



The Australian National University
Students' Association Inc. (ANUSA)

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ANUSA Legal Service (CLC) 2021 Report

Summary of client work

In 2021 ANUSA legal work covered 299 matters (not including administrative files). The latter are an increasing component of the work of the legal service, related to the compliance requirements connected with being a community legal centre.

There are two major aspects of the legal work undertaken for ANUSA. Firstly, in-house legal service provision and secondly service directly to students and student clubs, which falls within the scope of the ANUSA Legal Service operating as a community legal centre.

The 299 matters represented 217 legal issues on which students and student clubs sought advice from the ANUSA Legal Service and a further 82 matters which were in-house legal advice for ANUSA. Work for student clubs and societies represented 17 matters, a significant increase as compared to 2020.

In addition to these matters, the legal service provided community legal education both to students and to ANUSA for a total of 8 different instances of community legal education covering migration, employment, discrimination, corporate governance, risk management and other legal issues.

Administrative files numbered 36, the bulk of which were associated with practice management, particularly associated with management of the ANUSA Legal Service community legal centre.

Total matters files created amounted to 343, including both ANUSA Legal Service and in-house legal work.

During much of the year the work of the legal service was supported by a part-time principal lawyer and a part-time paralegal. From December 2021 the legal service has also had a full-time lawyer contributing to the legal work.

Much of the legal services work has continued to be undertaken via use of Zoom appointments, initially introduced due to the COVID pandemic in 2020. Students were also offered the option of face-to-face appointments should they want one, although this was only taken up on rare occasions. It continues to be our experience that online appointments are a more effective framework for appointments. The reinstatement of lockdown in the ACT in August 2021 was managed without difficulty with work being carried out from home and services being offered online.

In terms of areas of law covered during the year, the following table provides a breakdown, by area of law and by client category.

- The migration category has been split into two new categories: “migration and citizenship” which is primarily concerned with student visa needs after completing their studies and “visa” which is primarily concerned with visa needs associated with studying. This highlights that the bulk of migration/visa related work relates directly to student needs during studies, while also we continue to support aspirations for settlement after completion of studies through migration related advice.
- The tenancy category has been split into “tenancy” and “occupancy” to better highlight legal needs in relation to off-campus and on-campus accommodation – which generally fall into those two headings. This highlights the significant number of students that had concerns in relation to their on-campus occupancies. This was 27 students. As only a proportion of students who have a particular legal problem seek legal advice, this highlights that during 2021 students were being affected by on-campus accommodation arrangements.
- In terms of volume migration and visa together represented 31.3% of all student facing matters, whereas legal issues associated with accommodation represented 32.5% of student facing matters. The next highest area was employment law which represented 9.6% of matters, followed by 8.2% of queries related to intellectual property issues.
- For clubs and societies the most important area of need was in relation to commercial law, following by issues connected with running as unincorporated associations.

Areas of Law 2021	Total	Student Facing	Student Clubs	ANUSA Legal Service
Admin Law	2.0%	1.4%		1.4%
AVO	1.7%	2.4%		2.3%
Associations Law	15.1%		11.1%	0.5%
Associations Law (uninc)	2.3%	1.4%	22.2%	2.3%
Consumer Law	1.3%	1.9%		1.8%
Criminal Law	0.7%	0.5%		0.5%
Defamation	2.3%	0.5%	11.1%	0.9%
Discrimination Law	0.3%			0.0%
Employment Law	8.7%	9.6%		9.2%
Family Law	0.0%			
Gen Commercial	9.4%	4.3%	33.3%	5.5%
Intellectual Prop	6.4%	8.2%	11.1%	8.3%
Migration & Citizenship	4.7%	6.7%		6.5%
Miscellaneous	1.7%	1.4%		1.4%
Motor Veh Property	0.7%	1.0%		0.9%
Negligence	1.7%	2.4%		2.3%
Occupancy	9.0%	13.0%		12.4%
Personal Inj.	0.0%			
Tenancy	13.4%	18.3%	11.1%	18.0%
Traffic & Parking	2.0%	2.9%		2.8%
Visa	16.7%	24.0%		23.0%

From 2021, the ANUSA Legal Service adopted a new methodology for collection of demographic information from students in the form of a voluntary demographics form filled out by students before attending an appointment. Demographics collected include whether the student is undergrad or postgraduate, whether they are an international or domestic students, the students living arrangements, college, and year of studies.

In 2021 the voluntary demographics form was completed by 46 students (representing about 22% of the caseload). In part this low rate was due to the fact that the new system was adopted mid-year and so only captures data for the second half of the year.

The demographic data provided by students indicates the following.

- Domestic students represented around 59% of the student client base (a continuing decrease over previous years – and perhaps indicative on the ongoing impacts of COVID border closures).
- Around 98% of the client load were undergraduate students, with the remainder post-graduates.
- Around 61% of students were off campus, 30% on campus and 9% were outside Australia.
- About 17% of clients were repeat clients and 41% heard about the service through word of mouth. A further 15% were referred to the ANUSA Legal Service. Around 4% heard of the service through promotional activities of ANUSA. Around 22% found about about the service through the ANUSA website.

The graphs at the end of this report provide a high level view of the flow of work during the course of the year and the primary areas of law covered.

Community Legal Centre Phase 3 Roll Out

A major area of work during 2021 was new “Phase 3” requirements being rolled out by CLC Australia. A range of new standards have been adopted which are mandatory or recommended for CLCs. These include standards such as fostering accessibility of different client groups, cultural awareness and safety for indigenous clients, and instituting or enhancing systems for client feedback. Many of these areas have been addressed during the course of 2021, with further enhancements planned for 2022.

Client Feedback

Also a new client feedback system was instituted in 2021 for all initial appointments with clients, inviting clients to provide feedback on their experience of the ANUSA Legal Service. In the period 31 May (when the feedback forms were instituted) to the end of 2021, 68 feedback responses were received.

In general, these indicate a high level of satisfaction with the service, and summary graphics of responses are provided in the attached statistical report. The survey is anonymous, and students are invited to rate the service on a variety of metrics, including likelihood of recommending the service.

79% scored the service 10/10 on likelihood of recommending the service to other students and further 13% rated the service at 9/10.

91% considered the service to be very culturally appropriate and accessible and 89% gave the highest rating on ease of understanding advice provided. 81% rated the advice received at 5 out of 5 in terms of helpfulness and a further 15% rating it 4 out of 5.

In general students found it very easy to make an appointment with 85% rating ease at 5 out of 5 and a further 15% at 4 out of 5.

91% rated the service at 5 for cultural appropriateness and accessibility and 9% at 4.

The understandability of the advice was also highly rated: 88% rated it at 5 and a further 10% at 4.

The area of least satisfaction was in the wait time for an appointment 60% rated this metric at 5, 19% at 4, 18% at 3.

About 30% of clients waited 3 days or less for an appointment. Around half waited 6 days or less. 8% of clients were waiting 10 days or more.

There is however a moderate correlation between wait time and wait time satisfaction (c. 0.455). This indicates other factors are also involved, such as the urgency of a particular matter. In this

context a potential strategy for increasing wait time satisfaction could be around better identification of time sensitivities during the intake process.

Written comments provided by clients during the year were the following:

"Michael and Priyanka are very friendly and helpful :)."

"It will be lovely if this services could be extended to graduates of ANU for a certain period (graduates up to 1 year e.g.)"

"The lawyers who provided legal advices to me were very friendly and approachable, and I feel more secured about renting a place to stay thereafter."

"Thank you so much. Absolutely amazing service. Very kind and friendly."

The session was really good and we got lots of information that is going to help us."

"Excellent overall"

"I was very happy with the help"

"Thank you so much Michael! Even though i cant really do anything it was really great to talk t you bc you're a very professional and warm chat. I really appreciated how easy it was to go through everything and thank you again for the advice."

"It's hard to say how useful the advise is before I follow it and have outcome for my case."

"Absolutely impeccable"

"Great job! Professional advice and clear explanations"

"Michael and Priyanka were both lovely and very helpful! We're both in a tricky situation so the legal advice provided helped put us at ease. Thank you!"

"I was extremely pleased with ANU legal services!"

"the booking system was the only painful part of the process so I would try and streamline that"

"Nice and very professional."

"Maybe have a summary of all discussions, but still very helpful! Thank you!"

"Thank you so much Priyanka and Michael for everything. It really meant a lot to me!"

“Besides trouble with booking and a missed appointment, the service was exactly what I was hoping for. Ensuring the ANUSA admin team keep on top of the lawyers' diaries is my only suggested point of improvement”

“Might be helpful to receive a note after the appointment with the key parts of what was discussed, such as specific acts/websites”

“Really helpful and easy to understand”

While feedback indicates a generally high level of satisfaction, the limits of the service are experienced by some students as an inability to provide ‘value added’ services such as representation or case work services like negotiation and document drafting.

Community Legal Education (CLE)

An ongoing area of work for the service is community legal education.

The Migration Workshop was attended by 86 students during the year, of these 35 were undergraduate and 51 were postgraduate. 66 were physically located in Australia while 20 were offshore (largely due to COVID dislocations). Most of those who attend have less than a year remaining on their studies. Areas covered in the workshop included the 485 visa, permanent skilled visas and the partner visa, with the greatest demand for information about the 485 and permanent skilled migration.

During the year, the BIPOC department hosted a session on Racism and the Law which the Legal Service delivered. This was very well received. There were 20 students present and the recording of the session has been viewed 287 times. This is a very good outreach, particularly noting that the BIPOC officer had let us know that the Legal Service was unfamiliar to BIPOC students. As a result, the Queer Officer also involved the Legal Service to provide a presentation on Queerphobia and the Law. A further presentation for Bush Week was a general law presentation as part of the “How to Adult” Sessions (this had only 2 face to face participants but was also livestreamed – although figures for online participation are not available). These opportunities arose from the outreach work of the ANUSA Paralegal mentioned below. As noted below the ANUSA Paralegal played a key role in outreach to departments.

In addition, during Bush Week, the legal service delivered a legal ‘How to Adult Session’ that was focussed on tenancy law and employment law. This event was also attended by both a face to face and online audience.

Staffing and new paralegal position, and new lawyer position

The legal work of ANUSA is supported by a part-time lawyer (21 hours), management staff, and administrative staff (1 FTE equivalent).

In addition, a key development in the staffing of the Legal Service is that from 12 April, the Legal Service has had the support of a casual paralegal who worked around 17/20 hours per week. Part of this period involved on the job training and exposure to the kind of legal work that the service does. As well as supporting service provision to clients, including through managing their own appointments, the paralegal supported the administrative and outreach work of the service,

particularly in terms of developing materials for the ANUSA Legal Service website to enhance key information and materials available to students. Also, the paralegal played a critical role in outreach to ANUSA Departments which led to strengthening of relationships. The paralegal also supported delivery of community legal education and undertaken numerous legal research tasks. Increasingly the paralegal took on client interview under supervision (as required by CLC guidelines), releasing time to other critical tasks that need to be done. New appointment slots were opened in the paralegal calendar, increasing the capacity of the service to provide legal service for students.

In December 2021 a new full-time lawyer was engaged. The addition of an additional lawyer has extended the capacity of the ANUSA Legal Service to provide value-added services for clients, for example greater advocacy, representational and support work, as well as greater capacity to manage follow on appointments. It also set the stage for extending the ANUSA Legal Service to postgraduate students; something that ANUSA historically undertook. During December the focus was on induction. From January of 2022 the service was extended to postgraduate students on a default basis.

New Client Management System and Work of the Admin Team

In 2021, a new client intake process was initiated with new software to allow online enquiries and submission of basic client details to streamline client intake. This followed consultation with the admin team around “user oriented” redesign of client intake processes. This was very successful with a good uptake from students. Student (in addition to calling or emailing for an appointment) can now use an online form to request an appointment. From the establishment of an online enquiry form 2/3rd of enquiries were submitted online, indicating the value of the online contact option for students. 1/3rd of enquiries came through via phone or email.

In addition, the new functionality includes a “customer relationship management” system which allows admin staff to better manage clients from initial enquiry to appointment.

The new functionality also increases the visibility of the work of the administrative staff who undertake client appointments. Administrative staff managed a total of 232 enquiries in the period May to December. Not all enquiries result in legal appointments as students may decide not to progress their enquiry.

The following table summarises client flow during the year. It incorporates data from the client management system, as well noting total matters created each month, which also include administrative files and ANUSA in-house legal work.

2021	Online Enquiries	Other Enquiries	Total Enquires	Client Intakes	Matters
Jan	<i>Data Unavailable (May data partial)</i>				17
Feb					20
March					30
April					35
May	0	8	8	11	31
June	19	22	41	26	29
July	8	20	28	18	28
August	10	38	48	25	37
September	9	19	28	20	29
October	4	26	30	22	22
November	9	18	27	20	22
December	7	5	12	25	43
Annual Total	-	-	-	-	343

Referrals and Conflicts

Part of the case load managed by the service is 'referrals' where the service has not been able to assist students and referred them elsewhere. During 2021, 35 students were referred to other agencies for a variety of reasons including areas of law not covered by the service, conflicts in respect of previous clients, and additional services not provided by the legal service.

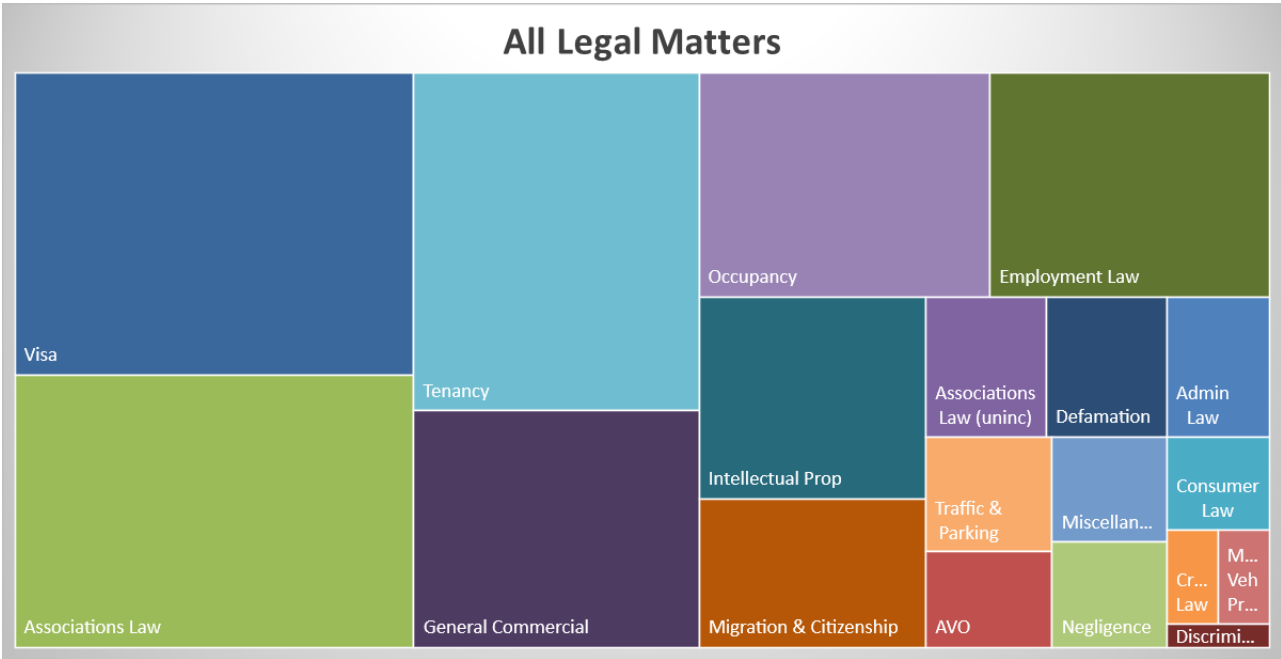
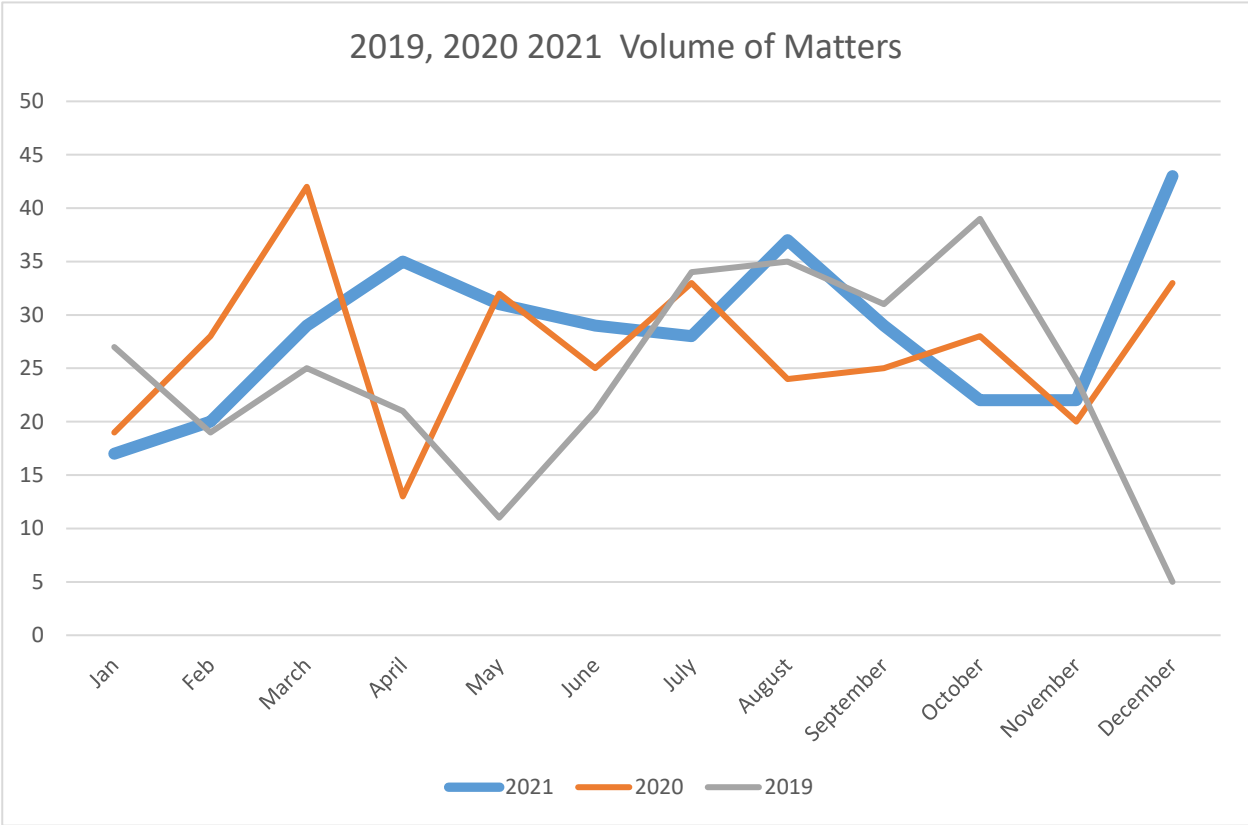
Michael Curtotti

Principal Lawyer

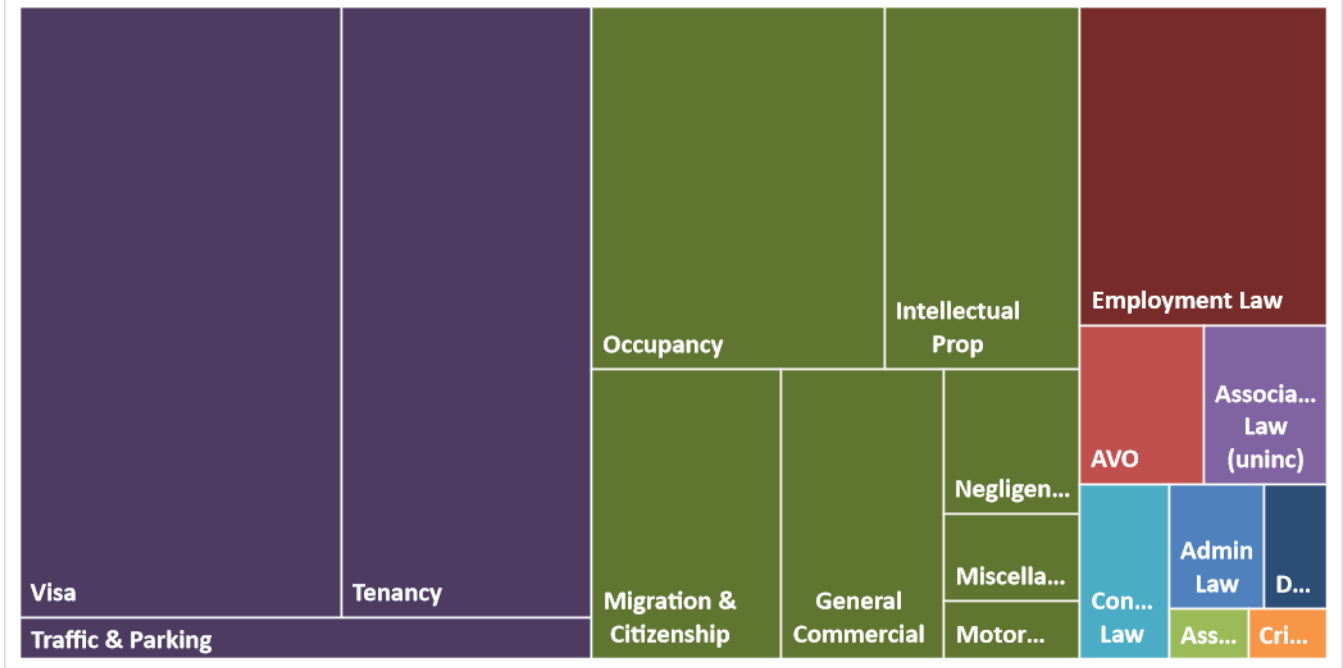
ANUSA Legal Service

28 June 2022

LEGAL SERVICE STATISTICAL REPORT 2021

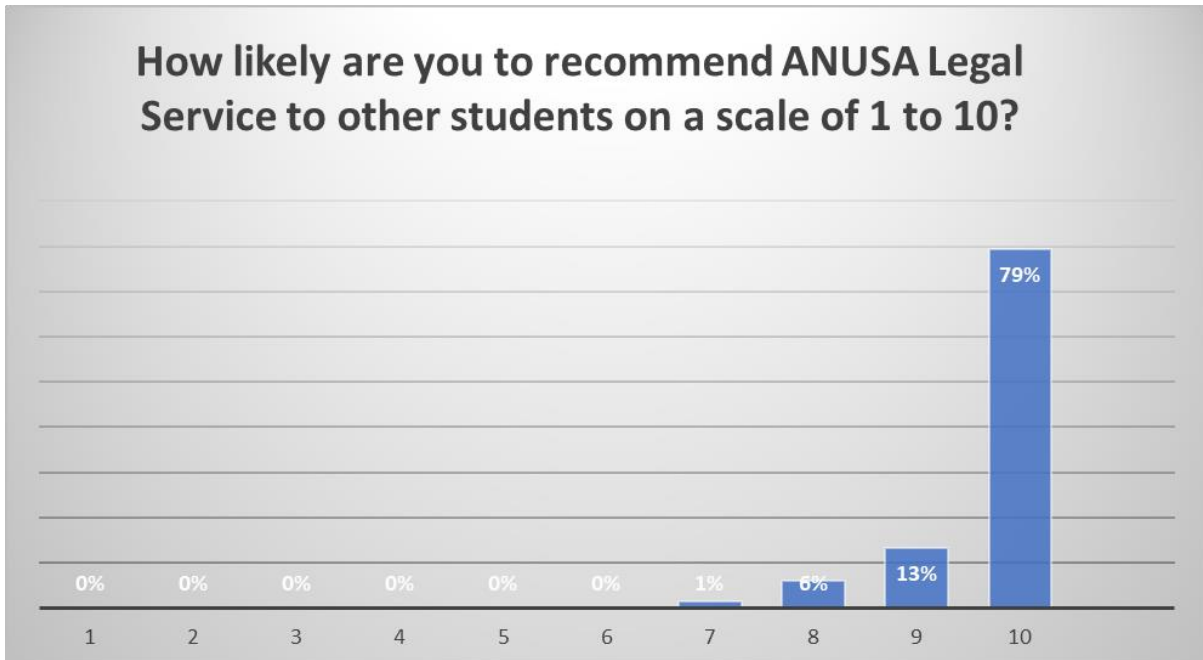


ANUSA LEGAL SERVICE

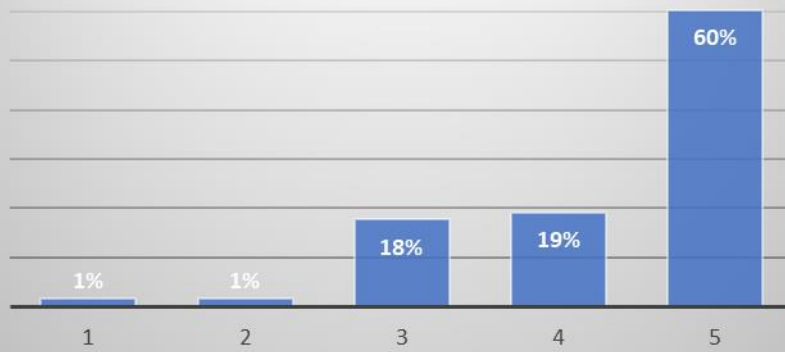


Client Feedback Statistics

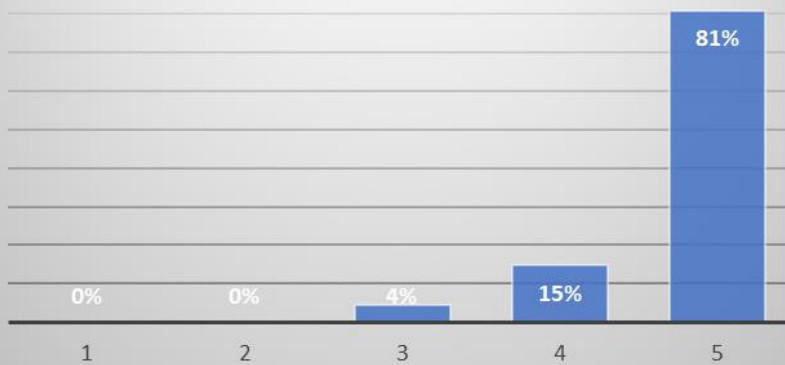
The statistics below were provided in response to a question which asked the respondent to indicate their level of satisfaction from low to high, with "5" or "10" indicating highest level of satisfaction (depending on the scale used).



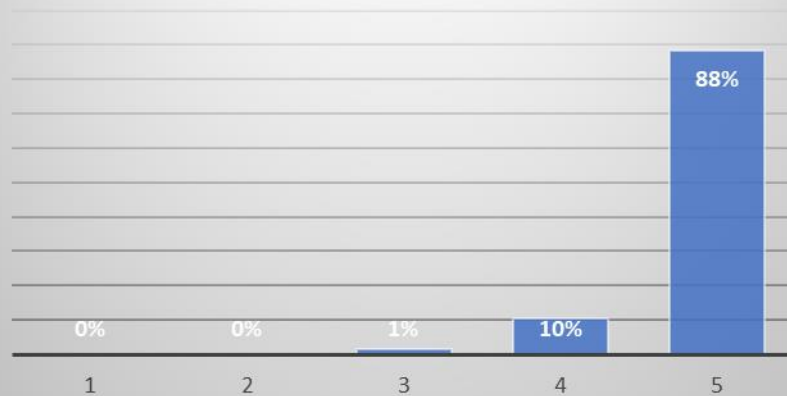
How satisfied were you with the wait time for your appointment?



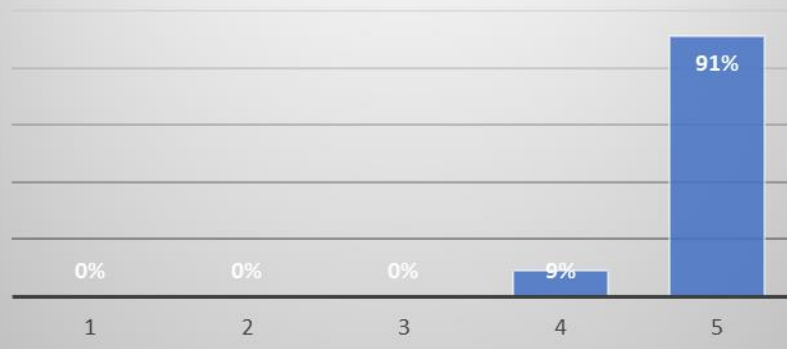
Did you find your legal advice helpful?

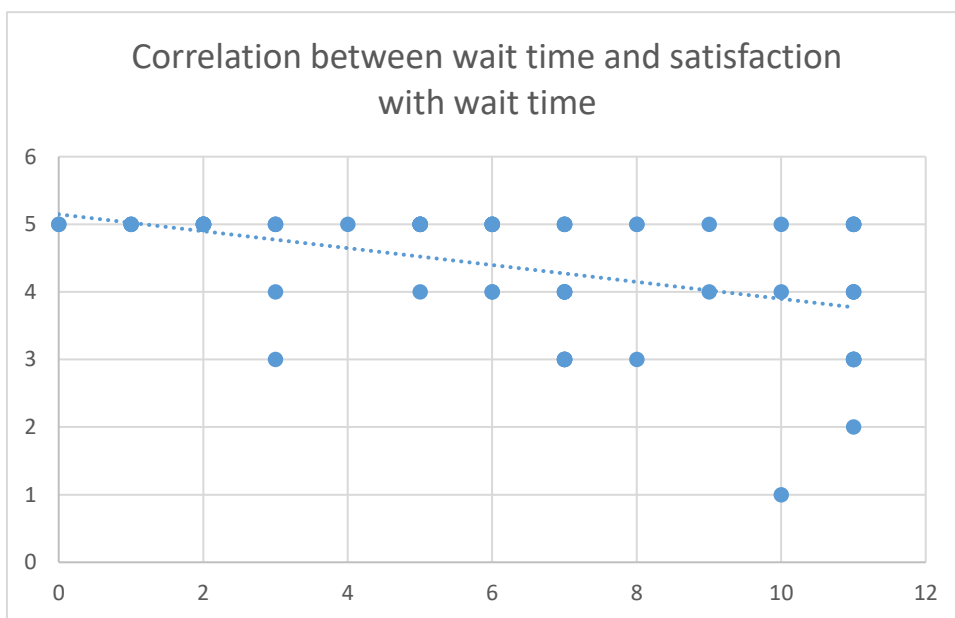


How easy was the legal advice to understand?



Was the legal advice provided to you culturally appropriate and accessible?





Intake Statistics

The data below is from the customer relationships management system introduced in May 2021 and only has data from that month. The 'appointments made' module is not enabled. Client intake forms correspond to the number of clients confirmed for each month.

