Student Services and Amenities Fee Procedure

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1 Objective

The objective of this Procedure is to provide details of how the University manages:

- establishment of an annual Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF)
- student consultation and communication
- management of fee revenue and expenditure
- the allocation of funds raised from SSAF
- student administration including:
  - payment due dates, and invoicing
  - requests for refund of SSAF
- legislative compliance requirements.

2 Scope

All students of the University of Tasmania and all staff engaged in the implementation of SSAF funded initiatives or in management of SSAF.

3 Procedure

Following the passing of the *Higher Education Legislation Amendment (Student Services and Amenities) Act 2011*, a SSAF Consultation Group was established to provide a formal means of ensuring input from elected student representatives and the peak student body (Tasmania University Union - TUU) as required by legislative guidelines.

As the strategic body, the SSAF Consultation Group provides input to the development of policy, process and strategy with the SSAF Sub-Group being formed to consider submissions for funding.

3.1 Determining - SSAF, Exempted Cohorts, Study Period and Due Date

3.1.1 Determining the Fee

The University may charge any amount up to the maximum specified under legislation for both full time and part time students.

In determining this, the University may consider such factors as:

- projected intake and enrolment load
- perceived gaps in services and amenities currently provided
- the length of the course or program
- the services and amenity students enrolled in a particular course or program may utilise
- the mode of delivery for the course or the enrolment mode of the student, and subsequent access to services and amenity
- existing contracts or agreements whereby there is minimal provision to add additional fees.

Decisions should be reasonable, based on relevant matters, consistently applied, and able to stand scrutiny should they be questioned.


3.1.2 The cohorts to which the fee relates

The University may determine which cohorts are to be charged or exempted from a fee.

Decisions should be reasonable, based on relevant matters, consistently applied, and able to stand scrutiny should they be questioned. A record will be maintained of such decisions, and information in respect of fees and student categories, published to ensure transparency and currency.

The University should review the exemption categories on an annual basis to ensure compliance, equity and transparency in the decision process.

3.1.3 The study period to which the fee relates

The University may also determine the study period to which a fee charged relates.

The SSAF is calculated on a student’s enrolment load for the period 1 January to 30 June and from 1 July to 31 December, each year. For a study period crossing over these dates, enrolment load will be calculated on the course census date. A record will be maintained of such decisions, and information in respect of study periods to which the fee is charged, published to ensure currency.

3.1.4 The due date payable

Legislation specifies the period in which the University may determine a due date for the fee to be payable or for the SA-Help form to be submitted. This date becomes the “debt incurral date” for the purposes of managing compliance. This date cannot be earlier than the last day on which a student is able to enrol in a course of study. An earlier administrative date for payment of the fee and submission of SA-Help may be established.

As a guide, the University may determine the debt is calculated at Census date and payable prior to Government reporting, 28 days after Census. A record will be maintained of such decisions, and information in respect of due and payable dates, published.

3.1.5 Procedure

On an annual basis the following will apply:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Executive Director</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Centre (or</td>
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<tr>
<td>nominee)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determine the date payable (i.e. debt incurral date), which cannot be earlier than the last day a student is able to enrol. An earlier administrative date may be established for payment of the fee and submission of the SA-Help forms.</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Executive Director</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Centre (or</td>
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<tr>
<td>nominee)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirm the student categories or programs approved for SSAF exemption. Identify new categories or programs to be considered for approval by the DVC (Students and Education)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Executive Director
Student Centre (or nominee) | Research and make recommendation for endorsement to the Senior Management Team (SMT) on:
- annual SSAF to be charged in accordance with legislation
- which student categories a fee applies to.

Senior Management Team (SMT) | Consider and endorse by the 30 September each year, the annual fee and the student categories to which it will be charged for the forthcoming year.

Executive Director
Student Centre (or nominee) | Publish the following information by 1st October each year for a fee that is payable in the first half of the next year; and by 1st April each year for a fee that is payable in the second half of that year:
- the amount of the SSAF
- a description of the student category to which the fee relates
- the study period to which the fee relates
- how a student may pay the fee including access to the Government loan scheme SA-Help
- the date on which the fee is payable (debt incurral date)
- a description of the student category or program to be exempted from payment of the SSAF.

Student | Take responsibility to ensure the SSAF charged is paid or deferred by the due date.

3.2 Communication

The University will review the communication strategy on an annual basis, ensuring compliance and coverage.

A communication strategy needs to consider the following principles:

a) that eligible student cohorts understand, accept and action the required steps within the advised timeframe and method
b) that the University’s student representative bodies are actively engaged in the consultation process, are representative of students as a whole, and actively support the University in developing and communicating SSAF activity
c) that relevant staff action the required steps within the advised timeframe and method
d) that with the University ‘content management system’, information is captured, once, as the primary source for ease of maintaining currency and that all relevant web pages access information from this single source.
Fundamentally, there must be clear and visible communication that enables a student to be consulted and engaged in each stage of the SSAF process and that enables a student to:

- Determine:
  (a) eligibility criteria for SSAF being levied
  (b) calculation of any fee due
  (c) the period the fee relates to
  (d) when the fee is due and payable
  (e) how to pay the fee including access to SA-Help.

- Participate in the democratic election of student representatives
- Be aware of and participate in the process, inviting submission to access SSAF funding
- Participate in the determination of projects/initiatives to be approved for SSAF funding allocation.

3.2.1 SSAF Images

Wherever possible, each SSAF approved project, program or initiative needs to be identified with the SSAF image. This may be physically attached (e.g. stickers, poster, plaque) to tangible initiatives, and/or communicated through brochures, web sites and media.

In developing the image specific to an initiative/project/program, Project Managers are to adhere to the University “visual standards guide” and to relevant policy and procedures. Images outside of these guidelines need to be approved prior to publishing/displaying through the University Marketing team.

In locating the imaging, Project Managers need to consider the following principles:

- that the projects/programs/initiatives supported with SSAF funding are visible and transparent to students
- that the display of such imaging aligns with University policy, protocols and guidelines.

3.2.2 Procedure

On an annual basis the following will apply:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Executive Director Student Centre (or nominee)</th>
<th>Ensure an appropriate communication strategy is developed and implemented in accordance with legislation and University policy, and that:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- ensures relevant, timely and compliant communication of matters relevant to SSAF are published and accessible</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- ensures identified stakeholders action relevant activity in a timely, seamless and accepted manner</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- addresses the communication needs of all students regardless of study mode or location</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- ensures University adherence to legislative compliance</td>
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<td>- ensures that staff and students adhere to University policy requirements.</td>
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</table>
### Executive Director
**Student Centre (or nominee)**
- Develop ‘image’ to enable recognition of SSAF funded project/program/initiative.
- Develop and maintain guidelines for the use of SSAF ‘image’.
- Monitor projects/programs/initiatives approved for funding ensuring ‘image’ is applied / published appropriately and within guidelines.

### Project Manager
- Each project/programs/initiatives approved for funding is to be identified with SSAF ‘image’ according to published guidelines and the University “visual standards guide”.
- Requests for ‘image’ outside of these guidelines need to be approved by the Executive Director Student Centre and in consultation with Marketing Unit, prior to publishing / displaying.

### Marketing Unit
- Maintain the University “visual standards guide”.
- Provide advice in respect of requests for SSAF images for specific initiatives/projects/programs.

### 3.3 Student Consultation

The University will review on an annual basis, the consultation strategy that ensures compliance and coverage.

The overall objective for consultation is to ensure opportunity is provided to all students regardless of location, campus or mode of study.

Consultation may be both formal and informal, with three formal stages specified under legislation:

1. initiating the process to democratically elect student representatives
2. inviting submissions for access to SSAF funds
3. inviting input on the allocation of SSAF funds.

The determined timeframe for the three formal consultation stages are:

(i) Initiating the process to democratically elect student representatives. With TUU, open the process September/October and finalise November each year.
(ii) Inviting submissions for access to SSAF funds. Open the process October and finalise December each year.
(iii) Inviting input on the allocation of SSAF funds. Open the process January and finalise the determined allocation no later than mid-March each year.
### 3.3.1 Procedure

On an annual basis the following will apply:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Executive Director Student Centre (or nominee)</th>
<th>Ensure an appropriate and compliant consultation strategy is developed, communicated and implemented in accordance with legislation, Commonwealth National Protocol and University policy.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stage 1: Formal consultation</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Executive Director Student Centre (or nominee)</td>
<td>Develop, implement and coordinate the formal and compliant student consultation process that ensures:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- enrolled students are provided with the opportunity to participate in a process to democratically elect student representatives</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- publication of the details and mechanism by which enrolled students are consulted and able to participate in the decision making processes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student and Student Representative bodies</td>
<td>Take responsibility for engaging in the process to elect student representatives.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Stage 2: Submissions to access funding</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Executive Director Student Centre (or nominee)</td>
<td>Develop and communicate an appropriate and compliant strategy in accordance with legislation including the Commonwealth National Services Benchmarks and University policy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Director Student Centre (or nominee)</td>
<td>Initiate the process, inviting submissions from relevant stakeholders seeking access to SSAF generated funds for the forthcoming enrolment year.</td>
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<td>Ensure submissions are received on the prescribed form, and within the prescribed time.</td>
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<td>Timeframe to complete this process is early December each year so as to optimise student engagement.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Managers including:</td>
<td>Actively consult and engage in the process to identify and develop submissions to be considered for accessing SSAF generated funds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Student Representative bodies</td>
<td>Submissions must:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Student representatives</td>
<td>- be on the prescribed form and submitted within the prescribed timeframe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- University departments</td>
<td>- specify the program, service or amenity that will be funded and the amount requested</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- identify the alignment with Government eligibility criteria</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- provide a rationale for the use of SSAF funds taking into account prescribed University priorities</td>
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<td>- provide a detailed budget justifying the amount</td>
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</table>
requested. Project Managers are encouraged to engage with stakeholders early, for example, if minor works are required consult with the University's relevant section to assist in bid and with planning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Take responsibility for providing input to or initiating via student representatives, a submission requesting allocation of SSAF funding.</th>
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</thead>
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### 3.4 Allocation of SSAF Funds

Legislation defines how the University ensures appropriate attention to the provision of a range of essential student support services including: orientation programs, health services, welfare services, and advocacy in relation to academic and procedural rules and regulations of the University.

The University will review on an annual basis, the strategy to allocate revenue from SSAF that ensures compliance and coverage.

The following principles will inform the allocation of SSAF generated funding, with projects being assessed according to:

- demonstrated adherence to legislative eligibility criteria and guidelines as specified in Section (19-38) of HESA 2003
- the optimal realisation of benefits to the students in the year of their fee charge whilst considering a sustainable approach to long-term delivery of the service or amenity beyond the year of SSAF funding
- feedback from students and student representative bodies on priority needs
- consolidation of services delivery / amenity and the avoidance of duplication among service providers across the University
- the provision of a range of services that are collectively of value to the whole student population, whilst acknowledging that individually their value will vary for different cohorts due diversity in the student population
- alignment with priority categories approved by the University that:
  
  (a) are identified as most likely to provide the maximum benefit to the student body as a whole in terms of:
  
  o improving the quality of student services and/or
  o enhancing a student engagement and/or
  o providing a positive and vibrant out of classroom experience for students and/or
  o improving student well-being and/or
  o improving student retention.

  and/or

  (b) may be used to fund infrastructure and capital development to support the continued provision and improvement of student services and amenities.

A record will be maintained of such decisions, and information in respect of approved initiatives to receive SSAF funding, published to ensure currency.
3.4.1 Third Parties

In the University choosing to contract a third party, such as a student organisation, to provide any of the listed allowable services, the University must ensure that the third party also complies with University policy and requirements under legislation including those regarding funds used for political parties.

Any such arrangement should be confirmed in writing as a contract or agreement outlining the services that the third party will provide using the funding.

3.4.2 Procedure

On an annual basis the following will apply:

| Executive Director Student Centre (or nominee) | Convene a meeting of the SSAF Sub-Group to consider the submissions requesting access to funds. |
| SSAF Sub-Group | Confirm eligibility (legislative and University priorities) of submissions to be referred through to the formal consultation process. 
As a minimum, the Act specifies that the University is required to provide, support access to and publish information in respect of:
- orientation program/s for all enrolled students
- information on how to access health and welfare (including accommodation, financial, legal, employment etc.) services
- student-focused advocacy services relative to academic and procedural rules and regulations of the University.
Consider impacts on available budget, and prioritisation. |
| Executive Director Student Centre (or nominee) | Initiate a formal and broad consultation process on the allocation of SSAF funds. 
Publish confirmed eligible submissions together with proposed fee expenditure. |
| Student and Student Representative bodies | Take responsibility for active participation in the consultation process seeking input on priority initiatives as submitted. |
| SSAF Sub-Group | Consider feedback and input to the allocation of funds from the formal consultation process. 
Consider impacts on available budget, and prioritisation and recommend adjustments to budget as necessary. 
Recommendation forwarded to SMT. 
Recommend to the DVC (Students and Education) funding that may be preserved for subsequent allocation within the same funding period. |
DVC (Students and Education) | Determine at their discretion, initiatives to be supported with unallocated funds.
---|---
SMT | Consider recommendations, determine and approve initiatives and budget.
Executive Director Student Centre (or nominee) | Coordinate advice to submission originator (Project Manager), approved / not approved. Publish approved initiatives with allocated funding.
Executive Director Student Centre (or nominee) | Initiate development of formal agreement with Project Manager’s identified as a Third Party (such as a student organisation).
Executive Director Student Centre (or nominee) | Provide details of approved initiatives to Financial Services.
Project Manager | Formalise financial arrangements for approved initiatives with Financial Services.

3.5 Financial Management

The University must ensure compliance with legislative requirements and with University policy and governance, in the:

- receipt of:
  - SSAF paid directly by a student to the University
  - Government funds on account of SA-Help assistance discharging the student’s liability to pay the fee
  - SSAF encompassed in a tuition cost invoiced to a student
- allocation of SSAF funds to stakeholders for approved projects/initiatives
- monitoring of SSAF project expenditure
- acquittal of funds and managing budget variances
- reporting SSAF requirements to University executive and to Government.

3.5.1 Accounting

The University’s Financial Services determines the system, processes and protocol for the University to manage SSAF financials including:

- the allocation of SSAF funds to a budget centre on approved/evidenced projects
- the acquittal of funding and expenditure to a budget centre
- the reconciliation of and reporting for Commonwealth SA-Help funding.

If a SSAF allocated project is in receipt of funding from additional sources, these must be identified in the submission bid, and in Interim and Final Reports.
3.5.2 **Budget Variances**

Should there be expected funds remaining on completion of the project the Project Manager is to identify this in the Interim and the Final Report.

The DVC (Students and Education) will determine if and how the moneys are to be re-allocated, in accordance with this Policy.

3.5.3 **Quarantined or Committed Funds**

In consideration of the changeover in Student Representatives each calendar year, the SSAF Working Group may ‘quarantine’ funds ready for allocation the subsequent study period or funding year such that incoming representatives may have sufficient opportunity to consult and provide input on the allocation of such funds.

In accordance with legislation, all funds allocated must be acquitted within the calendar year. Should a project remain incomplete, funds not expended should be identified as ‘committed’ funds in the finance system, and identified in the calendar year Final Report and subsequent reports until the project is completed.

3.5.4 **Student Fees**

The University’s Student Centre manages:

- the invoicing of student SSAF
- the management of timely reminders including the issuance of a SA-Help Commonwealth Assistance Notice (CAN).
  A CAN must be issued to a student within 28 days of the earliest census date. Where a CAN applies only to SA-Help, this must be issued no later than 28 days after the date the SA-Help debt is incurred. If a CAN is issued for units of study that fall within the same half year period (1 Jan-30 June, 1 July-31 Dec) as the date the SA-Help debt was incurred, then SA-Help can be included on the same CAN.
- the receipting and recording of student fee revenue
- the debarral on a student record for non-payment of SSAF.

3.5.5 **Procedure**

On an annual basis the following will apply:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DVC (Students &amp; Education)</th>
<th>Overall responsibility to ensure legislative and policy compliance.</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Centre</td>
<td><strong>SSAF Revenue</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Issue an invoice to eligible enrolled students. The timeframe for this may be determined year to year, however must be prior to Period 1 and Period 2 Government reporting dates. Ensure a (CAN) notice that contains information in respect of SA-Help assistance is provided to a relevant student within the guidelines specified under the Act.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Services</td>
<td>Support the effective and compliant management of revenue, expenditure and acquittal of SSAF funds.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| SSAF Consultation Working Group | **Allocation of Funds**  
Responsibility to ensure funding allocated for project/program/initiative is within legislative guidelines and University policy. |
| Project Manager                 | **SSAF Expenditure**  
Monitor and manage expenditure ensuring all conditions are met. Maintain auditable records of project expenditure in the prescribed University format |
| Project Manager                 | **Acquittal of Funds**  
Organisations and departments in receipt of SSAF funds will:  
- Provide an interim financial reconciliation report to the DVC (Students & Education) by September each year.  
- Provide a final report including financial reconciliation to the DVC (Students & Education) at calendar year end on the acquittal of allocated funds.  

The report will include details of the use of funds, rationale for any budget variance, and a statement that funds have been used in accordance with the Commonwealth legislation and University policy. |
| Financial Services              | Accountable for management of SSAF revenue, funds allocated to approved projects, and acquittal of project funds.                          |
| DVC (Students & Education)      | Review interim and final reports from Project Manager, ensuring compliance and effective management of funds.  
Identify any or projected positive budget variance.  
Determine how the funding may be re-allocated in accordance with legislation and University policy. |
| Executive Director Student Centre (or nominee) | **Government Reporting**  
The University is required to:  
- Certify on an annual basis that they charged student services and amenities fees in accordance with the HESA 2003 and the Administration Guidelines under the Act.  
- Confirm that the revenue from the fee was spent strictly in accordance with the Act and the Representation Guidelines under the Act, and only on allowable services and amenities.  
- Submit the SA-Help file to Government twice yearly, due on 31 March and 31 August each year. |
### 3.5.6 SSAF Refunds

On an annual basis the following will apply:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Executive Director Student Centre (or nominee)</th>
<th>Ensure legislative compliance with respect to SSAF refunds:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- SA-Help debts incurred may not be refunded under any circumstances.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- The date of incurral is immediately after the day on which the SSAF is payable.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Centre</th>
<th>The University:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(a) Will fully refund the SSAF to a student who, before the census date of their course of study:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- voluntarily withdraws from one or more units of study</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- declares a leave of absence from their course or</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- are advised of exclusion from the University for failure to meet progression rules.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Will not refund the SSAF to a student who, after the census date for their course of study withdraws or is approved for withdrawal, for any reason from unit/s in the current study period.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(c) Is unable to remit a SA-Help debt incurred under any circumstances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The date of incurral is immediately after the day on which the SSAF is payable. This remains the case even if tuition fees are approved for refund or reduction of a HECS-Help or FEE-Help loans following withdrawal from a unit/s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Will accept liability for any SSAF debt incurred by a student due to:</td>
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<td>- an administrative error by the University or</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- the University defaulting in the provision of an offered course,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>and arrange a full refund of the charged fee or remission of SA-Help through a Government reporting revision file.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Student | Take responsibility to submit a request to withdraw from unit/s within the prescribed timeframe. Take responsibility to advise the University of a change in circumstances that may warrant consideration of a SSAF refund by applying on the prescribed form. |

| DVC (Students & Education) | Consider special cases where this policy does not adequately encompass individual circumstances. |
3.5.7 Non-Payment of SSAF

Academic Senate Rule 3 – Admission and Student Progress, states a student is eligible for an award provided they do not owe the University any fees or other monies.

A student will have a debarral placed on their record if fees remain outstanding after the due date.

4 Compliance and Policy

| Executive Director Student Centre (or nominee) | Ensure strategies are developed and implemented that support SSAF being managed in accordance with legislation, University policy and governance. Ensure the University establishes systems and processes that support compliance and adherence to policy. |
| Financial Services | Ensure an auditable system is established that tracks SSAF revenue, allocated expenditure and acquittal of funds according to University policy and legislative compliance. |
| Project Manager | Accountable for management of the allocated SSAF funds, ensuring due diligence and compliance with legislation and University policy. |

5 Timeframe

Year O:

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Jan</th>
<th>Feb</th>
<th>Mar</th>
<th>Apr</th>
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<th>Oct</th>
<th>Nov</th>
<th>Dec</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fees</td>
<td>Govt releases maximum fee</td>
<td>Determine fee and categories for following year</td>
<td>Publish fee and categories</td>
<td>Estimate Year 1 SSAF revenue</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elected student reps</td>
<td>Initiate process to elect reps</td>
<td>Finalise election process.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Submissions</td>
<td></td>
<td>Initiate: submissions process</td>
<td>Submissions</td>
<td>Confirm eligibility of submissions</td>
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Student Services and Amenities Fee Procedure

Year 1: Fee Generation, Funding and Projects

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<tr>
<th>Jan</th>
<th>Feb</th>
<th>Mar</th>
<th>Apr</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>Jun</th>
<th>Jul</th>
<th>Aug</th>
<th>Sept</th>
<th>Oct</th>
<th>Nov</th>
<th>Dec</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initiate consultation on Submissions</td>
<td>Consultation on Submissions</td>
<td>Consider Feedback</td>
<td>SMT approve allocations</td>
<td>Publish initiatives to be funded</td>
<td>Invoice &gt;= Census P1</td>
<td>CANS &lt;= 28 days after Census</td>
<td>Invoice &gt;= Census P2</td>
<td>CANS &lt;= 28 days after Census</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

6 Definitions and Acronyms

Organisational Unit: Faculty, School, Centre, University Institute, other University Entity, Division, Section or University Business Enterprise.

7 Supporting Documentation

- Student Services & Amenities Fee Policy

8 Versioning

|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|