



# ANUSA Student Assistance Team Report

Quarter 4, 2023 (September-November)

**\*\* Content Warning: our report has mentions of SASH and suicidal ideation\*\***

## Overview

Q4 2023 saw a sharp rise of Food Co-op voucher intake (approximately 50 individual students per day), which could be correlated to the busy exam time, but also with the increased cost of living. We also received a high number of ECA application enquiry as students start heading towards the exam period. We put in some collaborative work to learn more about the PhD space to ensure that we are up to date with our knowledge and that we are able to provide timely and accurate advice to PhD candidates. The team also continued to administer the SOAD Bursary, and GCAP (graduation ceremony assistance program). We have had an eventful 2023, with the successful transition of assisting postgraduate students at the ANU, and we look forward to working with everyone again in the new year.

## Q4 figures

Grant/ Program	Total Successful	Total Unsuccessful	Total Pending	Total
ANUSA Assistance Grant (AAG)	36	14	7	57 \$9375
ANUSA Medical Grant (AMG)	13	2	2	17 \$3,625
ANUSA Carers Grant (ACG)	0	1	0	1 \$0
Accommodation Assistance Program (AAP)	3 (20 nights)	0	0	3 \$1400

Grant/ Program	UG Successful (# and \$)	PGCW Successful (# and \$)	PGHDR Successful (# and \$)
AAG	23 / \$5875	10 / \$2900	3 / \$600
AMG	12 / \$3025	2 / \$600	0
ACG	0	0	0
AAP	3 / \$1400	0	0
GVP	132 / \$6600	10 / \$500	1 / \$50
TVP*	7 (\$112.70) / 13 (\$209.30 )picked up	3 (\$48.30) / 7 (\$112.70) picked up	2 (\$32.20) / 3 (\$48.30_)picked up

.\*the first number before / is the number of vouchers and the value of vouchers that have been picked up by the student. The other number is the number of successful applications (some have not picked the vouchers up).

## Casework spotlight areas

We assisted with a higher number of academic-related issues compared to Q3, which is something we predicted coming into the exam period. We also had a higher number of health-related presentations to us as well. We referred students to various health

practitioners including the GP called Next Practice in Braddon, as they have same-day appointments for students. Students with OSHC are able to receive free telehealth appointments with different online providers (e.g Students with Allianz Health Insurance are able to get free GP telehealth appointments with Drs at the “Doctors on Demand” website. This was particularly helpful during the exam period when students were unwell during the day of their exam but were not able to get a physical appointment with their regular GP. These appointments are often provided to students within the hour which makes things a lot more accessible.

We have also seen a number of students presenting with suicidal ideation which we worked with the SSWT to ensure that they are well supported. We also had a number of students come to us who had witnessed the attack on Chifley Meadows and required further support with mental health and academic adjustments.

Matter	Count	Percentage
Total Interactions (emails, zoom, in person meeting, phone calls)	Total Interactions: 977 Emails: 788 In Person: 124 Phone: 6 Zoom: 59	Emails: 80.6% In Person: 12.7% Phone: 0.61% Zoom: 6%
Total Matters	1287*	100%
Academic Matters (Spec Cons, Def Exams, Academic integrity, Appeals, course issues, academic advocacy)	838	65%
Disciplinary Matters	55	4.2%
Financial Matters	83	6.4%
SASH	24	1.8%
Health	169	13.1%
Suicidal Ideation	22	1.7%
Accommodation	41	3.1%

Others (incl. Tax help, legal referrals)	55	4.2%
--	----	------

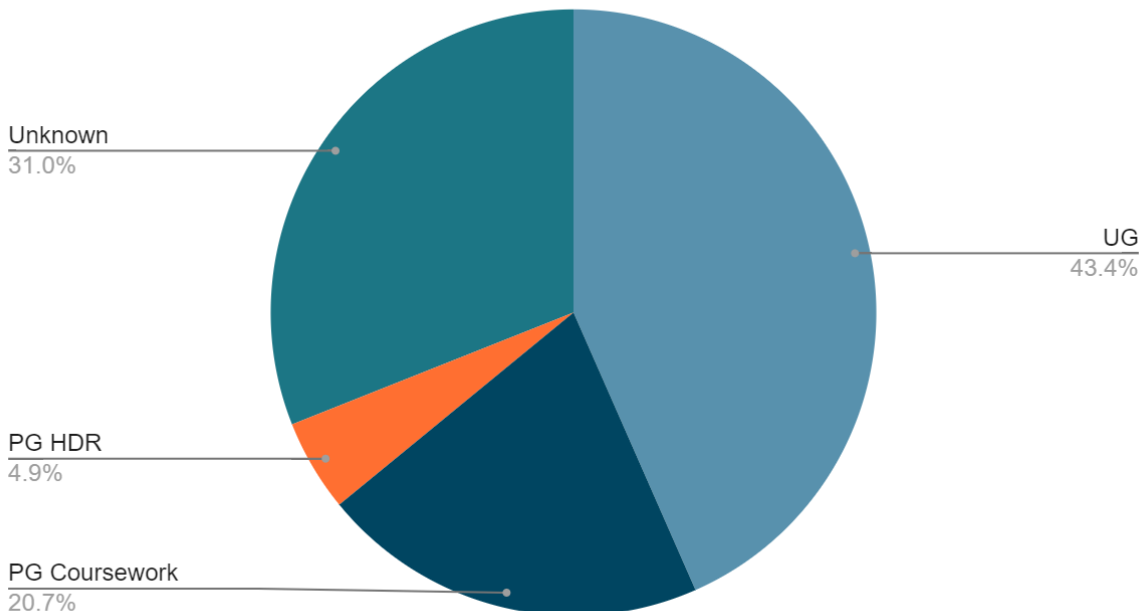
\*Each case could pertain to multiple matters, hence there are more matters compared to the total number of interactions. (ie. a student can come in for Late Withdrawal support and financial hardship in the same appointment, so this student would be considered one interaction, with multiple matters)

Student cohort breakdown:

UG	424	43%
PG CW	202	20%
PG HDR	48	4.9%
Unknown**	303	31%

\*\* Most commonly in emails when they require on-off support but don't disclose their enrollment status.

Breakdown of student cohorts



## Financial

As disclosed above, we have had a sharp intake of the Food Co-op food vouchers this quarter, with approximately 50 students accessing the meals each day. This can be due to the busy exam period, but also the cost of living crisis. Students have reported not being able to redeem their vouchers, as the Food Co Op has run out of food. We communicated to the Food Co Op that we anticipate these high numbers until the exam period is over, and we asked that they cook more meals, or offer students with vouchers a frozen meal from their freezer so that students do not go without. Year to date, we have spent \$9750 in Food Co-op Meals.

We continue to see a steady uptake of our grants during this quarter, and we provided \$14400 of financial assistance through our ANUSA Grants.

We had a small issue with the ANUSA transport program where Transport Canberra had denied students of the usage of their vouchers. However, this has been resolved, and students can now continue to utilise this program going forward as per usual.

## GCAP

We ran GCAP from 13 November to 4 December. We had 10 applications, 5 were successful and one was provided with 2 x \$50 Coles Grocery Vouchers from our ANUSA GVP as they had already purchased their gown despite applying and being successful for GCAP.

In December 2022, we had 8 applicants, and 5 were successful.

GCAP has historically been open to both postgraduates and undergraduates so we did not expect a bigger than usual turn out following the extension of our service to Postgrads in July. However, we are happy to see that we did have a few more applications than normal.

## Transport Vouchers issue resolved

A student received a warning from an ACT Transport Canberra official for using a transport voucher as an international student. The TC official later apologised as the warning was

issued in the mistaken application of the rule. We suspected that there was a hint of discrimination in this case.

We temporarily paused issuing the Transport Vouchers but later after receiving the confirmation from the TC office, we re-started issuing the vouchers.

## Eun Ju Bursary

ANU Advancement engages with us each year to disburse the Eun Ju Bursary. Eun Ju was a student at the ANU, who has since passed on. This bursary honours Eun Ju's deep care for people by supporting students in difficult times. Information on the Eun Ju bursary can be [found here](#). We are in the process of identifying a suitable recipient of this grant and if successful they will be awarded \$850 from this fund.

## Re-took grocery voucher administration from the admin team

With an expanded team, the ANUSA SAT took over the administration of the grocery voucher program. It had previously been in the SAT portfolio but due to the lack of resources, the Admin team had provided us with assistance to this up to now. Since the move back to SAT, we have had a reasonable uptake and we will continue to administer this program. We thank the ANUSA Admin team for their work on this program thus far!

## Equity tickets

We assisted and reviewed the equity ticket applications for the following events and balls:

Psych Ball

Union Ball

Debating society

NUS Conference

All equity ticket administrations were run without issues.

## SOAD Grant

ANUSA has agreed to administer a grant for the School of Art and Design. So far we have administered \$7120 to four individuals. The majority of individuals that were not provided assistance were due to them being ineligible (not an SOAD student).

## Academic

We saw an increase of academic-related matters from Q3 (838 vs 770), which aligns with the examination period that occurred in October. During the exam period, students were coming to us with ECA-related queries. As this is a new addition, some students were unsure of how they could apply and what they needed to provide.

As a whole, ANUSA has identified a few black holes in the ECA process which we had filtered through to the Examinations Team so that it can be reviewed.

We are hoping that these issues can be smoothed out and clarified by the next semester so that students are not confused as to what their options are going forward.

There was a delay in ECA outcomes which led to an influx of students asking us about their options. We also communicated this back to the Exams office for improvement.

### Grade appeals

Grades were released on 30/11/2023. We anticipated a large number of students emailing us for support and we requested the assistance of the Admin team to assist with triaging the emails that came through. Thank you admin for your support. We had a large number of emails come through on 30/11 and we anticipate this increase to continue into the first week of December.

### Academic integrity

We are seeing more and more students going through the Academic Integrity process for AI-related concerns. We assisted students accordingly. While we are seeing fewer online-based cheating allegations (e.g usage of online websites like Chegg), we are seeing an increase in other in-person types of allegations such as collusion etc, which is expected as we have resumed in-person classes.

### Credit transfers

There is a time limit for prior learning to be recognized, i.e. 7 years. For a Masters by research student, their request for credit was declined because their prior study was 7 years and a couple of months ago.

We approached the dean of the college, met the program convenor and amicably resolved the matter. The student received the credit and was thankful. This also showed us that there is flexibility in this rule and the Dean of the college has power to make exemptions.

### HDR uptake

We are continuing to see an increase in HDR student enquiries and appointments and anticipate this uptick will continue into 2024. It was a useful exercise for ANUSA to attend the HDR Service Providers session on 28<sup>th</sup> November, both in terms of information for us, as well as letting the broader ANU HDR community know that we are now assisting with HDR students.

The majority of our work with HDR students has been in relation to candidature progression and milestones. Some of this support has been ongoing as students navigate issues that have compounded over time. Some pain points that we have experienced are the way in which candidature information is presented for students: it is not a smooth process to see their consumed candidature time and summaries in ISIS. We note that the ANU is moving towards a confirmation of candidature milestone next year and have identified this as an area that may increase HDR enquiries.

## Accommodation

### ANUSA Accommodation Assistance Program

We provided 4 students 20 nights' assistance this quarter. Three of the four students required accommodation assistance due to Unilodge-related issues.



## ANU Accommodation Bursary

SAT is part of the committee that reviews the ANU undergraduate accommodation bursaries. As part of the committee, we reviewed applications and provided our recommendations on each. Similar to last quarter we assessed 54 applications this quarter (55 last quarter) of which most have expressed an increase in day-to-day expenditure and unexpected financial hardship.

## Disciplinary

Students with a number of appeals and disciplinary cases were assisted by SAT. The majority of these cases relate to sexual assault and sexual harassment (SASH).

We also assisted a student with the Medical Leave Rule 2013 hearing.

## Other Activities

### DoS office review

University is doing a review of the Dean of Students office. SAT, along with ANUSA execs participated in the review meeting and highlighted the benefits of retaining the existing functions of the Dean of Students office.

### Late Withdrawal process review

We've noticed a tightening of the LW outcomes, with more and more students' applications being rejected despite being provided with medical documentation. This change was observed since the process was taken over by the ASQO team. SAT to tee up a meeting with the team to discuss our observations and how we can advise our students better with regards to late withdrawals.

### Reviewed Q Pay case management system

SAT is exploring improvements to our current data management. This includes standardising the manner in which we record and present data.

We are also exploring new data management systems. Currently, we use Microsoft Access database which is supported by Excelability. The current system is very simple and customizable. It helped us to adjust to the changes efficiently, like expansion of our services

to postgrads in July. However, it has some challenges like data entry is not automated, collating of data at the end of the quarter or any term is manual.

We are exploring new case management systems; the one which we have spent most time in is run by Qpay. Although their system is in the initial stages, and they plan to have it up and running by early next year, we are focusing our energies on understanding this system well, identifying its pros and cons and be ready to make an informed pitch/decision in 2024.

## Some Wins

> A student emailed on 20th October:

Dear Hassan,

Thank you so much for helping me to go through all the applying process. I received the response of Late Withdraw just now and its success. Hurry! Thank you so much !

> A student emailed on 25 October:

Hi Casey,

I've submitted the application. Regardless of the outcome, I want to extend my deepest gratitude for guiding me throughout the process. Your assistance was invaluable, and without your help, I wouldn't have been able to complete the application both promptly and effectively.

>A student impacted by Israel-Palestine conflict emailed on 28th Nov

Hi Hassan,

Thank you so much for this, the issue was causing me a lot of anxiety so I'm truly relieved to hear of this.

>A student emailed on 1st December

Hi Casey,

Thank you for your email and efforts. I am more than happy to receive such great news.

Thank you again for your support!

> A student emailed on 5th September;

“ Last semester I met you to seek help and everytime I met you my stress would be have half vanished. I have some problem this semester, can u please help me to solve that.”

>A student we supported in November sent this:

Hi Emily,

I have received the outcome. No penalty will be applied to me. No word can describe my feeling now.

I am so grateful for your support throughout this journey. I want to send you my special thanks.

Thank you very much.

Kind regards,

> Another student emailed in November:

Hi Emily

Thank you very much for your help today. I really appreciated the time, advice and care that you showed and feel a lot better knowing I have your support! I look forward to reviewing my next steps with you later today.

Cheers,

>A student emailed 28/11 about receiving support for an academic misconduct matter:

Hi Emily,

Thank you very much for your follow up and willingness to further assist. Both of our meetings went well and the case is now finally concluded with the no breach outcome!

Thank you again for giving us all the support we needed.

Best wishes,

## Community connections, networking and training

### Presentations & Panels

- Casey and Kat presented at the CHM induction on 25 October
- HDR induction - 11th September

- Casey and Kat presented at the ANU HDR Candidate Service meeting on 28 November

### Community connections:

- Meeting with Brendon on 24/10 to discuss common themes and issues.
- Attended Parents & Carers lunch on 29th September.
- Met with the Residential Experience Team, Lucie Kolarikova.
- Attended ANU Researcher development stakeholder meeting - 28th Nov

### Training

- Supervision training for Hassan & Emily (AASW, 18 & 20 October)
- Suicide intervention training for Casey & Suzie (ASIST, 21-22 September)
- Ally training for Casey & Suzie
- Supporting Student Wellbeing and Disclosures of Sexual Misconduct, by CRCC for Casey & Suzie, 8th November.
- DVCS training - All team - 14th September
- HUE Mind - student journey mapping- Emily
- SENCON conference in Wollongong - Hassan & Emily 20-23rd November.

## Future goals and focus areas

- Data! Data! Data!
- Make connections with the team at ASQO to discuss Late Withdrawal matters
- Manage Show Cause notices that are anticipated to land in student's inboxes in mid-to-late January 2024
- Follow up with Exams re: the reforms and changes that are set to take place with ECA in the next semester. ANUSA and the Examinations Office have identified several black holes which are yet to be resolved which hopefully will be resolved in 2024. We will check in with Execs if they part of AQAC or any similar committees to discuss this matter so that we can provide further feedback where appropriate.
- Figure out how often and when we would like to run our very popular skill up program!
- Roll out a post skill up survey to see where students are at with their employment.