

Your Start@UNSW Welcome Pack


EDITION 3

2026

Everything you need to know for a fantastic Start to UNSW



UNSW
SYDNEY



Start@UNSW is proud to acknowledge that UNSW is located on the unceded territory of the Bedegal (Kensington campus), Gadigal (City and Paddington Campuses) and Ngunnawal peoples (UNSW Canberra) who are the Traditional Owners of the lands where each campus of UNSW is situated.



Contents

Welcome to Start@UNSW	1
Start@UNSW Contact info	2
Key dates & events Preparing for uni	3
Headstart@UNSW: Your Pre-Orientation	5
Your Uni Checklist	6
Get Uni Ready	7
Peer Mentoring	8
Faculty Information	10
Support	13
Financial Support	15
Academic Support	17



Welcome to Start @UNSW

We are so excited to meet you! Start@UNSW is your dedicated support system as a first-year student at UNSW, whether you've joined us through the [Gateway Admissions pathway](#) or live in a low-socioeconomic area based on IRSAD or IEO indexes of [SEIFA](#). We're here to ensure you get a smooth transition into university life, link you to academic and support services, and help you find your place in the UNSW community.

In 2026, we have some exciting events and resources just for you, including HeadStart – a pre-orientation day to

jumpstart your understanding of what happens at UNSW and who you can talk to. You can also look forward to a dedicated Peer Mentoring program, weekly updates delivered straight to your inbox, peer-led check-in calls each term, social events and exciting collaborations with your faculty throughout the year.

Getting in touch

To ensure you don't miss out on any important dates or fun activities, check out all the ways UNSW and Start@UNSW will communicate with you:

Email

Once term starts, we will contact you via your UNSW email account, and each week you'll receive your UNSW student newsletter, which includes a specific Start@UNSW section! This will have weekly updates about key dates, fun social events, career development opportunities and much more, so be sure to keep an eye out. Streamline your inbox by setting up automatic redirects on your UNSW account to your personal email – find simple instructions on the [UNSW IT page](#).

Check-in Calls

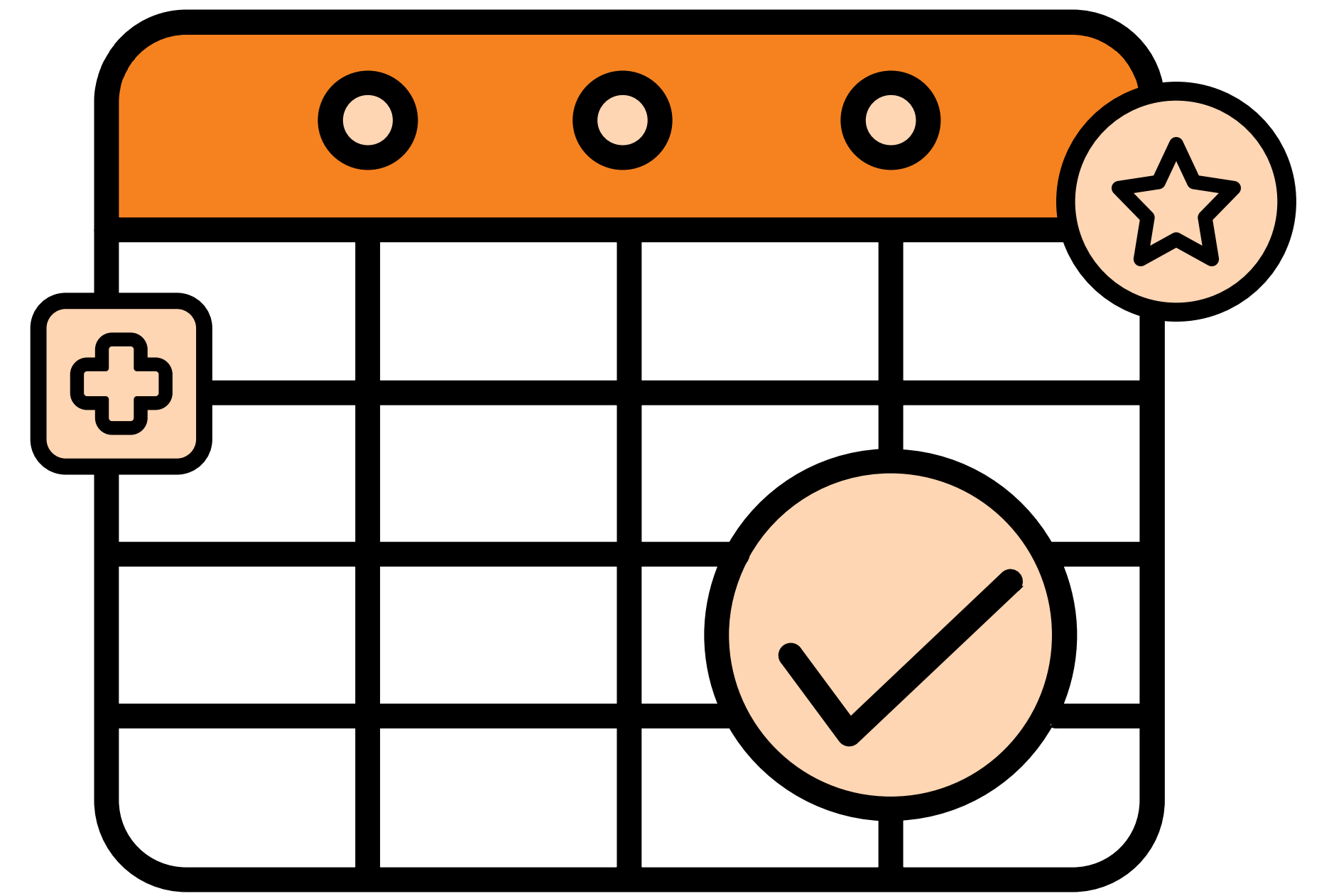
A key part of Start@UNSW are our termly Check-in Calls! You'll receive a call from a Senior Start@UNSW mentor in your faculty. Your Check-in Call is a perfect opportunity to ask any time sensitive questions, hear more about relevant support services, get the latest on social events, or just have a friendly chat with a student who has been in your shoes. We'll send you a text the week before we call so you can choose your ideal date and time.

You can get in touch with us at any point throughout the year by emailing start@unsw.edu.au and one of the team will get back to you.



Key dates & events

KEY ACADEMIC DATES



T1

5 FEB

HeadStart@UNSW Pre-Orientation Event

9 FEB

O-Week & Faculty Welcomes

WK1-WK6

Weekly Peer Mentoring

WK6

End of Mentoring Celebration

DURING TERM

**Your Start@UNSW Check - In Call:
A senior mentor will check in to see how
you're going at UNSW!**

“

I really enjoyed reflecting on how far we've come — it's not something we usually do, and it was a great reminder that we're on the right track..”

**First Year ADA
Start@UNSW Student**

Your Check-In Calls don't stop after Term 1!

Each term, a Senior Start@UNSW Peer Mentor will give you a quick call to see how you're going. It's a great chance to reflect on your progress, spot any gaps, and get extra support if you need it.

They've been in your shoes and can't wait to guide you through your first year at uni.

UNSW Co-NNECTIONS

After you've settled into uni life, you'll get the chance to be part of UNSW Co-NNECTIONS; a program designed just for Gateway-eligible students.

Co-NNECTIONS helps you get workplace-ready with real-world experiences, internships, and professional development opportunities available exclusively to you.

We'll reach out when it's time to start exploring what's next - so for now, focus on enjoying your first year and making the most of everything Start@UNSW has to offer!

Co-NNECTIONS - UNSW Sydney

Get Paid Work While You Study!

As a Start@UNSW student, you could be eligible to join **UNSW's Equity Student Talent Pool**.

This program connects you with casual job opportunities on campus. Once you join, you might be contacted about specific roles to apply for - and hiring managers can even select candidates directly from the pool.

It's a great way to earn while you learn and gain real experience while studying at UNSW!

UNSW Employability explores the benefits of casual work: [Career stepping stone: build skills in casual jobs - Start](#)



Preparing for Uni

Your HEADSTART

HeadStart@UNSW is a pre O-Week event designed to formally welcome Start@UNSW students to UNSW. At this event you will meet the support services available to you and learn useful information about making the most of your time at UNSW. It is also a fantastic opportunity to meet a Senior Peer Mentor and make some friends with other new students ahead of O-Week!

**This is your invite to
HeadStart@UNSW
On Thursday 5th February
2026 from 10am - 3pm**



You'll hear from the Student Life team, find out what to expect during your studies and learn tips to take care of yourself throughout your time at UNSW. You'll also have the opportunity to submit questions to our panel of experts via the live Q&A, before heading into your faculty inductions to get an inside scoop on student life at UNSW. We'll provide a tasty lunch and then you can enjoy an interactive campus tour led by the Gateway team, with prizes to be won! You'll also get help finalising your enrolment and class registrations, or if you're already enrolled you can grab your student ID card early! Invite your parents/caregivers along to have their questions answered by one of our Student Support Advisors.

Find out more and register now to secure your place.

Your Uni Checklist

Before O-Week

1. **Read through your Welcome Pack** - everything you need for a successful Start@UNSW, all in one place!
2. **Set up your zID & accept your offer** [UNSW New Student Checklist](#)
3. **Enroll and register for your courses**
[How to enrol](#) | [How to register for classes](#)
(Ask your Peer Mentor or the Start@UNSW team for help at HeadStart!)
4. **Register for HeadStart @UNSW** - feel ahead of the game before uni even begins! [Register here](#)
5. **Choose your Start@UNSW Peer Mentor** - pick someone based on your degree, availability, or interests!
[Our 2026 Mentor Team is ready to support you every step of the way.](#)

During your first 3 weeks

1. **Get your Student ID card**
(You can also do this at HeadStart once you've enrolled.)
[How to get your Student ID Card](#)
2. **Join your weekly Peer Mentoring sessions** - connect, learn, and make new friends!
3. **Check out the First Years' Feed** - [your go-to space for student tips, events, and updates.](#)
4. **Visit The Nucleus Student Hub** [if you need extra support or advice.](#)
5. **Book your Start@UNSW Check-In Call** with a Senior Peer Mentor - a friendly chat to reflect on how you're going and get any extra support you might need.

Get Ready For Uni



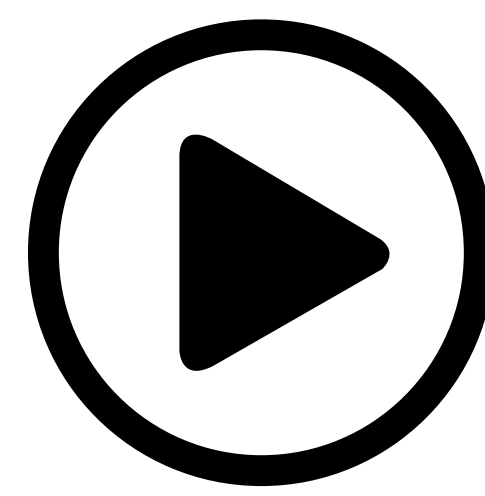
Set yourself up for success in first year!

A broad guide for any university, designed by students for students, Uni Ready is your go-to guide to starting uni. You'll hear from current students and get plenty of tips and tricks for studying and acing your assessments.

[Find out more here.](#)



Peer Mentoring



Five reasons to have a mentor in your first semester

[WATCH THE VIDEO](#)

Uni can feel like a big step, but you don't have to do it alone!

Your Peer Mentor has been exactly where you are now — they're here to share tips, answer questions, and make your first term that little bit easier.

What is it?

- A program designed to help you settle into uni life with guidance and support from a Peer Mentor in your faculty.
- You can choose your Peer Mentor based on your availability, degree, or even shared interests and hobbies.
- Not sure yet? No stress! A Peer Mentor will reach out to help you figure it out together.

What to Expect

- Weekly catch-ups with your mentor group — in person, online, or a mix of both.
- A chance to ask questions, share experiences, and get support from someone who's been there before.
- A ready-made friendship group! Many mentees say they've made friends for life - don't miss out!

Why Join?

- Over 90% of students who take part in Start@UNSW Peer Mentoring say they feel more supported and confident thanks to their Peer Mentor.
- "Meeting new people within my mentor group has been an unexpected highlight. It's comforting to know that I'm not alone in facing challenges."
2025 ADA Mentee
- "Just having someone explain stuff so you don't overstress was incredible."
2025 Science Mentee

How to Join

You can choose your Peer Mentor right now on [this link](#)! Our 2026 Mentor Team is ready and excited to support you on your journey.

Once you've selected your mentor, you'll receive an email invitation from them to join your group chat and get started.

Not sure who to pick? No drama! You'll be matched with a mentor from your faculty who'll reach out with next steps.

Keep an eye on your inbox — your mentoring journey starts before O-Week!



**Start@UNSW Mentoring –
what's it all about?**

WATCH THE VIDEO

So, what's it really like to have a Peer Mentor?

We asked a few mentees to share their favourite moments and biggest takeaways from the Start@UNSW Peer Mentoring Program. Here's what they said!



“

“I actually met one of my best friends during my Start@UNSW mentoring! Being part of the Peer Mentoring made my transition from High School to UNSW a whole lot smoother, new Start@UNSW students should join Peer Mentoring because they have nothing to lose and a whole lot to gain!”

**Maixience – Start@UNSW
mentee from rural South
Australia**

“

“Each student wants to learn new things and look forward to different experiences at uni – luckily Start@UNSW peer mentoring has it all! Whether you want to make new friends, learn more about your degree, or connect with industry, peer mentoring is an amazing start to your social, academic and professional journey, and it opens paths to a range of opportunities.”

**Rifah – Start@UNSW
mentee, Gateway student**



Welcome to UNSW Engineering!

Confidently start your journey with the [Engineering Student Resources](#) - First Year Guide. It's full of hot tips and uni life hacks from students to help you succeed.

We support students from Gateway Equity Target cohorts (including those from Gateway High Schools, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and low SES backgrounds). Through the Academic Boost Program, you will receive tailored support and events to help you thrive.



At ADA, we're a vibrant community of students, academics, and professionals from around the world, united by creativity, curiosity, and a shared commitment to tackling society's most pressing problems related to peoples, places, and cultures.

Whether you are enrolled in a single or double degree program, we consider you a valued part of our diverse and creative community.

Starting something new can be overwhelming, but we are here to help. We have a [range of resources](#) available to support you.



Look out for your welcome email containing key details about the First Year Academic Boost Program, which includes:

- **Textbook fund Scheme** UNSW Assistance for course material costs
- **Slice and Advice** Free weekly pizza + your uni questions answered
- **PASS** (Peer Assisted Study Sessions) Led by senior students

We're excited to be part of your journey - welcome to UNSW Engineering!

Welcome to UNSW Arts, Design & Architecture!

To get started, make sure to:

- Read your [Degree Program Onboarding Pack](#) for essential information about your degree and available support
- Indigenous students can also access the ADA Indigenous Onboarding Pack on the [same webpage](#)
- Explore our [ADA Student Life](#) and [O-week](#) resources

Take some time to explore the resources above and keep an eye on your zID email to stay informed and up to date.

We're thrilled to have you join us!



You are now part of a dynamic and diverse community of students united by a common goal, tackling the world's most pressing medical and health challenges.

Explore our [Student Life & Resources](#) pages & take a look at the [Student Society](#) links for your program to set you up for success. You can also find information on [mentoring programs](#) you can join from your First Year. You'll receive a welcome email from us with key information about some exciting events including the following:

Welcome to UNSW Medicine & Health!

- Meet and Greet Term 2 designed to help you connect with other Gateway Students & key academics and support services
- First-Year Opal Card credit to assist with your travel costs to/from UNSW
- Book & Beyond Scheme: credit for purchasing textbooks, resources and UNSW merchandise
- First-Year social activities to help you feel supported & part of our Health and Medicine community!

Welcome to UNSW Law & Justice!

Stay across your emails and our [orientation page](#) to keep up to date with all the information to help get you started! Including details on some exciting initiatives:

- Your exclusive invite to our Gateway Community Welcome where you'll have the opportunity to connect with academics, staff, and fellow Gateway students
- Funding to support the purchase of textbooks for your Law & Justice core courses



- Academic-led exam revision workshops during Study Week
- Career events and 1-1 coaching sessions with our UNSW Law & Justice Careers Service
- Don't forget to check out your [go-to student networks](#) at the UNSW Law Society, UNSW Criminology Society and Student Legal Education Group!

Welcome to UNSW Faculty of Science!

Before jumping into your studies in February, here are some helpful resources to set you up for success!

- **Course Selection Tool** For those in the Bachelor of Science or Bachelor of Advanced Science (Honours), use our diagnostic tool to help choose the right [Maths](#), [Physics](#), or [Chemistry](#) courses based on your background and interests
- **Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS)** Provides free, weekly study sessions to help students thrive. Available for students in selected courses in Term 1



Welcome to UNSW Business School!

Welcome to UNSW Business School! We're delighted you chose to join our diverse community where you are now apart of a global network of people who are passionate about shaping the future! Starting uni can feel like a big transition, so take a look at our resources designed to help you get started:

- **Video Guides** Get tips on navigating your first weeks; ranging from advice on attendance policies and punctuality, how to email academics, breaking down grades and assessment, advice from current students, and much more
- **Opal Connect Scheme** Supports first-year students in their first term from low-socioeconomic backgrounds who entered through the Gateway Admission Program

To explore these resources and more, including grant schemes, study tools, and key contact, visit the [Science GET Resource Bank](#) using the enrolment key: SciGET_Students

- Navigate your future with [Career Accelerator](#)
- [O-ssentials](#) An O-Week session for key tips on excelling in studies and building a community
- [Student resources](#) Helps you upskill for career moves (LinkedIn, interview prep, etc.)
- [Educational Resource Access Scheme](#) Provides assistance with accessing essential learning materials
- [Student Stories](#) Insights from current students about life at the Business School



Support



Top three tips for starting uni

[WATCH THE VIDEO](#)

The Nucleus

The Nucleus can help with everything from enrolment, ID cards, progression planning and can point you in the right direction if you're not sure who to ask for help.

You can find the Nucleus on Level 2 of the library on Kensington Campus or on the Ground Floor of Block D on Paddington Campus.

[The Nucleus website](#)

Arc - UNSW Student Life

Arc is always on hand to help you make friends and invite you to all the hottest events on campus. They are the centre of student life at UNSW and have something for everyone with their hundreds of clubs and societies. You're bound to find something you connect with!

[Arc @ UNSW website](#)

Accommodation

Thinking about living away from home and closer to campus? There are loads of accommodation options both on and off campus!

Living on campus is a great way to make meaningful connections in a fun and supportive environment and create your very own UNSW family. The accommodation team are on hand to answer any queries and alleviate any concerns.

[Get accommodation support](#)

Follow UNSW Accommodation on Instagram and find out what current students get up to!

Looking for something different? You can find off campus accommodation support [here](#).

Liverpool Study Hub

Opening early 2026, the UNSW Liverpool Study Hub will be a free, modern space for students in South-West Sydney to study, connect, and thrive.

Located at TAFE NSW Liverpool, it's all about bringing uni closer to home.

[Home | Liverpool Study Hub](#)



Equitable Learning Services

ELS will be there to support you throughout your studies and can provide reasonable adjustments for your study if you're living with a disability or long term physical and/or mental health condition. A free and confidential service that ensures your health doesn't adversely impact your studies.

[Learn more about Equitable Learning Services](#)

Student Support Advisors

The Student Support Advisors can help with a variety of areas that might be affecting your studies, from wellbeing to finances. The team can provide you with personal support and work with you to develop the skills needed to navigate and succeed at uni.

[Get Support](#)

Mental Health Connect

Find and access mental health support that suits you through Mental Health Connect, whether you're looking for self-serve resources or 1:1 counselling, always feel free to reach out. You can also access urgent assistance 24/7, so you are supported whenever you need it.

[Mental Health Connect services](#)

Financial Support

Scholarships & Awards

There are a whole range of scholarships available to students. You can find out about these [here](#).

Some that might be of interest:

UNSW Gateway and Advantage Awards

If you're eligible for a UNSW Advantage or Gateway Award you will have received information outlining how to access this – please read carefully and make sure you complete all relevant steps.

[More info here.](#)

Equity Scholarships

UNSW offers a wide range of Equity Scholarships, Awards and Grants to assist students to undertake full-time study for the duration of their degree program.

[2026 Equity Scholarships for Commencing Undergraduate Students | Scholarships.](#)

Commonwealth Support Place (CSP) and HECS-FEE Help

A Commonwealth Supported Place is a domestic, subsidised higher education place. This means the government pays a share of your study costs and you pay a share of the costs. Eligible students can use HECS-HELP loan to pay for their student contribution amount.

If you are a student with a Commonwealth Supported Place, you will be required to complete the 'Request for Commonwealth Support and HECS-HELP' form as part of the online acceptance and enrolment process. You must complete the form by the relevant census date for your enrolment.

[Find out more.](#)

Concession Opal Card

Full time UNSW students are eligible for a concession Opal Card. This card will give you 50% off all travel in Sydney, including buses, light rail, trains and ferries.

To apply for a concession Opal Card you will need to release your information via MyUNSW, then apply. Your card will be cancelled if you don't complete the required units to be a full-time student.

[Get some answers to your questions here.](#)

Student Support Grants

If you are experiencing immediate financial difficulty, UNSW may offer financial support. You can receive a student support grant for things such as essential living, study or medical expenses, technology needed to study, phone or utility bills and bond. Tuition fees are not covered. To be eligible, you must have completed one term of study. To apply, you must first book an appointment with a student support advisor.

[Check your eligibility.](#)

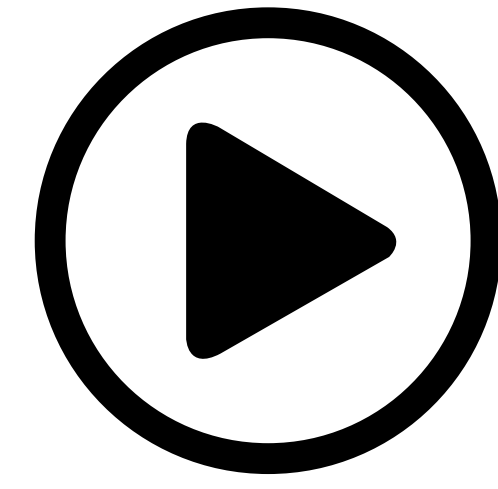
Student Loans

UNSW offers a range of loans for students, all of which are repayable and interest-free. To be eligible for a UNSW student loan, you must be: currently enrolled, have completed at least one term of study, have the capacity to repay the loan, be in good academic standing, not have other debts to the university and provide documentary evidence.

[Check your eligibility.](#)



Academic Support



Academic Skills: empowering your success at UNSW

[WATCH THE VIDEO](#)

Academic Skills Team

Academic Skills are there to assist with report writing, strategic reading to manage workload, wrapping your head around literature reviews, referencing and many other key university skills.

Check out the variety of resources available that can help you brush up on the basics, as well as fine tune your academic writing for best performance.

[Academic skills | Current Students - UNSW Sydney.](#)

Make a one-to-one consultation with an Academic Learning Facilitator to develop key academic skills. You can bring a draft, a question, or an assessment guideline to a one-to-one consultation with one of our friendly experts.

PASS

Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS) are weekly study groups led by friendly senior students who have completed the course before. Students who attend PASS do better in their courses, and it's a great way to meet other students. Sessions are offered both in person on campus, and online. Find out if PASS is offered in your course by checking [the timetable here](#) (new timetables are available before each term).

Library Peer Mentors

New and existing students are welcome to drop in or book ahead to talk with their fellow students. Library Peer Mentors have diverse backgrounds and subject expertise across UNSW faculties and schools.

[Connect with Library Peer Mentors](#)



Studiosity

Studiosity is the official place to go to get free personalised feedback on your written work 24/7. Submit any piece of draft writing, including essays, reports and literature reviews, to the UNSW Studiosity platform and get feedback from writing specialists. You will receive fast feedback on your structure, grammar, choice of language and referencing. You can then use this feedback to strengthen your work before you submit it as a final assignment.

[How to access Studiosity.](#)

Special Consideration

If you ever find yourself unable to sit or complete an assessed task due to illness or other exceptional circumstances, then the Special Considerations team are on hand to help. They can assess the impact of short-term events that are beyond your control and help make reasonable adjustments with you.

[Find out more about special Considerations.](#)

