



Student Services and Amenities Fees SSAF

2019 SURVEY REPORT SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

In 2019 SSAF survey has developed to strengthen University's consultation process with students. It has enabled the University to obtain direct comment and feedback from across all student cohorts, campuses and study modes, at a comprehensive level, to inform decision making on service delivery and provision of non-academic amenity for students in 2020, and beyond.

The survey was launched on 1 October 2019 and closed on 31 October 2019. An invitation to participate was sent to 34,789 enrolled students who were eligible to pay the SSAF fee. Design of the survey is coordinated through the Office of the Executive Director, Student Engagement and Registrar, with an invitation for input into the questions issued to student associations and other entities or areas involved in delivery of SSAF compliant services and amenity to students. There are three distinct sections to the Survey:

- In Part A of the Survey, students were asked to select one category only from the 19 allowable categories for SSAF expenditure that they considered the most important to receive SSAF funding in 2020.
- In Part B of the Survey, students were asked to indicate their priorities regarding whether particular services should receive SSAF funding in 2020. The services were grouped into three themes (sections) in the survey:
 - Student Support Services (16 services)
 - Student Recreation and Sport Activities (5 services)
 - Student Social and Cultural Activities (7 services)
- Part C was an Open Comments section where students may provide any further detail or ideas for services.

The data analysis and preparation of the 2019 SSAF report has been conducted by Business Intelligence Unit (BIR).

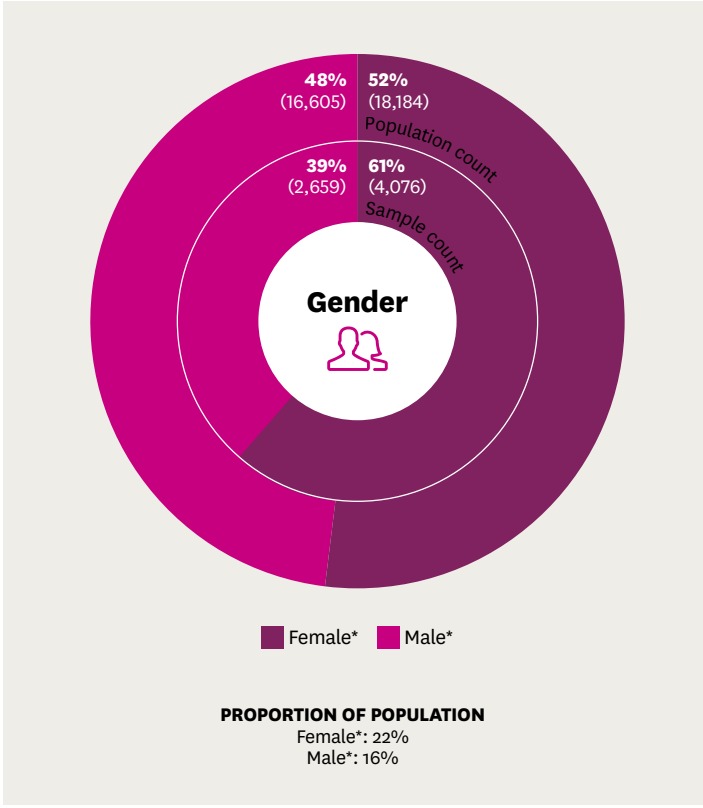
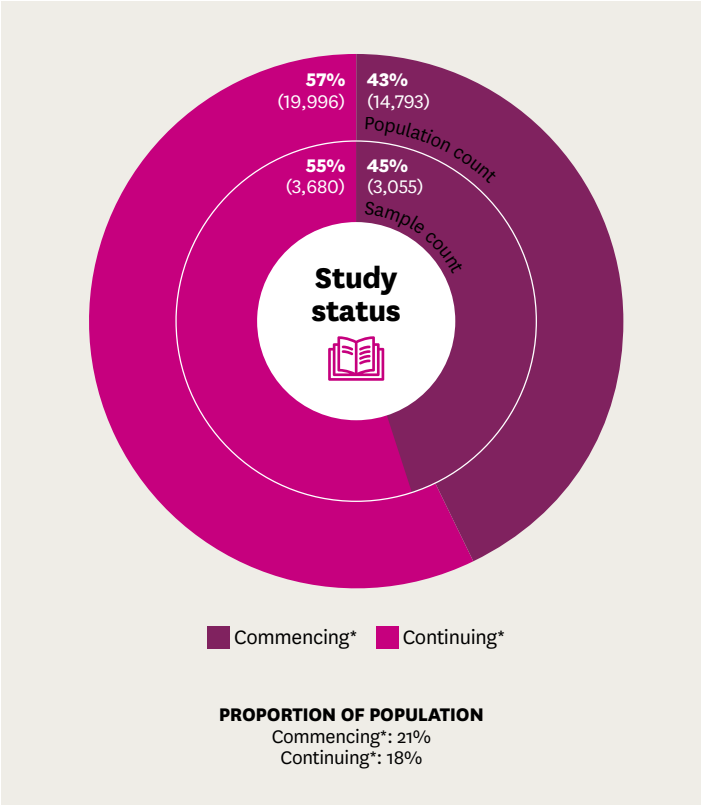
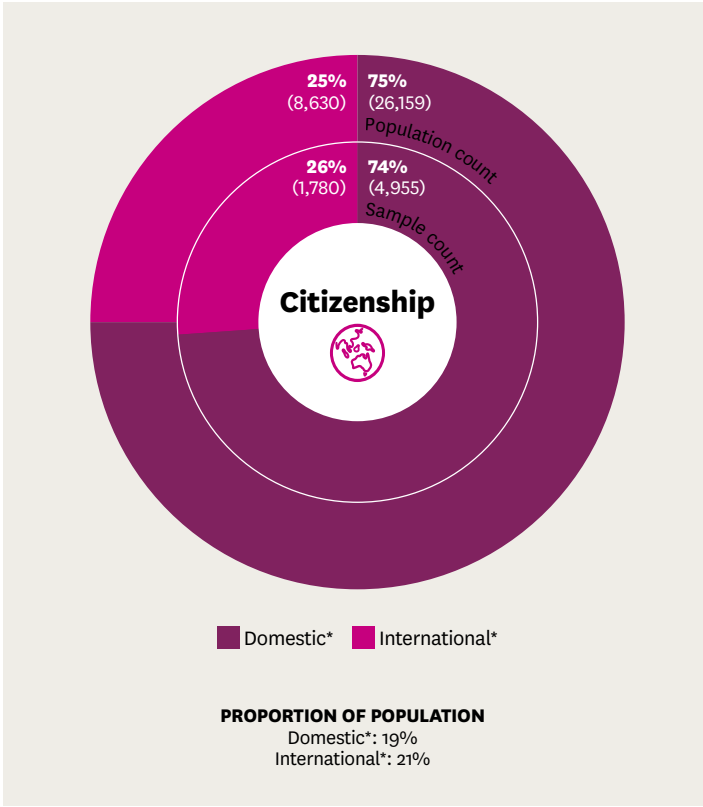
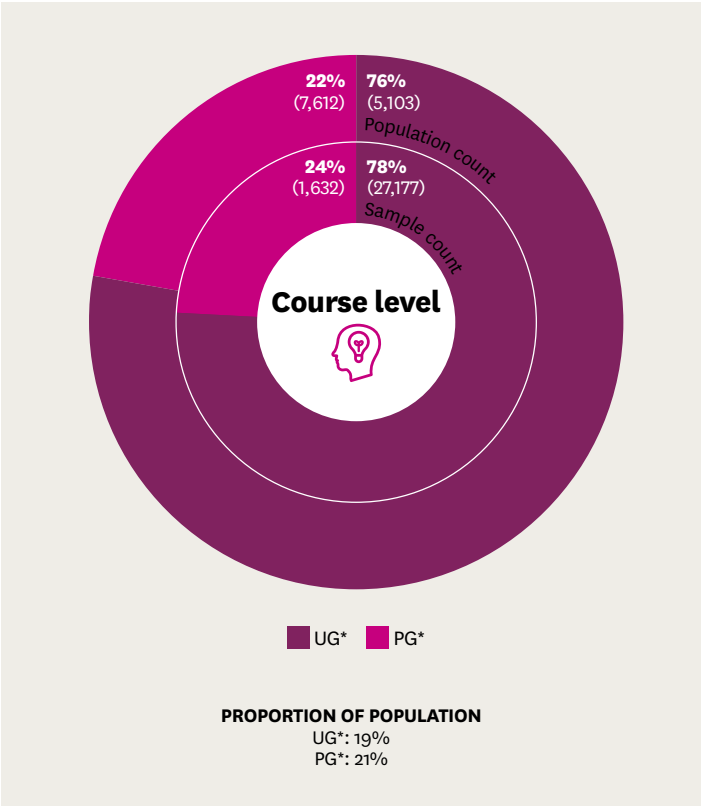


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GENERAL SURVEY DATA

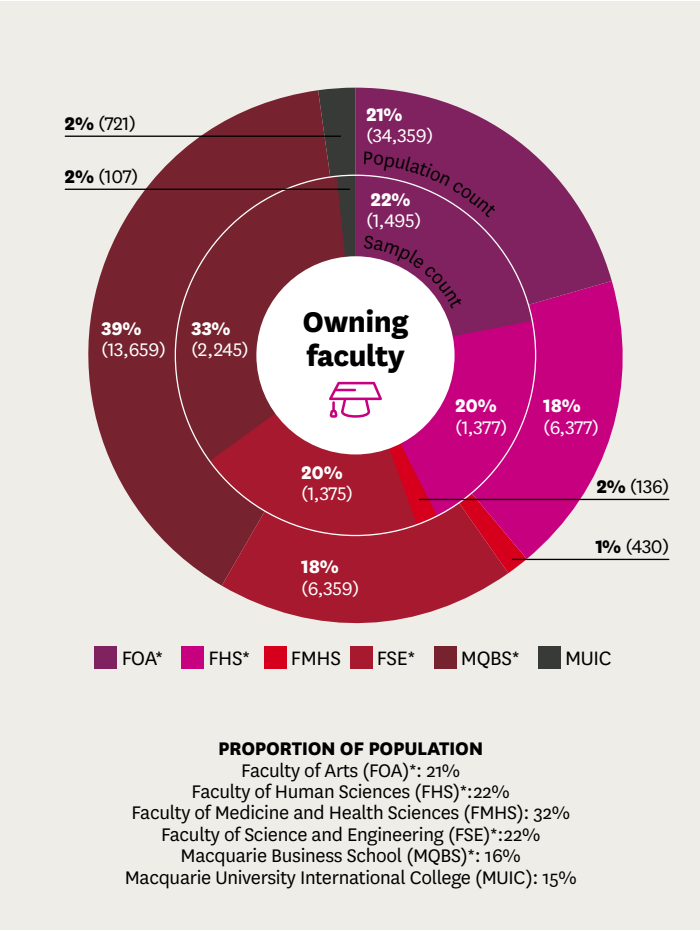
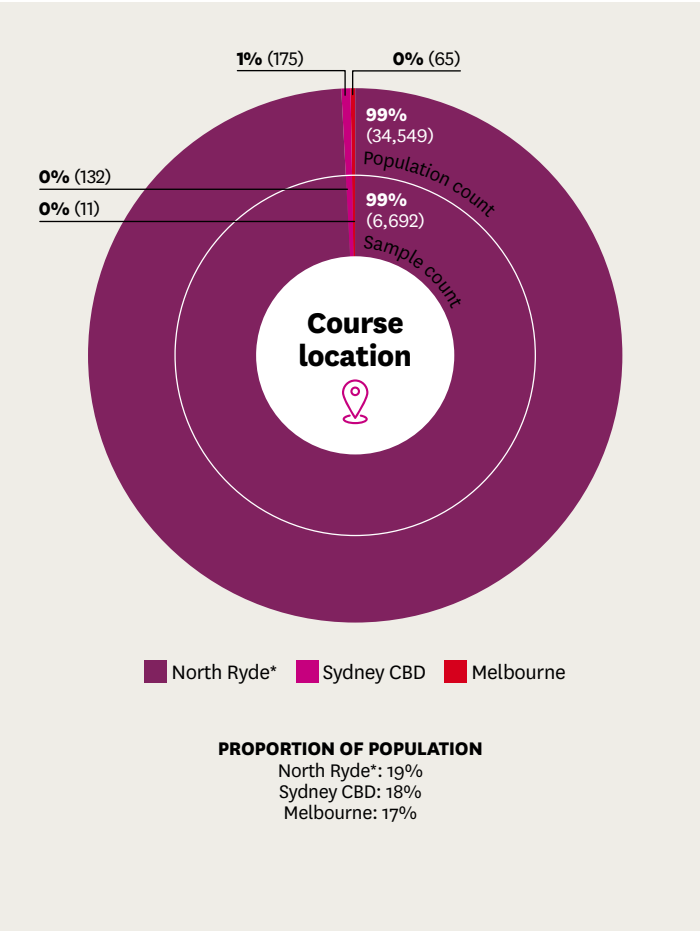
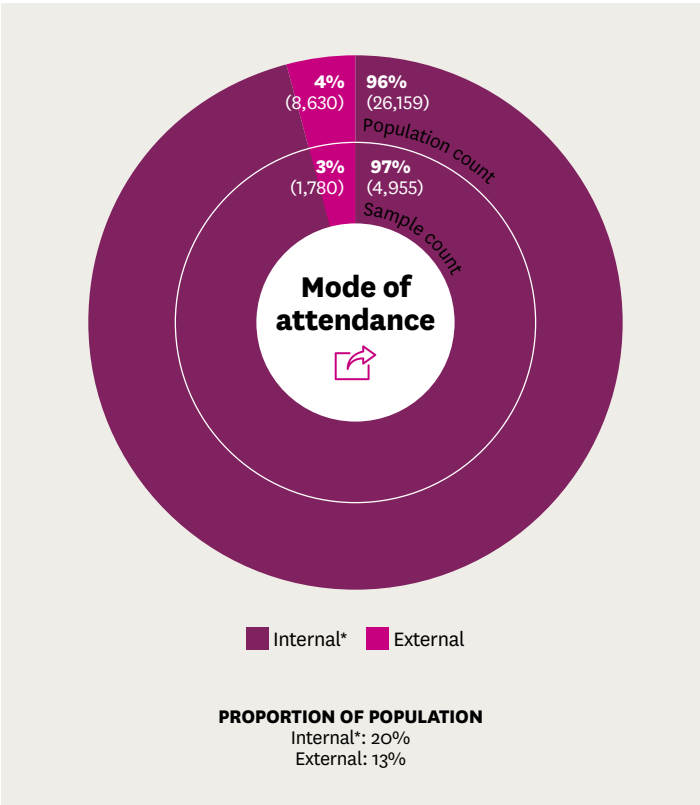
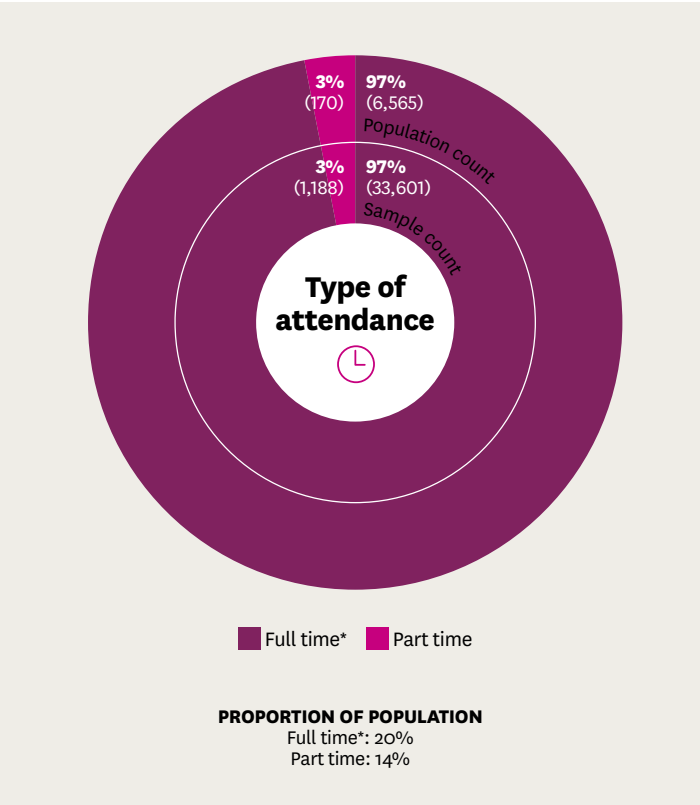
The total number of respondents this year was 6,735, representing a response rate of 19.4%. 2,398 students responded the open questions in Part C. The more detailed data is represented in the graphs below:

GRAPH 1. REPRESENTATIVENESS OF THE 2019 SSAF RESPONSE SAMPLE



GENERAL SURVEY DATA (CONTINUED)

GRAPH 1. REPRESENTATIVENESS OF THE 2019 SSAF RESPONSE SAMPLE



TOTAL
POPULATION COUNT
100%
(34,789)

TOTAL
SAMPLE COUNT
100%
(6,735)

TOTAL
PROPORTION OF POPULATION
19.4%

PART A: PREFERENCES FOR SSAF ALLOWABLE CATEGORIES

Within the SSAF legislation, the Australian Government has defined 19 allowable categories for expenditure of SSAF revenue. Students were asked to select the single category that they considered the most important to receive SSAF funding in 2020. The wording of the categories in the survey and in Graph 2 below is as it is in the legislation.

GRAPH 2. PREFERENCE FOR SSAF ALLOWABLE CATEGORY OF EXPENDITURE, ALL RESPONSES, 2019

Rank	SSAF Allowable Category of Expenditure	
1	Helping students obtain employment or advice on careers	28.5% (1,917)
2	Promoting the health or welfare of students	14.7% (992)
3	Helping students develop study skills	9.9% (667)
4	Providing food or drink to students on campus	7.6% (511)
5	Supporting overseas students with welfare, accommodation and employment services	7.4% (497)
6	Helping students with their financial affairs	7.2% (486)
7	Providing student libraries and reading rooms for non-academic purposes	4.5% (305)
8	Advising students about university rules, policies and procedures	4.2% (286)
9	Advocating students' interests in relation to rules, policies and procedures	3.8% (259)
10	Supporting student clubs and groups	3.7% (249)
11	Caring for children of students	1.9% (125)
12	Supporting student sport or other recreational activities	1.7% (115)
13	Giving students information about orientation	1.1% (72)
14	Helping students secure accommodation	0.9% (59)
15	Providing legal services to students	0.8% (57)
16	Supporting an artistic activity by students	0.7% (44)
17	Supporting the student media and content	0.6% (43)
18	Helping students obtain insurance against personal accidents	0.4% (28)
19	Supporting debating by students	0.3% (23)



TOTAL COUNT
100%
(6,735)

SUMMARY:

Overwhelmingly, the single most important category was ‘helping students obtain employment or advice on careers’, ranked first by all student cohorts. Of the next five highest ranked categories. This category was equally important for commencing and continuing students. “Promoting the health or welfare of students” was ranked as highest priority by Domestic students, which “Helping students develop academic skills” was ranked highest by International cohort.

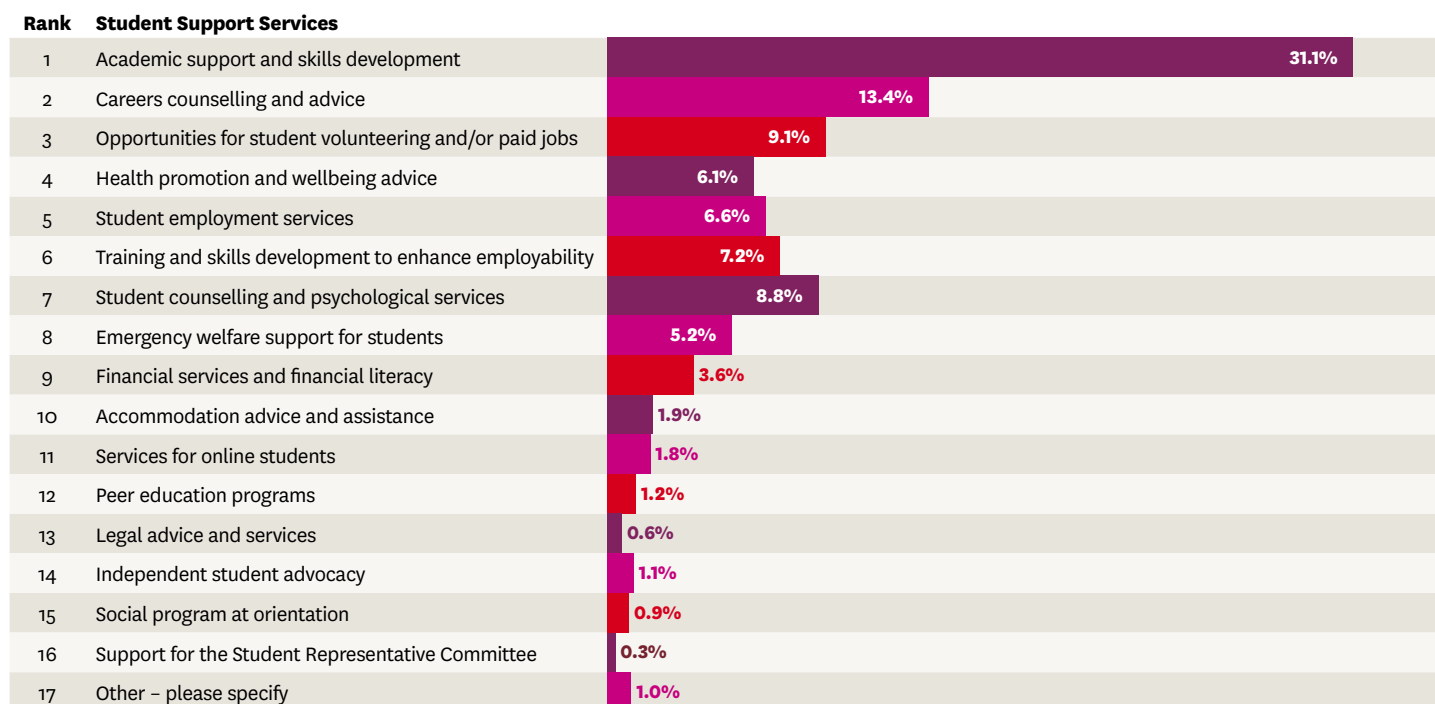
PART B: SERVICES AND PRIORITIES FOR FUNDING IN 2020

THEME 1:

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

There were 17 services identified under this theme of Student Support Services. Students could select up to six services from the options and rank them in order of preference. Student selections in order of preference/ranking can be seen in Graph 3 below.

GRAPH 3. FIRST PREFERENCE OF STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES



TOTAL COUNT
100%

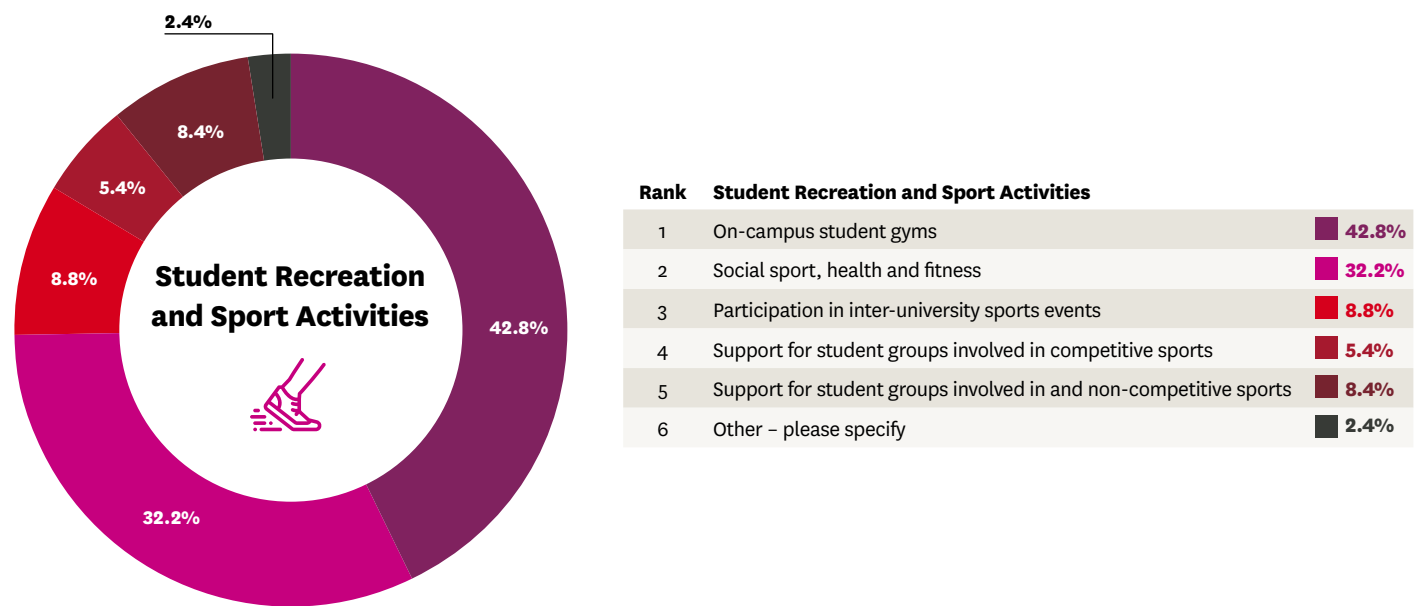
SUMMARY:

Academic support and skills development and Careers counselling and advice were the first and second highest ranked services in this section. Opportunities for student volunteering and/or paid jobs was ranked as third highest priority.

THEME 2:
STUDENT RECREATION AND SPORT ACTIVITIES

There were six services identified in this theme of Student Recreation and Sport Activities. Students were asked to select up to three services from the options and rank them in order of preference. Student priorities in order of preference/ranking can be seen in Graph 4 below.

GRAPH 4: FIRST PREFERENCE OF STUDENT RECREATIONAL AND SPORT ACTIVITIES



SUMMARY:

In Part A of the survey, only 1.7% of students (115) identified ‘Supporting student sport or other recreational activities’ as the most important category for SSAF funding support in 2020, ranking it twelfth overall. However, the second highest priority identified in Part A as ‘Promoting the health or welfare of students’. The top three activities, identified in this section, can be used to achieve the second highest priority of the SSAF in Part A.

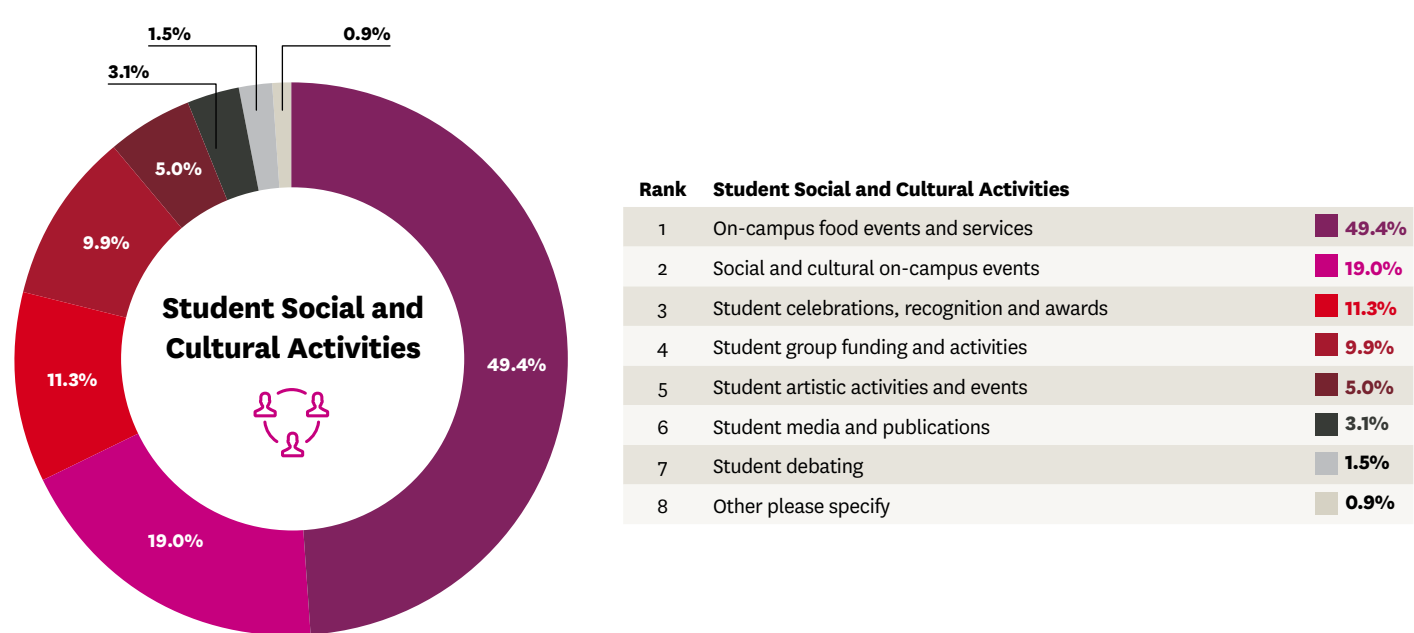
In responses to this section, the most significant is the overwhelming number of students who selected ‘On-campus student gyms’ as their first preference (42.8%).

THEME 3:
STUDENT SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

There were eight services identified in this theme of Student Social and Cultural Activities. Students could select up to three services from the options and rank them in order of preference.

Student priorities in order of preference/ranking can be seen in Graph 5 below.

GRAPH 5: FIRST PREFERENCE OF STUDENT SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES



SUMMARY:

The first two highest-ranked services in this section, on-campus food events and services and social and cultural on-campus events were supported with more than 79.9% of all students selecting them as one of their preferences, and 68.9% of all first preferences. The ranking of activities as shown in Graph 5 above was consistent with student subgroups such as domestic and international students, UG and PG students and commencing and continuing students.

PART C: OPEN COMMENTS

Part C provided students with an opportunity to provide open comments and respond to 3 questions:

1. What are the best aspects of student support?
2. What aspects of student support need improvement?
3. Do you have other suggestions and comments about student services and support?

MQ should consider the promotion of student health and welfare as the top priority for SSAF capital (amenity) funding in 2020. Reflecting the strongest preference shown by students, the University must ensure that information is available to students that clearly communicates the available services under SSAF. In open comments, many students stated a lack of information as to what services existed and, requested the promotion of what and where SSAF services were available to aid their University experience.



BEST ASPECTS OF STUDENT SUPPORT

The majority of students classified student health and welfare, as well as obtaining employment and/or career advice as stand out features of SSAF services. MQ students were also positive towards the support given to student clubs and groups, and the help given to students with study skills. Despite the positive regard, students also commented that they would like to see increased resources given to services regarding health and welfare as, though it exists, improvements can be made for efficiency. MQ students also had overwhelming positive feedback regarding their career advisors but, also mentioned a lack of resources that hindered their experience. Students further commented on the importance of funding for student groups to enhance their experience and, requested more variety in the study skill sessions/workshops that are available.



WHAT ASPECTS OF STUDENT SUPPORT NEED IMPROVEMENT?

The majority of students requested upgraded services to health and welfare and, more career opportunities. MQ students also stated a lack of variety regarding food or drink of campus, with very limited accessibility to those with food intolerances. As previously mentioned, students commented on a lack of funding towards student groups. MQ students also requested help with financial affairs, study skills and, advice regarding university rules, policies and procedures.



OTHER SUGGESTIONS AND COMMENTS

A significant amount of suggestions was given in question 3. It is clear that an overwhelming number of students want more communication about what services are available to them in the first place. Students regarded this as a lack of transparency and accountability by MQ as the few that had attempted to research SSAF, could not find clarification. Students suggested proactive introduction of SSAF services, via pamphlet, posters, emails, etc, and clear information on MQ's website.

Furthermore, students also identified issues with services such as limited opening hours, slow response, inefficiency and, excessive red tape. Students suggest more flexible opening hours for those that work full time, quicker responses and clearer advice. There was a particular trend by mature-aged students feeling unsupported as, per their statements, there are no inclusive services for older students which creates a difficulty in networking. These students suggested health and wellbeing programs specific to mature-aged students, similar aged mentors and increased social opportunities for older students to connect. These comments are equally reflected by online students commenting on a lack of support. This contributes to another identified issue being MQ's culture on campus due to limited social events and a perception of being 'unsupportive'.

Regarding facilities, MQ should consider upgrading study areas for students. A portion of students reflected the desire for more dedicated study areas for MQ students alone, unencumbered by non-MQ students. Several comments identified broken desks and uncomfortable chairs as an issue.