

Settling into life at University

Tips on being successful

Congratulations on gaining a place at our University

Coming to university is one of those big steps we take as part of our journey through life. No doubt you have worked hard to be able to take this step and you have plans and goals around where this degree is going to take you.



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There's a lot to be learned over the next few years. Most of it will be learned inside the classroom. There is a lot to be learned however outside the classroom. There are many exciting and enjoyable experiences to have around the campus. You will meet lots of new people, from different age groups, gender groups and social classes; people from other cultures with different beliefs. New relationships will be made – romantic and friendship; changing levels of independence will occur - perhaps you have moved out of home for the first time, or perhaps you have launched the beginnings of a career/life change.

All of this will happen at the same time as you are coping with academic demands, like learning how to study effectively and get work done on time, finding out how to use the libraries and computer facilities, learning how to utilise the services of lecturers and tutors, and learning how to study and work with other students.

While all of this is going on, you'll be learning how you respond to stress and how to get the support you need.

This seems like a lot to be dealing with and it is. Fortunately, you don't have to learn it all at once and you don't have to learn it entirely without help. You also don't have to be perfect at it either. This is a time to learn all of these things, so if you don't already know how to cope with all of these things yet, join the club! Hopefully, you can have some fun as you embark on this journey of adventure.



A PLACE OF OPPORTUNITY

Try to be open to new ideas and new experiences. We tend to look at new things in the same way we looked at things in the past. The more we do that, the fewer new things we learn. Try to suspend judgment for at least a little while when faced with something-or someone-that challenges what you have believed in the past.



- Engage with your study. Know yourself as a learner, develop a study technique, become independent and active about your learning, and build academic skills. This is your degree, your choice, no one else can do this for you, and you can develop the skills you need.
- Meet people. Get involved and be engaged with your lecturers, your school and your fellow students. Engage in social activities, friends and family and with yourself. The more you are involved in your life, the more you will benefit from it. Of course you should also remember that nobody can do everything all the time and that you have limits. Learn how to say “no” to others when you need to take of yourself.
- Know your way around the campus. Get a campus map; find a friend or 2 and take a guided tour around the grounds. Locate buildings, rooms and other facilities that might be of use during your time of study.
- Make every effort to go to your classes and be prepared by doing the course assignments. The first sign that you may be in trouble academically is that you have been missing classes.
- Make out a study schedule, but make it realistic and include time to eat, sleep and enjoy leisure activities.
- Make your longer term goals into a series of short-term goals. By accomplishing each short term goal this contributes to your longer-term goals so that you don't have to do everything at the last minute. Also, accomplishing something, even a small step each day helps you feel like you're making progress.
- Use the many excellent support services available to you free of charge as a student. There are academic advisors, doctors, counsellors, residential hall staff, financial aid officers, study skills specialists and many others who want to see you be successful in your time at the University. Don't be afraid to ask them for help. It's why they're there.
- If you don't understand something or find yourself confused, ask questions. Use the lecturers and tutors as your resources for helping you learn. Being aware of what you don't know is at the heart of learning and can lead you to search for new knowledge and solutions.

Where can I get help from others?

You can make an appointment with the University Counselling Service - it is free and confidential.

Phone: 02 492 15801

Email: counselling@newcastle.edu.au

Visit: Find us in the Hunter Building foyer near the Griffith Duncan Theatre