

AVONDALE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

SUMMARY REPORT: 2020 SSAF STUDENT SURVEY

BACKGROUND

The Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) survey is a comprehensive survey that assists Avondale University College in obtaining direct comment and feedback from across all student cohorts, campuses and study modes. The information gathered in the survey will be used to inform decision making on service delivery and provision of non-academic amenity for students in 2020, and beyond.

COVID-19 Update: Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 we made the executive decision to postpone the annual SSAF survey and any SSAF initiatives planned in semester one. With the return of the students in semester 2, we have moved forward with the SSAF survey and existing SSAF initiatives whilst also following safe health and hygiene protocols.

GENERAL SURVEY DETAILS

The SSAF survey was sent out on Friday 4th September 2020 and students had until Monday 14th September 2020 to complete the survey.

The email invitation (via SurveyMonkey) to participate was sent to **1,251** enrolled students who were eligible to pay the SSAF fee. Of those invited we had **265 (21.2%)** students respond and participate in the survey.

From section two of the survey we were able to identify the student voice represented. The tables below show the percentages of students who participated by campus, study mode, faculty and student status.

Percentage responses by campus:

Lake Macquarie	72.62%	Sydney	25.48%
Both	1.90%		

Percentage response by study mode:

Full-Time	71.48%	Part-Time	19.01%
On-Campus	39.54%	Off-Campus	12.55%
Distance	22.43%	Mixed-Mode	10.65%
Other (please specify)	0.38%		

Percentage of responses by faculty/school:

Business	6.46%	Education	33.84%
Humanities & Creative Arts	5.32%	Ministry & Theology	14.83%
Nursing	30.80%	Science & Mathematics	1.52%
Diploma of General Studies	1.14%	Postgraduate	4.56%
Vocational Courses	1.52%		

Percentage of response by student status:

Domestic	86.59%	International	13.41%
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SSAF: PERCEPTION & AWARENESS

In section two of the survey students were questioned about how well they understood the SSAF charge and where the SSAF funds were being spent.

The results from the survey identified that 66.54% of students that participated had some understanding of what the SSAF charge is, but 92.01% of students claimed to have little to no idea of where funds were being spent.

Q7: How well do students understand the SSAF charge?

Good understanding of the purpose of SSAF	27.38%
Some understanding of its purpose	66.54%
Never heard of it	7.60%

This feedback highlights an important issue in the SSAF space, which is transparency of where funds/funding is being allocated. As we work to improve the SSAF space, we will focus our efforts on making information clearer and more precise both online and in our future reports.

Q8: how well do students understand where the SSAF funds are spent?

Good understanding where funds are spent	9.13%
Some understanding of where funds are spent	56.27%
No idea where funds are spent	35.74%

(Due to rounding and question formatting, percentages may not always appear to add up to 100 %.)

As stated above we want to improve the SSAF space and how information is communicated. Utilizing the feedback provided by the students in the survey we have identified the three platforms we will be using to inform students about SSAF reports and updates.

1. Email
2. Student Social Media
3. Avondale Website & Avondale Student Life Website

Q18: How would you like to receive more information about SSAF and where its funding is spent?

SSAF Information Session	8.11%
O-Week Promotion Stall	15.77%
Posters	20.72%
Email	59.46%
E-newsletter	17.57%
Student Social media pages	30.18%
Avondale/Avondale Student Life (ASL) Website	34.23%

In the final section of the survey we asked students if they were aware of the services and amenities available before the participated in the survey and 57.46% of the students who participated (131) said yes and the remaining 42.54% said No. This feedback re-enforces the need for transparency but also raises the issue of awareness and accessibility.

SSAF: UNDER REVIEW

In section three students were asked to rate and review the SSAF funded services and amenities offered on-campus and online.

Review: From the feedback it shows that 58.94% of students were satisfied with the services and amenities provided whereas 27.24% neither felt satisfied nor dissatisfied and 13.82% expressed dissatisfaction with our current services and facilities. When asked to rate the quality of facilities on campus students' responses varied with 62.6% having excellent to good reviews and 37.4% rating the facilities as fair to poor.

Q14. Thinking about your experience this year, how satisfied have you been with the following services and amenities aimed at enriching the student experience

	Satisfied	Neither	Dissatisfied	Not Used
Support for student clubs	47	27	21	150
Support for artistic activities	38	31	22	154
Non-academic libraries and reading rooms/lounges	103	37	17	87
On-campus food and drink services	81	46	39	79
Sport and recreation facilities and services	83	27	16	118
Support for debating by students and producing and sharing student-created media	41	42	15	147

In question 14, we asked students to reflect on the services and amenities listed above and how they enrich the student experience. From the highlighted figures in the table we can identify areas that students are satisfied with and areas that are not utilized. Moving forward we can evaluate these services and facilities and assess where funding should be allocated.

In question 12, students were asked a similar question to question 14. Results showed that 50% of students who participated had never used the student health and well-being services, employment support and advice, accommodation services, international student support services. However in question 15 students were asked the importance of these services and we found that almost 50% of students still saw the importance of these services.

Q15. Thinking about your experience this year, how important do you think the following services and amenities aimed at enhancing the student experience has been?

Answer Choices	Important	Somewhat important	Not important at all	Not sure/Don't Know
Support for student clubs	115	69	9	52
Support for artistic activities	106	76	5	58
Non-academic libraries and reading rooms/lounges	134	68	11	32
On-campus food and drink services	159	53	6	27
Sport and recreation facilities and services	151	52	6	35
Support for debating by students and producing and sharing student-created media	99	86	7	53

COVID-19 RESPONSE

With the disruption of semester one, students were no longer able to access on-campus services and facilities. As a result, Avondale quickly adjusted to the change of circumstance, specifically utilizing our online platforms and services as a means of communication.

In survey we asked students which SSAF funded services and amenities were most useful during that period? From the feedback we were able to identify that well-being and pastoral care services were the most utilized followed by finance and student life services.

SSAF PRIORITIES

According to the SSAF legislation there are 19 categories of allowable, non-academic expenditure.

On the last page of the SSAF survey students were asked to rank the 19 categories in order of priority (highest to lowest). Listed below the top three priority categories for SSAF funding for the remainder of 2020, and beyond.

SSAF PRIORITIES:

1. Promoting the health or welfare of students
2. Providing food or drink to students on a campus of the higher education provider
3. Helping students secure accommodation

Table 1: 2020 SSAF Student Survey – ranking of the 19 allowable categories:

SSAF allowable category of expenditure	Rank	%	N
Promoting the health or welfare of students	1	15.29%	208
Providing food or drink to students on a campus of the higher education provider	2	13.37%	211
Helping students secure accommodation	3	13.29%	206
Supporting a sporting or other recreational activity by students	4	12.74%	208
Helping students obtain employment or advice on careers	5	12.59%	202
Helping students with their financial affairs	6	12.5%	206
Providing legal services to students	7	11.29%	202
Supporting the administration of a club most of whose members are students	8	11.04%	202
Caring for children of students	9	11.03%	203
Helping students develop skills for study, by means other than undertaking courses of study in which they are enrolled	10	10.48%	205
Providing libraries and reading rooms (other than those provided for academic purposes) for students	11	9.94%	206
Helping students obtain insurance against personal accidents	12	8.64%	206
Giving students information to help them in their orientation	13	8.44%	204
Helping meet the specific needs of overseas students relating to their welfare, accommodation and employment	14	8.42%	205
Advocating students' interests in matters arising under the higher education provider's rules (however described)	15	6.86%	202
Supporting debating by students	16	6.76%	204
Supporting an artistic activity by students	17	6.71%	203
Supporting the production and dissemination to students of media whose content is provided by students	18	5.99%	203
Advising on matters arising under the higher education provider's rules (however described)	19	5.95%	202

Based on the survey response, student representatives on the consultative committee along with the key internal figures will work alongside one another to identify areas within these priorities that need funding. Student proposals submitted that support these categories will also be analyzed and reviewed, as part of the overall redevelopment of the SSAF space moving forward.

OPEN COMMENTS:

Students had the opportunity to leave feedback at the end of the survey. This year we had close to 100 students comment about how we can improve current services and facilities. At this stage we are still reviewing and working through the comments but from the feedback reviewed so far, we can see a theme reoccurring regarding transparency of SSAF funds and visibility of services available.

MOVING FORWARD:

The feedback provided in this survey will be used to assist our decision making for the remainder of 2020 and the foreseeable future. A copy of key date tables will be made available to all student associations and key internal areas responsible for service delivery.

Matters identified in Open Comments that are not SSAF-compliant nonetheless identify key issues of concern to students will be communicated to the relevant internal area responsible.