



## Starting at UTAS: The First Semester

If you haven't enrolled, look out for the companion fact sheet, 'Preparing for UTAS'.

### C O N T E N T S

- How does Uni work?
- Getting started
- Nature of a successful student
- Support
- Need more help?

You've been accepted, you're enrolled and you're all fired up! What next? The key challenge for you over the following weeks will be to work out what is expected of you at university. This is no easy task, so don't feel overwhelmed if it takes a little while. The following information will provide you with hints and tips to smooth the process of your first semester.

### HOW DOES UNI WORK?

#### The learning environment

"Sometimes I feel like I'm just a student number..." (second year student).

Along with the excitement of starting at a large campus can sometimes come a sense of feeling unknown and insignificant. Welcome to the world of 'self-directed learning'! How much and how often you learn is essentially up to you. University can soon start to feel like home, but it's up to you to get involved and take advantage of the opportunities provided.

All new students are encouraged to **enrol in UniStart**, an enabling course that provides a short face-to-face program prior to each semester and access to many learning resources throughout the year. UniStart is free for all domestic students. To enquire about UniStart, call 6226 7251 (Hobart) or 6324 3504 (Launceston and Cradle Coast) or go to: [www.utas.edu.au/unistart](http://www.utas.edu.au/unistart) for more information. Email enquiries to [enquiries@calt.utas.edu.au](mailto:enquiries@calt.utas.edu.au)

## Learning format

*Lectures* are usually large classes and a lecturer presents the information using a variety of visual and auditory resources.

*Tutorials* (tutes) or practical groups are usually smaller groups run in conjunction with lecture courses, which include discussion or demonstration of material – you sign up for them during the first week. You will be expected to share your ideas but remember: you don't have to know it all! You are there to learn and part of learning is asking questions (even the ones that seem stupid!).

Access your **timetable** online; just follow the link to the eStudentCentre from the Current Students page at: [www.utas.edu.au/students](http://www.utas.edu.au/students). You can also pick up a 'How do I work out my Timetable?' information sheet from Student Services. Alternatively, call 1300 361 928 for assistance.

## Teaching staff

Academics are not the same as the teachers you may remember from your school days. Their roles are split between teaching, research and administrative commitments. They will not pursue you for work due and they may not even know who you are until later in your degree. They will make themselves available to you at appropriate times but will rely on you to contact them for what you need. You will need to take the initiative!

## How much time?

Depending on your course, your contact hours (formal meeting times in lectures, tutes or practicals) may seem small. As a general rule however, the courses with fewer contact hours expect more 'out of hours' study. This will be made clear in the unit outlines at the start of each unit. Treat a full-time uni course as a full-time job and budget your time accordingly (at least 38 hours per week).

**Library tours** run early in semester. Ask in the library or go to: [www.utas.edu.au/library](http://www.utas.edu.au/library) for details and a wealth of other information.

## GETTING STARTED

Visit the **First Year at UTAS website** for a host of information relevant to you as you start uni. Read the **Quick Help Guide** and **Important Steps for new students** linked from the site at: [www.firstyear.utas.edu.au](http://www.firstyear.utas.edu.au)

## Getting your ID card

Your Student ID Card is used for a range of things including library borrowing and entry to examinations. Information on how to obtain your ID card will be emailed to you after you enrol. If you're not sure, phone 1300 361 928 for advice.

## Using computers

Access to a computer is vital. If you lack confidence with computers, you are strongly encouraged to enrol in UniStart where you will gain the skills to get started.

Various links to available IT training and support can be accessed at: [www.utas.edu.au/servicedesk](http://www.utas.edu.au/servicedesk). For further information, call 1300 304 903. Online training materials are also available at: [www.firstyear.utas.edu.au/links/itskills.html](http://www.firstyear.utas.edu.au/links/itskills.html)

## Accessing your email

You automatically get a UTAS email account and access to computers when you accept an offer of a place. Your confirmation of acceptance lists your username and passwords for your email account and access to computer labs. You can use any computer with an internet connection to access your account. To get started, access the email 'How to' information at: [www.utas.edu.au/servicedesk](http://www.utas.edu.au/servicedesk), or phone the Service Desk on 1300 304 903.

**UNIAccess** can help you access online information and UTAS study materials off-campus through your local Online Access Centre or State Library Branch. For more information, go to: [www.utas.edu.au/uniaccess](http://www.utas.edu.au/uniaccess)

## Finding your way around

Before classes begin, take a tour of the campus and check out where your lectures will be. Don't miss your first lecture as you will get full details of the structure of the unit and how to enrol in your tutorials or practicals. Your lecturer will also let you know what assignments are required, when they are due and who to contact if you require help.

Download a **campus map** from the web. Follow the link from the First Year website at:  
[www.firstyear.utas.edu.au](http://www.firstyear.utas.edu.au)

Take a **campus tour** during Orientation Week.

## Getting orientated

It is clearly documented that students who succeed at university jump in with both feet. They get to know lecturers, tutors and other students. The best way to start this process is to attend orientation activities.

Attend all **orientation activities** relevant to you. Visit the First Year website at: [www.firstyear.utas.edu.au](http://www.firstyear.utas.edu.au) and click on 'Orientation, UniStart & Enabling Programs', or call the Student Centre on 1300 361 928 for details.

## Nature of a successful student

"My time at uni was not just about the knowledge I gained from my chosen field, but about the life skills I developed. It took me time to 'learn the ropes' of how uni works and I needed to allow for this to happen. Equipping myself with as much support as I could and not being afraid to ask about anything (even though I felt stupid at times!) helped heaps. I look back on my uni days as some of the best in my life!" (graduate of 15 years).

Make use of the **Mentor Scheme** which introduces you to experienced students in the first weeks of uni. Contact your school/faculty to find out if they run a mentor scheme.

## Getting to know other students

Some students come to university with a group of friends, but for others it can start out being a very lonely experience. If you'd like to meet other students, there are a number of ways of doing this. Whichever method you try, give it time – often the connections come gradually.

- Introduce yourself to people next to you in lectures and tutorials.
- Make sure to attend any social events organised by your school.
- The University student body (Tasmania University Union) have a wide range of clubs and societies (see over for contact details).
- Start or join a study group.
- Ask for a mentor.
- If you find it very difficult getting the confidence to talk to others, consider seeing a counsellor at Student Services.

## Academic feedback

Getting feedback on your progress can be a challenging task at university. You will need to find ways to assess your own understanding of the material and ensure that you are 'on the right track'. Look out for study partners and make use of academic staff. If you feel you need more intensive help, consider enrolling in selected units from the University Preparation Program (UPP).

For **help with your studies** visit the 'Learning Support' website at: [www.learningsupport.utas.edu.au](http://www.learningsupport.utas.edu.au) or call 6226 7251 (Hobart) or 6324 3504 (Launceston/Cradle Coast).

## Changing your course

Courses don't always turn out to be what you expected and it is possible to change them. However, it's best to discuss changing courses with a Student Adviser or an academic sub-dean. You can also contact Client Services Staff on 1300 361 928 for help. Be aware that all changes must be completed by the census dates to avoid HECS liability and academic penalty. Information on census dates can be found on the enrolment website – follow the links from [www.utas.edu.au](http://www.utas.edu.au) 'Current Students'.

## SUPPORT

Whether academic or personal, there are plenty of people who can support you on campus. The key issue is ASK!

Register online with **CareerHub** for your career and employment needs at: [www.studentservices.utas.edu.au/careers](http://www.studentservices.utas.edu.au/careers) and click on the 'CareerHub' logo.

- For personal issues, make a free appointment with a professional counsellor – visit or phone your local Student Services office, visit the Student Services home page, or browse and borrow books from the counselling resource library.
- Visit Student Services to browse the careers resource library or speak to someone about your career/employment options.
- Student Advisers and the Transition Support Service provide advice, support and assistance to students in their first year at UTAS. To contact your faculty Student Adviser go to: [www.firstyear.utas.edu.au](http://www.firstyear.utas.edu.au)
- If you have a disability that may affect your study, we strongly encourage you to discuss this with your lecturer/s and/or see the Disability Service in Student Services for information and advice.
- There is a diversity of faiths within the University community and visiting religious representatives are available to provide spiritual support. For more information, follow the links from the Student Services home page.
- The TUU provide student representation and advocacy, welfare support, social interests and entertainment for students of all campuses of the University. To find out more, attend their activities during orientation or visit their website at: [www.tuu.com.au](http://www.tuu.com.au).

## NEED MORE HELP?

- Go to the First Year website at: [www.firstyear.utas.edu.au](http://www.firstyear.utas.edu.au) or call 1300 361 928 for further details on any of the information contained in this fact sheet.
- For a huge amount of information about what students can expect at university – from lectures, tutorials etc. through to study strategies and what it means to be an independent learner – go to Teaching and Learning at UTAS at: [www.utas.edu.au/tl](http://www.utas.edu.au/tl)