International Student Orientation
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Adjusting to Change

Welcome to the University of Tasmania!

International students travel to Australia from all over the world. Many students also study online from outside Australia for part or all of their course at UTAS.

For many students, this may be your first experience of studying at an Australian university, and for some it will be the first time in a new country with a different culture and environment..

How do you feel about starting at UTAS?

Nervous?        Excited?        Confused?        Worried?

If you feel like this, don’t worry! Most new students experience these feelings. And there are many things to feel unsure or wonder about.
Adjusting to Change

Are you thinking about any of these things (some will depend on whether you are studying in Australia or online)?

- Starting classes
- Exams
- Getting sick
- Finding a job
- Missing your family
- Asking for help
- Improving English
- A place to live
- New experiences
- Communicating
- Failing a course
- Making friends
- Food
- Strange Australian culture

You are not alone!

It is normal to be concerned about all kinds of things when you are starting something new, and especially if you have travelled in a completely new place.

It will take time to adjust to the changes – but you don’t need to do everything by yourself. There are many people at the University who can help you adjust to as a student:
Meet the International Peer Leaders

International Peer Leaders are current international students who have been successfully studying and living in Australia for some time. They are available to share their experience and advice of settling into life and studies here, and to help you find the answers to any questions you might have. You can contact the Peer Leaders by email, or meet in person if you are on campus.

An International Peer Leader is a great person to talk to if:

- you need help getting started at University
- you feel homesick, anxious or unhappy
- you need information on settling in
- you have a question and don’t know who to ask

Email: IPL.Hobart@utas.edu.au or IPL.Launceston@utas.edu.au

Find out more about the team at:
www.students.utas.edu.au/international-students/international-peer-leaders
Meet the International Student Advisers (ISAs)

ISAs support all international students at the University, including pre-degree, undergraduate, postgraduate and research students, whether studying online or on campus.

Talk to us about anything that affects your studies at UTAS:
- Accessing university services
- University environment/culture
- Help with university processes
- Safety and health
- Communication difficulties
- Personal circumstances
- Student visa questions
- Adjusting to life in Australia

Contact us by email:
- ISA.Hobart@utas.edu.au - Cameron, Alison and David
- ISA.Launceston@utas.edu.au - Ginni
- ISA.Sydney@utas.edu.au – Ann

Book an appointment (phone, Skype or in person):
www.utas.edu.au/appointments
Personal Counselling

Your life as a student will be full of experiences. Everybody has difficult experiences at times, because of stress, pressure, relationships, loneliness and other things. Sometimes you will need somebody to listen.

A Counsellor takes time to listen to you and help you understand your situation. They may help you find ways to try and manage your personal circumstances, so you can continue to focus on studies. Counselling is private and confidential and is free for all UTAS students.

Book a Counselling appointment (face-to face or by phone):

www.utas.edu.au/appointments
For students in Australia, free phone counselling is also available after business hours:

**University of Tasmania after-hours Crisis Support Service**

Call or text to speak with a Counsellor

5pm – 9am on weekdays

24 hours on weekends and public holidays
Staying Connected: 4 Key Messages

What do you want to achieve while at University?
Most students aim for good results, gaining useful experience and successful graduation. Connecting with the University is an important step towards these goals. This means connecting with the people around you, including University staff, and your classmates – and if you are on campus, you also need to start making connections with the community outside the University.

How to stay connected:
- **Check UTAS email regularly:** so you do not miss out on important communications
- **Ask for help early:** the earlier you ask, the more options will be available to you
- **Be an independent learner:** your teachers are not going to do the work for you. Being independent means sourcing information for your studies, talking to people, planning your study, managing your study/life balance and asking for help when you need it!
- **Explore beyond Uni:** there is more to life than studies, and you need a balance. If you are studying on-campus in Australia, visit some of the unique places here. Consider volunteering in the community to make connections and build experience.
U Connect

U Connect are the team that provide information about University facilities and help you connect with all services across the University. For most students U Connect is the first point of contact for everyday University-related matters.

Contact U Connect by email at U.Connect@utas.edu.au, or by phone at +61 3 6226 6111.

You can also find answers to many of your questions online at Askus.

If you are on campus, no appointment is needed. You can find the U Connect team:

**Hobart**
- Level 2 (entry level)
- Morris Miller Library

**Launceston**
- Ground Floor
- Student Centre

**Sydney**
- Rozelle Campus Library
Rules and Conditions

We usually expect to find new or different rules in a new place. If travelling to a new country, people may behave differently, and some of the laws are different as well.

The University also has lots of rules – remember your Letter of Offer? The offer itself was 2 or maybe 3 pages... and then there were at least 5 pages of terms and conditions. You can find many other rules listed on the UTAS website. Important rules at the University include the Behaviour Policy, which explains the expectations for staff and student behaviour, and the rules about Academic Integrity.

If you are concerned about any of the rules or are not sure what the expectations are, please talk to an International Student Adviser.
Visa Conditions

Students who are studying in Australia usually hold a student visa, which comes with a range of conditions.

There are visa conditions relating to studying, work, contact details, and other things, and not all students have the same conditions. To check your current visa conditions, log in to VEVO on the Department of Home Affairs website.

If you have any questions or concerns about your student visa, contact an International Student Adviser.

International Compliance

The University is required to ensure students are following certain visa conditions. The International Compliance team is responsible for this.

If International Compliance have any concerns about your visa conditions, they will contact you by email. Please make sure you read any email from this team and follow any advice it gives, or there may be an effect on your visa.

If you receive an email from the International Compliance team and it concerns or confuses you, please contact them at U.Connect@utas.edu.au
Student Learning

Even if you have studied at University before, you may find the Australian university environment and academic culture very different.

It is normal to find Australian English challenging at first. It can also be difficult working out the different communication ‘rules’ in Australia, and in university classes.

The **Student Learning** team provide workshops, classes and individual consultations to develop your academic and English language skills. These services are all free!

Find out more at [www.utas.edu.au/students/learning](http://www.utas.edu.au/students/learning), or book an appointment.

Some tips from the team:

- **Get ready** for classes by completing readings and preparing questions
- **Don’t be afraid to ask questions**, by email or in person – your teachers want to hear from you
- **If on campus, join PASS sessions** or form study groups with your classmates
- **Accept that it takes time** to adapt to a new accent or language – stay calm, it will get easier
- **Practice, practice, practice** – make and take opportunities to speak English as much as possible
What if I’m not happy?

We want you to enjoy your time studying at the University. If something is not going well, it’s important to deal with it as early as possible. Make sure you contact us about any difficulties you are facing or anything that is making you unhappy.

Not happy with the University?

Sometimes students do not agree with a University decision, or they feel they have been treated unfairly, and they are not sure what they can do.

The first step is always to talk to somebody (by email, phone or in person):

- Your lecturer, Unit Coordinator or Course Coordinator (for anything related to a unit)
- An International Peer Leader
- An International Student Adviser

In many cases, a complaint is because of a misunderstanding, and having a good conversation can resolve the situation.
Further Steps

The University always tries to treat students fairly. When a decision is made about a student, the student is always given an opportunity to appeal this.

After talking about your situation, if you need to appeal against the University’s decision, or would like to complain about your experience, you can find help and support with these processes from the Tasmania University Union Student Advocates.

Legal Support

For students studying in Australia, free advice and support with legal matters outside the University is also available. Please contact:

- Student Legal Service
- Hobart Community Legal Service
- Launceston Community Legal Centre
Health and Emergencies

Whether you are studying on campus or online, if a health condition is affecting your studies, please speak to an International Student Adviser. They will help you contact the Disability Advisers who can assist with arrangements to help you manage your health condition while continuing in your studies.

Safety on Campus

SafeZone is a free app for students and staff at all University of Tasmania campuses and facilities in Australia. After downloading and signing up, you can use the app to contact the University’s Safety and Security team. If you need safety assistance when you are away from campus, you will need to contact Emergency Services by phoning 000.

SafeZone
Your on-campus safety app

Campus security
First aid call
Emergency
Campus Notifications
Check-in
Privacy!

utass.edu.au/safezone
Health and Emergencies
(for students in Australia)

All students on student visas are required to have Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) to help with the cost of medical care. If you have questions about your OSHC, contact UTAS.OSHC@utas.edu.au or your OSHC provider directly.

In Australia, if you are sick you will usually go first to a local doctor, called a General Practitioner or GP. There is a GP clinic on campus in both Hobart and Launceston. The doctor will examine you and talk to you about your condition, and they may prescribe medication or help you find a suitable specialist. If you go straight to the hospital instead of to a GP, you will wait a long time to see a doctor, and it will be much more expensive!

In an emergency, or late at night, you can go straight to the hospital emergency department. If somebody’s life is in danger, call 000 for an ambulance. Your OSHC will cover the cost of an ambulance in an emergency.
Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)  
(for students in Australia)

If you asked the University to arrange your OSHC, we have created a membership for you with Medibank OSHC.

The first thing you must do is activate your membership and register for Online Member Services:

- Go to [medibankoshc.com.au](http://medibankoshc.com.au)
- Select **Just arrived in Australia? Activate**
- Enter all your personal details and click **Submit**
- Confirm and update your details to complete registration

You can order a plastic membership card or download an electronic card. Your card verifies that you have health cover if you need to go to hospital or see a doctor. So keep it on you at all times.
Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)  
(for students in Australia)

When you visit a doctor, you will usually need to pay their fees at the time, and then claim a refund from your OSHC provider. When Medibank members visit a Medibank Direct Billing doctor, they will charge you a much lower fee and charge Medibank directly for the rest.

Medibank has a **free 24 hour Student Health and Support Line** for OSHC members. You can call this number any time for advice on health or mental health. This is only for international students, and support is available in many languages.

1800 887 283

**Remember that your OSHC does not cover everything.** For details on your OSHC cover, or if you have any questions, contact your provider directly.

**Medibank:**  

There are also Medibank stores in Hobart, Launceston and Sydney which you can visit in person.
Working while Studying

Many online and on-campus students work part-time while they are studying. This can be a good way to gain experience and skills, as well as some income to add towards living expenses. Remember that it is important to manage your time well to keep making progress in your studies. You can always contact an International Student Adviser to talk about time management.

For students on campus, the **Career Development and Employment** team can help you with advice and information on finding work and building your career skills while still a student.

**Remember:**

- There is a lot of competition for jobs, so it often takes longer than expected to find paid work
- Your student visa may have conditions limiting the amount of work you can do
- **International students have the same rights as all other workers in Australia**

If you have any questions or concerns about your experience at work, please speak with an International Student Adviser, or contact the **Fair Work Ombudsman** directly
Summary

Once again, welcome to the University of Tasmania. We hope your time as a student here is rewarding and enjoyable.

Remember the 4 key messages from earlier in this booklet, and do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions at all!