



ANUSA Student Assistance Team Report

Quarter 4, 2024 (October-December)

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

Overview

In this quarter, SAT supported students through the busy assessment period. We saw an increase in students requiring support with ECAs, general advocacy for assessment adjustments, deferred exam queries, and assessment appeals. We also saw a few Show Cause-related concerns come to our team. In particular, we have seen an increase of ECA-related support required from students in terms of both application and also outcome appeals. We also saw a large number of academic integrity-related matters due to final assessments at this time of the year.

With exams, students have found themselves unable to take on shifts in their casual employment, hence, there was also a steady uptake of our ANUSA grants and programs.

HDR candidates have also contacted us for support with candidature extensions and general advocacy. With the candidates' consent, we have worked with the Dean of Students on a number of these cases to provide the best possible support to them.

Lastly, some of us from SAT attended the SEN conference this year, which was held in Melbourne. We have come back with lots of new ideas to think about, and are keen on collaborating further with the connections we have made at the conference.

Casework spotlight areas

With the end of the quarter, we saw 1236 matters overall, and we saw 823 students. We had a strong uptake overall from Postgraduate, a year and a half on from taking on Postgraduate students, with HDR and Coursework students making up 43% of our students. During this quarter, we saw students requiring support with issues surrounding financial hardship, academic integrity matters, appeals, show cause and late withdrawals. These matters usually occur during this time of the year, when students are busy with the assessment period.

We were able to provide support to students directly, and also by advocating for students by following up with various stakeholders with larger issues occurring. Namely, with this time of year, we saw issues with ECA which we were able to communicate to the Exams office.

We provided advocacy and support to students in 2024, and will continue to do so in 2025. Thank you for your help this quarter, and we look forward to working with everyone again in the new year!

Case matter breakdown

Matter	Count	Percentage
Total Matters for 2024	1236	100%
Academic Matters	851	68%
Disciplinary Matters	30	2.4%
Financial Matters (non-grant)	82	6.6%
SASH	15	1.2%
Health	144	11.6%
Suicidal Ideation	22	1.7%
Accommodation	26	2.1%
Others (incl. Tax help, legal referrals)	66	5.3%

Student cohort breakdown

UG	PG CWR	PG HDR	Unknown	Total
464	297	62	0	823
56%	36%	7%		100%

These figures are from Jan 2024 onwards (year to date figures). These are also just the casework numbers. The students who have accessed our financial grants and program are not necessarily captured in this table.

FINANCIAL (Q4 figures)

<u>Grant/Program</u>	<u>UG</u> <u>Successful</u> <u>(# and \$)</u>	<u>PGCW</u> <u>Successful</u> <u>(# and \$)</u>	<u>PGHDR</u> <u>Successful</u> <u>(# and \$)</u>	<u>Total</u> <u>Successful</u>	<u>Total</u> <u>application</u> <u>s</u> <u>(successful</u> <u>and</u> <u>unsuccessf</u> <u>ul)</u>
ANUSA Assistance Grant (AAG)	21/ \$12,200	6/ \$4,000	9/ \$6,250	36/ \$22,450	43
ANUSA Medical Grant (AMG)	8 /\$2,336	1/ \$300	3/ \$750	13/ \$3,386	15
ANUSA Carers Grant (ACG)	1/ \$1000	0	1/ \$1000	2/ \$2000	2

Accommodation Assistance Program (AAP)	1/ \$490	4/ \$1960	0	5/ \$2450	5
ANUSA Indigenous Wellbeing Program (IWP)	1 \$300	0	0	1 /\$300	1
ANUSA HDR Completion Support Grant (AHG)	NA	NA	1 / \$700	1/ \$700	2
Grocery Voucher Program (GVP)	92/ \$4,600	34/ \$1,700	5/ \$250	131/ \$6550	131
Transport Voucher Program (TVP)	2/ \$32.20	2/ \$32.20	2/ \$32.20	6/ \$96.90	6
<u>Total amount spent/total applications</u>				<u>\$37,932.90</u>	<u>205</u>

- These financial figures are the numbers for this quarter only.

Grants

We see a steady uptake of our ANUSA grants and programs this quarter. Almost an equal amount of students applied for our ANUSA Assistance Grant this quarter, compared to the previous quarter, with similar amounts granted in the last quarter compared to this quarter (\$22450 vs \$22640). Students require financial support during this time due to the busy assessment period, and ANUSA's quick turnaround time allows students to access this support in a timely manner. We have provided an increased amount of support to carers this quarter as well, providing \$2000 to two carers requiring support. We introduced a new grant and program last quarter, the ANUSA Indigenous Wellbeing Program (IWP) and the ANUSA HDR Completion Support Grant (AHG). We provided \$300 and \$700, respectively to

students via this program and grant. One of the criteria of our AHG is that students will need to provide a Notice Of Intent to submit a document (issued via ISIS) to be eligible. However, we have found that HDR candidates are finding it challenging to obtain this document despite being at the tail end of their program. In 2025, we will be looking to remove this criteria, and to provide more flexibility to candidates to show the status of their program.

School of Art & Design Financial Hardship Bursary

ANUSA continued to administer the SoAD bursary this quarter. 2 applicants applied for this bursary, and both were granted financial support, with a total of \$ 4500.

Transport Vouchers

We've had a significant decline in the Transport Voucher Program uptake this quarter since Transport Canberra provided free public transport during this quarter to all users. This meant we were not providing many vouchers to students, as public transport was free.

Grocery Vouchers

Demand for grocery vouchers declined this quarter. A total of 131 vouchers were provided to students. This is likely due to the fact that students can only access one \$50 voucher per semester. Most students aware of this program would have already accessed this voucher by this time of year.

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 have identified a recipient for this bursary this quarter, and they were awarded \$850 as part of this bursary.

Food Co-op Vouchers

In conjunction with the Admin team, the SAT has received 256 requests for meal vouchers this quarter. We have had a steady uptake of vouchers since the 5-voucher limit was implemented. Students have also been accessing other ANUSA food programs such as the BKSS Lunch Express, and Student Bites.

Equity Tickets

We provided Equity Ticket support for the following:

1. Clubs Ball 2024

We will continue to provide equity ticket support to all clubs and society as needed.

Academic

Academic matters continue to be a category that the team assists students with the most, with 68% of our cases being academic-related. Some notable matters we dealt with this quarter pertain to show cause, ECA, and graduations and appeals. We saw a number of students having issues with ECA. The issues experienced were in relation to the application process, and the outcomes provided. We also supported students through the change of graduation date from two a year, to once in February. Other matters that we supported students with are with Late Withdrawal matters, Academic Integrity matters and also HDR matters. We also supported students through the Show Cause process, which will be further expanded on below.

Show cause notices

Show Cause notices came out on the 9th of December with a due date of 9th January 2025, meaning that they stretch across both Q4 2024 and Q1 2025. Unfortunately, the bulk of the casework we saw in this space in Q4 2024 was for students who had already been excluded after unsuccessful or (most frequently) non-submission of show cause appeals from earlier study periods. Students in this predicament often require a higher level of assistance from SAT to retrospectively annul their exclusion status under the Academic Progress Rule, via the late withdrawal process. While SAT is happy to help students regardless of the situation, we see much better outcomes for students when we see them earlier on. We will remain vigilant for further show cause notices after the deferred and supplementary exam period for S2 2024.

ECA issues

ECA continued to be a problematic area for students in Q4 2024. There were several instances of incorrect advice being provided to students by course convenors and exam

invigilators which caused confusion to students and adversely impacted their ability to get adjustments. We have also seen a lot of change in the assessment of ECAs within colleges, which has resulted in differing approaches taken by different colleges. This results in students experiencing different outcomes depending on where they study and who assesses their ECA application.

There is clearly still significant work to do in the advocacy space with ECA. Reforming the appeals process and reinstating a supplementary exam as an outcome are already established as areas of focus for SAT. We would also like to see more transparency and consistency in the college-level assessment of ECAs to ensure all students have a fair opportunity to seek adjustment, regardless of what college they are in and who assesses their ECA application.

Graduation changes

SAT was aware of general angst among many students with the new graduation schedule for students completing in Q4 2024. There were also concerns from some students around what the ceremonies would look like in the context of staffing cuts and instability stemming from the 'Renew ANU' restructuring. We opened the Graduation Ceremony Assistance Program (GCAP) to assist students experiencing financial hardship.

Late Withdrawal

Late withdrawal is a consistent feature of SAT's academic workload and Q4 2024 was no exception. We have continued to provide assistance to students with late withdrawal, including a number of students seeking to submit late withdrawals outside of the standard 12-month application period.

A notable pain-point with late withdrawals in Q4 2024 has been an increasingly long backlog on late withdrawal appeals. As the policy criteria for late withdrawal has become increasingly specific and the assessment of late withdrawal increasingly pedantic, we have seen an increase in unsuccessful outcomes that are appealed by students. The turnaround times for assessment of late withdrawal appeals has exceeded 6 months in several cases we are aware of. While we have had some success with helping students appeal, the overall stress of prolonged uncertainty has added a new problematic dimension to the late withdrawal process for many students.

Academic integrity

We had an influx of requests for support with academic matters towards the end of Semester 2, 2024 and the examination period. This is an expected peak period for integrity matters, however we had several particularly difficult decisions made against students which have resulted in higher than expected requests for our assistance in appealing the outcomes. This is an area of focus for SAT as we consider our options for advocacy. We also had several good outcomes, where our advocacy and assistance led to academic integrity proceedings being dropped by course convenors and one student who feared for their future in the legal profession being able to proceed with legal training.

HDR uptake

With new executives elected, we had meetings with the new HDR officer and discussed some focus areas for the upcoming year. There was a steady engagement with HDR candidates, some longer term cases and some new. The common issues remained termination of candidacy, extension of candidature and supervisory relationship complication. In some matters, with the consent of the student, we worked with the dean of students office to get a better outcome for the candidate.

Accommodation

ANUSA Accommodation Assistance Program

We processed 5 emergency accommodation applications and provided students 35 nights' assistance this quarter, amounting to \$2,450.

ANU Accommodation Bursary

SAT is part of the committee that reviews the ANU accommodation bursaries. As part of the committee, we reviewed applications and provided our recommendations on each. We assessed multiple applications this quarter too.

Disciplinary & Critical cases (** Content Warning: This section mentions SASH and suicidal ideation**)

Students with a number of appeals and disciplinary cases were assisted by SAT.

Atleast 2 students with suicide ideation and 4 with SASH matters were assisted. There were some other complex matters with severe mental health conditions, domestic violence, Professional Behaviour Committee meetings at the medical school, and harassment.

Some students had good outcomes with the appeal process with their exclusions overturned.

Most of these critical cases were complex and required a combination of academic, financial, accommodation support along with referrals to support services on campus and across Canberra.

Other Activities

Implementation of Symplicity case management system

We signed a 3-year contract with Symplicity and are engaging their case management system called “Advocate”. Some ANU services like Dean of Students & SSWT already use this system. We are aiming to have the system deployed by April 2025. This will remain a focus area for our team this year.

Participation in SEN Conference 2024

SAT attended the Student Experience Network conference (<https://studentexperiencenetwork.com.au/sencon-2024/>). We not only attended relevant sessions, networked with other student guilds and unions, we also presented some sessions and have taken convenerships of some groups.

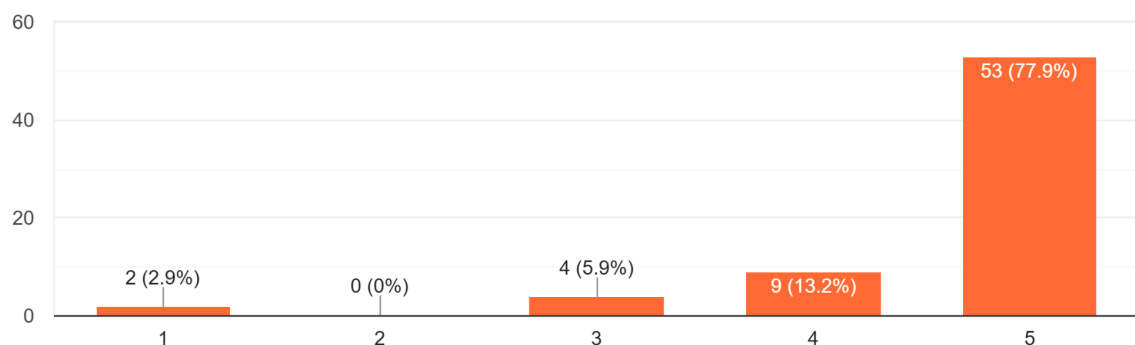
Hassan & Casey presented on “*Data Aiding Human-Centric Approach to Student Services: How to Utilise Data Better*” and Emily was elected as the convener of “SEN welfare and wellbeing professional network”.

Student Feedback

This year, SAT has also started collecting formal feedback from the student through a feedback form. Almost 90% of the students found support provided by the ANUSA Student Assistance Team to be ‘helpful’ or ‘very helpful’.

Did you find the advice/support from ANUSA Student Assistance Team helpful?

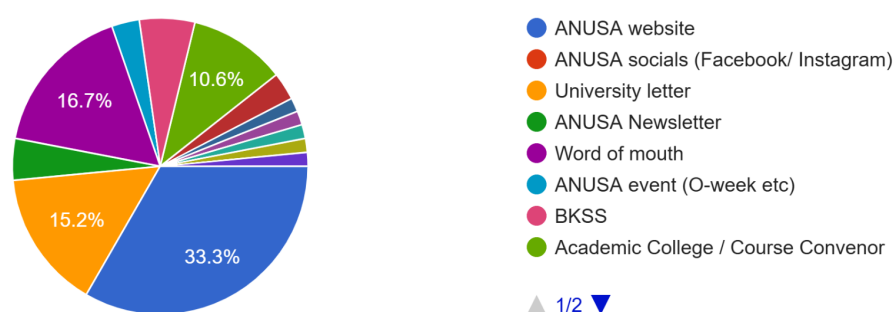
68 responses



Students are finding our service through a combination of different channels.

How did you hear about our service?

66 responses



Some of the general feedback on the SAT service included:

- I want to extend my deepest gratitude to ANUSA for their invaluable support during my time here. Their assistance has gone far beyond just financial aid; it has given me peace of mind and allowed me to focus on my studies and research without added stress. I truly appreciate the dedication ANUSA shows to helping students through every challenge, and I feel incredibly grateful to be part of a community that cares so deeply. Thank you for making a meaningful difference in my journey!!
- The ANUSA service is great for supporting students. For example, I met an ANUSA advisor with an issue and he was extremely helpful and understands the issue very well and can provide all possible outcomes with all possible solutions. ANUSA also helps you with writing an appeal or if you need to speak to a lawyer they arrange an appointment for you. I highly recommend all students to talk to ANUSA not just if you have an issue

but also you can contact them for an advice. It is a really helpful service and as I'm student I'm so grateful for ANUSA and their tremendous support and help.

Some Wins

Email from 6/11/2024

Dear Emily,

I am happy to share that my early termination application for the accommodation has been approved. I am deeply grateful for all the assistance you provided throughout this process. Your help has been incredibly effective, and I feel truly fortunate to have the support of such a wonderful team like ANUSA.

Thank you once again for everything.

Email from 18/11/2024

Dear officer,

I hope this email finds you well.

The purpose of writing this thank-you letter is to express my gratitude to Emily Yam for her great help in the academic integrity investigation.

When I received the teacher's notification, I was very anxious and didn't know what to do. I have some anxiety disorders, especially when I am under a lot of pressure. It was Emily who provided me with timely technical guidance in writing the statement and emotional comfort. In addition, after the review meeting, take some time to help me analyze the details of the meeting and provide timely guidance on how to deal with unconventional issues encountered during the review meeting, giving me advice on preparing an inquiry.

Fortunately, my investigation was terminated at a review meeting, and the convenor confirmed that I was not engaging in academic misconduct. And only a new paper needs to be written and submitted. This result cannot be achieved without the help of Emily and ANUSA.

Thank you very much for your help. I wish you all progress in your studies and good health.

Best regards,

Email on 6th December

Dear Hassan,

I am happy to receive the final investigation outcome today. The inquiry officer decided to dismiss the case after reviewing all the supporting documents.

I would like to thank you for all your supports and valuable advices offered to me in the past couple of months.

New Year season is coming. Taking this opportunity, I wish all the best to you for the coming new year and Merry Christmas.

Email on 16/12/2024

Hi Andy and the ANUSA team,

I just wanted to say a big thank you for the support you've outlined in your email. It is also helpful and reassuring to know that there are other support services available when things get tough.

Thank you for approving the medical expenses grant, and for all your support. it really makes a big difference.

Email dated 13/12/2024

Thank you so much Hassan. Your words meant a lot 🙏 thanks for your warm smile and words which made my day.

Email on 16/12/2024

Thank you so much for your kind response and your great support for us in financial need and many other supports provided.

Really appreciate your kind support

Email on 21st December:

"Dear Professor,

I am deeply grateful for your invaluable help. I have received your email, and your thoughtful and thorough response truly impressed me. I sincerely apologize for taking up so much of your precious time. Your dedication and sense of responsibility as a teacher are truly admirable, and I feel incredibly fortunate to have your guidance.

Thank you for your kind assistance. With your support, I hope that I can receive good outcome."

Email on 9th Jan

Dear Hassan,

Thanks for your suggestions and I don't know how to express my appreciation. That's so nice of you... 😊

Email on 1st November

“Just sending this update through as requested – thank you so much for your help!! Since the ECA application was approved I won't be needing another appointment, but thank you again for talking me through my options, it was really helpful 😊”

Email 30/11:

Dear Casey,

Thank you so much for your patient guidance and unfailing support during this period. I have been extremely anxious every single day, and it was your assistance that enabled me to calm down and meticulously reorganize my statement.

Email 11/12/24

Good morning Casey,

I hope you are very well.

Just wanted to let you know on Monday I received an outcome of Poor Academic Practice. Feeling relieved, to say the least, and enrolling in ... after all.

I wanted to thank you very much for all your support throughout this process, and say that I'm really grateful to you for helping me achieve a good outcome in all the circumstances.

I'm taking all the knowledge gained through this process with me, for the better.

You guys offer an amazing support service and I felt assisted throughout the whole thing.

Thanks so much

Email 23/10

Dear Casey,

Good day! I hope you're doing well.

Thank you so much for your kind and warm response. Reading it made me smile and filled me with positive energy.

I feel lucky to have your support and ANUSA's help. I had some concerns before, worrying about addressing ANUSA incorrectly, but your reassurance has helped me feel more at ease.

Email 13/10

Dear Casey,

I wanted to express my gratitude again to you. You have been so helpful and supportive the whole time, even though the outcome is disappointing, I am very glad and felt very lucky that I was supported by ANUSA Sas like you in this difficult time.

Your help in directing me to the ANU Wellbeing team, helping with the draft of complaining, and the emotional support mean a lot to struggling students. Thank you so much

Email 4/10

Dear Casey, I just received the result of Academic Progress. I can continue my study in ANU ! Thank you so much for helping me prepare for the Show Cause letter :)

Email on 17th December'24

Hey Hassan,

I am pleased to say that my request for the supplementary examination has been approved. Thank you very much for your advice, I am incredibly grateful for the outcome.

Email on 23rd December

Dear Professor,

I am deeply grateful for your invaluable help. I have received your email, and your thoughtful and thorough response truly impressed me. I sincerely apologize for taking up so much of your precious time. Your dedication and sense of responsibility as a teacher are truly admirable, and I feel incredibly fortunate to have your guidance.

Thank you for your kind assistance. With your support, I hope that I can receive good outcome.

Community connections, networking and training

Presentations & Panels

- At SEN conference 2024

Community connections:

- Presented ANUSA services to ANU library and Academic Skills staff.
- Had a catchup with Academic Skills
- Arranged a meeting with SSWT

Training

- Andy completed his accidental counsellor training in Dec 2024
- In-house Research Award Rule (HDR) training session with legal team.

Future goals and focus areas

- Deployment of Simplicity (Case management system)
 - Better feedback collection from students
 - Deploying the new case management system
- Annual plan for 2025
- Raising ANUSA's awareness in HDRs
- Increasing support and advocacy regarding the cost of living related matters