

# Parents' Guide

Supporting your child on their journey to university



[usc.edu.au](https://usc.edu.au)

CRICOS Provider Number: 01595D



# Welcome

This guide will help you support your child through their final years of schooling as they transition into the exciting next chapter of their lives at university.

Close to half of our students are the first in their family to attend university, so we understand that many parents and carers are unfamiliar with the university experience.

Use this guide to start the conversation with your child about their journey to university. We offer plenty of opportunities to come on to campus too, allowing you to explore everything that's on offer.

With a safe, inclusive and supportive environment for students of all ages, cultural backgrounds, values and beliefs, you can rest assured knowing that your child will feel welcomed into the UniSC community.

We look forward to welcoming you and your child to UniSC. If you have any questions, we're always here to help.

Contact us at **07 5430 2890** or **[information@usc.edu.au](mailto:information@usc.edu.au)**

Published by the University of the Sunshine Coast, July 2023.

Information contained in this publication was correct at the time of publishing; however the University reserves the right to alter any program/course, procedure or fee. Prospective students should check for any amendments before submitting an application. For the most up-to-date information visit [usc.edu.au](http://usc.edu.au) University of the Sunshine Coast is registered on the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students. CRICOS Provider number: 01595D  
© University of the Sunshine Coast 2023



The University of the Sunshine Coast acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which our campuses sit. We recognise and pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging.



University gives your child the opportunity to become independent, make connections and discover their passions.

# Why university?

It's an exciting time for your child as they gain unique experiences that give them knowledge, skills and confidence to become the best version of themselves and set up their future.

There are many benefits of going to university, including:

- ✓ More job opportunities
- ✓ Higher earning potential
- ✓ The development of skills such as communication, critical thinking and problem solving
- ✓ Opportunities to pursue interests or passions
- ✓ Making life-long contacts
- ✓ Meeting like-minded friends and mentors



# Why UniSC?

We're the University of the Sunshine Coast (UniSC), a young, ambitious university driven by the belief that community and culture are equally important to a world-class education.

A highly ranked, comprehensive university, we're known for ground-breaking research that explores the timeliest topics of our era, supportive 5-star teaching and championing sustainability principles. And we're growing, rapidly.

Our first campus opened in 1996. Today our teaching network spans five campuses across South East Queensland, providing access to education for more regional, first-in-family and mature age students. Our graduates are invaluable to their local communities, with seven out of ten UniSC graduates staying in the regions to contribute to their social and economic prosperity.



**UniSC is rated 5 stars in the following:**

Overall Experience

Learning Resources

Teaching Quality

Skills Development

Student Support

Social Equity

First Generation

Learner Engagement

Good Universities Guide 2023/24

More than

**1500**

students were supported by a scholarship or bursary in 2023.

# 90%

of UniSC graduates  
employed within four  
months of finishing  
their degree.

Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT)  
Graduate Outcomes Survey 2022

Ranked in the  
**top 2%**  
globally for  
overall impact.

Times Higher Education Impact Rankings 2023

Students from over  
**70**  
different countries.

Top source countries for new international  
student enrolments: Nepal, Germany,  
India, Norway and Austria.



# Your child's journey to university

Explore a range of opportunities and events at UniSC available for Year 10 through to Year 12 students.

## YEAR 10

### Experience UniSC

An exclusive day on campus for Year 10 students to explore a range of career paths, speak with academics and current UniSC students and experience what uni life is like. Students will learn more about the field they're interested in or discover something they hadn't previously considered.

### Headstart Information Evening

You and your child can attend an information evening to learn all about UniSC's Headstart program, which enables Year 10 (Semester 2), Year 11 and Year 12 students to study a university subject while still in school. These events are held in March and September each year.

### TIPS FOR PARENTS

- ✓ Start the conversations about possible careers with your child. Ask them what subjects they like most, what they're good at and what they are interested in outside of school. This will help narrow down the types of jobs or environment they're looking for and school subjects or courses that will assist them on their career pathway.
- ✓ Year 10 Senior Education and Training (SET) planning is a crucial process in your child's educational and career pathways journey. It involves you, your child and the school working together to develop a plan for achieving success throughout Years 11, 12 and beyond.
- ✓ During SET planning it is important to consider:
  - QCE (Queensland Certificate of Education) requirements
  - ATAR (Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank) eligibility
  - Tertiary course subject prerequisites
  - Alternate tertiary admissions pathways
  - Vocational Education and Training (VET) and employment options both during school and beyond.
- ✓ SET plans should be regularly reviewed and allow for flexibility and adaptation in consultation with all parties if circumstances change (eg illness, academic or other challenges). Talk to staff at your child's Year 10 Senior Education and Training (SET) planning events about subject options and career pathways.

## YEAR 11

### Headstart

Year 10 (Semester 2), Year 11 and Year 12 students can study UniSC subjects while in high school. Your child can get a taste of university life and prepare for future study while gaining points toward their QCE and credit towards a UniSC degree. By successfully participating in two or more Headstart subjects, they are eligible for a tertiary rank giving them admission into a wide variety of UniSC degrees and courses.

[usc.edu.au/headstart](http://usc.edu.au/headstart)

### Open Day

Open Day is a great opportunity for your child to come on to campus to explore the facilities, attend information sessions and speak one-on-one with academics.

[usc.edu.au/open-day](http://usc.edu.au/open-day)

### TIPS FOR PARENTS

- ✓ Year 11 is the time for your child to think more seriously about what path they'd like to take after school. Ask them to think about their ideal job which will help them identify their dream degree.
- ✓ Attend career expos with your child so they can become more familiar with universities and the degrees on offer.
- ✓ Attend information events to get a feel for the campus and ask questions about the degrees your child is interested in studying.
- ✓ Talk to as many people as possible and ask lots of questions. Your child can ask professionals what it's like to be a nurse, teacher or accountant, so they hear first-hand what their future career might be like.
- ✓ Encourage your child to create a shortlist of degrees that spark their interest and support them to research key information, including entry requirements and what content is covered in the course. This information is available on program pages on the UniSC website.



### Virginia Kehl

Parent of Creative Industries student, Jamison Kehl

"My advice to anybody considering sending their son or daughter to UniSC — just ask questions, get involved, come to the various information events and Open Day. We were quite amazed with all the information that we learnt, because we didn't really know anything."

## YEAR 12



### Open Day

Even if you attended Open Day in Year 10 or 11, it's important for your child to go along in their final year of high school in case their study interests or circumstances have changed, or they may have different questions to ask academics and staff.

[usc.edu.au/open-day](https://usc.edu.au/open-day)

### Apply to UniSC

Once your child has chosen their degree, they will then need to apply online through the Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC). Make sure they have checked the entry requirements for the degrees they are considering. If your child's application is successful, they'll be notified via email with their offer.

### Access UniSC

Your child could be eligible to receive ATAR or selection rank adjustments from QTAC through the Access UniSC scheme, allowing them to boost their rank and increase their study options.

[usc.edu.au/accessusc](https://usc.edu.au/accessusc)

### Early Offer Guarantee

Your child can beat the stress of getting into uni by applying for UniSC's Early Offer Guarantee (EOG) Program. They could receive an early and guaranteed offer to UniSC, before the release of Year 12 results. EOG offers are based on the recommendation of their school principal.

[usc.edu.au/eog](https://usc.edu.au/eog)

### TIPS FOR PARENTS

- ✓ Check the Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC) for key dates and information about the application process.
- ✓ Ensure your child has checked the entry requirements and required study for any degrees they are considering. If they need to gain prerequisites to study their chosen degree, they can always complete the Tertiary Preparation Pathway (TPP) before commencing university. You can read more about TPP on the next page.
- ✓ Support your child to submit their list of up to six preferences for QTAC. These should be in order of the degree or program that your child would most like to study. Consider keeping your last two preferences for pathway and 'foot in the door' options.

## FIRST YEAR AT UNI

### Orientation

Orientation provides your child with essential information about their program as well as opportunities to chat with academics and support staff and meet new students.

### Student clubs or societies

Student associations are based on common interests like sport, human rights, environmental causes and more. Many degrees or study areas also have student associations available to join.

### Academic support

A range of free academic skills workshops are available to help your child develop skills and strategies to enhance their learning.

[usc.edu.au/academicssupport](https://usc.edu.au/academicssupport)

### Student wellbeing

Free counselling, health and fitness programs, support for mental and physical wellbeing is available to all students.

[usc.edu.au/studentwellbeing](https://usc.edu.au/studentwellbeing)

### TIPS FOR PARENTS

- ✓ It's ok for your child to change their mind, lots of people do! UniSC's Career Development team is available to chat about career interests and which programs are best suited to them.
- ✓ Encourage your child to seek support if needed. We offer a wide range of support services across all our campuses to help ensure your child's university experience gets off to a strong start. UniSC's support services aren't just for students who may be struggling. Students can also receive assistance with career advice, disability services and more, so you can feel confident that your child will be supported at university.



# Pathways to UniSC

There's more than one way to get into uni.

No matter what your child's situation is, if they're keen to get started at uni, we can help them find a way.

In addition to UniSC's Headstart program for Year 10–12 students and the Early Offer Guarantee, UniSC offers a variety of avenues to help your child get into university.

---

## Tertiary Preparation Pathway (TPP)

TPP equips students with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed at uni and provides a pathway into a degree program. Students can also study TPP to meet prerequisites for their chosen degree.

---

## Pathway diplomas

A pathway diploma is a stand-alone qualification that gives students direct entry and up to one year's credit into selected bachelor degrees. These one-year programs mean students can get a taste for university and have something to show for it, without the commitment of a full degree program.

---

## TAFE/vocational studies

TAFE and vocational studies can also provide an entry pathway to UniSC. Students are assigned a selection rank if they have completed a Certificate III or Certificate IV or if they have completed at least one semester of a Diploma or Advanced Diploma. In some cases, your child may be eligible for credit for prior learning.

---

## Indigenous Direct Entry and Access Scheme (IDEAS)

If you identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person, you may be given direct entry to a program based on your potential to succeed through our Indigenous Direct Entry Scheme (IDEAS). This is a direct entry scheme for people who may not have completed Year 12 or have no previous study experience. High-school leavers completing year 12 are not eligible and must apply through QTAC.



### Zoe Brennocks

TPP student

"I took an alternative path, and I completed the Tertiary Preparation Pathway in Session 8 and then enrolled in my bachelor degree in Semester 1. I used TPP to study prerequisites that I didn't do in high school, which enabled me to get into my degree at UniSC.

Through TPP, I learnt really important skills like how to write scientific essays and use Harvard referencing style. I found TPP to be a really nice way to settle into the uni."



# FAQs



## What is the ATAR?

The Australian Tertiary Admission Rank is the primary mechanism used nationally for tertiary admissions. The ATAR is a percentile rank, not a mark, indicating a student's position relative to other students in any given year.

## What is a minimum selection threshold?

Eligibility for a degree requires meeting or exceeding the ATAR or selection rank, known as the minimum selection threshold. These thresholds can vary each year based on available spots, number of applicants, and their academic performance. You can find the threshold for each program in the QTAC and UniSC study guide for an idea of what you need to secure a place at UniSC.

## What is the difference between subject prerequisites and recommended prior study?

**Subject prerequisites** are subjects studied in Year 11 and 12 that are considered necessary for applicants to complete in order to gain entry into an undergraduate degree (program). Subject prerequisites must be met before you can be made an offer to study at UniSC.

**Recommended prior study** is the knowledge students should have in a subject area. Completing recommended subjects is helpful but not compulsory to be made an offer.

## What is the difference between a semester, session and trimester?

**Semester 1 and 2** are the main teaching periods for degrees studied at an undergraduate level.

**Trimester 1, 2 and 3** consist of 12 teaching weeks, a study break, and an exam period. Courses available in trimester-based study periods are usually studied at a postgraduate level.

**Sessions** consist of 8 intensive teaching weeks, a study break and exam period.

## What are the different types of study modes available?

**Full-time study** is usually 3–4 courses per semester.

**Part-time study** can be a great option if students have other commitments that take up much of their time, as they can still make progress towards a degree (usually 1–2 courses per semester) at a pace that suits their needs.

**An online degree** can be a great option for students who need flexibility. Students will complete self-directed online learning materials (podcasts, interviews, simulations, screencasts, recorded discussions and quizzes) at their own pace, at whatever time suits them best. They will still have full access to the facilities and services offered across all UniSC campuses.

**Blended learning** means students learn through a combination of in-person seminars and face-to-face tutorials, workshops or lab classes (usually on campus) supported by online learning materials which are completed at their own pace, at a time that suits them best.

## What is Work-Integrated Learning?

At UniSC, we prefer practical training to relying solely on traditional lectures. Our goal is for students to be ready for the workforce, prepared to step into their chosen career field after graduation – and nothing beats applied experience when it comes to learning.

We call these work experience opportunities 'Work-Integrated Learning' (WIL), where students put classroom theory into practice.

At UniSC, students complete WIL as a part of almost every degree we offer. It can be in the form of an internship, practicum, placement, industry project or field experience where students can develop their skills, establish professional networks, and discover what it's like to work in their area of study.

# What does it cost to go to uni?

We understand the cost of study can be a significant barrier in many students' decision to go to university, but it doesn't need to be.

Between course fees, textbooks and living expenses, there are a number of costs to consider when your child starts university.

Being prepared for these expenses and knowing what help is available will ensure you aren't caught off-guard so your child can plan ahead and manage their money.

## Study fees and expenses

Course fees depend on the type and length of a degree. On average, a student studying full-time can expect to pay between \$4,124–\$15,142\* per year.

There's also a Student Services and Amenities Fee, which is used for improving student services and facilities. This amount is around \$300 and is indexed annually by the Federal Government.

Students may also be required to purchase items such as textbooks, equipment or uniforms to help them with their studies, so it's good to factor some extra money in the budget to cover these costs.

## Other costs to consider

There will also be expenses such as printing costs, parking or public transport and some degree programs (eg education, health) may require memberships, certifications, licences and/or immunisations.

## Household expenses

If your child is planning to move away from home for study, they will need to budget for these additional costs, such as rent, utility bills, bond and moving costs and of course food and groceries.

There are a variety of accommodation options close to UniSC's campuses, including student villages, share houses or private rentals.

[usc.edu.au/accommodation](https://usc.edu.au/accommodation)

\*Based on 2023 course costs.



## Financial support

Whilst there are several costs involved with going to uni, it's important to remember that there is help available.

If your child is an Australian citizen, holds a permanent humanitarian visa or is a New Zealand citizen who holds a Special Category Visa (SCV) and meets eligibility requirements, they are eligible to borrow money through the Commonwealth HELP loan scheme. This means that the payment of fees can be deferred until your child is earning above the threshold.

Your child may also be eligible for government assistance, such as Youth Allowance, Austudy, ABSTUDY, rent assistance or a student start-up loan. Visit [humanservices.gov.au](https://humanservices.gov.au) and search 'payments for students and trainees' for more information.

Visit [usc.edu.au/learn/what-will-i-pay](https://usc.edu.au/learn/what-will-i-pay) for more information on course fees, financial support and budgeting tips.

## Scholarships and bursaries

Ensure your child applies for a UniSC scholarship or bursary which could provide them with money to help support them while studying. It's easy to apply with one online application form for most scholarships.

[usc.edu.au/scholarships](https://usc.edu.au/scholarships)



## Could uni also be for you?

Many parents of our students are inspired by their child's decision to go to university and decide that it could actually be for them as well. If you've been thinking about pursuing a lifelong passion or new career, don't be afraid to discuss your own study options with us.

The UniSC Equip Program is a series of **free workshops** designed to help you take the first steps towards uni or TAFE. These workshops are for adults (18+) from all backgrounds and experiences.

Visit [usc.edu.au/equip](https://usc.edu.au/equip) for more information.



### **Rachel Astill**

Bachelor of Counselling

Rachel was 51 years old when daughter Michalie convinced her to take the first step towards a new way of life and join her in enrolling UniSC.

"With Michalie and my husband's support, I proved that it is never too late to get out of your comfort zone, back yourself and try something new. The biggest change has been my confidence in my abilities. I discovered that I really am capable."

# Helpful resources

There's plenty of additional resources to assist you and your child in the transition from high school to university.

## **Queensland Tertiary Admission Centre (QTAC)** [qtac.edu.au](http://qtac.edu.au)

Provides information and resources about study options for all Queensland universities and is where students submit their application to study.

## **Jobs and Skills** [jobsandskills.gov.au](http://jobsandskills.gov.au)

Learn about the job future outlook, pay and other demands of careers that interest your child.

## **First in family** [firstinfamily.com.au](http://firstinfamily.com.au)

Helpful advice for students who are or will be the first in their immediate family to go to uni.

## **StudyAssist** [studyassist.gov.au](http://studyassist.gov.au)

Information for students about government assistance for financing tertiary study.

## **Centrelink** [humanservices.gov.au](http://humanservices.gov.au)

Payments to help students while they are studying.

## Connect with UniSC

Q #LifeatUniSC



## Contact us

If you and your child have any questions, you can connect with us by phone or email:

Tel: 07 5430 2890

Email: [information@usc.edu.au](mailto:information@usc.edu.au)



[usc.edu.au](http://usc.edu.au)

University of the Sunshine Coast | CRICOS Provider Number: 01595D

## Relax with UniSC's Parent Lounge

As a parent or carer of a future UniSC student, you play a valuable role in guiding and supporting them through their exciting journey. We have a dedicated space with all the information you need to help support your child through to university. Make yourself at home via the UniSC Parent Lounge. Visit [usc.edu.au/parents](http://usc.edu.au/parents) and sign up for the Parent Lounge update while you're there.

