Making the transition to university

As a parent, you will notice some substantial differences between school and university:

- **Teaching and learning** at university has a different approach. For each unit students have scheduled lectures and tutorials. Some courses include practical sessions or workshops.
- **The academic year** at university is structured as two main semesters, each comprising 13 weeks of teaching. Within each semester the required attendance at lectures and tutorials can be as little as 12 hours across the week. You will therefore find that your son or daughter has substantially less structured class time during the year than at school.
- **Communication** about matters such as academic progress is between the student and the university, and is strictly confidential. While your child is at school you receive newsletters and reports, and attend parent-teacher interviews. As a university student, your son or daughter is treated as an adult.

Cost of study

There are expenses involved in a university education, but if your teenager makes wise and informed course choices the cost is an investment in the future. The main cost is the student contribution to a Commonwealth supported place (previously called HECS) This is charged at different rates depending on the choice of units, with various options to assist in paying the contribution. For more information, phone the Department of Education, Science & Training on 1800 020 108 or visit the Department’s website at www.goingtouni.gov.au

There will also be expenses for textbooks and possibly specialist equipment, depending on the type of course undertaken.

Scholarships & financial assistance

Through the Tasmania Scholarships Program, the University of Tasmania provides significant financial and academic support for study. Scholarships are available within the broad categories of academic merit or financial need, through the assistance of business and industry, government, and generous benefactors. For more information contact the Uni Info Centre on 1300 363 864 or go to www.scholarships.utas.edu.au

About the University of Tasmania

UTAS has three campuses—Hobart, Launceston and Cradle Coast—and a total student population of approximately 25,000. Compared to some of the heavily-populated mainland institutions, UTAS is a very personal size, which gives it a number of distinct advantages:

- **Smaller classes.** Teaching staff recognise students by name and focus on individual needs.
- **Less competition for resources.** For example, UTAS has a generous scholarship program, offering 600 individual scholarships, worth a total of more than $2 million.
- **Access to many opportunities.** For example, UTAS coordinates an overseas student exchange program, and makes generous contributions towards the travel costs.

The University has over 130 undergraduate degrees, within the areas of Arts, Business, Education, Health Science, Law, and Science, Engineering & Technology. The Australian Maritime College in Launceston is an institute of the University of Tasmania.

Other pathways

It is quite common for plans to change for young people, for many different reasons: they may not perform as well as expected in final exams, or they may change their mind about their career directions, or they may have originally planned to go to university at all.

If you have concerns about your son or daughter securing a place in a particular course, there are a number of alternative options which may assist:

- Bridging courses – intensive short programs to satisfy subject prerequisites
- Year 13 – may be used to enhance a low TER
- Enrolment in another, related course as a stepping-stone to the desired course
- University Preparation Program (UPP) – pre-university program for future students, providing essential learning skills for university.
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- Degree and credit arrangements between TAFE and UTAS applicants.
- Special entry provisions. To qualify, applicants need to demonstrate educational disadvantage due to illness, misadventure or lack of TCE subject opportunities.
- TAFE applicants. There are good articulation and credit arrangements between TAFE Tasmania and UTAS. For more information go to www.utas.edu.au/tafetouni.

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Why go to university?

Universities are different places than they were 30 years ago, when they were an option for a small, elite group of school leavers. A much higher proportion of school leavers now go into university—around 40% of the University of Tasmania’s commencing students come directly from Year 12.

There are many different reasons to go to university. Some careers require a university qualification—for example, psychologists, architects, lawyers and teachers. Statistics also show that university graduates have a much higher rate of employment and generally receive better financial reward.

However, universities don’t just provide training in specific vocations. One of the most compelling reasons to consider university is that the generic skills which you will encounter as you start to research the options—going to university to study at university. We hope that the information helps both you and your teenager make the right choices.

Getting the right information

One important way in which you can help your teenager is in guiding them to the best sources of information.

TALK TO PEOPLE:

• Make time to talk to your teenager’s classroom teachers and career advisors at school and college
• Come to a Uni Info Day in August.

START READING:

The University of Tasmania produces a vast array of resource material:

• Course and subject brochures
• Prospectus and Course Guide
• Pathway and bridging programs and other UTAS support services.

Fact sheets on topics such as Preparing for UTAS:

GO TO THE WEB:

www.utas.edu.au/futurestudents

Central UTAS information site for future students
www.career.edu.au

Gives access to an information package called ‘Overview of Career Development’ which gives an overview of career development and ways in which you can help.

www.myfuture.edu.au

Articles and activities to assist with exploring future studies
www.utas.edu.au/services/careers

Fact sheets on a range of career-related topics

Applying as a school leaver

If your teenager is currently in Year 10 (or a lower year level) or he or she plans to apply to UTAS on the basis of Year 12 qualifications. This involves:

• Completing at least two years of post Year 10 study
• Satisfactory completion of a minimum of four Level 5 subjects—the scores of a student’s best three Level 5 subjects taken in Year 12, together with the best scores(s) of up to two other Level 5 subjects from either Year 11 or 12. Each undergraduate course specifies a TER as a guide to the minimum score for entry into that particular course.

Undergraduate (study): study undertaken in order to gain a diploma or degree.

Unit: a set of lectures, seminars and tutorials and/or practicals on a particular topic, and the associated assessment. Each unit has a specific code (e.g. HTA091 History 1A) and a percentage weighting (e.g. 12.5%).

Weighting: UTAS uses a percentage point weighting system for its units to determine student contribution amounts (see ‘Costs of study’). A full-time course of study for one year is 100% weight. Most semester-long units are weighted at 12.5% each, and a full-time enrolment usually consists of 4 x 12.5% units in each semester.