



Transition Plan template - guidance

Requirement to allocate a minimum of 40 per cent of student services and amenities fee (SSAF) revenue to eligible student-led organisations

Section 19-39 of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (HESA) and the *Higher Education Support (Student Services, Amenities, Representation and Advocacy) Guidelines 2022* (SSARA Guidelines) require higher education providers that charge a SSAF to allocate a minimum of 40 per cent of their SSAF revenue to student-led organisations from 1 January 2025.

The definition of a student-led organisation is as follows and set out in Section 19-39(3) of the HESA:

(3) An organisation is a **student led organisation** that relates to a higher education provider for a particular calendar year if:

- (a) the majority of the persons constituting the governing body (however described) of the organisation are either or both of the following:
 - (i) students enrolled in a *course of study with the higher education provider during the calendar year;
 - (ii) students who have been enrolled in a *course of study with the higher education provider during any of the 3 immediately preceding calendar years; and
- (b) the majority of the persons constituting the governing body (however described) of the organisation have been democratically elected by students enrolled in a *course of study with the higher education provider when the student votes in the election; and
- (c) the organisation satisfies the requirements (if any) specified in the SSARA Guidelines for the purposes of this paragraph.

As set out in Section 19-39(1) of the HESA, this only applies to student led organisations in receipt of 40 per cent of the SSAF revenue collected by providers; the remaining 60 per cent providers can continue to allocate under the existing requirements of the HESA.

Part 4, paragraph 20 of the SSARA Guidelines requires higher education providers to be satisfied that a student-led organisation in receipt of 40 per cent of the SSAF revenue collected by providers has appropriate governance arrangements, including that:

- (i) the governing body of the organisation makes decisions independently from the higher education provider; and
- (ii) the organisation keeps and publishes annual audited accounts that record the organisation's income and expenditure, including in relation to transactions between the higher education provider and the organisation; and

- (iii) the organisation has, and complies with, policies and procedures in place that relate to record keeping, risk management, fraud prevention and financial controls.

The student-led organisation must also provide the services set out in subsection 19-38(4) of the HESA to students using the SSAF revenue allocated to them in a calendar year.

Section 19-40 of the HESA provides for the Department of Education (the department) to make a determination in relation to transitional arrangements for up to three consecutive years for a Table A provider, and up to five consecutive years for a non-Table A provider.

To enable the department's decision-making, transition plans must:

- provide evidence of why the provider is not able to meet the new requirement and what the 'gap' is to meeting either or both the funding requirements or the governance requirements;
- demonstrate how the provider will achieve full compliance on both the funding and governance requirements of the measure by the conclusion of the transition timeframe, which is a maximum of three consecutive calendar years for Table A providers, and five consecutive calendar years for non-Table A providers, and earlier if possible; and
- be submitted and reported against annually.

Transition plans are:

- separate to the production of annual, public SSAF allocation reports released by the provider
- for the purposes of seeking agreement to the proposed transition plan and will not be proactively released by the department, though may become public through normal operation of government.

Additional supporting information can be provided to the department as needed, and the department may follow up for further information where issues are identified.

As each provider's arrangements are unique, it is expected that supporting information is likely to be required to enable the department to be satisfied the outcome of the policy would be achieved by the provider's intended approach.

Responsibility for legislative compliance rests with the provider

As the responsible party under the HESA, the provider is required to have appropriate oversight of the arrangements within student-led organisations and SSAF expenditure to ensure compliance with the HESA.

Provided that a student-led organisation meets all the HESA and SSARA Guidelines requirements, providers have the discretion to determine the most appropriate mechanism to prioritise and fund the student-led organisations who are in receipt of 40 per cent of the allocated SSAF revenue as long as they are providing services consistent with Section 19-38 of the HESA. Providers may allocate SSAF revenue to one or more student-led organisation to comply with the HESA and SSARA Guidelines.

Timing

Key annual dates from SSAF collection years from 2026 onwards:



31 May (prior year)	Providers submit transition plan for subsequent calendar year with required information
July to August (prior year)	Departmental assessment of transition plans, including requests for further information and support for revisions to ensure provider compliance.
September (prior year)	Approval from Department of Education
1 January (SSAF collection year)	Transition arrangements take effect



[Insert Higher Education Provider Name]

Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF)

[Insert Reported Year] Transition Plan

Introduction

1. This Transition Plan is for [Provider] to seek approval from the Department of Education (the department) to enter into a transition arrangement [for up to three consecutive years for Table A providers, and five years for non-Table A providers], consistent with Section 19-39 of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* and the Higher Education Support (Student Services, Amenities, Representation and Advocacy) Guidelines 2022.
2. Submission of this plan to the department does not constitute agreement to the plan. Providers will be notified of the status of their plan following assessment and consideration.

Application

3. Provide an overarching summary of the current arrangements for the delivery of student services and the uses of the SSAF funding. For example, this may include information about how student services are delivered now, what future plans for service delivery may be, recent changes to engaging with student led organisations, information on the student population and information about campus arrangements e.g. multi-campus, regional campuses (**no more than 750 words**).
4. Provide an overarching summary explanation and supporting evidence of (1) why your organisation is not yet able to meet the funding and/or governance requirements and which requirement you are seeking transition for e.g. it could be either funding or governance requirements, or both requirements; and (2) the period of transition you are seeking for each requirement, noting the maximum approval period is one year and that transition arrangements have to be agreed yearly – it is not possible to provide multi-year approval (**no more than 300 words**)
5. To agree to a transition plan, the department must be assured that key services would be maintained at an appropriate level for the calendar year in question, and that the plan will enable the provider to fully comply with all legislated requirements by the end of the plan.
 - a. Describe how service delivery of key services will be maintained at an appropriate level throughout the transition plan (**no more than 300 words**).



6. For each year that the transition plan is intended to cover, describe **how** your organisation will achieve compliance with the funding and governance requirements below, populate the **milestones/timeframes** in achieving this, and how your organisation will be **fully compliant by the end** of the proposed transition period.

a. Funding requirement (no more than 300 words) regarding the allocation of 40 per cent of SSAF revenue should include information on the:

- key activities to be delivered through expenditure of SSAF revenue across the provider, for both student-led organisations and other entities
- stakeholder engagement and outcomes in determining SSAF allocation and implementing transition arrangements
- the proposed allocations of the 40 per cent of SSAF revenue to student-led organisations on an annual basis
- progress against any previous milestones or commitments in previous annual plans submitted to the department, including actual SSAF revenue collected, distributed and expensed for preceding years
- provide the total SSAF revenue expected to be collected and the intended allocation amount and percentage to student-led organisation/s for each year that the transition plan is intended to cover. **Note: this information should align with the information provided in the SSAF Allocation Report.**

Funding Milestones	Year	Year	Year
Estimated SSAF revenue	\$	\$	\$
Allocation to student-led organisations	\$	\$	\$
Percentage allocation to student-led organisation	%	%	%

b. Governance requirement (no more than 300 words) regarding student-led organisations which should include information on:

- how the planned governance arrangements and timeframes to design, establish and implement by either the provider or its student-led organisation, will be achieved, and
- progress against any previous milestones or commitments in previous annual plans submitted to the department.



Transition Plan Governance Milestones <i>(examples, not definitive)</i>	Year	Year	Year
	Majority student-led	<i>e.g. 30% student representation</i>	<i>e.g. 60% student representation</i>
Democratically elected leaders	<i>e.g. Process for elections developed</i>	<i>e.g. Elections held</i>	
Governing body of the organisation makes decisions independently from the higher education provider			
Keeping and publication of annual audited accounts			
Policies and procedures for record keeping, risk management, fraud prevention and financial controls			

Contact information

Please nominate one relevant individual to be a SSAF Contact Officer for your organisation. The Department of Education may follow up for additional supporting information or may follow up for further information where issues are identified.

Please provide the following details for your nominated SSAF Contact Officer:

Full name	
Position title	
Email address	
Phone number(s)	

Transition Plan Owner

I, *[insert full name of Approver]*, *[Role description - Vice Chancellor or Chief Executive Officer equivalent]* of *[insert full name of higher education provider]*, seek approval of this Transition Plan and declare that the information provided in the Transition Plan is to the best of my knowledge true, complete and correct and meets the requirements of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* and the *Higher Education Support (Student Services, Amenities, Representation and Advocacy) Guidelines 2022*.



Signature of Owner	
Full name of Owner	
Position title of Owner	
Date Approved	

Please submit your organisation's completed Transition Plan via email to SSAF@education.gov.au.

