Senate Standing Committees on Education and Employment

RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE TO WITNESSES
Universities Accord (Student Support and Other Measures) Bill 2024
Tuesday 30 September 2024

Question from SENATOR SARAH HENDERSON:

Schedule 4: Commonwealth Prac Payment

Q1.   Students will be required to provide personal information to assess their eligibility, such as identity documents, pay slips, bank statements and Centrelink records. What systems do you have to protect student information?

Answers:

University of Adelaide (UoA) – Systems to protect student information

At the UoA any personal documentation from students is collected via our Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system and stored in the Oracle Service Cloud. This documentation is stored against the student's record in that system and can be viewed or downloaded by staff who have approved access to that system.

Due to privacy requirements, the UoA does not record any Tax File Numbers in that system.

Student Finance at the UoA is not involved in payments to students, apart from refunds and OS-HELP. OS-HELP is provided through a lump sum grant scheme from the Australian Government for students enrolled in a Commonwealth Supported Place (CSP) who want to study part of their course overseas. The OS-HELP is paid directly to the student to assist with expenses associated with studying overseas such as airfares, accommodation and other travel or study costs. Students in receipt of OS-HELP funds have the amount added to their accumulated HELP debt and repay it through the Australian tax system.

In 2020, the Tertiary Access Payment (TAP) was first announced by the Australian Government as part of the Job Ready Graduates program. In 2021 the UoA was provided with a lump sum from the Government to process and distribute payments to eligible students. Due to the UoA having insufficient personal information for these students, it was not possible to process and distribute these payments. As a result of universities being unable to process the TAP to eligible students, in 2022 the TAP came under the sole management of Services Australia.

University of South Australia (UniSA) – Systems to protect student information

UniSA maintains the following policy provisions with respect to privacy obligations, acceptable systems use and access, and information security practices as appropriate for respective classifications of information.

- https://i.unisa.edu.au/policies-and-procedures/university-policies/hr/privacy-policy/
- https://i.unisa.edu.au/policies-and-procedures/university-policies/corporate/c-22/
- https://i.unisa.edu.au/siteassets/askit/ists/it-policies/information-security-policy2.pdf

These practices are inherent in system implementations, identity and access controls, information storage by design, backup and retore capabilities, and audit regimes. UniSA maintains a governance body with a specific focus on the identification and management of Personally Identifiable Information and Sensitive data. UniSA also maintains an enterprise and industry standards driven cyber security strategy aligned with the NIST framework with progress toward Zero Trust adoption.

Schedule 2: Student Services and Amenities Fees (SSAF)

Q2.   In allocating SSAF funding to student led organisations now, do you agree on or approve the use of funding and for what purposes?

Can you explain the process as to how this works now?

Answers:

University of Adelaide (UoA) – SSAF funding allocation process

Separate Funding and Services Agreements are in place between the University and YouX (Adelaide University Union) and with Adelaide University Sport and Fitness (AUSF/AU Sport). These govern the percentage allocation of SSAF between the three groups as well as obligations for use of the funds.

The annual allocation of SSAF is facilitated by the University and involves a two-phase consultation process with students. The first phase involves an annual survey of all students regarding their priorities for allocation of the SSAF.

The second phase involves consultation with democratically elected student representatives as required under the Student Services, Amenities, Representation and Advocacy Guidelines. This consultation is carried out annually through the SSAF Consultative Committee comprised of student representatives from YouX, AUSF/AU Sport, Student Representative Council (SRC), international and postgraduate student representatives, as well as University members.

YouX, AUSF and the University submit separate SSAF funding requests to this committee, with each funding request being informed by feedback from the student survey. The Committee agrees on the approach and makes recommendations to the University on the allocation of SSAF funding for the following year. These are ultimately brought to the Vice-Chancellor for final approval.

The YouX and AUSF funding requests include a budget summary, an outline of how SSAF will be expended, and detail on the activities and initiatives funded by SSAF.

The University of Adelaide Act 1971 (SA) also requires YouX (Adelaide University Union in the *Act*) to provide University Council with the financial statements of the union for the previous calendar year (prior to June), a financial report for the 6 months ending 30 June (prior to 30 August), and the budget for income and expenditure for the following calendar year (prior to 1 December).

University of South Australia (UniSA) - SSAF funding allocation process

Oversight for all USASA business functions is undertaken by the University's administrative department which consists of the General Manager and Finance Officer. Tasks undertaken by this department include HR, IT, quality, finance, reporting, strategy, leadership, office management, project management, payroll, and training and development.

Any new or additional (non-core) activity is discussed and negotiated with the CASO and would require a strong case, driven by student need/demand (supported by student consultation and feedback), and subject to there being sufficient SSAF available to fund the additional activities.

Once the business plan and budget are finalised a funding agreement is drawn up that includes the funding amount for the upcoming calendar year and USASA's obligations under the agreement.

USASA's obligations under the agreement include the need to provide quarterly reports to the University as well as audited financial statements for the previous year.

There are also regular meetings held between the Office of the CASO, Director: Student Engagement Unit, and USASA throughout the year.

The UniSA Student Association (USASA) submits a business plan and budget in August each year, for the following year.

The business plan is provided in writing and followed up with a meeting between the Chief Academic Services Officer (CASO), USASA President, USASA General Manager and Executive Officer for the Office of the CASO to discuss in more detail.

The business plan is largely made up of the core activities delivered through USASA, including:
- **Advocacy Services** – provides students with independent, free, and confidential support regarding the University's policies and procedures matters. Student Advocates help ensure that students are fairly represented by providing relevant information, referral and advice as well as acting as an advocate, liaison or support person on matters of: Requests for remarking and resubmissions; Appeals against allegations of academic misconduct (including plagiarism); Advice regarding University Academic and Assessment Policies; Appeals against final grades; Appeals against intention to preclude; Appeals against allegations of examination misconduct; Issues with Academic and Professional Staff; Referral to other services inside and outside of the University
- **Student Leadership,** which covers Student Representation**;** Student Board (USASA)**;** Committees (Education, Governance, Finance, DEA, Clubs)**;** Student Voice; Governance training; Leadership Training**;** University decision making groups; Club executive development
- **Student Support** which covers Financial wellbeing and financial literacy education; Financial grants (in partnership with the University's Student Hardship Fund)**;** Financial counselling; University Policy creation input/assistance**;** Advocacy Internship**;** Wellbeing support/education
- **Student Community** which covers Events (such as orientation, Campus Fair, social events, and wellbeing programs)**;** Pop ups (Student Reps)**;** Food Pantry**;** Cooking classes (online and in person)**;** Volunteering Marketing; Communications – Including student newsletters**,** Clubs and societies, Awards/Galas and *Verse* magazine
- **Administration** see above – Oversight for all USASA business functions is undertaken by the University's administrative department

Q3.   Are there limits in place for how much funding can be used to support overhead or administrative costs for providers as the legislation is now and under this bill for student unions, guilds or associations?

Answers:

University of Adelaide (UoA) – Limits on funding for overheads or administrative costs now and under legislation

As above, the Funding and Services Agreements in place between the University and YouX and with AUSF/AU Sports detail the obligations for application of SSAF funding as well as other areas such as Behaviour and Conduct and alignment with University policies and procedures.

YouX and AUSF/AU Sports may only use the Grant Funding for the provision of the Funded Services.

In the agreement with YouX it is also specified that Grant Funding must not be used to pay student honoraria other than certain prescribed roles such as the President of YouX.

There are no limits in place for how much funding can be used to support overheads or administrative costs for providers.

University of South Australia (UniSA) - Limits on funding for overheads or administrative costs now and under legislation

UniSA's SSAF allocation directly funds student related activities and is not used to support the overheads or administrative costs of the University.

There is no formal limit in place for how much SSAF funding USASA can use to support overhead /administrative costs. The business plan and budgeting process, however, enables both parties to discuss and prioritise student services and support that provides maximum, direct benefit to students. This is balanced with the associated costs. The University also provides some in-kind support to USASA (e.g., facilities) which helps to reduce the burden of overhead costs on SSAF.

Schedule 3: FEE-FREE Uni-Ready courses

Q4.   Can you provide the committee with data on the number of students at each of your universities, both enrol in and complete an enabling course and in what discipline?

Answers:

University of Adelaide (UoA) – Students enrolled in and complete an Enabling course by discipline

Broad Program Level	First Enrolment Year	Program	FOE	Students Enrolled (Head Count)
Enabling	2021	UoA Preparatory Program	Education, n.e.c.	75
		Wirltu Yarlu - Uni Prep Prog	Society and Culture	2
		Engineering Enabling	Engineering and Related Technologies, n.e.c.	6
		CASM Foundation Year	Music	3
	2021 - Summary			86
	2022	Wirltu Yarlu - Uni Prep Prog	Society and Culture	1
		UoA Preparatory Program	Education, n.e.c.	68
		CASM Foundation Year	Music	6
	2022 - Summary			75
	2023	CASM Foundation Year	Music	2
		UoA Preparatory Program	Education, n.e.c.	71
	2023 - Summary			73
	2024	CASM Foundation Year	Music	6
		UoA Preparatory Program	Education, n.e.c.	60
	2024 - Summary			66
Enabling - Summary				299

Figure 1: University of Adelaide total Enabling enrolment, including disciplines, 2021-2024

University of South Australia (UniSA) – Students enrolled in and complete an Enabling course by discipline

Enabling programs are purposefully generic to provide students with a broad skillset that enable them to enrol in a range of Bachelor programs.

Students as values			2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Enabling program	UniSA Education Futures	DFFS: UniSAFoundationStud	0	0	0	0	544
		DFIN: Aboriginal Pathway	69	65	54	55	55
		MFFS: UniSAFoundationStud	1103	993	715	614	182
		UniSA Education Futures	**1171**	**1058**	**769**	**669**	**773**
	All Programs		**1171**	**1058**	**769**	**669**	**773**
Custom Subset 1			**1171**	**1058**	**769**	**669**	**773**

Figure 2: University of South Australia total Enabling enrolment, including disciplines, 2020-2024

Q5. Do you have any data to show how many students who complete their enabling course go on to enrol in a further degree of study?

Answers:

University of Adelaide (UoA) – Student completion of Enabling Courses who enrol in an Award Course

Note: Enabling Courses are Non-Award Courses. At UoA, students completing Non-Award Courses do not generate a completion record within the University's data systems. The data in *Figure 2* therefore shows a breakdown of Enabling students who continued on to study an Award Course as against the number that did not. This analysis has been undertaken on the 2021 cohort of students due to sufficient time now having passed for them to complete their Enabling Course/s and enrol in Award Courses in subsequent years. A similar analysis provided for later years of Enabling enrolments would therefore be misleading or inconsistent.

2021 Enabling Program Enrolments				Progressed to Award Program Study?		
Broad Program Level	**Program**	**Field of Education**	**Headcount**	**Yes**	**No**	**% Further Study**
Enabling	CASM Foundation Year	Music	3	2	1	67%
	Engineering Enabling	Engineering and Related Technologies	6	6	0	100%
	UoA Preparatory Program	Education	75	29	46	39%
	Wirltu Yarlu - Uni Prep Prog	Society and Culture	2	0	2	0%
			86	**37**	**49**	**43%**

Figure 3: University of Adelaide total number of students enrolled in Enabling Courses in 2021 who continued to an Award Course

University of South Australia (UniSA) – Student completion of Enabling Courses who enrol in an Award Course

Year Started	Students Count
2020	95
2021	192
2022	168
2023	132
2024	33

Figure 4: University of South Australia total number of students enrolled in Enabling Courses in 2021-2024 who continued to an Award Course