

La Trobe University

Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF)

2021 Allocation Report

The *Higher Education Support (Student Services, Amenities, Representation and Advocacy) Guidelines 2022* require higher education providers to provide a publicly available report on Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) allocations and actual expenditure for the year as part of their annual reporting and in the form approved by the Minister. This *SSAF Allocation Report* is the form approved by the Minister.

Additional reporting was introduced to allow for greater transparency and consistency in SSAF allocations and expenditure.

SSAF Consultation and Achievements

SSAF legislation requires Universities to have a formal process of student consultation regarding the allocation of funds and expenditure of SSAF fees. La Trobe University (LTU) provides a range of consultation opportunities for our students to provide input and feedback on how SSAF is spent. La Trobe University Council approves our formal consultation framework, underpinning the engagement with students around how SSAF is spent each year.

The University made the tough decision to reinstate the Student Services and Amenities Fees (SSAF) for 2021, acknowledging that 2021 was a year for the entire tertiary education sector to regroup and recover in response to the continuing impact of COVID-19.

Consultation

The decision to reinstate the SSAF for 2021 followed significant consultation in 2020 through several opportunities:

- online feedback forms
- surveys
- campus and student-led events
- consultation with the Student Services and Amenities Group Consultative Committee (SSAG) and elected student representatives from the International Students Association (ISA), La Trobe Student Association (LTSA) & La Trobe Student Union (LTSU)
- workshops with Student Partnership Program student leaders
- through the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Students) dedicated email address for feedback regarding SSAF, ssaf.feedback@latrobe.edu.au

The SSAF survey in 2021 was used to inform priorities for SSAF allocation in addition to feedback from student focus groups and consultation with student associations. The SSAF survey was emailed to students and open from 11th to 26th October, with 542 students participating. These responses were used to inform and improve SSAF spending.

Outcomes and priorities

According to the SSAF survey, the top five services that students felt were important for the university to support were wellbeing and counselling support, learning and study support, food-share or emergency food relief, career advice, and industry mentoring. The survey also revealed that the most frequently used services by students were clubs and societies, health and wellbeing services, support and advice for careers, student communications, and learning hubs.

Notable outcomes:

- An improvement in student satisfaction with support services with 2021 seeing the largest improvement of any university in Victoria.
- Good overall understanding of SSAF purpose and spend, with a greater understanding of SSAF purpose than spend
- 85% of respondents completing undergraduate level study
- Responses evenly received across 1st, 2nd and 3rd year students
- 95% of respondents were domestic students

In light of the challenges caused by COVID, LTU focussed its SSAF allocation on a series of key priorities for SSAF supported activities in 2021:

- Student associations (including student representation, student clubs, student engagement, legal and financial services and student advocacy)
- Student advising
- Support for international students
- Student financial assistance
- Food share
- Student health & wellbeing services

Achievements

In 2021, LTU provided additional investment for increased student support through our Health & Wellbeing services and Student Engagement services to help students feel supported and connected during their continued navigation through COVID-19.

Students were supported through a range of successful services and programs:

- Student Advising Program
- Student Health & Wellbeing Services
- Career services (including Industry Engagement and Career Ready Advantage Program)
- Student engagement and Emerging Leaders' Program
- Student Excellence Academy
- Work Integrated Learning (WIL)
- LTU Sport
- Learning Hub
- Studiosity (24hr on-demand, online service)
- Peer Learning Advisors
- MyKi International student concession travel cards (in partnership with the Victorian Government)

Services and programs

Significant additional investment in our Student Health and Wellbeing services enabled the expansion of our specialist counselling program, wellbeing supports and the development of a suite of additional preventative initiatives to support mental health and respectful behaviours. Additional counselling and wellbeing capacity has been embedded in the team, enabling over 7,000 students to be supported by the service in 2021.

Our Academic Advising program was expanded in 2021, supporting almost 18,000 students across all cohorts and all campus and providing advising and support to students throughout the lifecycle of their degree, including dedicated support provided to every commencing student.

Our AccessAbility service experienced a 10% increase in engagement from relevant students in 2021, with additional investment embedded within the team to support students with disabilities to access a suite of services to enable their learning. The University also hosted our inaugural AccessAbility and Inclusion Awards to strengthen our culture of supporting learners with a diverse range of needs.

The Learning Hub and our on-demand Studiosity service continued to see high-demand from students, with SSAF investment enabling real time learner support to complement formal academic study, enabling 5,000 students to engage with the Learning Hub's broader suite of support. As in 2020, the 2021 Learning Hub service saw a 10-fold increase in engagement with services compared to the previous year.

Employability continued to be a key focus for La Trobe with above national average for full-time employment rates (2021 GOS National Report). In 2021, Employers rated La Trobe graduate's 1st in Victoria on the Adaptive Skills measure. 2021 saw over 400 students achieve their silver Career Ready Advantage award, with almost 9,000 students participating in the program. Career Ready Advantage is the foundation of the University's strategy to embed employability into our curriculum and ensure students develop the skills that will enable them to thrive in the world of work.

LTU Sport provided support to all student cohorts and campuses through a combination of face-to-face and hybrid models. These included the University Basketball League, which ran a full season and involved 25 students. Additionally, offsite student-run clubs such as the Melbourne Rowing Club, Queenscliff Harbour, and Heidelberg Badminton Centre were supported. Direct club funding supported approximately 800 student members and 27 affiliated sport clubs. Other events included Swimming & Athletics Nationals, involving 30 students, the Southern Shield Netball Tournament with 50 student participants and online health and fitness sessions catering to 250 students.

In 2021, engagement events and activities remained online due to the continued Covid-19 pandemic. The team successfully delivered an Orientation program, which included a mix of online live, semi-live and on-demand sessions. The Official University Welcome live online session was a huge success with 2,500 attendees. This success was mirrored with 92% of commencing students attending online orientation. The team successfully delivered online events throughout the year including Pride Week, Harmony Day, All-student forum, peer-to-peer events and supported the delivery of the student flu vaccination clinic.

SSAF Revenue Summary

	2021 Allocation \$ ¹	2021 Actual \$
SSAF Revenue	\$7,375,685	\$7,737,594

SSAF revenue carried forward from 2020	\$-506,000 ²	\$-506,000
Total SSAF funds available for 2021	\$7,375,685	\$7,231,594
SSAF revenue carried over into 2022	\$0	\$1,028,391

¹ Allocation refers to the SSAF funds expected to be received in the reported year (i.e., budgeted SSAF revenue).

² This refers to an overspend in 2020 due to lower SSAF charges as a result of COVID 19. As such, \$506k of SSAF allocated in 2021 was used to accommodate.

SSAF Charge Summary

The student services and amenities fee (SSAF) must not be above the maximum fee for a calendar year. The maximum SSAF is indexed annually as required by the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*. In 2021 the maximum SSAF was \$312.00 in SSAF.

Student Status	2021 SSAF charged \$ ²	Number of students charged in 2021 ³
Internal Full Time Full Year	312	14264
Internal PT Half Year / FT Half Year	273	2311
Internal Part Time Full Year	234	1983
Internal Full Time Half Year	156	2458
Internal Part Time Half Year	117	1784
Online Full Time Full Year	156	180
Online PT Half Year / FT Half Year	136	328
Online Part Time Full Year	116	211
Online Full Time Half Year	78	900
Online Part Time Half Year	58	294
Internal Full Time Half Year and Online Full Time Half Year	234	154
Internal Full Time Half Year and Internal Part Time Half Year	214	119
Internal Part Time Half Year and Online Full Time Half Year	195	20
Online Part time Half Year and Internal Part Time Half Year	175	184
International students	NA ¹	4,072
		Total: 29,262

¹ Note: As per Part 2 of the *Higher Education Support (Administration) Guidelines 2022* (Administration Guidelines), students studying on a part-time basis must not be charged more than 75 per cent of the maximum SSAF that a higher education provider determines for students studying on a full-time basis. The term "part-time basis" means a study load of less than 75 per cent of the normal full-time student load for the period to which the fee relates. As per part 7 of the Administration Guidelines, the normal EFTSL value for a full-time student studying over a period of one year is 1.0.

² Note: As per Part 2 of the Administration Guidelines, a higher education provider may choose to determine a different SSAF for particular categories of persons, including a zero amount.

³ Note: Students are categorised as full-time or part-time students based on the total EFTSL value of the units of study they undertook in [insert reported year]. For example, a student undertook a full-time study load in Semester 1 which was equal to 0.5 EFTSL and undertook a part-time study load in Semester 2 which was equal

to 0.375 EFTSL. This student would be categorised as a full-time student in [insert reported year] as the total EFTSL they undertook in [insert reported year] was equal to 0.875.

Student Status	2021 SSAF charged \$ ²	Approx. number of SSAF students remote learning 2021 ⁴
Remote learning/Online only	\$156 f/t \$116 p/t	1913

⁴ Note: The Department understands that not all higher education providers capture mode of study in their information systems and many students undertake a mixed mode of study such as face-to-face and remote learning. The data provided above is for students who undertook remote learning for 100% of their units of study. Please note, due to the limitations of our information systems, the above data may be approximate.

SSAF Allocation Summary

Subsection 19-38(4) of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (the Act) provides a list of 19 allowable expenditure items which higher education providers may allocate and spend SSAF revenue on.

Please note, under subsection 19-38 of the Act, SSAF revenue must not be spent to support a political party or the election of a person as a member of the legislature of the Commonwealth, State or a Territory, or a local government body.

Key Area	2021 Total Allocation \$	2021 Total Actual Spend \$	Are services available online?	Estimated No. of students accessing services
1. Health Services	\$234,787	\$234,787	YES	7068
2. Clubs or other associations (\$2,300,000)	\$2,300,000	\$1,316,363	YES	Open to all La Trobe University students
(a) Sporting	\$750,000	\$746,716	YES	Open to all La Trobe University students
(b) Internal student politics (specific to Honoraria included in Student Organisations)	\$100,000	\$100,000	YES	Open to all La Trobe University students
(c) Gender, sexuality, ethnicity, race, or nationality-based	\$0	\$0	N/A	Captured in 2 (Clubs or other)
(d) Areas-of-study related e.g. law	\$0	\$0	N/A	Captured above, not distinguished
(e) Other activities e.g. music, debate, chess (included in Student Association)	\$272,000	\$272,000	N/A	Open to all La Trobe University students
(f) Other	\$0	\$0	N/A	N/A
3. Employment/career services	\$335,680	\$184,902	YES	13,123
4. Legal aid (included in Student Association)	\$77,000	\$77,000	YES	Open to all La Trobe University students

5. Student Concessions (iUse)	\$50,000	\$3989	YES	Open to all international students
6. Advising Program	\$1,701,033	\$1,701,033	YES	
7. Learning Hubs (Discipline, Studiosity)	\$1,040,255	\$1,401,291	YES	
8. Student Engagement and Partnerships	\$297,448	\$647,265	YES	Open to all La Trobe University students
Total	\$6,709,203	\$6,236,346		

Organisations, bodies or third-party providers that received SSAF funding in 2021

Organisation Name ¹	Australian Business Number (ABN)	Supported Key Area	Total SSAF Funding Received \$	% of total SSAF Funding Received
La Trobe Student Association	55 644 397 160	Advocacy Service Student Representation Student Engagement & Activities Student Theatre & Film Legal Service Financial Service Food Relief Student Clubs International Student Support	\$2,025,000	29.5%
La Trobe Student Union <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LTU allocated \$275,000 (4%) – only invoiced for \$250,000 	15 079 588 570	Student Representation	\$250,000	3.6%

¹ Note: Only organisations, bodies or third-party providers who receive over \$1,000 in SSAF funding are expected to be disclosed above.

Declaration by Person of Authority

I, Jessica Vanderlelie, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Students of La Trobe University, declare that the information provided in this Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) Allocation Report is to the best of my knowledge true, complete and correct.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Vanderlelie', with a period at the end.

Signature of Person making Declaration

Professor Jessica Vanderlelie

Full name of Person making Declaration

Deputy Vice-Chancellor Students

Position of Person making Declaration

22/06/2022

Date