



Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF)

2020 Report





2020 SSAF Report

The University has found that the vibrancy of our campuses, range of services and activities available to students and the number of students accessing services and participating in events and activities has grown exponentially since this fee was introduced.

Student Services and Amenities Fees (SSAF) at Deakin University are annually spent on the Australian Government's list of Allowable Items. The services and amenities are delivered by Deakin University and the Deakin University Student Association (DUSA).



6,000+ students engaged in guided offerings



10,000+ students completed a resume review



15,000+ students engaged in careers education in a course



10,000+ vacancies advertised on the Jobs & Internships board

2020 SSAF - use of funds

SSAF 2020 income and expenditure was \$8,513,000.

Here are some of the ways your SSAF has enhanced student life in 2020.

Use of funds	Service Provider	Approved 2020 Allocations
Direct Advocacy and General Representation	DUSA	\$1,200,000
Sporting Programs including University Games, Club support and Sports Ambassadors	DUSA	\$715,000
Student Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-sporting clubs and societies • Orientation • Events • Volunteers • Cultural engagement • Cloud inclusive 	DUSA	\$1,635,000
Student Media (by students)	DUSA	\$180,000
Student Welfare General and including Survival Centre	DUSA	\$550,000
DUSA Digital Service Delivery	DUSA	\$150,000
Legal Advisory Service	DUSA	\$310,000
University Sport and Rec Management and Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salary + • Elite Athlete Grants • AUS Membership 	Deakin	\$425,000
Graduate Outcomes – Careers and Employment Services	Deakin	\$150,000
Mental Health Programs and Services	Deakin	\$820,000
Health Wellbeing and Specialist Support Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling • Medical • Mental Health Programs 	Deakin	\$570,000

2020 SSAF - use of funds continued

Use of funds continued	Service Provider	Approved 2020 Allocations
Social and Cultural Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation • Social Engagement Activities 	DUSA	\$470,000
Disability Liaison Officers	DUSA	\$180,000
Digital Service Provision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cloud Resources and communications 	DUSA	\$218,000
Sexual Harm Prevention	DUSA	\$300,000
Safer Community Service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic Violence Support • Sexual Harm Response and Support • Supporting students experiencing concerning behaviour 	DUSA	\$280,000
Cloud Peer Support: Success Coach Programs and Peer to Peer Programs	DUSA	\$300,000
Extended Hours Academic Support	DUSA	\$60,000
TOTAL		\$8,513,000

The 2020 experience



With the impact of COVID-19 in 2020, Deakin refined the delivery of funded initiatives to meet social distancing requirements or be remotely delivered. Prioritisation of student health, welfare, and financial assistance funding was essential. All essential services remained in place by shifting to 100% remote delivery, and in most cases, these services increased their reach.

Deakin aims to provide an inclusive student experience that optimises access and success for diverse learners whilst empowering students through partnership and community. In 2020, our student support teams made rapid changes to adapt to COVID-19. These changes in practice have been captured through multiple sources of data on the student experience and insights into service delivery.

Deakin was quick to respond to the outcry from students who had been affected financially by the sudden onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 Financial Assistance scheme was created to support students during this difficult time. As part of a range of responses facilitated by DUSA and Enterprise Portfolio, Deakin has launched the Student Emergency Assistance Fund. This fund supported students facing significant financial distress with emergency grants of up to A\$500. Thousands of students were supported in 2020 with multiple funding sources, including Deakin's HEPPPP funding.

Highlights

- Student financial assistance programs
- Rebuilding Orientation to wholly online
- Student engagement and connection programs
- Online Careers Expo
- Establishment of online communities
- Student communication and online channels
- Service delivery moving online for all student service

Priorities

- Mental health and wellbeing
- Connection and belonging programs
- Student welfare and financial assistances
- DUSA clubs and societies
- Student Health Promotion Plan
- Respect at Deakin



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University Sport and Rec Management and Development

From a sport, recreation and fitness perspective 2020 was a very difficult year. With the impacts of COVID-19 the focus moved to online engagement through the DeakinMOVES APP. From March, all programs were delivered via DeakinMOVES including online classes, physical activity campaigns and student-focused tips on wellbeing.

The modest investment in the DeakinMOVES app provided students with an option to stay connected to Deakin whilst they were in lockdown and maintain physical activity when the campuses and fitness centres were closed. Student engagement with the app peaked in April 2020, with a total of 4,160 downloads.

Graduate Outcomes – Careers and Employment Services

Student success and retention are key outcomes for Deakin. Students build a sense of belonging to the University, motivating and enabling students to maximise their sense of purpose and persistence. Students build their own agency, taking responsibility for their learning. Students link their study to future careers to become employment ready

Mental Health Programs and Services

Health, Wellbeing and Support services remained accessible to students via telehealth consultations and restricted face-to-face at the Medical Centres. Students utilised most services at or above pre-COVID levels. There was a significant increase in Domestic and Family Violence support. Services have observed that the complexity and/or severity of student presentations has increased this year due to COVID-19, which is reflective of broader community experiences. Welfare support has increased enormously with housing issues, financial hardship, social isolation, family disconnections, food insecurity, and unsafe living arrangements all being prevalent.

Health, Wellbeing and Support services have had 42,327 + interactions with students and the International Student Support enquiries relating to health and wellbeing increased 103% compared to 2019. Most of these queries have related to mental health, social engagement and isolation. The university introduced Student Wellbeing Liaison Officer roles and the Student Referral Portal for staff to assist student in distress or in need of other health and wellbeing support. Over 1,000 staff across the University have sought the advice and support of the Liaison Officers.



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Social and Cultural Engagement

Orientation and Starting out

The Getting Started space has seen enormous change in 2020, moving all sessions and engagement activities online for both T2 and T3.

Students in 2020 engaged strongly with the Orientation Program, tailored to cohorts (school leaver, pathway, returning to study, international, HDR, course, cloud, on-campus, blended, and its online delivery facilitated students' access to resources regardless of the timing of commencement.

The CloudFirst approach to a tailored orientation experience ensures commencing students receive a scaffolded online orientation experience, building a sense of belonging and connection to Deakin. Students are placed at the centre of the orientation experience, establishing a new standard for how Deakin will deliver a unified approach for all student cohorts. The transition allows Deakin to measure engagement with communication, resources, session and peer mentoring.

This new model increased Deakin's ability to identify students' level of engagement, inform the Priority Students Program, and improve our understanding of student outcomes. Whole of University coordination has been strengthened resulting in students experiencing a more cohesive, consistent and comprehensive One Deakin welcome and preparation for learning.

Social Engagement Activities

2020 has seen increased engagement across all student communication channels, including social and the student news blog. The student newsletter is now delivered fortnightly with improved measurement, contextualised content and stronger engagement.

Student engagement programs have included collaboration with DUSA and faculties to deliver opportunities for students to engage online, socialise and build connections to the Deakin and their peers.



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Disability Support Services

In 2020, Deakin invested significantly more time and resources into providing accessible materials through the Disability Resource Centre (captioning, audio description, live captioning and screen reader accessible learning materials). Students with disability achieved a 3.1% increase in success in 2020, a significant increase on previous years. The inclusive approaches put in place such as additional extensions without documentation, changes to exam formats and adding troubleshooting time reduced barriers for students but did introduce other challenges in time management for staff and students. Special Consideration applications for students with Access Plans decreased by 50%, in line with the total student cohort.

Student Communication

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Student engagement programs have included collaboration with DUSA and faculties to deliver opportunities for students to engage online, socialise and build connections to the Deakin and their peers.

Sexual Harm Prevention

Safer Community service data for 2020 indicated that case referrals to the service remained consistent and largely reflective of previous years. Some students were also managing home schooling, caring responsibilities and increased levels of domestic responsibilities amongst their own studies. For those students that were already at risk at home, COVID restrictions presented a greater risk of violence against women (and children). Help-seeking behaviours, cyber abuse and mental health challenges were also more prominent in reported cases.



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Academic and Peer Support

Student study support services moved successfully to a fully online model of provision in 2020. Advantages of this model included a reduction in cancelled appointments and a greater uptake overall of available study support options, including maths support.

2020 student feedback via an online survey demonstrated that attending online PASS sessions were one way of connecting with peers at a time when most opportunities for this kind of connection around their studies was not readily available. 97 of 98 students surveyed noted a positive experience. This was particularly evident in the T1 feedback but also included in the T2 comments and was evidence that PASS online has the capacity to provide students with the opportunity to develop a sense of belonging and connection with peers.

The PG Success coach program was successfully implemented with 5520 students allocated a coach and 1693 (30%) students replying to their coach at least once in t1 and t2. The program was particularly valued by students as changes arising from the COVID19 crisis evolved, requiring students to adapt quickly to a changing learning environment.

Deakin University Student Union (DUSA)

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DUSA activities were severely impacted by COVID-19, particularly on campus engagement activities and sports. Resources were re-directed in response to restrictions and student needs.

DUSA was eligible for the Jobkeeper payment scheme which assisted in offsetting reduction in revenue from Bookshop sales and Memberships. The downturn in these areas is likely to take at least two years to recover.

Student Engagement

- DUSA activities and services are promoted through DUSA's Facebook, Twitter and Instagram channels. Engagement continues to grow with 2020 reaching 54,000 from 48,000 in 2019.
- 2020 OWeek went ahead as usual, but it was noticeable that numbers were down, particularly at the evening events in Melbourne, however it is still estimated that 34,000 students attended events across all campuses, a similar number to 2019.
- DUSA moved to online delivery of social events, hosting 65 events through the year attended by 1,400 students.
- 130 Clubs with over 10,000 members struggled with the inability to conduct in person events. In a normal year Clubs would run more than 2,000 events per year. Only a small number of clubs were able to navigate online experiences as most student leaders concentrated on their studies and dealing with their own personal issues during lockdowns.
- The only National UniSport event that occurred was the eSports tournament where the Deakin team finished 3rd overall, a significant improvement from 16th in 2019.

Student Engagement

- Advocacy continued with online appointments and assisted 2,135 cases a decrease of 4.3% from 2019. The change in the learning environment and changes to the grading schema resulted in complaints increasing from 197 cases in 2019 to 270 in 2020.
- Short courses continued predominantly online with 32 courses delivered with over 500 students attending.
- 'Student Experience of Contract Cheating' research project was finalised, and findings published in an article "Mess, stress and trauma: Students experiences of formal contract cheating processes". This research has been provided to Deakin as part of the review of the Academic Integrity policy suite due to be undertaken in 2021.
- 99 students accessed Financial Counselling services compared to 85 in 2019.
- 1,603 Welfare cases were recorded, 1005 students receiving \$50 grocery vouchers, 199 Geelong students received \$250 grocery vouchers.
- 692 students were assisted by the Deakin University Student Legal Service. The service also ran recorded webinars.



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Published by Deakin University in March 2022. While the information published in this guide was accurate at the time of publication, Deakin University reserves the right to alter, amend or delete details of course offerings and other information published here. For the most up-to-date course information please view our website at **deakin.edu.au**.

Deakin University CRICOS Provider Code: 00113B