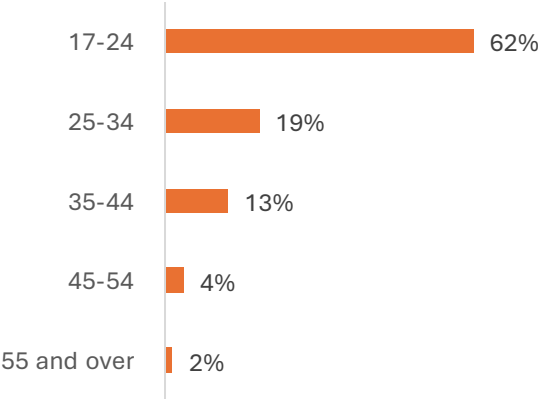


SSAF Survey Topline Summary: VU & VU Online Students

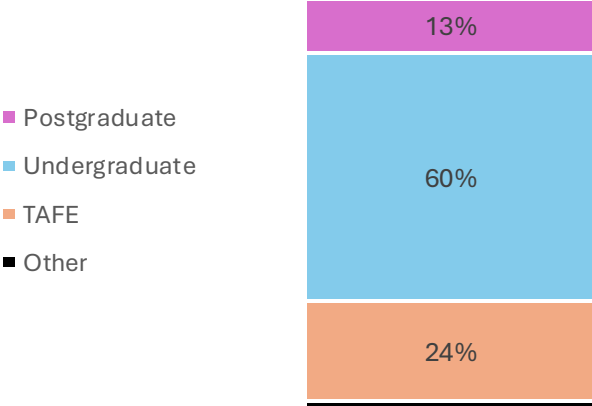
- **Cost-of-living support is a prominent theme for both on-campus and online students**
 - Food provision ranks as a #1 campus priority
 - Free meals show strong current and future demand
 - Online students prioritise welfare, housing, financial support and grants to assist with studies
- **Academic & careers support are core expectations**
 - Academic support is the most used and most in-demand service across both cohorts
 - Careers services show significant growth in future demand and is emphasised by VUOnline students as a priority area
- **Experience with SSAF funded initiatives varies by cohort and campus**
 - Campus students emphasise the importance of facilities, food access and physical environments to study and socialise
 - Online students focus on the wellbeing, counselling and financial supports available to them
 - On-campus satisfaction varies – Footscray Park strongest, St Albans & VU Brisbane receiving the lowest scores.

SSAF Student Survey Respondent Profile

Age group



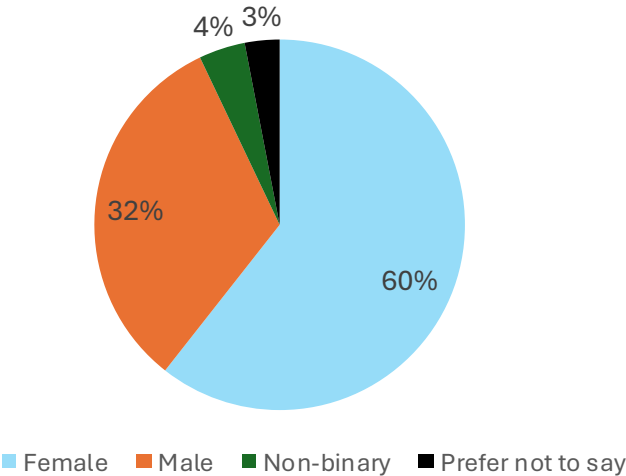
Study Level



Years at VU

< 1 year	52%
1-2 years	27%
2-3 years	14%
3+ years	8%

Gender



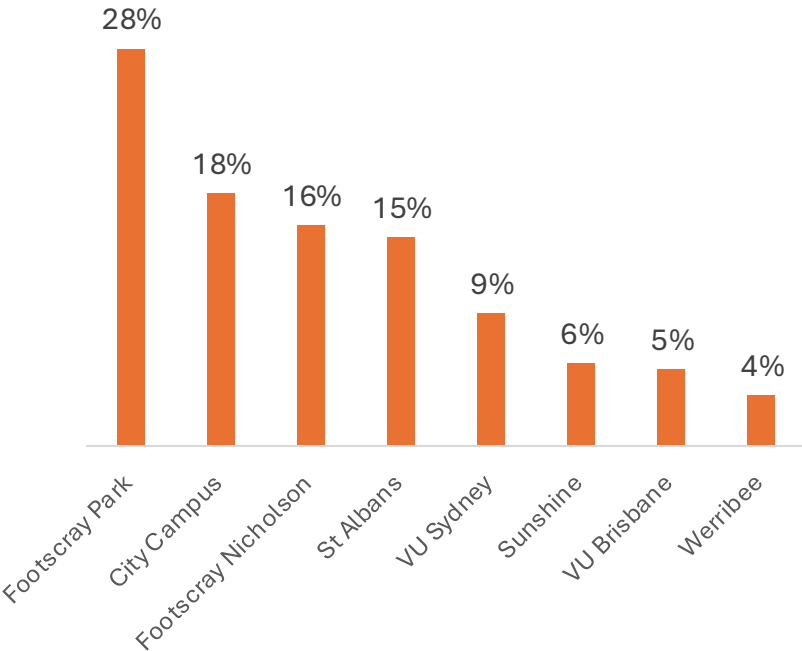
Top areas of study

Early Childhood	18%
Health	13%
Education	12%
Business	10%
IT	7%
Nursing	5%

Domestic vs International

Domestic	73%
International	27%

Primary Campus



Students spend limited time on campus outside of class, typically less than two hours per day. This suggests campus environments are not yet optimised to retain students beyond academic requirements.

Q11. How many days do you typically come to campus each week?

0 days	5%
1 day	9%
2 days	16%
3 days	55%
4 days	12%
5 days	3%

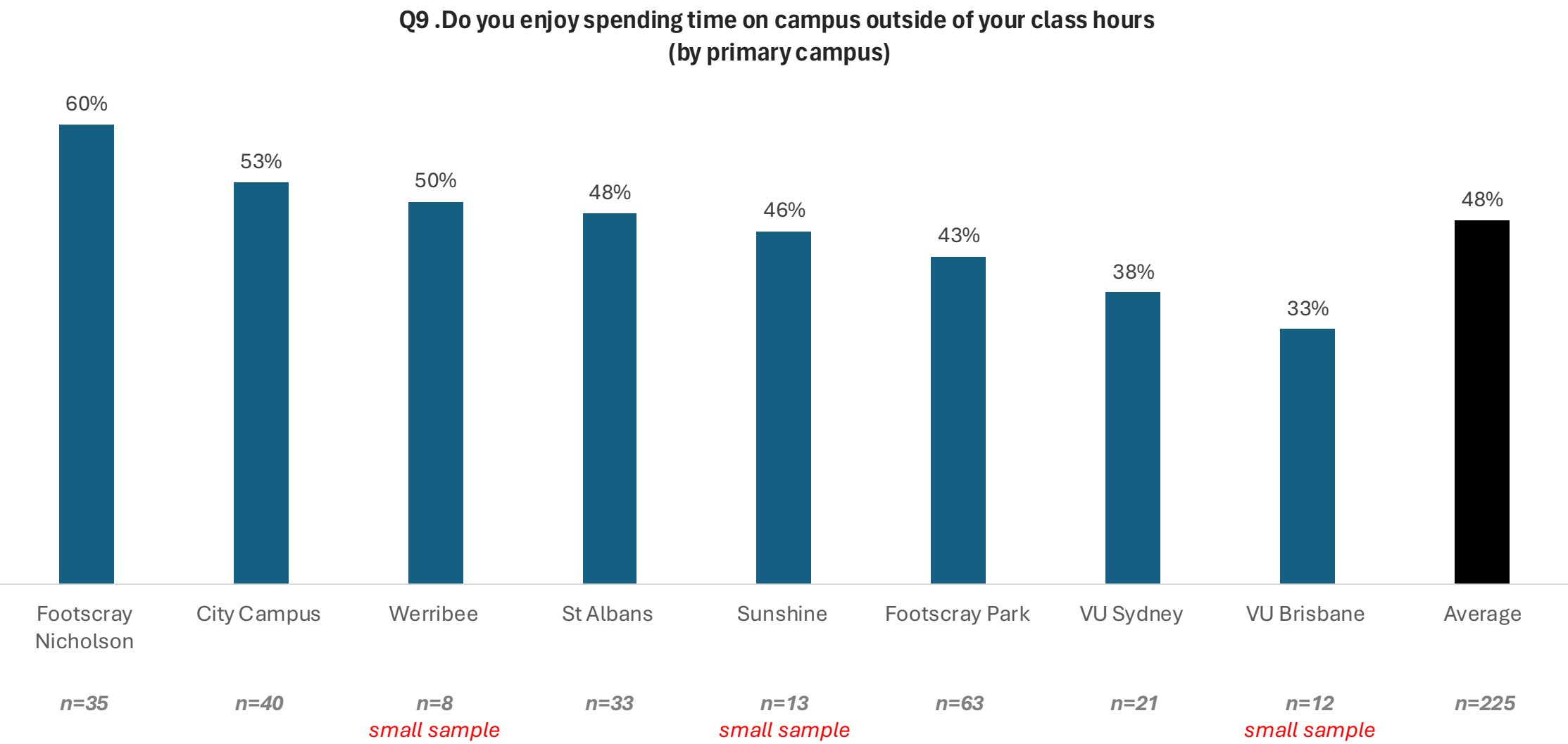
Q12. How much time do you spend on campus outside of class hours?

0-1 hour	52%
1 – 2 hours	16%
2-3 hours	12%
3+ hours	16%
Other (no response)	3%

Undergraduate and postgraduate students spend more time on-campus (3-4 days), this is reflective of their study mode and schedule within Block mode. For TAFE students the number of days spent ranges with some spend between 1-4 days on-campus, which aligns with the diverse delivery modes of TAFE courses.

Note that only 3% of students spend all 5 days on-campus.

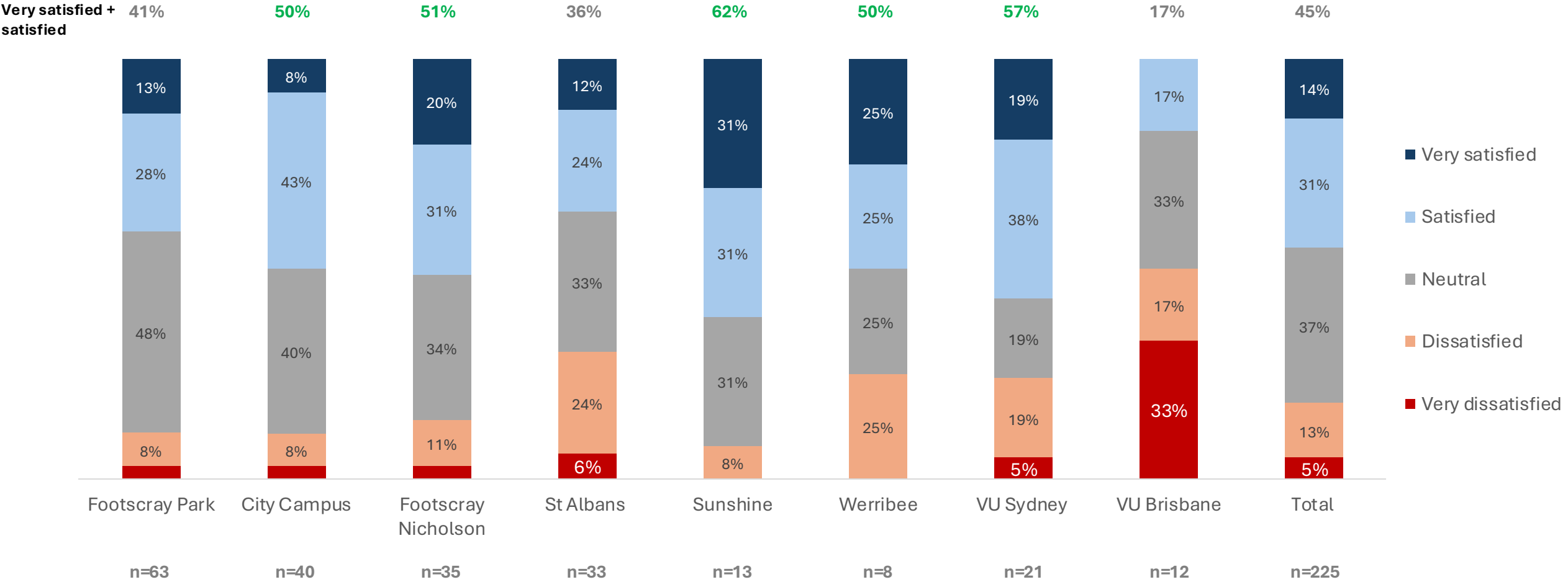
Students at Footscray Nicholson, City Towers & Werribee most enjoy spending time on campus outside of classes, while students at Brisbane, Sydney and Footscray Park have lowest enjoyment.



Base: SSAF survey respondents n=225

Students at Sunshine, VU Sydney & Footscray Nicholson are most satisfied with the opportunities they have to make friends. Brisbane, Footscray Park and St Albans are the least satisfied with the social opportunities available to them.

Q14. How satisfied are you with the opportunities available on campus to meet new people and form friendships?



Base: SSAF survey respondents n=225

Students identify improved lounge facilities, extended café hours and more affordable food options as the primary drivers of increased campus engagement -particularly at campuses with limited infrastructure (Whitten Oval, St Albans, Sunshine, Werribee).

Q13. What would encourage you to spend more time on campus?
Please select all that apply

Q13. What would encourage you to spend more time on campus? (Please select all that apply)	
Student Lounge Facilities	57%
Cafés and food outlets open for longer hours	47%
Campus Activations	32%
Outdoor social seating	29%
Student Bar	29%
Other	24%

A gym for the students to use.

At whitten oval campus (where I am at 3 days a week, there is no facilities available for students apart from classrooms. No library, no student events, no computers or printers

Because of the class-timetable design students go participate in class get the resources for assignments and done. Probably they need to start working On next week's requirements. I do like the 4 weeks module but we are so busy!

I think having better lounges would be great, also the possibility of a bar, even if it's just open Wed, Thurs and Friday.

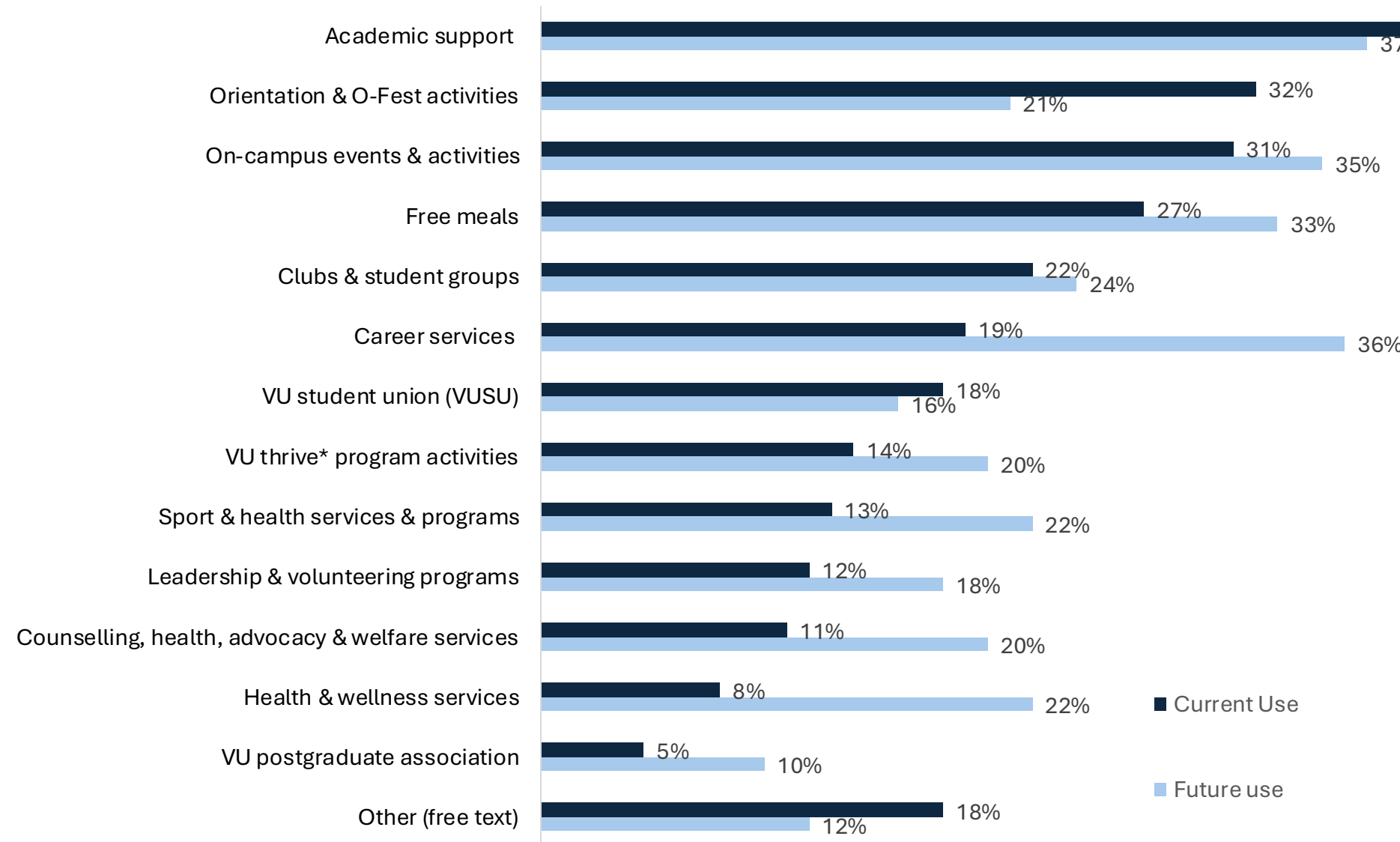
more comfortable private spaces around libraries, more affordable options for food

more private outdoor social seating areas with greenery

More Food options should be available. And bit healthier

Academic support, onboarding and on-campus activities are the most widely used service. Free meals shows strong current engagement and growing future demand, reflecting cost of living pressures.

Q17. Which of the following SSAF services have you used during your time at VU / Q18. Which of the following SSAF services are you likely to access across the rest of your time at VU?



Top services that students expect to use **in the future** are:

- Academic supports: 37%
- Careers Services: 36%
- On-campus activities: 35%
- Free meals 33%
- Clubs & student groups: 24%

Improvement feedback centres on four themes: Food access and affordability, facilities and infrastructure, consistency of services across campuses & support for sports and student life.

Top Themes

Q19. Are there any SSAF services or amenities you feel need improvement?

Food Access & Affordability

“Free meals - there’s none at St Albans campus. Cafe should have more variety. The furniture should be more clean or new.”

For St Albans particularly, the cafe and seating could be better. Maybe more inviting and more food options. It’s very hard to want to stay on campus as it empty.

“Canteen (bringing more variety), there are only 2 microwaves for so many students, there are long lines of people waiting, there is not adequate or functioning water fountains, all machines that offer snacks are far too expensive”. (FN campus)

Campus Equity

“Most of the SSAF services and amenities, such as the free food programs and student pantry, are mainly available at the Footscray campus and are rarely offered at the City campus. It would be beneficial to extend these initiatives more consistently across both campuses to ensure equitable access and support for all students.”

“Free meals — there’s none at St Albans campus...”

“It would be great to have a gym at Footscray Nicholson.”

Infrastructure

“Some of the study rooms have gunk on the walls.” (FP campus)

“Canteen area at lunch time and rest rooms, poorly maintained.” FN campus

We have one cafe that doesn’t offer much and is often understaffed and/or closed. Toilets are a disgrace. (SA campus)

“Mow the grass and fix the roads on campus — it’s like a war zone at St Albans compared to other campuses. I’m not proud to call it my campus.”

“Toilets/bathrooms.” (FN campus)

Clubs & Student Engagement

“Low to no sport advertisement and support to organize teams...”

“Uni-games — low to no sport advertisement and support to organize teams.”

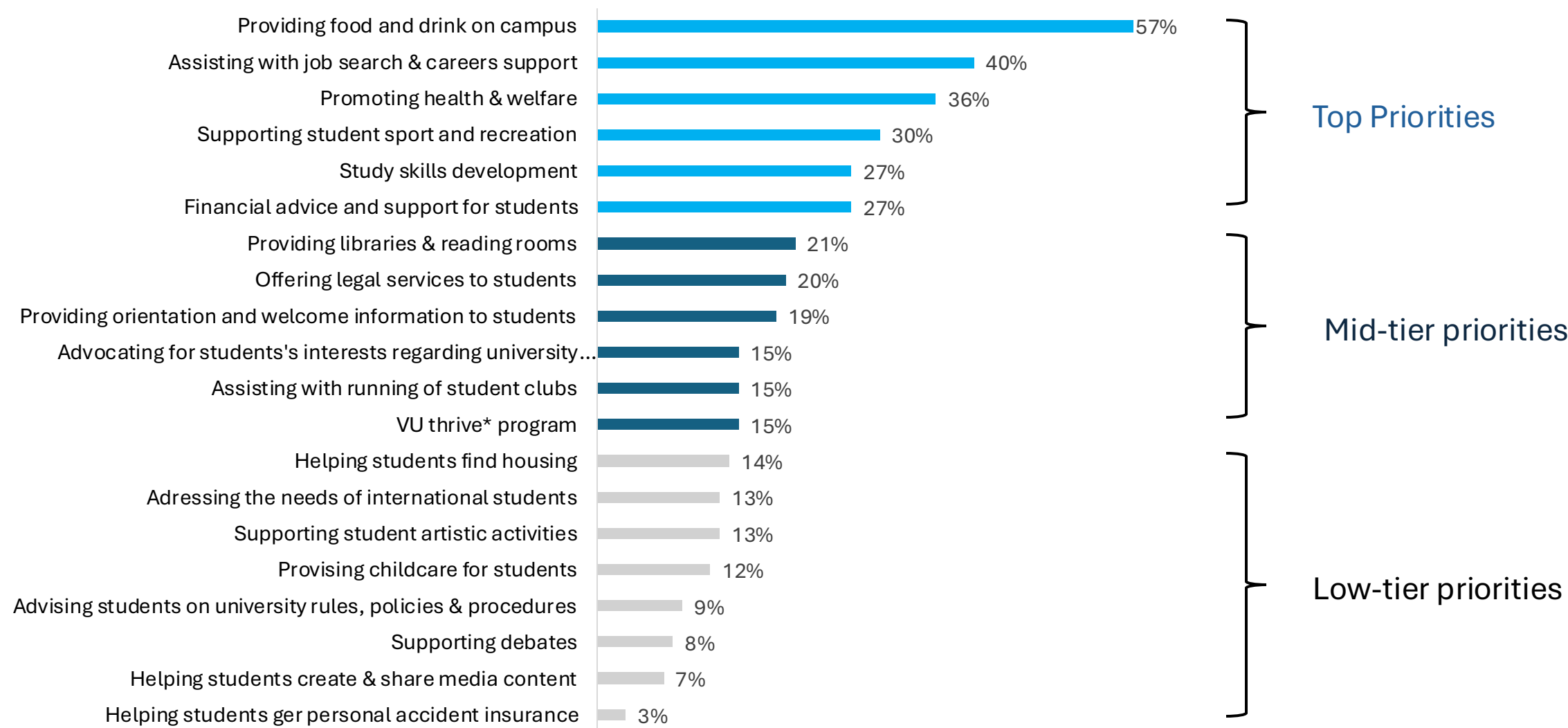
“Better funding to Indigenous related events.”

“Clubs groups need a bit more support.”

“I believe that the access to student union could be improved as there is an office for the student union at footscray park but it is rear to find a member of the community there. and when you message them it can sometimes be days before they respond.”

Top priority for SSAF is providing food & drink on campus, significantly ahead of other areas. This aligns with strong current & future demand for free meals, indicating cost-of-living pressures as a driver of student expectations. Beyond food, careers and student wellbeing remain high on the list.

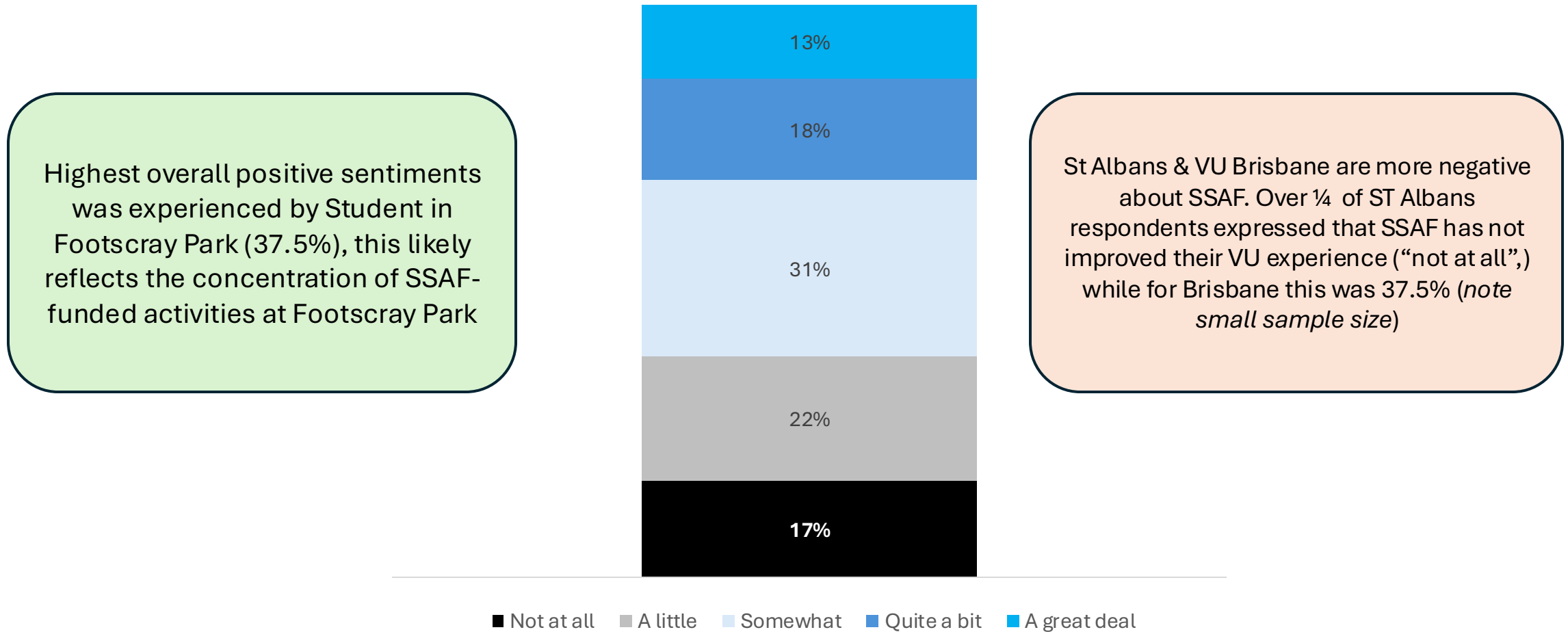
Q20. Select your top 5 priorities for SSAF at VU



Base: SSAF survey respondents n=225

There is moderate positive sentiment on SSAF, with just under a third (31%) of respondents saying it improved their experience quite a bit/a great deal.

Q22. How well do you think SSAF has improved your VU experience?



Topline Insights (On-Campus Students)

- **Cost-of-living support is top-of-mind for students and a priority:**

- Providing food & drink on campus ranked as #1 priority for SSAF
- Free meals program shows strong current and future demand
- Food-related improvement requests featured prominently in qualitative feedback questions.

- **Academic & careers support are core expectations**

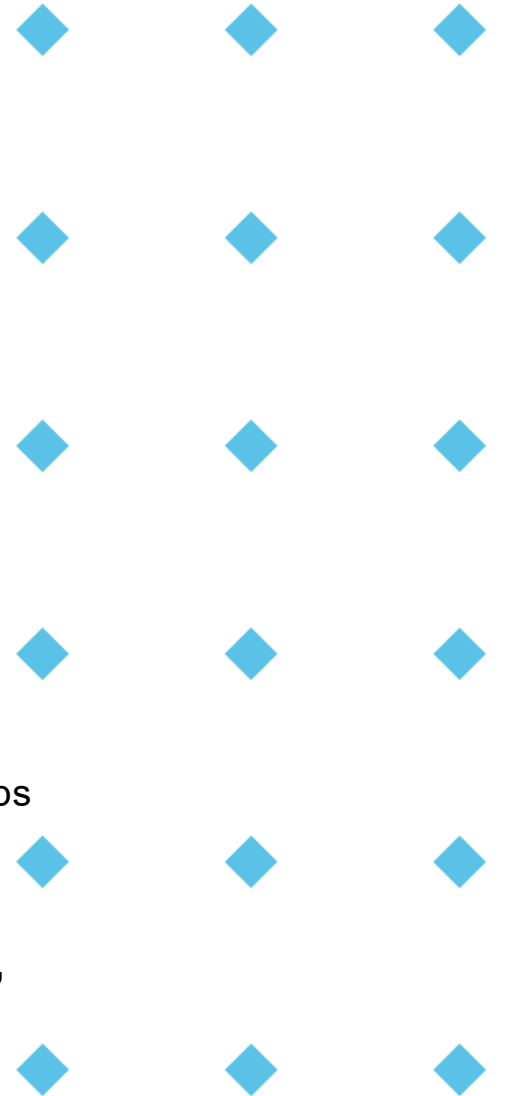
- Academic support is the most used service (35%) and the top future-intent service (37%)
- Careers show significant growth in demand (15% current- 36% future intent)
- Career development also ranks #2 in 2026 priorities

- **Overall impact of SSAD is moderate – opportunity to lift perceived value**

- Only 31% report SSAF activities have improved their VU experience. SSAF is valued but there may be gaps in the awareness of what are SSAF-funded activities and improvements to be made in the delivery of services and amenities that will truly uplift the student experience.

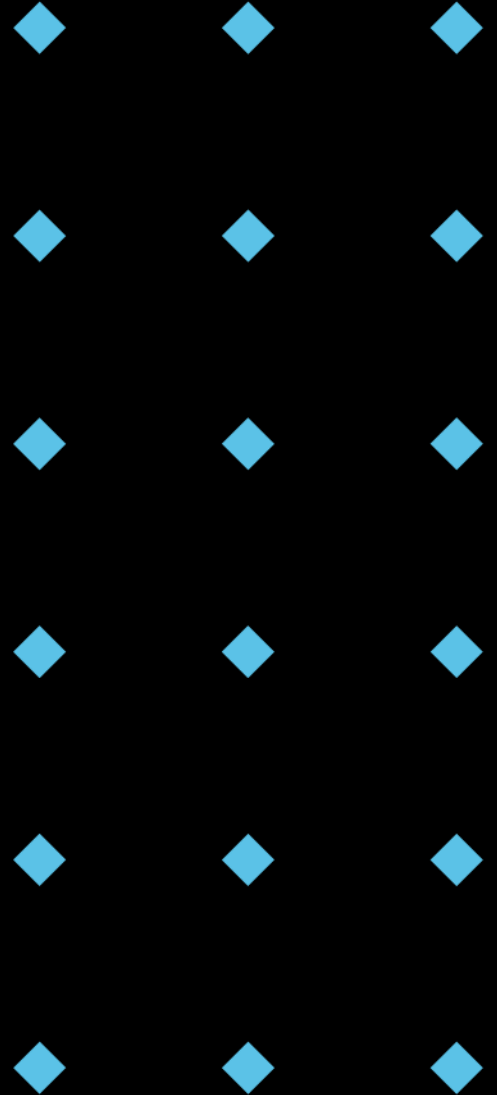
- **There are strong perception of unequal access to SSAF-funded amenities across campuses, which impact satisfaction with campus life.**

- Footscray Park demonstrates the strongest positive sentiment, while St Albans and Brisbane show higher dissatisfaction - often linked to facilities and perceived inequity in amenity provision.



Next Steps (On-Campus Students)

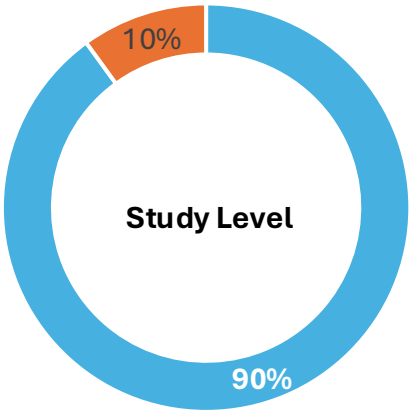
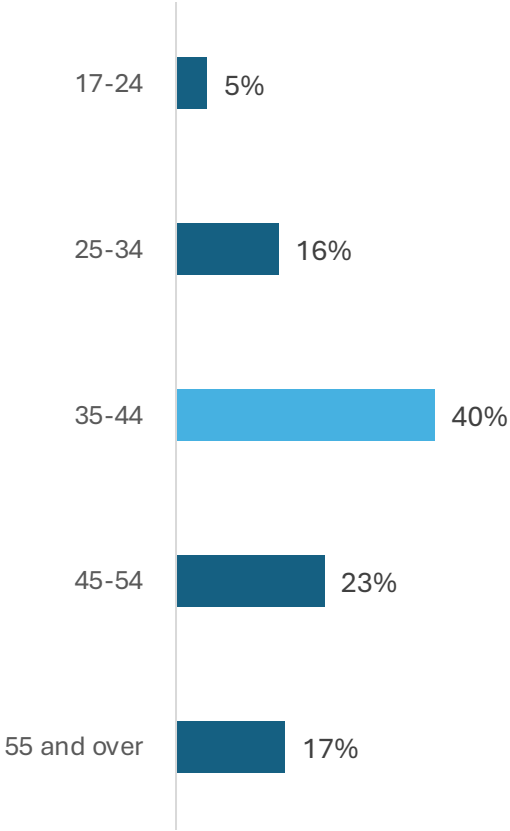
- ◆ Prioritise tangible cost-of-living supports (food access) across all campuses. Some students noted that the food options on campus are not satisfactory and highly priced which drives them to leave early.
- ◆ Expand careers and industry connection opportunities
- ◆ Improve core student campus facilities (i.e. bathroom, dining areas, lounges) to entice students to stay on campus longer and enjoy time with their peers and/or student life activities
- ◆ Improve offering and promotion of SSAF services and amenities, especially at smaller campuses like St Albans, Sunshine, Brisbane & Sydney that have lower engagement and satisfaction.
- ◆ There may be gaps in awareness of what is SSAF-funded versus what is general university provision. Ensuring relevant activities and services are SSAF branded will improve in recall and usage.



VU ONLINE SSAF SURVEY RESULTS

VUONLINE SSAF SURVEY RESPONDENT PROFILE

Age group



■ Postgraduate ■ Undergraduate

Top Areas of Study	
Mental Health	35%
Teaching	27%
Business	13%
Nursing	11%
Public Health	8%
Change Management	6%
Finance	1%

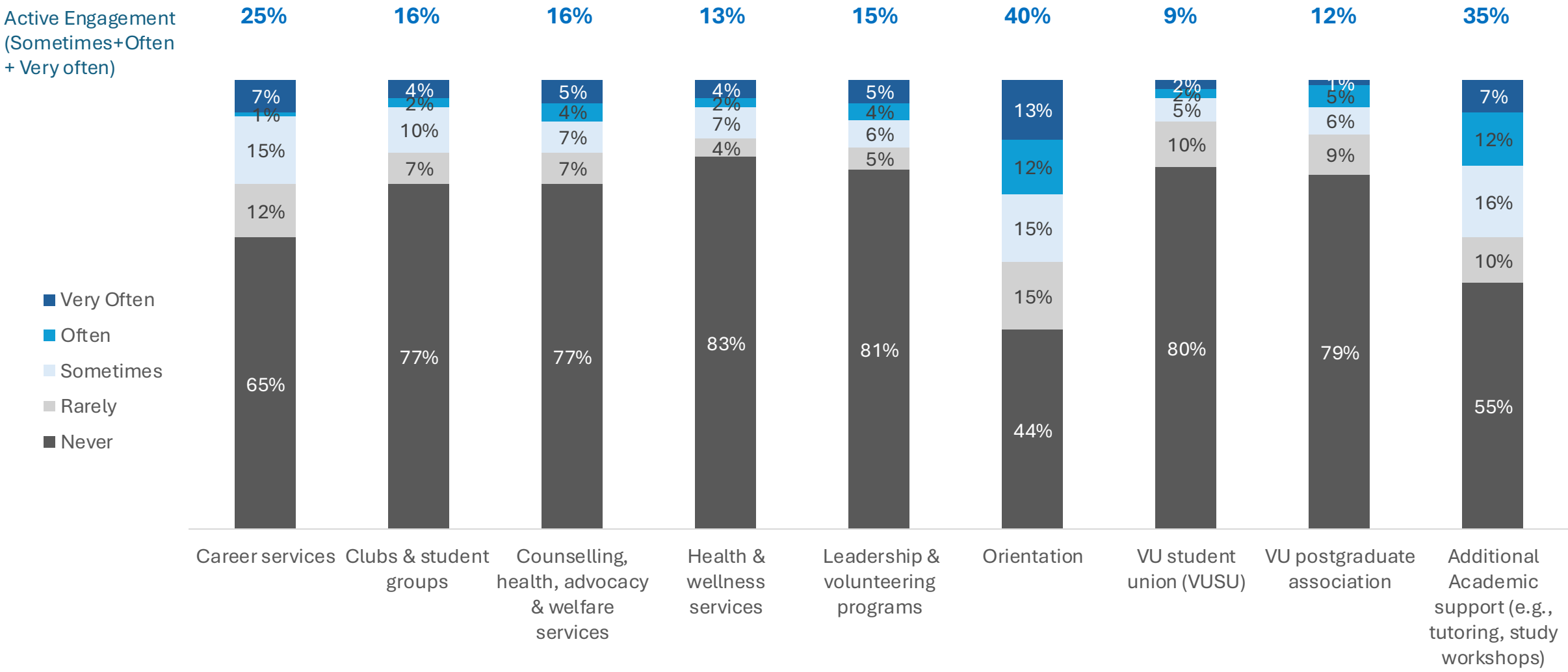
Years at VU

< 1 year	58%
1-2 years	19%
2-3 years	11%
3+ years	12%

While many students report having accessed SSAF services at least once, regular engagement is concentrated in Orientation, Academic Support and Career Services.

Q11. Which of the following SSAF services of amenities have you used during your time at VU? (Select all that apply)

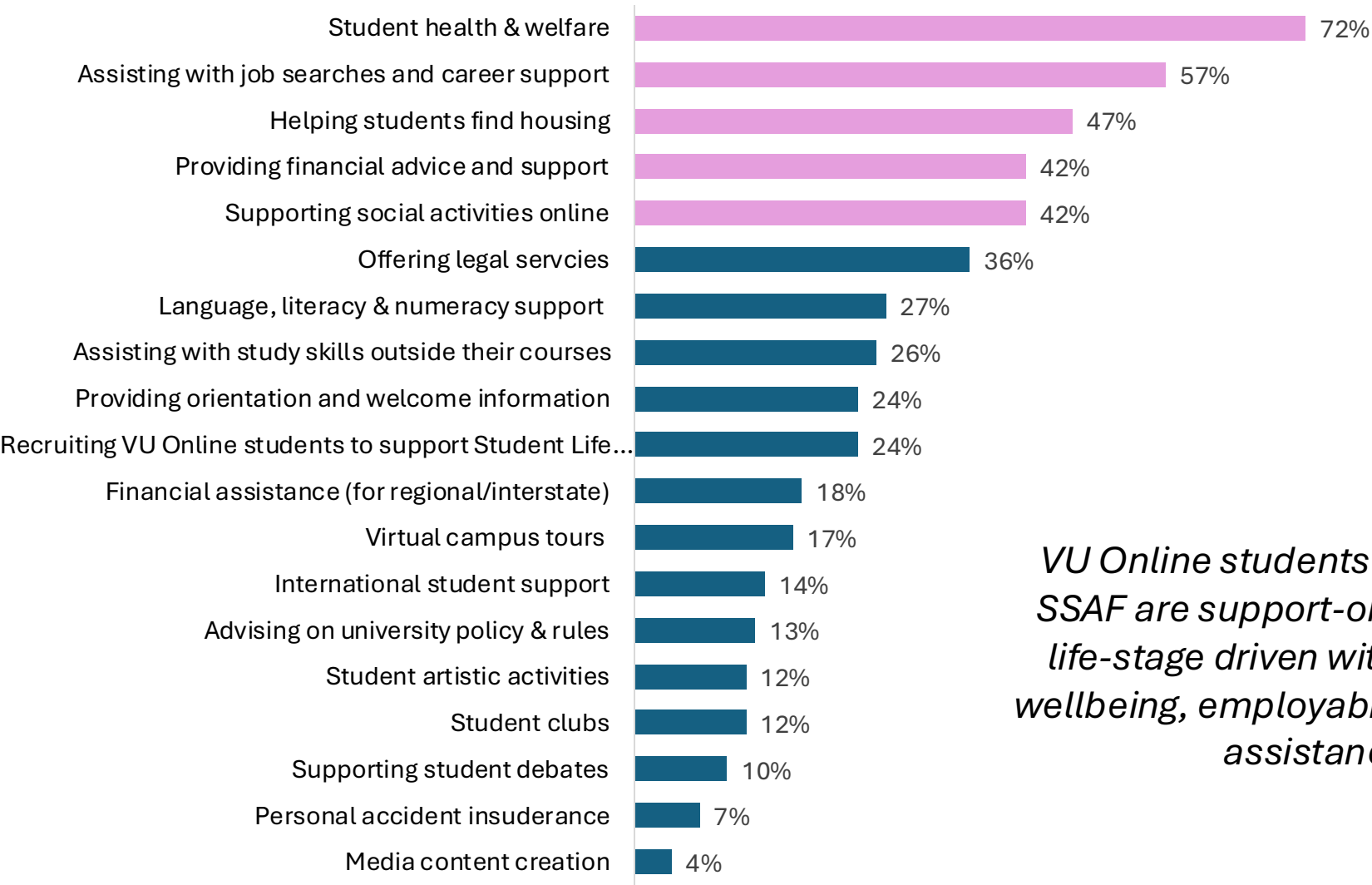
Active Engagement
(Sometimes+Often
+ Very often)



Base: SSAF VUONLINE survey respondents n=101

VUOnline students prioritise health and welfare support (72%) and careers support (57%) as the strongest funding areas for 2026, followed by housing support (47%) and financial advice / supporting social activities online (42% each)

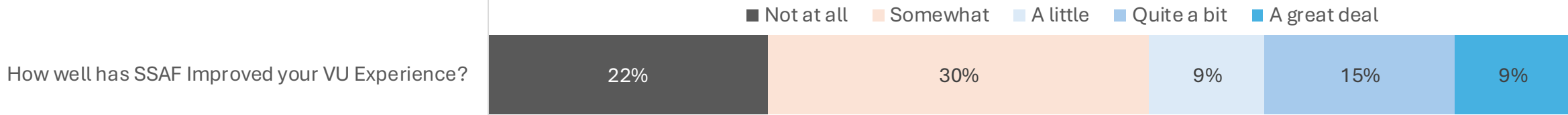
Q7. Which of the following initiatives would you most like SSAF funding to support in 2026? Please select up to five options.



VU Online students' priorities for SSAF are support-orientated and life-stage driven with a focus on wellbeing, employability & financial assistance

Only 24% report strong positive impact from SSAF, indicating opportunity to better align services with online students needs.

Q8. How well has SSAF improved your VU experience?



Q5.Are there any services or amenities that you would like to see funded by SSAF at VU?

mental health and skillset improvement workshops

More supports for regional students with disabilities find work post studies

More around Indigenous Australians, also bringing in some traditional healing.

Domestic student loan support

Want SSAF to fund more mental health and counselling services. Shorter wait times, culturally safe counsellors, after-hours.

Help to buy a computer for studies, please bring back the grant

Online graduations in person

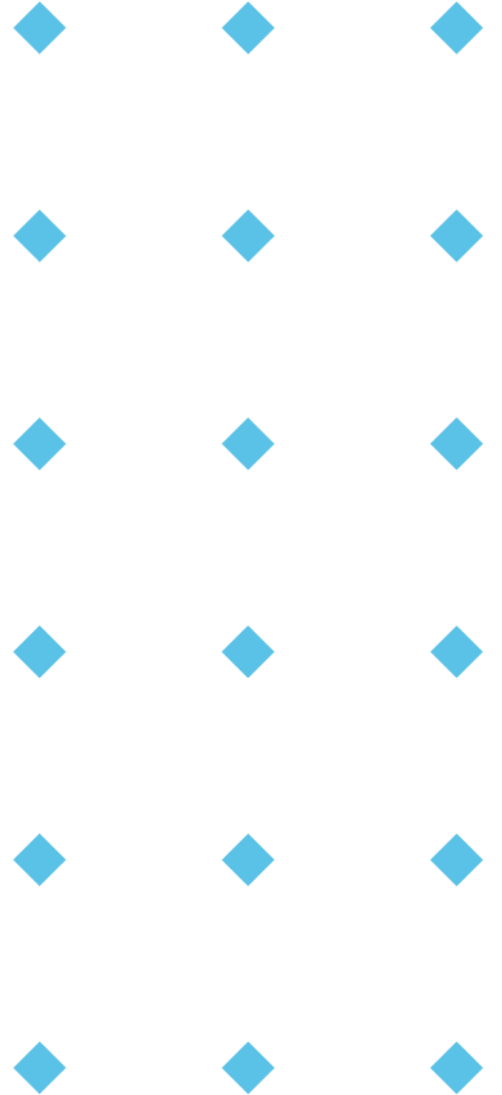
funding for single parents to study again

Free coffee & snacks

Base: VU Online SSAF Survey respondent & complete Q8 (n=85)

Topline Insights (VUOnline Students)

- **VUOnline students priorities foundational support needs**
 - Health and welfare is #1 priority at 72%
 - Career support (57%), housing (47%) and financial advice (42%) follow
 - Strong focus on wellbeing, employability and financial security which aligns with the life stage and maturity of VUOnline cohorts.
- **SSAF service usage is broad, but regular engagement quite low**
 - Many have used the service at least once, but just a small portion report using a specific service often/very often. Services that receive highest uptake are orientation, academic support & careers.
- **Overall impact of SSAD is moderate – 24% report strong positive impact on their VU student experience**



Next Steps (VUOnline Students)

- ◆ Expand careers and employability opportunities targeted at VUOnline cohorts
- ◆ Strengthen visibility and accessibility of wellbeing support services
- ◆ Improve information available of financial and housing-related guidance
- ◆ Expand careers and industry connection opportunities

