



VICTORIA UNIVERSITY STUDENT SERVICES & AMENITIES FEE (SSAF) GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK 2024



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INTRODUCTION

On 11 October 2011, the Australian Parliament passed legislation allowing universities and other higher education providers to charge a fee for student services and amenities of a non-academic nature. The fees collected may be spent by higher education providers on items such as sporting and recreational activities, employment and career advice, childcare, supporting student representation, financial advice and other areas that benefit students. Victoria University (VU) has been collecting the fees since the start of 2012.

At VU, Student Services Amenities Fee (SSAF) is allocated towards items such as:

- Maintaining critical student services that include: student clubs and societies, wellbeing and support services including counselling, advocacy, welfare and accessibility, student led campus events, student led sport and health programs, student leadership and volunteering activities, the Student Union (and affiliated College Societies and Associations) and the Postgraduate Association.
- Providing essential services such as welcome and orientation activities, including O-Fest and Block Party and careers and employability services.
- Improving the student experience and creating a safe and welcoming campus for all.

For more information about SSAF see <https://www.education.gov.au/student-services-and-amenities-fee>.

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY'S STRATEGIC PLAN

The VU SSAF Governance and Management Framework provides an approach to the implementation and management of SSAF funded initiatives which is congruent with VU's overarching [Strategic Plan 2022-2028](#).

VU's Purpose and Vision states 'Victoria University emboldens its people to design their future and has a deep commitment to protecting country. Our vision is to be a global leader in dual sector learning and research by 2028.'

SSAF OBJECTIVE

Our goal is to enhance the student experience at Victoria University by focusing on student engagement, wellbeing, inclusiveness, career preparedness, employability, and leadership.

STRATEGIC PLAN PRIORITIES ALIGNED TO SSAF



Doing Dual Differently | Enhance the overall student experience and create opportunities for student engagement and consultation in relation to SSAF.

A thriving place to work and study | Develop and improve resources that are dedicated to student opportunity and success, employment and entrepreneurship and leadership and support initiatives that will encourage student wellbeing, health, inclusiveness and diversity.



Protecting Country | Support initiatives that honour our deep diversity as a foundation for collaboration and social progress.

GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

The Student Services and Amenities Fees are charged strictly in accordance with the [Higher Education Support Act 2003](#) and the Administration Guidelines made under the Act. Revenue from the fee is spent strictly in accordance with the Act and only on services and amenities allowable under the guidelines.

The SSAF fee is managed by VU's Students Portfolio, led by the Chief Student Officer, who oversees the governance and management of the fee.

SSAF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

The SSAF Consultative Committee provides feedback and a point of consultation for the annual schedule of funded activities that benefit students. The Committee also has responsibility to champion and communicate the benefits of SSAF to students, assist with SSAF grant panels, report against funded activities (if recipients ie those VU departments and VU student representative organisations that receive operational SSAF funds), assist with governance oversight, provide feedback on SSAF priorities and assist with continuous improvement activities. The SSAF Consultative Committee ensures the continuous improvement of SSAF funded services provided to students. Individual members and funding recipients are required to act within the compliance requirements of legislative frameworks related to SSAF and VU activities. The Committee aims to provide transparent communications to students around the use of their SSAF funds, ensuring the fund allocation and expenditure is open and transparent and is aligned with the strategic goals of VU.

The purpose of the SSAF Consultative Committee is to:

- Ensure the use of the SSAF is in accordance with legislation and is aligned with funding criteria, as well as VU priorities;
- Provide feedback on the priorities of monies for future funding;
- Provide approval for the allocation of SSAF Grant initiatives;
- Ensure the use of SSAF funds remains focused on improving the student experience and delivers benefits to students in-line with their expectations.

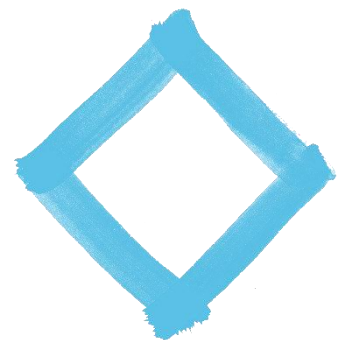
The Terms of Reference and current Membership of the SSAF Consultative Committee is available at: <https://www.vu.edu.au/current-students/your-course/fees/your-student-services-amenities-fee-ssaf-contribution/ssaf-student-consultation-fee-management>

MEMBERSHIP

Membership to be updated regularly to ensure relevancy with VUs organisational structure, SSAF contributors and student bodies.

Voting Members Staff:

- **Chief Student Officer (Chair)**
- Manager Student Life and Leadership (Deputy Chair)
- Manager, VU Recruit
- Director, VU Sport
- Director Student Equity, Safety and Wellbeing Services
- Director, Advisory & HQ
- VU TAFE Representative
- VUOnline Representative



Voting Members Students:

- President VUSU
- President VUPA
- President of VU International Student Associated
- VU Online Student Representative (nominated by VUOnline)
- VET Student Representative
- HE Student Representative

PRINCIPLES FOR THE ALLOCATION OF SSAF FUNDS

VU follows the following principles for the allocation of funds collected from SSAF. The allocation of funds will:

- Comply with the Student Services, Amenities, Representation and Advocacy Guidelines;
- Be informed by students (data driven) and deliver funds where priorities are identified by students;
- Continuously improve service provision to students in the areas specified by the Higher Education Support Act 2003;
- Ensure internal financial controls, management accounting, efficiency and effectiveness; and
- Align funds allocation and expenditure with VU's strategic plan 2022-2028.

SSAF ALLOCATION OF FUNDS AND GRANTS MODEL

VU takes a formula approach to the allocation of SSAF funds and grants each year. This represents flexible funding arrangements to ensure some fixed funds, as well as the ability to access short-term funds to pilot initiatives and/or meet a short-term need. This approach accommodates need and demand and allows for greater flexibility in the delivery of SSAF funded student services and activities.

The model is centrally governed, managed and administered by the Student Services and Administration Department on behalf of VU with direction from VU Finance and includes the following:

- Base allocation funding for all core services currently approved for SSAF; the allocation and funding value is reviewed annually in line with VU's annual budget forecasts and business planning cycle;
- An allocation for initiative grants;
- Capital allowance for the improvement of student amenities as needed;
- Funding to support student representative organisations and associated infrastructure; and
- Contingency for unexpected growth in usage and/or emerging needs allocation for services not currently funded by SSAF (where annual budgets permit).

The review of funding each year considers feedback from students, government legislative requirements, engagement and consultation, feedback from VU's community, and VU's organisational budget priorities to ascertain allocation priorities each year. Final allocation is determined by VU's annual budget processes.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

FUNDING FORECASTING & APPLICATIONS

Each SSAF recipient is required to submit a SSAF Funding proposal each year. Applicants are asked to submit their proposed income and expenditure of SSAF for the following year outlining, key deliverables, activities, benefits to students and risks. The activities are to state clear benefits to students and meet the [eligibility criteria](#) for SSAF.

The applications are reviewed by the Senior Project and Administration Officer and the Finance Business Partner who manages the central internal VU budget and once finalised, the recommendations are proposed to the Chief Student Officer for endorsement.

For external funding arrangements, a Funding Agreement is established between VU and the external organisation for the year ahead.

The process is aligned to VU's annual budget and planning cycle as follows:

MONTH	ACTIVITIES
August	◆ Notice of Government Maximum Fee Determinisation for SSAF
September	◆ Year aheads budget process updated and forecast funds communicated to eligible recipients of SSAF.
October-November	◆ Chief Student Officer reviews applications and recommends funding allocations in line with budget forecast and determinations.
December - January	◆ Funding confirmation provided to successful recipients and execution of budgets initiated.

Note: Schedule is subject to change where VU's budget planning cycle is changed for any reason.

REPORTING ON EXPENDITURE AND BENEFITS TO STUDENTS

Twice yearly reporting on activities, expenditure and the benefits to students is completed by each SSAF recipient in June and November each year. Reporting dates for 2025 will be available in January 2025.

Annual meetings with the Senior Project and Administration Officer and/or the Chief Student Officer or delegate are held with each SSAF recipient. Meetings occur at least two weeks after each report on expenditure has been submitted. This allows for timely actions to be taken by the Chief Student Officer should funds need to be redirected due to underspend or strategic or government changing priorities.

Any non-compliance with SSAF legislation will be addressed at these meetings or earlier where risk is identified or reported.

At meetings of the SSAF Consultative Committee, SSAF activity reports and budgets will be discussed and adjustments made if required to ensure SSAF expenditure is in line with VU's SSAF Objectives.

SSAF Recipients are required to provide an annual Expenditure and Activity Report which highlights the actual spend and activities for the year and details benefit to students by expense item. This information forms part of VU's yearly review of SSAF. Recipients final reports must be submitted by the end of the second week of January, or on closure of VU's accounts for the year prior.

SSAF STUDENT EXPERIENCE INITIATIVE GRANTS (SEI GRANTS)

Since 2013, SSAF Student Experience Initiatives Grants funding has been made available to support the provision of student amenities, services and activities that provide for a positive student experience of a non-academic nature.

To ensure a fair and transparent allocation of SSAF Student Experience Initiative funding, the SSAF Consultative Committee oversees a competitive grants process annually each calendar year.

The grants open in the first teaching week of the traditional Higher Education Semester One (February) and close approximately six weeks later (April). An annual grant pool is allocated each year and the amount of monies is determined through the budget and priority setting cycle. The total amount of funds available varies each year.

A grant panel comprised of the SSAF Consultative Committee Chair, two student representatives and the Consultative Committee Finance representative assess the SEI Grant applications, The Panel meets to discuss which applications meet the SSAF criteria most successfully and recommend funds allocation. Final awards are made based on a majority endorsement of the Panel's recommendations.

SEI Grant recipients may be invited to present their project plans and the outcomes of their projects at two meetings of the Consultative Committee.

The total amount of funds available varies each year. Projects must be completed and reported on in the calendar year in which the grant is awarded and must not carry over into the next year. SEI Grant recipients provide their final report on the SEI Grant Reporting template.

For a full overview of the SSAF Student Experience Initiative Grant Scheme application process here:

[SSAF Student Experience Initiative Grant | Victoria University \(vu.edu.au\)](https://www.vu.edu.au/ssaf-student-experience-initiative-grant)

STUDENT CONSULTATION

The SSAF legislation requires Universities to have a formal process of student consultation regarding the allocation of funds and expenditure of the SSAF fee. We provide a range of consultation points for our students to provide input and feedback on how they want their SSAF spent.

VU has an annual schedule of consultation activities where students have the opportunity to voice their opinions on SSAF and where their SSAF fees should be spent. Consultation occurs via online feedback forms, surveys, at campus events, student led events, Student Leadership Council Representative Organisations and via the SSAF Consultative Committee.

SSAF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE:

The SSAF Consultative Committee consists of staff and student representatives who attend meetings scheduled at minimum annually. Student members of the Committee are provided with clear oversight into the proposed spending of SSAF and contribute their ideas on where they believe SSAF should be spent. All members ratify decisions and also approve the annual SEI grant release.

STUDENT GROUPS AND REPRESENTATION

Student-led and informed groups, organisations, activities and events are a key component to ensuring SSAF funds are allocated in a manner that supports students to improve the student experience. VU has a rich and diverse group of student-led groups who ensure that what we do, meets the needs and expectations of our students. These include:

STUDENT-LED GROUPS AND PROGRAMS, DESIGNED BY STUDENTS, LED BY STUDENTS

- ◆ Victoria University Student Union (VUSU) - [Victoria University Student Union \(vustudentunion.com\)](https://vustudentunion.com)
- ◆ Victoria University Post Graduate Union (VUPA) - [VUPA - Victoria University Post Graduate Association, Melbourne, Australia - Home](https://www.vupa.vu.edu.au)
- ◆ International Student Association (ISA) [International Student Association \(vustudentunion.com/isa\)](https://vustudentunion.com/isa)

- ◆ VU Student Clubs - [Join a club or college society | Victoria University \(vu.edu.au\)](#)
- ◆ Student Consultative Group - [Student Consultative Group | Victoria University \(vu.edu.au\)](#)
- ◆ Student Leadership Program - [Student Leadership Program | Victoria University \(vu.edu.au\)](#)
- ◆ Student Mentor Program (not currently SSAF Funded) - [Student Mentors | Victoria University \(vu.edu.au\)](#)
- ◆ VU Vollies Program - [VU Vollies volunteering program | Victoria University](#)
- ◆ VU Orientation Program - [Orientation | Victoria University \(vu.edu.au\)](#)
- ◆ VU Campus Events Program - [Events | Victoria University \(vu.edu.au\)](#)
- ◆ VU Equipment Bookings [Student Life Equipment Hire \(victoria-university.booqable.store\)](#)
- ◆ VU Sport - [Sport & fitness | Victoria University \(vu.edu.au\)](#)
- ◆ VU Thrive Program for Students - [Thrive: Active living & wellness | Victoria University \(vu.edu.au\)](#)
- ◆ Careers and Employability – [VU Careers Hub | Victoria University](#)
- ◆ Free Meals for Students Program - [Free meals for VU students | Victoria University](#)
- ◆ Student Publications - [Student publications | Victoria University \(vu.edu.au\)](#)

STUDENT FEEDBACK

Student Services and Administration consult with students throughout the year in a range of ways including (but not limited to):

- ◆ Annual survey of students - [SSAF survey 2022 \(vu.edu.au\)](#)
- ◆ SSAF Feedback Form - [Tell us how to invest your SSAF | Victoria University \(vu.edu.au\)](#)
- ◆ Student Consultative Group - [Student Consultative Group | Victoria University \(vu.edu.au\)](#)
- ◆ Regular meetings with the student representative groups and other student-led forums

REVIEW OF SSAF GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The Chief Student Officer reviews the SSAF Governance and Management Framework annually in consultation with the SSAF Consultative Committee. The current governance framework can be found here: [VU Student Services & Amenities Fee Governance and Management Framework 2023](#) (currently under review)

Version Control Schedule

Version	Date modified	By whom	Purpose
2016 Draft	14 April 2016	Naomi Dempsey, Craig Barrie, Dafiya Pampori	Document creation
2016 Draft	8 June 2016	Naomi Dempsey	Consultation with members and endorsement
2016 - v1.0	8 June 2016	Naomi Dempsey	Final document and release
2016 - v2.0	31 August 2016	Naomi Dempsey	Voting members updated. In Attendance updated. Membership term added.
2016- v3.0	22 December 2016	Lisa Kalms	Voting Members updated.
2017 – v1.0	28 March 2017	Naomi Dempsey	Background, Purpose, Responsibilities, Membership and Meetings, Governance Framework updated. Endorsed by the Committee at the 12 April 2017 meeting.
2018 – v1.0	20 October 2017	Natalie Glenton	Updated to reflect 2018. Endorsed by the Committee at the October 2017 meeting.
2018 – v2.0	1 February 2018	Naomi Dempsey	Updated to reflect Student Services role changes within the department.
2019-v3.0	1 March 2019	Robyn Shilton	Updated to reflect that PVC (Students) chairs meetings.
2020-v4.0	16 December 2019	Robyn Shilton	Updated to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect that PVC (Students) may delegate chair • Record Assoc. Director Employability & Success as member • Remove Assoc. Director Student Life & Well Being from membership • Include an Appeal Clause
2020-v5.0	18 November 2020	Robyn Shilton	Removed references to Pro Vice-Chancellor (Students) and replaced with Associate Provost (Students) to reflect VU realignment Edited dot points 2 & 5 under Responsibilities
2020-v6.0	6 December 2021	Robyn Shilton	Removed references to Associate Provost (Students) and replaced with Pro Vice-Chancellor (Students)
2020- v7.0	7 March 2022	Leon Kerr	Removed reference to Pro Vice-Chancellor (Students) and replaced with Deputy Vice-Chancellor, People & Organisation
2022 – v8	19 December 2022	Robyn Shilton	Reviewed to remove references to Recipients as part of Committee Governance responsibilities (P1, & P2)
			Removed reference to Pro Vice-Chancellor in membership diagram Edits and changes endorsed by SSAF CC 14/12/22
2023 – v8.1	13 March 2023	Robyn Shilton	Updated references to Chief Student Officer to Deputy Vice-Chancellor, People & Culture Updated Appeal contact address to Peter.Radoll @vu.edu.au
2024 – v9.0	5 July 2024	Michelle Gillespie	Updated to reflect the latest organizational structural changes and refresh the governance model to be less administratively burdensome, while ensuring it is still student centric.