



ANUSA Student Assistance Team Report

Quarter 1, 2025 (Jan-March)

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

Overview

In this quarter, SAT participated in various O-Week related events (presentations, stakeholder meetings and catch-ups), alongside providing vital support to both students continuing their degree and also to new students who are just starting their program at ANU. For continuing students, the matters we are seeing relate to the issues from the conclusion of the previous semester. This includes Assessment Appeal, Show Cause and Late Withdrawal related matters. We have also seen an increase in critical and disciplinary-related matters and HDR matters, in line with what we saw in Q4, 2024. Some of these critical cases and HDR support matters require multi-stakeholder support, including the Dean of Students, and we thank their team for their assistance.

We have also been busy providing students with program leave and reduced study load support for those who cannot complete a full-time study load this semester. In terms of advocacy, we have also been providing support to CSS students experiencing difficulties in a COMP course. We have had a busy start to the year, and we envisage this to continue as the year progresses.

As an update, we have also made significant progress in implementing a new case management system (Advocate), which is the current system in place for most student-facing services on campus. We are in the final stages of testing, and we hope to

implement this system by Q2, which will enhance our record-keeping abilities and data reporting.

Casework spotlight areas

This quarter, we saw an increase in financial matters, health and suicidal ideation compared to Q1, 2024 (29 vs 36, 43 vs 57, and 6 vs 12, respectively). More students are facing financial and health-related concerns at the start of the semester, compared to last year. This is likely due to the cost-of-living crisis that is impacting many across the community. We also granted an additional \$5,712.90 in grants compared to the previous year's Q1. Typically, we see an increased access to our grants and programs towards the middle of the semester, but we are seeing a strong uptake as early as Q1 this year.

In March, a fire broke out at Lena Karmel lodge, where students from multiple floors had to evacuate for multiple days. Most students were provided temporary accommodation from the University during this time; however, there were still a few students who were either not provided with appropriate accommodation, adjustments, or access to their belongings. We received a large number of students enquiring about support options from ANUSA. We quickly responded to these queries and provided students with: financial support, access to grocery vouchers, emergency accommodation and assistance with academic adjustments. We also provided referrals to students for mental health support. We also sent our details and information on the support that we can provide to affected students to the Lena Karmel team so that they can pass on our details to students. Students have been grateful for our quick support during this time.

Case matter breakdown

Matter	Count	Percentage
Total Matters for 2025	391	100%
Academic Matters	231	60%
Disciplinary Matters	13	3%
Financial Matters (non-grant)	36	9%

SASH	4	1%
Health	57	14%
Suicidal Ideation	12	3%
Accommodation	12	3%
Others (incl. Tax help, legal referrals)	26	6%

Student cohort breakdown

UG	PG CWR	PG HDR	Unknown	Total
132	74	14	4	226
59%	33%	6%	2	100%

These figures are just the casework numbers. The students who have accessed our financial grants and program are not necessarily captured in this table.

FINANCIAL (Q1 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>applications</u> <u>(successful</u> <u>and</u> <u>unsuccessful)</u>
ANUSA Assistance Grant (AAG)	20/\$10060	5/\$2600	4/\$2100	29/\$14760	Total: 41
ANUSA Medical Grant (AMG)	6/\$1500	1/\$300	2/\$600	9/\$2400	Total: 13

ANUSA Carers Grant (ACG)	0	2/\$1050	1/\$400	3/\$1450	Total: 4
Accommodation Assistance Program (AAP)	1/\$490	7/\$2450	3/\$1120	11/\$4060	Total: 14
ANUSA Indigenous Wellbeing Program (IWP)	0	0	5/\$1380	5/\$1380	Total: 5 All successful
ANUSA HDR Completion Support Grant (AHG)	N/A	N/A	4/\$2750	4/\$2750	Total: 4 All successful
ANUSA Textbook Program (ATP)	10/\$2400	1/\$300	N/A	11/\$2700	Total : 17
Grocery Voucher Program (GVP)	96/\$4800	85/\$4250	12/\$600	193/\$9650	Total: 193 All successful
Transport Voucher Program (TVP)	9/\$144.9	20/\$322	5/\$80.5	34/\$547.4	Total: 34
Total amount spent/total applications				\$39,697.4	325

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

Grants

We see a steady uptake of our ANUSA grants and programs this quarter compared to Q4 2024 (\$37932.9 vs \$39697.4). AAP, IWP and AHG all have significant contributions to the uptake. The AAP especially is due to the relocation of students from both overseas and interstate given that it is the start of the academic year. The ANUSA Indigenous Wellbeing Program (IWP) has an uptake compared to the last 2 quarters (Q3 and Q4) with a total 5 applicants and all successful. Tjabal Centre's newsletter and direct connection to eligible applicants has contributed to the success. The ANUSA HDR Completion Support Grant (AHG) has increased from \$700 to \$1000 this year, aiming to provide more support to the HDR candidates. We have also removed the compulsory requirement for AHG applicants to provide a Notice Of Intent to submit a document (issued via ISIS) as we found that HDR candidates find it challenging to obtain this document despite being at the tail end of their program. Applicants can now provide proofs like email communication with their supervisor and final thesis drafts. This would allow greater flexibility in AHG assessment and hopefully attract more HDR candidates to seek help.

For Q2 onwards, budget allowing, we want to increase the cap for our Grocery Voucher Program and our ANUSA Medical Grant. The increase in the Grocery Voucher Program is in response to the increased cost of living. The intention to increase the AMG in Q2 is in response to the lack of available bulk-billing doctors' appointments at the ANU Medical Centre. Students are required to access off-campus doctors, which come with expensive gap fees. Students require more support from ANUSA to cover this cost and the associated medication.

School of Art & Design Financial Hardship Bursary

ANUSA continued to administer the SoAD bursary this quarter. 3 applicants applied for this bursary, and 2 were granted financial support, with a total of \$2000. SAT are also actively updating ANU SOAD team with the remaining amount and the overall view of the applicants' degree, reason for applying and award amount.

Transport Vouchers

TVP has a very high uptake compared to last quarter as well (6 booklets vs 34 booklets). This is due to the end of free public transport under the MayWay+ trial period and the beginning of semester. Multiple issues were raised due to bus drivers rejection of the transport vouchers under the new MyWay+ system. We have received an official confirmation from the transport minister that the vouchers should be usable for buses under

the new system. Yet, 2 students have raised the concern of bus drivers still not accepting the voucher and unable to provide a physical receipt for the 90 minutes free ride between different bus routes. Emails have been sent out to all successful applicants and SAT will continuously monitor this ongoing issue.

Grocery Vouchers

Demand for grocery vouchers has increased this quarter. A total of 193 vouchers were provided to students. This is likely due to the rise of living costs and groceries. A lot of international students have also mentioned the significant increase of their tuition fee compared to last semester, resulting in a significant burden to afford groceries. The LK fire incident in March has also boosted the applications given that students have to leave their dormitory without any food supply.

Textbook Program

Due to the discontinuation of ANU Book Bursary, ANUSA has launched the Textbook Program in response. The ANUSA Textbook Voucher Program is designed to provide ANU students facing financial hardship with the opportunity to purchase prescribed textbook(s) for their enrolled courses. Successful applicants can receive up to \$300 in Harry Hartog textbook vouchers per application. You can read more about our new program [here](#). Despite its infancy, it has been well utilised, with 17 total applications, and \$2700 already spent. Our other grants and programs continue to be heavily utilised, with a large number of applications coming through

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](#). SAT will continuously keep an eye on potential candidates.

Food Co-op Vouchers

Food Coop renegotiated the cost of meal vouchers with ANUSA. After deliberation and negotiations, we accepted the cost to be \$10/meal. In conjunction with the Admin team, the SAT has received 49 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.

Birth Control Subsidy

SAT is getting ready to take over the administration of ANUSA Birth control subsidy program from the admin team. For this, we had meetings with the Women Department, Admin team and Hayden (treasurer). We are planning to formally take it over in June 2025.

Equity Tickets

We have not provided any equity ticket in this quarter. We will continue to provide equity ticket support to all clubs and society as needed.

Skill Up

Skill Up for Sem1 2025 was launched on 4th March. We have received 160 applications up to 24th March when the program officially closed. 35 successful applications have been granted and \$4693 has been spent on reimbursement. The most popular courses students are interested in are consistent, mainly First Aid, Responsible Service of Alcohol training, Working with Vulnerable People Card, Coffee related courses and White Card. SAT will organise another Skill Up program in semester 2 (Q3).

GCAP

This quarter, we also administered GCAP in collaboration with the ANU Graduations team. We had 7 applicants, and 5 were identified as being successful. They were provided with graduation gowns for their graduation.

Academic

We continue to see a large number of students requiring academic support during this quarter. We have seen a number of students requiring assistance with Late Withdrawals, Show Cause and Assessment Appeals. There was an issue with Show Cause notices this year, where some students were impacted by a miscalculation of submission date by the University and these impacted students were provided additional time to submit their Show Cause notices. During the tail end of the quarter, we also saw a number of students coming to us for support following a rejected Show Cause application. There are limited options for students who have been unsuccessful with their Show Cause application, but we were able to explore options such as Late Withdrawals should it be applicable.

ANUSA also received emails from students studying a COMP course this semester. As it was a large scale issue, we collaborated with our COMP course reps for assistance. The course reps were able to advocate for large-scale change in this course due to our combined effort.

We understand that there are delays in students receiving their EAPs from Accessibility, which is impacting students' ability to complete their assessments equitably. The DSA team reached out to us to provide our team with a template email that we could provide to students. The template email outlines the fact that the student has reached out to Accessibility already regarding their circumstances, and would like interim adjustments to be in place to ensure that they are able to complete their assessments. SAT found this template helpful and provided it to students in need.

We are also noticing a delay in both Late Withdrawal outcomes and Late Withdrawal Appeal outcomes as well. Late Withdrawal applications are typically responded to within 30 working days, we are seeing more and more students receiving outcomes outside this timeframe. This is not in accordance with the Policy and we have raised this accordingly. For Late Withdrawal Appeals, we are seeing outcomes being provided to students within 6-9 months. We are actively working in this space to ensure students are not receiving outcomes more than half a year after submitting their appeal applications.

We anticipate Q2 to be another busy quarter with academic issues as we get into the assessment period. We will continue to provide assistance and support these students.

Graduation changes

The one-a-year graduation ceremony took place in February, and we were able to provide assistance to students (in conjunction with the ANU Graduations office) with graduation gowns for the ceremony.

Late Withdrawal

Despite long delays on Late Withdrawal appeal processing, the number of applications for Late Withdrawal and the appeals against the outcomes were still very consistent throughout the quarter.

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

This quarter is not as heavy for academic integrity cases as some of the others are. This is because not many assessments are submitted and marked before the census date. However, we still received some ongoing academic integrity cases from Q4 of 2024.

HDR uptake

The semester breaks have been a busy time for HDR matters to prop up. WE assisted some of the candidates with the appealing against the termination of their candidature. The reasons for the cancellation ranged from health reasons to non-completion of milestones.

We had greater engagement with HDRs because of active participation of the HDR officer (Geo) and SAT & Legal team's presence in events like RM inductions, O week activities and later at the HDR inductions.

We also worked with the Dean of Students office in assisting some of the candidates in dealing with the supervisory issues and finding a new supervisor.

Accommodation

ANUSA Accommodation Assistance Program

We processed 11 emergency accommodation applications and provided students 55 nights' assistance this quarter, amounting to \$4,060.

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 7 applications in this quarter.

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 12 students with suicide ideation and 4 with SASH matters and 13 with other disciplinary matters were assisted. There were some other complex matters with severe mental health conditions, domestic violence, forged documents, misrepresentation to university in addressing admission requirements and harassment.

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

Though numerically not as much, 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

After signing a 3-year contract with Symplicity and engaging their case management system called “Advocate”, we prioritised implementation of the system this quarter. Some ANU services like Dean of Students & SSWT already use this system.

We have received the Privacy Impact Assessment approval from the ANU’s privacy officer. The ANU’s Student Business System (SBS) team will now work on getting a consent from each student to integrate some of ANU student’s data to our case management system. This may take a shape of having an option in ISIS that the students can click to provide consent in sharing their basic data with the association.

We are aiming to have the system go live by Mid May 2025 (without student data integration). This will remain a focus area for our team this year.

Annual Plan 2025

On 6th January, SAT had a planning session in the National Arboretum. The priority areas for the team were established, namely HDRs, cost of living related programs and better data management.

The plan was shared with the rest of the team. With changes expected externally and internally, we prepared plan A,B,C (multiple course of actions).

SSAF underspent bid

SAT prepared some bids for the upcoming Student services council. We will know the outcome of these bids in Q2.

Pantry project

SAT is exploring the feasibility of running a pantry for the students and is in touch with some stakeholders.

Recruitment for parental leave cover SAA role

We are recruiting for the parental leave cover for the Student Assistance Advisor role. We received a lot of interest in the role, and the recruiting panel has gone through the shortlisting and the interview stage.

Reviewed the proposed “National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence”

The team has Reviewed the proposed “National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence” and its possible impact on ANUSA's reporting requirements. This is a proposed code and is subject to passage of legislation.

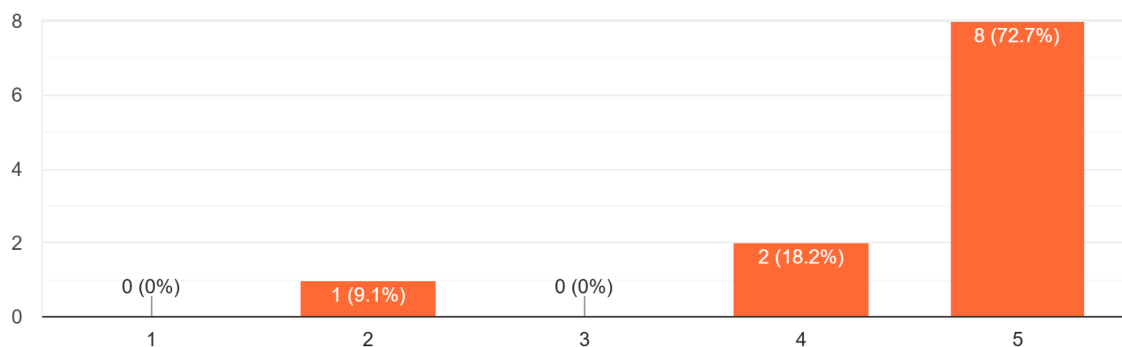
We are also attending a discussion on the code, organised by SEN, on 7th May 2025.

Student Feedback

SAT has continued collecting formal feedback from the student through a feedback form. More than 90% of the students found support provided by the ANUSA Student Assistance Team to be ‘helpful’ or ‘very helpful’.

How easy was it to contact ANUSA Student Assistance Team (SAT)?

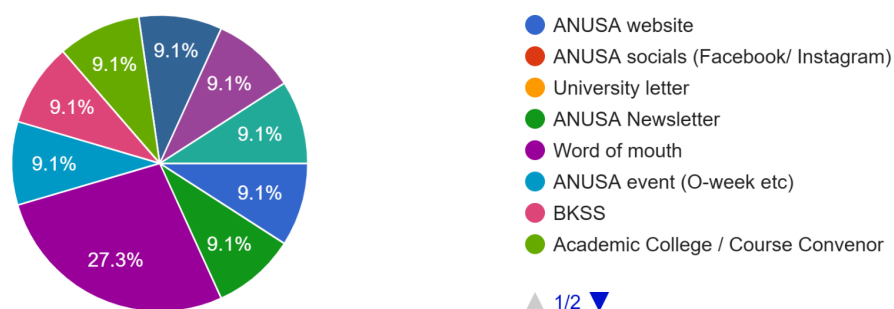
11 responses



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

How did you hear about our service?

11 responses



Some of the general feedback on the SAT service included:

- Overall the team is wonderful and more than willing to help, however there was a case of re-scheduling multiple times and, when I sent an email requesting a meeting I put in the email questions that I needed to be answered regarding my degree. ANUSA are unable to help me with those topics, it would've been more beneficial for me to be told where to go to get that assistance rather than book the appointment. Though I would go to ANUSA in future for help when relevant.
- For the ANUSA team, I think your feedback is very valuable as you are inclined more to student wellbeing compared to ANU staff, the latter being on direct payroll to ANU. Wishing a long success for ANUSA team
- Thank you ANUSA Student Assistance Team I wish there would be a chance to have great result on my "Procedural Appeal"

- It seems there is an issue with Microsoft Teams app for Android, where joining a meeting was not straightforward. Not your fault but rather Microsoft, and using phone for joining a meeting wasn't really common. Just to let you know this could be a problem somehow.

Some Wins

Email dated 03/02/2025

Hi Emily,

Firstly, my apologies for the delay in updating you about this. I just wanted to thank you for all your help and guidance with my Show Cause response. I received the committee's response today and, with the condition of only taking two courses this semester and passing both, the exclusion has been overruled. I can't express enough how much I've appreciated your support and assistance through this process, and how excited I am to be able to resume my university life. Thank you so very much.

Email dated 13/02/2025

Hey Emily,

Greetings!

Thank you so much for sharing the details. I am happy to share that I have received the outcome for my credit application today. Thank you so much to ANUSA Team for hearing out my plea and lending a strong supporting hand. As an international student, I felt distressed and alone, but ANUSA gave their time, listened my issue in depth and extended their support with prompt communication.

Thank you so much 😊

Dated 03/03/2025

Dear Emily

I understand that this may be a lengthy request, and I truly appreciate the time and effort you are dedicating to helping me through this process. Your support and understanding mean a great deal to me, especially during this challenging period. Each of your patient responses and timely assistance has provided immense warmth and reassurance during a time when I have felt incredibly overwhelmed.

If you have any further suggestions or feedback, please let me know. I am more than willing to make any necessary improvements to strengthen my application. Once again, thank you so much for your

kindness and generosity in assisting me—I cannot express enough how much your help means to me.

Dated 23/02/2025

"Happy New Year, Hassan!

I'm really grateful for the help you gave me last year. Now I have successfully graduated and returned to China. I've prepared a gift for you and asked my friend to take it back to Australia for you. Are you available tomorrow? He will help me give the gift to you.

The gift is a scroll calendar for 2025. On the scroll, there is an auspicious Chinese phrase "如意ru yi", which means that everything goes as one wishes. I hope that in your future life and work, everything will go smoothly, and you will have all your wishes fulfilled and be satisfied with everything."

Dated 13/03/2025

Hi Emily,

Thanks a lot for the quick reply and for sorting this out so quickly! Really appreciate ANUSA standing up for students.

Cheers,

Dated 31st January 2025

We managed to revise ANU graduation's practice of taking student's official name only for the presentation and not their preferred name. Because of our advocacy, a student who was not attending their graduation ceremony as they didn't want their dead name to be taken while receiving the degree, eventually attended the ceremony with their loved ones.

"Hi Hassan,

Thank you for reaching out on XX behalf. I apologise if I overstepped when reading XX previous email about perhaps not attending next week's ceremony.

After consulting with key University staff, we have determined that since this is not an official ceremony (i.e. all degrees have already been conferred and thus the use of a legal name is not strictly necessary as it was in past ceremonies), we will use XX preferred name 'XX' when verbally presenting the award onstage next week. We will also work towards ensuring this is possible for other students in future without having to navigate further red tape.

.....

Sarah Bayes (she/her)

Associate Director, Academic Services"

"Hello,

Yes, this is an excellent result. Thankyou very much.

XX"

Email dated 28th March 2025

"Hey Hassan.Thank you so much for your help, time, and assistance. You've really made this so much easier for me. I wish more people could be competent at their jobs like you.

..... Again thank you so much for your help I would have been lost without you. "

Email dated 8th April 2025

Dear ANUSA Student Assistance Team,

I would like to express my gratitude for being given this grant. This means a lot to me and my journey. I will fully use the grant to cover a part of my surgery costs and/or recovery time expenses. Thank you, I really appreciate ANUSA's help.

Kind regards,

Email dated 24th February 2025

Thank you for your mail. But I would really appreciate it if I'm given the grant which is highly helpful for my daily expenses. The grant is a huge relief as it can cover at least a part of my daily expenses.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Regards,

Email dated 9th January 2025

Dear Casey, Thank you so much for all the help you have provided during this time. It is because of your support that the process went so smoothly, and I was able to achieve a satisfactory outcome. Thank you again!

Email 28 January 2025

Hi Casey! I wish this email finds you really well. I am doing well on both my study and work in ANU, and all these are because of you and your help. I can never thank you enough for these.

It is luna new year coming. In my culture, it is regarded as the beginning of the new year and new start. I really wish you could have a brilliant new year, and according to our tradition, I would like to extend my best wishes to all your families and friends, together with all that you are care about. Wish all of you a healthy, happy, and fruitful new year!

Email dated 20 February 2025

Dear Casey, I am incredibly grateful and happy—I can't even describe how overjoyed I am right now. This result is truly a blessing for me, especially after the challenges I have faced since March last year. Thank you so much, Casey. You are incredibly kind and have been a lifesaver for me. God bless you.

Email dated 20 February 2025

Dear Casey,

I hope you're doing well.

Thank you for your response and for all the support you and the ANUSA team have provided throughout this process. I truly appreciate the effort you have put into assisting me with my Late Withdrawal application and for scheduling an appointment with the ANUSA team next week.

As I have now returned to China, I regret that I won't be able to express my gratitude to you in person. However, regardless of the final decision, I will always remember and appreciate the help I received from you and the ANUSA team during this challenging time.

Thank you again for everything! If I could return to Canberra, I would love to meet you in person.

Email dated 18th March 2025

Got the official approval!

Finally 😊

Thanks again for all your support/help with this. It was nice having someone in my corner!

Email dated 18 March 2025

I am truly grateful for the time and effort that you all have spent in getting this process done on my behalf. Without your help, I don't think I would have been able to get this process done, so it means a lot to me. Wishing you the very best,

Email dated 26th March 2025

Dear Casey, I can't tell you how grateful I am for your consistent support.

Over the past four-plus months, your patience has been my lifeline through this incredibly challenging time. When I first faced the 100% penalty, I was on the verge of giving up. But your help gave me the strength to persevere. I truly appreciate all you've done

Email dated 26th March 2025

Dear Casey,

Your a legend! It's a relief that they are changing their tune. Thankyou for making that happen

Email dated 26th March 2025

Hi Casey,

... good news! It was approved! Tuition refund still hasn't happened yet but my transcript has already been updated.

I never got to properly thank you for your help and support through the entire process. I'm not sure I'll get the same outcome without your input. Thanks again!

Community connections, networking and training

Presentations & Panels

- Whole day Residential Scholars (SRs) training on 28th Jan
- O week presentations
 - International Student Orientation
 - ANU Scholarships
 - Staffed Market Day stall
 - Presented on behalf of SAT and ANUSA Legal at Access Scholarship welcome event on 11th of February
- Convened SEN's Welfare and Wellbeing forum on multiple occasions

Community connections:

- Had a catchup with whole Student Safety & Wellbeing Team (Jnauary)
- Set up regular catch ups with HDR officer (Geo) and VP (Vaish)
- Provided feedback on ANUSA's Canberra Crash Course Guide.

- SAT met ANU Counselling and exchanged the information about the services each team provides.
- Met Rizwan Khan and Liz from Student Experience team

Training

- SEN Grant Writing Workshop with Nyree Slatter
- Internal HDR trainings

Future goals and focus areas

- Training new parental leave cover staff member
- Deployment of Simplicity (Case management system)
 - Better feedback collection from students
 - Deploying the new case management system
- Raising ANUSA's awareness in HDRs
- Increasing support and advocacy regarding the cost of living related matters