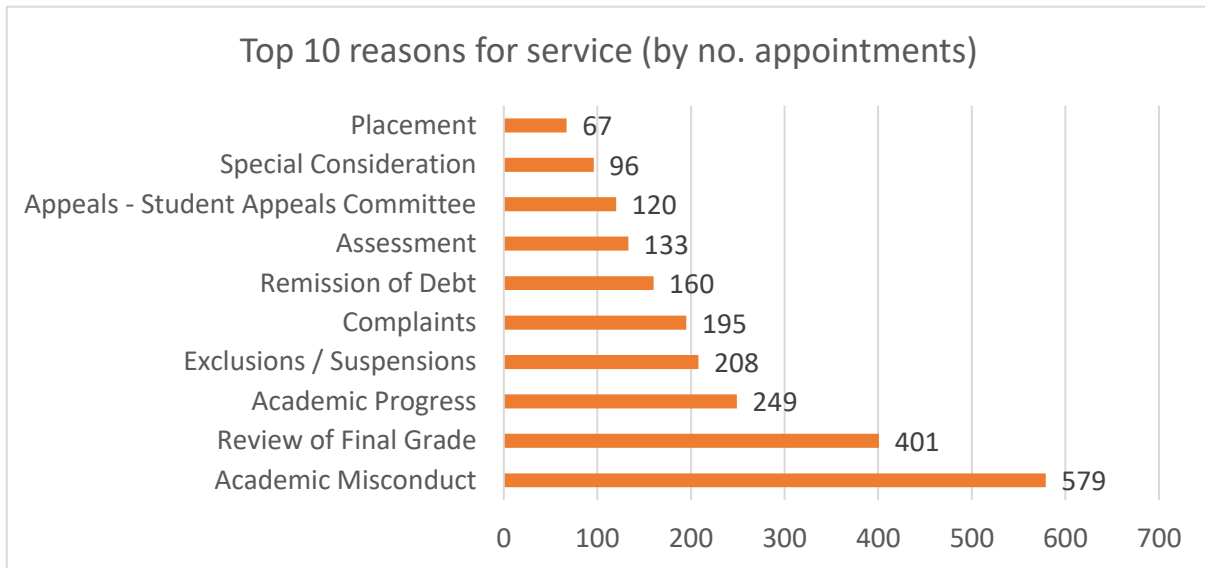
- The Student Senate, in partnership with the University led the Student Leadership Retreat held in July. This was for all student leaders and there were representatives from Student Groups, Clubs and Societies, Student Senate, Peer Mentors and Student Academic Leaders. The three-day retreat involved a group dinner, guided Tour of SMB Campus, networking session, student led self care for student leaders workshop, and professional development workshop on emotional intelligence and leadership skills.
- Some examples of passed Motions are:
  - Offer/expand the number of classes offered over the summer
  - Provide more effective pest control on all residences
  - Introduce of First Nations curriculum into Bachelor of Arts degree
  - Provide information and guidelines on when students who are promised compensation will receive said compensation
  - Provide weekend contact for Fedliving Mt Helen

## Student Advocacy

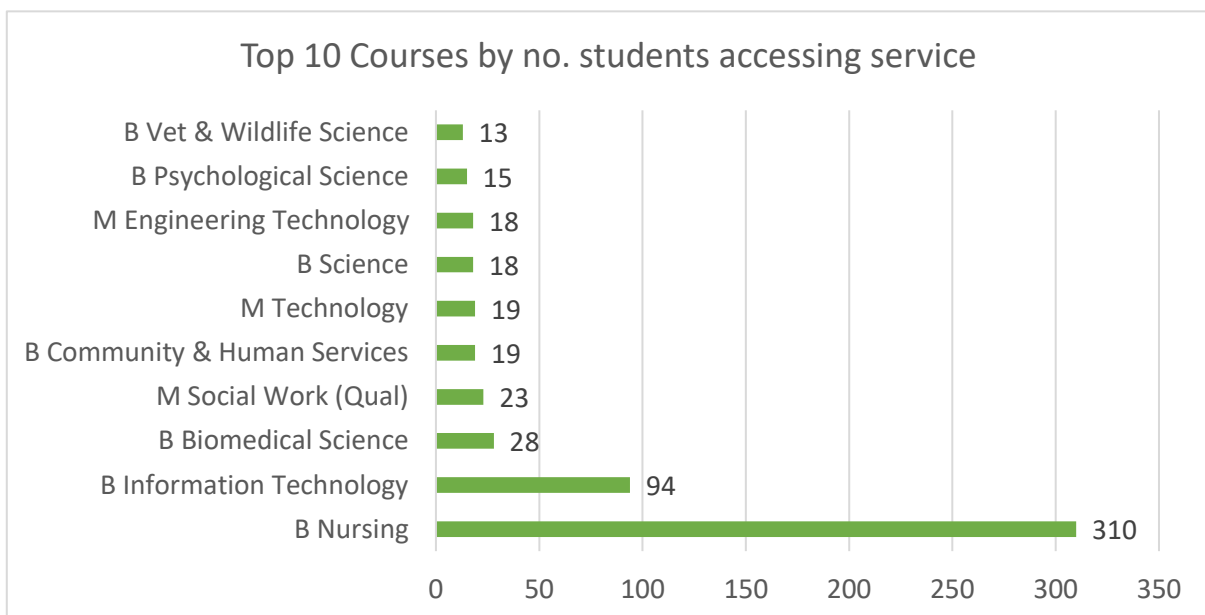
- Student Advocacy provides independent advice and support on student rights, and on navigating University legislation and processes. We support all students at all study levels and campuses (including TAFE and Partner Provider students). We are here for when things go wrong between students and the University and try to redress the power imbalances inherent to these situations.
- We are fully-funded by the Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF), and – although we are employed by the university - we are required under SSAF legislation to act independently of decision-makers within Fed. This means we can advise you based on your best interests, not those of the university.
- Our staffing level remained stable throughout 2022 – a total of 4.5 Full-time equivalent (FTE) staff members across each of the 3 main campuses (although the vast majority of our work is conducted via TEAMS, email or phone):
- 1FTE Manager, 1.6FTE Advocates and 0.6FTE Intake/Triage Officer in Ballarat  
0.8FTE Advocate in Berwick  
0.5FTE Advocate in Churchill
- Overall, our caseload reduced in 2023 vs 2022, although the team noted a significant increase in case complexity, evidenced by a large increase in complaint-related cases, and those involving potential exclusion.

	2023	VS 2022
APPOINTMENTS	2473	-8.5%
STUDENTS SUPPORTED	852	-14.7%

- Below are the top 10 reasons for service from 2023, and the top 10 Courses of students accessing the service. For a detailed look at what we can help with, please visit [www.federation.edu.au/studentadvocate](http://www.federation.edu.au/studentadvocate).
- 32% of appointments in 2023 related to Academic Misconduct, an almost identical % to 2022.



- 36.4% of students accessing the service were from the Bachelor of Nursing, although this has reduced from 52.4% the previous year. Overall, students from 99 different Courses used Student Advocacy last year, an increase from 83 Courses in 2022.



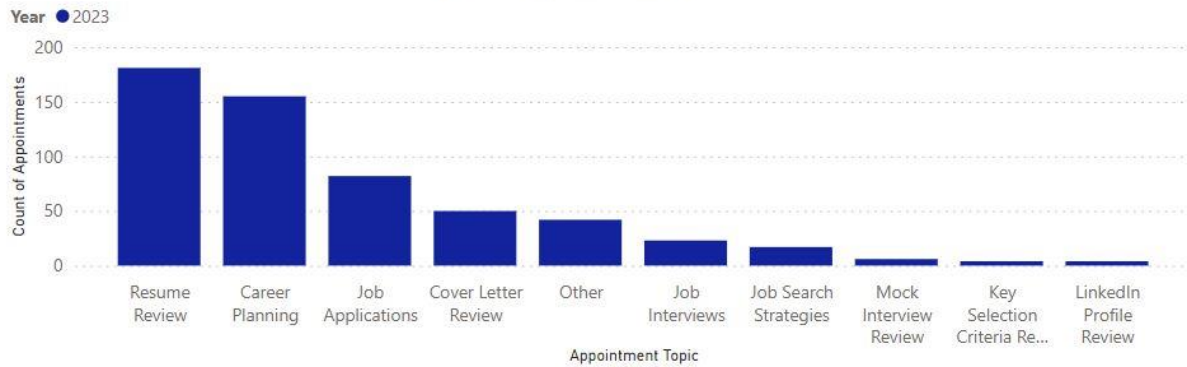
- At a systemic level, we provide expert advice to university management on how university policy is experienced by students and impacts to their experience. We report regularly on trends and ongoing issues to both the university and the Student Senate. In 2023, this systemic work took in Special Consideration, the changes to the Nursing calendar and academic misconduct processes and penalties.
- Outside of individual and systemic casework, we also updated the look, navigation and content on our webpages, re-framing them as self-advocacy tools to give students the basics they need for their case if they prefer not to get our support. This has led to improved efficiency in our team and (we hope) and improved, streamlined experience for students.

## Careers and Employability Service

- The Careers and Employability (C&E) team offers comprehensive support to help students and recent graduates to achieve their career goals. The C&E team support current Federation University Students, Alumni who have graduate in the past two years and provide limited support to prospective students. They assist students in navigating potential careers paths related to their degrees by providing the following services: individual careers counselling appointments with qualified Careers Advisors, online and in-person workshops, integrating career development learning content into the curriculum, resume and application reviews, professional development programs, and through liaising with employers to connect students with employment and volunteer opportunities.
- The C&E team run two flagship programs to assist students with developing their employability skills.
  - Federation Advantage Program:** This program recognises students for their participation in co-curricular activities.
  - Mentor Advantage Program:** This program offers students the opportunity to be mentored by Fed Alumni currently working in industry.
- In 2023, the C&E team had a further reduction in staffing from 7.6 FTE to 6.6 FTE. As some of the C&E team work on time fraction reductions and one position was temporarily vacated and not filled, there was only 5.2 FTE staff for 2023. This may have had an impact on service delivery for 1:1 appointments as there was a drop in the number of appointments from 736 in 2022 to 609 in 2023. The C&E team did however see an increase in engagement from students in webinars & workshops and in the Mentor Advantage and Federation Advantage Programs despite the reduction of staff.

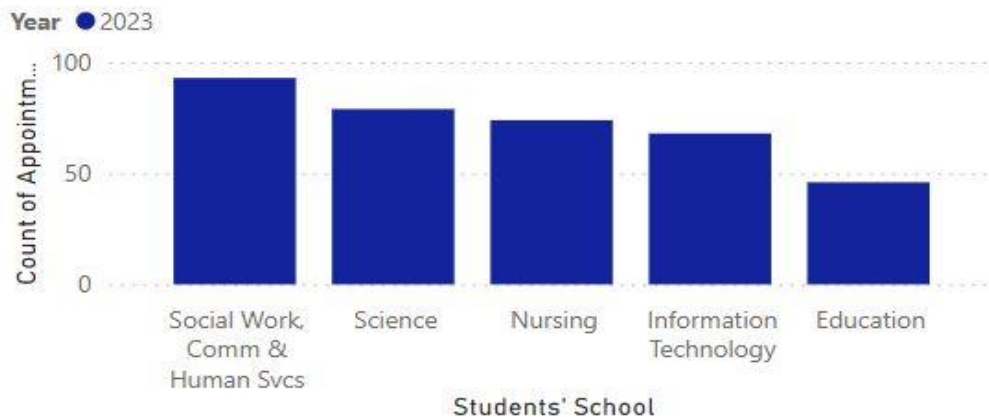
Role	Campus	2023 FTE staff funded in Org Structure	2023 actual FTE Staffing
Coordinator – Careers and Employability	Mt Helen	1.0 – HEW 7	1.0
Careers and employability Advisor	Mt Helen	0.8 – HEW 6	Filled 0.8 from end of March 2023
Careers and employability Advisor	Berwick	1.0 – HEW 6	0.8
Student Development Support Officer	Gippsland	Fixed term contract	0.8 from end of March 2023- Dec 2023
Careers and employability Advisor	Brisbane	1.0 – HEW 6	0.8
Training and Program Development Officer (TPDO)	Mt Helen	0.8 - HEW 6	Position vacant
Student Development Opportunities Coordinator	Mt Helen	1.0 – HEW 6	0.6
Employment Liaison Officer	Berwick	1.0- HEW 6	0.8
Casual staff (Backfill for TPDO position)	Berwick	N/A	0.4
		<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>
		6.6	5.2

Career Appointments by Topic



- C&E's top reason for student appointments is 'Resume Reviews', suggesting the services are used primarily for assistance in polishing their job applications to gain employment more than any other topic. Close second is 'Career Planning' with staff assisting students in making informed decisions about their career progression.

Top 5 Career Appointments by Students' School



- The highest users of C&E's appointment service were from Social Work and Community & Human Services courses with other study areas such as Science, Nursing, IT, Science and Education coming in the top five.
- Appointments and workshops have averaged 4.97 out of 5 stars for quality and assistance from student participants that responded to our feedback survey.



- Other data includes:

Measure	2022	2023
<b>Student Appointments including document reviews.</b>	<b>736</b>	<b>609</b>
<b>Webinars and Workshops</b>	<b>69 webinars/workshop 924 attendees</b>	<b>90 webinars/workshops 1472 Students</b>
<b>FedEdge Users</b>	<b>14,742 (non unique) Users</b>	<b>15, 899 (non unique) Users</b>
<b>Mentor Advantage Program (MAP)</b>	<b>12 Pairs</b>	<b>17 pairs</b>
<b>Federation Advantage Program</b>	<b>10 Silver Awards 25 Gold Awards 5 Federation Advantage Awards</b>	<b>51 Bronze Awards 66 Silver Awards 15 Gold Awards 2 Federation Advantage Awards</b>