



Charles Sturt  
University

# Get set for success

How to prepare for uni

The Charles Sturt difference

# Yindyamarra winhanganha

This is a Wiradjuri phrase meaning 'the wisdom of respectfully knowing how to live well in a world worth living in'.

It's at the heart of everything we stand for at Charles Sturt University.

Since day one, we've empowered people to make the world a better place. Because we believe in making a difference. When we connect people to their purpose, we make communities better. And when we make communities better, we create a world worth living in.



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Whether you're about to begin your first degree or a postgrad qualification, studying at uni is a great adventure! One that comes with a mix of excitement and apprehension.

The good news is when you become part of the Charles Sturt family, we'll help you dial up the excitement and dial down the nerves.

That's why we've created this guide. It's packed with useful information to help you prepare for uni and make a strong start to your study journey!



# Take the first step

Starting your study journey is easy. The most important step is to accept your offer to study with us. And that's super simple.

Once we send you an email with your offer details, just follow the links!

## 1. Activate your Charles Sturt University account

We'll generate your username and email. Set up your password and you're good to go.

## 2. Accept your offer

Easy as. Just have your username and password handy.



# The portal to success

From your first day through to graduation, the Charles Sturt student portal is your one-stop shop for info. Even better, the portal is set up to guide you every step of the way. There are answers to common questions, hints to help you study smarter and loads of information.

## What can you do in the student portal?

- Get your student card
- Enrol in subjects
- Sort out your fees (pay upfront or defer)
- Organise textbooks and equipment
- Plan for any intensive schools (online students only)
- And lots more!



# Must do: student card

## Say 'cheese' and get your student card

Your card is your key to the university. Use it as your ID for exams and entry to campus buildings. It allows you to borrow from the library and access photocopying, printing and scanning services. Load your card up and you can purchase goods at most campus retail food outlets.

Upload a photo of yourself through our [student portal](#) to get started.

Your student card can be picked up from campus or mailed to you.



# Must do: Orientation

## Check out Orientation

Whether you're studying online or on campus, [Orientation](#) is the best way to meet your new academics and classmates, learn about your campus or online study, ask last-minute questions and check your enrolment.

There'll be lots of people from the Charles Sturt team ready to chat with you!

Orientation is usually held a week before classes start.





# Must do: accommodation

## Arrange accommodation

When you live on campus, you're at the very heart of campus life. Surrounded by like-minded people!

We guarantee accommodation for first-year students who apply to live on campus,\* and there's a range of different options to choose from.

Accommodation offers are made on a weekly basis, so you'll need to get in quick to lock in your choice.

→ [csu.edu.au/accommodation](https://csu.edu.au/accommodation)

\*Terms and conditions apply

Check out our [Living on campus booklet](#) and the [Packing for uni checklist](#).



Dedicated security service



All bills included



All utilities included in your rental rate



Everything is on your doorstep: lectures, library, facilities, dining



Internet access included at no extra cost



All rooms fully furnished



Dedicated Residence LIFE team to give you a hand when you need it



No bond required



All communal areas cleaned





# Living on campus

Albury-Wodonga



Orange



Bathurst



Port Macquarie



Dubbo



Wagga Wagga



# Must do: enrol in subjects

First up, don't stress. Choosing what subjects to do, enrolling in them and managing your timetable can be done easily in the 'get started' section of the [student portal](#). And remember, we're here to help. Just reach out to the team at [Student Central](#).

For many first-year students – whether you're doing a bachelor's or postgrad course – there's a good chance we'll have pre-enrolled you in some or all of your first semester's subjects.

Not sure what you should be enrolled in? Check out our [official handbook](#).

It's a great tool that will explain your enrolment pattern (that's what subjects to study and which order) so you keep on track to graduate.



# Need to phone a friend?

Uni can feel like a whole new world. But we've got your back. We have a bunch of experts in our [Student Central](#) team who are ready, willing and able to help you.

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## What is Student Central?

A group of enthusiastic and caring people who are the keepers (and sharers) of an enormous amount of info on uni life and services.

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## What can they help with?

- Enrolling in the right subjects
- Adding or deleting subjects
- Navigating the library system
- IT issues
- Accessing timetables
- Exam information
- Facilities and support services
- Fees and scholarships

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## Contacting Student Central

- Email [ask@csu.edu.au](mailto:ask@csu.edu.au)
- Phone 1800 275 278
- Visit one of our Learning Commons on campus

# What are the different costs of uni study?

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## Subject fees\*

For each subject you study you'll pay a fee. These fees will depend on the number of subjects you enrol in and the course you're studying (for example, medicine subjects cost more than communication subjects).

\*Subject fees are often also called course fees or tuition fees.

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## SSAF

Most Charles Sturt students pay the Student Services and Amenities fee (SSAF). This fee goes towards providing non-academic support services and facilities for all our students.

- For each subject you study, you'll pay a SSAF.
- In 2024, the total SSAF payable is capped at \$344 per student.

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## Study-related costs

There are some other things to factor into your student budget.

- Textbooks.
- Uniforms (if required for your course).
- Computer.
- Intensive school costs (for some online students). You'll need to cover your accommodation, food and travel expenses during your stay (but we do have scholarships and grants that can help).



# Getting HELP with fees!

## What are your fee payment choices?

Figuring out fees can be confusing, but the good news is that you've got options. You can:

- pay each session in full
- make a part payment
- defer payment.

Eligible students can defer either their full payment or part-payment and take out a Higher Education Loan Program loan. You can also defer both your subject fees AND your SSAF – just remember you have to complete two separate HELP forms.

## What are HELP loans?

HELP loans are offered by the Australian Government to eligible students as a way to pay off uni fees over time, so you aren't stuck with a big bill all at once.

## How do they work?

- The government pays your fees and registers them against your tax file number.
- You pay the balance back when you start working and you're earning above a certain amount (currently around \$51,550).
- The government determines how much you should pay and takes it out through the taxation system.

## What type of HELP loan can you use?

- HECS-HELP loan – suited for eligible undergraduate students.
- FEE-HELP loan – suited for eligible postgraduate students.

There is a deadline for submitting your HELP loan forms, so it's definitely a must-do!

You'll need your tax file number (TFN) to complete the HELP forms.

Don't have a TFN? [Apply online.](#) TFN's could take up to 28 days to be processed, so organise it ASAP!

# Must do: submit your HELP forms

## How to apply for HELP

Once you accept your offer to study with us, hop onto the student portal. Head to 'get started – organise my fees' (or search 'get started' to jump straight to the menu!).

1. Select which type of student you are.
  - Domestic, Commonwealth supported student (mostly for undergrads).
  - Domestic, full-fee paying students (mostly postgrad students).
2. If you're not sure what category you fall into, check your offer letter/email. Under 'payment options' it will list whether you're Commonwealth supported or full-fee paying.
3. Applying for a HELP loan means you're going to 'defer your fees'. To do that you'll have to follow the link to complete the Electronic Commonwealth Assistance Form (eCAF). Have your tax file number ready.
4. To be eligible for HELP, your eCAF has to be submitted before census date.

## What is census date and why is it so important?

Census date is the deadline for finalising your enrolment for the session. It's your last chance to:

- add or delete subjects from your enrolment (after census you'll have to pay fees for whatever subjects you're enrolled in)
- apply for a HELP loan by submitting an Electronic Commonwealth Assistance Form (eCAF).

Check out more important [uni dates](#).

# We know money matters

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## Tax deduction

If there's a direct connection between your study and your work, you may be able to claim your subject fees as a tax deduction.

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## Student support

Apply for a student income payment (ABSTUDY, Austudy or Youth Allowance) up to 13 weeks before you start. [Check your eligibility.](#)

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## Get a discount

If you're one of our alumni, you'll receive a 10 per cent discount on the cost of your course.

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## Get budgeting

Keep track of your spending for a couple of weeks and plug the info into a budget planner. [Try this one.](#)

Need advice about the financial costs of university?

Call 1800 275 278. We'll work it out together.



# Get a helping hand

Did you know we offer more than \$10m in scholarships?

Think only a few high achievers get scholarships? Think again. Scholarships have all sorts of criteria and there are so many that you'll qualify for.

All you need to do is apply. For as many as you like. Trust us, it's worth your while.

## Our advice to you

### Apply, apply, apply

Make sure you're in the running. Lots of scholarships get left on the table simply because people assume they won't get one.

### It's easy as

The application process is simple. So don't hesitate to apply. Hop online and see what's available.

### Keep looking

Different scholarships have various application and submission dates. Bookmark the scholarships page and keep checking in to see what's available – all year round!

→ [study.csu.edu.au/scholarships](https://study.csu.edu.au/scholarships)





# Tips for starting uni with Grace

- Participate in everything you can.
- Plan your time so you balance work, study and friends. It's important – you don't want to burn out.
- Use the support services! I used the library service many times through my first year and it's helped me with textbooks, assignments and notes for class. The library staff are super helpful and kind. I also used study support staff for help with my assignments. That helped me better my grades.

# Tips for starting uni






## with Maurice

- Don't be afraid to ask for help. Whether it's from a lecturer, a peer tutor, someone from your cohort or even a second- or third-year student.
- Plan, plan, plan! If you plan out what you want to do every week it's much easier to keep track of things and set goals. Don't forget time to relax, to socialise and to exercise.

- The team at Student Central helped me settle into uni life, particularly with timetabling and little bits of advice from the student casuals who also work in there. They have a lot of personal experience, so helped me space out my classes really well. They made sure I had time in between to have a break, finish notes or to ask my lecturers questions.

# The right equipment

You'll need a computer or mobile device and internet access. For some courses and subjects you might need specific hardware or software. Check your course or subject details page for information and follow up with your lecturer or subject coordinator if you're unsure. But for most students, here's what we recommend.

	Desktop/laptop		Tablet/mobile device		
Operating system	 Windows 11	 macOS X 13+	 iOS 17+	 Android 14+	 Windows 11
Computer	16GB RAM / i7+	M3/16 GB RAM	Less than three years old		
Network	High speed internet (NBN)		High speed internet (NBN) or 4G/5G (cellular)		
Browser (latest version)	Chrome, Firefox or Edge	Safari, Chrome or Firefox	Safari	Chrome	Chrome, Firefox or Edge

→ [csu.edu.au/current-students/computer-standards](https://csu.edu.au/current-students/computer-standards)

## Don't forget

Staying organised throughout your studies will make life a lot easier – so grab a diary and plot out all important dates like assessments and exams.



# Discounts and free stuff!

Before you buy any tech equipment, check out what discounts you're entitled to from companies like Apple and Dell.

Not looking for a new computer? No worries! Some organisations provide free or cheap refurbished and recycled computers to eligible students. Want to know more? [Check it out.](#)

- As a student you can grab a bargain on lots of different products and services.
- Think transport, gym memberships, movie tickets, food – the list is long!
- Many retailers and websites (like UNiDAYS) happily offer student discounts.
- So, before you buy, always ask if you're entitled to a student discount.

While you're studying with us, we provide free software for you to download, install and use on your computer/device.

- Adobe Reader
- Antivirus Software (Sophos)
- Microsoft (MS) Office 365
- Qualitative Research (NVivo)
- Reference Management (EndNote)







# Get in the zone

Make the most of your study time by creating your own space that's super conducive to learning. How? Try these ideas.

## Let the sunshine in – and air, too

Have plenty of natural light and good ventilation. Make sure you also have a proper night light on your desk.

## Get out and about

And here's a top tip – if you're a really smart operator you'll use a few different study zones. Your brain will stay engaged and your study will be more effective. Study outside, at the library, at a friend's house. Anywhere you have the right conditions. Just remember to stay disciplined and not be distracted by your new location.

## Kick out the distractions

You can't get 'in the zone' if your phone is pinging – or you're checking social media, watching TikTok videos or catching up on Fortnite.

## Need it? Get it!

Once you're in the zone, you don't want to stop to look for more paper, a highlighter, a calculator or a pen. At the end of each week check your supplies and if you need something, get it.

Don't forget there are dedicated study spaces – open 24/7 – on all our campuses.

# Get a head start with Study Link

Want to start your course with confidence? We'll help you get prepped with a head start on uni study. We call it Study Link. You can brush up on a few areas – like maths, science or academic writing – before your actual uni course begins!

## Study Link subjects are super helpful if you:

- have had a break from study
- are starting a maths or science-based degree and want to refresh your knowledge
- want to brush up on your grammar
- need some pointers on academic writing and referencing
- are new to online study.

## Study Link subjects are:

- completely optional! Your results aren't on your official uni transcript
- online – so you can do them whenever suits you
- short – between 14 and 40 hours
- self-paced – take up to five months if you need
- free – for all Australian citizens, New Zealand citizens or holders of a permanent visa
- supported by a real person who can guide you through the subject.

Through Study Link, you can brush up on your knowledge of literacy, learning, mathematics, statistics and science.

# Support every step of the way

As soon as you accept an offer to study with us, we'll be here to support you – every step of the way.

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## Study support

Our support team is dedicated to helping you succeed and can provide help in person, online or over the phone. We're available seven days a week, and it's free. We'll help when it suits you. Plus, you can use our range of other support options like online workshops, online discussion forums or the assignment feedback service.

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## Academic support

Whether you're in your first session of study, or your last year with us, individual academic skills support is available. It can be face-to-face, via video call, phone, online or through email. Whatever works for you. Want to get to grips with academic writing, or build literacy and numeracy skills? We can help – and our advisers can even design you an individual learning plan.

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## Health support

Your physical and mental health can impact upon your study. We're here to help. Disability, illness, injury or temporary medical conditions (pregnancy or broken bones) – whether your condition is permanent or temporary, we'll provide advice, support and adjustments if needed. That way you can participate 100 per cent in your studies.

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## Spiritual support

We can connect you with religious and spiritual support and access to community resources and services, both on and off campus.

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## Student wellbeing

Healthy students are happy students. We have a great range of services and information available to keep you in top physical, mental and emotional shape.

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## Careers advice

From researching career options and finding job opportunities, to help working on résumés, application letters and interview techniques – our Careers and Skills team will help you land your dream job.

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## Learning about the library

We have our own library YouTube channel to guide you through all you'll need to know! Discover a range of information sources and learn how you can use them for your studies. Take a virtual tour of our campus libraries and check out our range of 'how to' guides that can help you navigate our online resources.

→ [study.csu.edu.au/support](https://study.csu.edu.au/support)



# Students helping students

“In each subject of my course I’ve really appreciated the informal peer-to-peer learning from other postgrad students via online discussion forums in particular.

“Students are from a diverse range of organisations – and countries, too – which has brought diversity to my own perspective and enhanced my learning.”

**Katherine Bell**

Master of Business  
(Social and Organisational  
Leadership)





# Stay healthy and happy

Life can be hectic. We all cram a lot in. Family and friends, work, hobbies and study.

So, how can you increase your chances of study success? Getting into a healthy routine right from the start will help you study better, reduce stress and enjoy life!

Here are some important ways to help you be your best.

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## Eat properly

We all know it. A balanced diet full of fruits, vegetables and other healthy food is essential. Without the right fuel your brain won't fire up properly. And while we're on the topic of healthy – drink lots and lots of water. That's important, too.

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## Sleep

There's only so many hours in the day. We get it. But, if your eyes are hanging out of your head you won't be at your best. Set yourself a reasonable bedtime (and, no, anything past midnight is not reasonable).

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## Balance

It is all about balance! Too much of any one thing is just not good for you. So, make sure you maintain study-life harmony by having enough time to do all that needs doing. Get organised, stay focused and do a little every day. Delegate and let slide the things that don't really matter.

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## Keep moving

Being active supercharges your body and brain, and every little bit helps. Get up from your desk and walk around the house or the block. Exercise, do yoga, walk the dog, dance like nobody's watching – as long as you move.

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## Socialise

There's a lot to get done when you're juggling uni and life. Keep balanced by staying connected with family and friends. Have dinner together, have a laugh, watch a movie, or just chat. It all adds up to a mental break – and who doesn't love a break?

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## Attitude

To successfully study you'll need to be 'attitude ready'. Ready to learn, ready to contribute, ready to reach out for help, ready to put in the hard work. It'll be worth it!

# Uni speak decoded

University education comes with its own language. At least, that's how it can seem sometimes. This guide will get you up to speed with 'uni speak'.

<hr/> <b>ATAR</b> <p>Australian Tertiary Admission Rank. Indicates a student's position relative to all the students who started high school with them in Year 7. It's one – but not the only – criteria for entry to an undergraduate degree.</p> <hr/>	<hr/> <b>HELP</b> <p>Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) – refers to the Commonwealth Government's HELP loan scheme. Eligible students can defer payment of their subject/tuition/course fees each session via HECS-HELP or FEE-HELP.</p> <hr/>	<hr/> <b>Subject points</b> <p>A value assigned to a subject. At Charles Sturt, a standard one-session subject is eight points.</p> <hr/>
<hr/> <b>Census date</b> <p>The deadline by which all students must finalise subject enrolments for each session, after which they are financially and academically liable for each subject that remains on their enrolment.</p> <hr/>	<hr/> <b>Lecture</b> <p>A regular teaching session for a large group of students.</p> <hr/>	<hr/> <b>SSAF</b> <p>Most Charles Sturt students pay the Student Services and Amenities fee (SSAF). This fee goes towards providing non-academic support services and facilities for all students. It's a small charge paid for each subject you are enrolled in.</p> <hr/>
<hr/> <b>Commonwealth supported place (CSP)</b> <p>A place at university for domestic students subsidised by the Australian Government. Most undergraduate students are enrolled in a CSP, and can benefit from HECS-HELP.</p> <hr/>	<hr/> <b>Major study</b> <p>An area within a course that allows in-depth study in a particular field. A major usually consists of eight related subjects.</p> <hr/>	<hr/> <b>Study load</b> <p>Depending on the amount of subjects and the number of credit points that a student is enrolled in each session, a study load will be classed as either full-time or part-time.</p> <hr/>
<hr/> <b>Core subjects</b> <p>The subjects in a course that all students are required to complete.</p> <hr/>	<hr/> <b>Minor study</b> <p>A grouping of between four and seven subjects within a course, allowing students to focus on a particular field.</p> <hr/>	<hr/> <b>Study mode</b> <p>This can be either online or on campus, depending on each subject's delivery mode in each session.</p> <hr/>
<hr/> <b>Course</b> <p>The degree or qualification being studied. This may also be known as a program.</p> <hr/>	<hr/> <b>Non-tuition fees</b> <p>Any fees required for items not directly related to course/subject/tuition fees. Examples include: overseas student health cover, student services and amenities fees (SSAF), library fees, campus accommodation fees, campus facilities, late payment and late enrolment fees.</p> <hr/>	<hr/> <b>Tutorial</b> <p>A regular teaching session for a small group of students, involving participation.</p> <hr/>
<hr/> <b>Elective</b> <p>An optional subject selected in addition to the core subjects of a course.</p> <hr/>	<hr/> <b>Intensive school</b> <p>A short period of study, usually three to five days, where online students come on campus to complete units or assessment tasks for a subject.</p> <hr/>	<hr/> <b>Undergraduate</b> <p>A student in a university who has not completed a first degree.</p> <hr/>
<hr/> <b>Faculty</b> <p>A department within a university devoted to a particular area of study. Charles Sturt has three faculties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Arts and Education</li><li>• Business, Justice and Behavioural Sciences</li><li>• Science and Health</li></ul> <hr/>	<hr/> <b>School</b> <p>A division of the university that administers the courses in a particular area of study.</p> <hr/>	<hr/> <b>Unique Student Identifier (USI)</b> <p>A USI is your lifelong education number required by the Australian Government for anyone studying in a CSP. A USI only needs to be created once. Without one, you can't get Commonwealth financial assistance. Visit <a href="http://usi.gov.au">usi.gov.au</a> to get a USI.</p> <hr/>
<hr/> <b>Enrolment pattern</b> <p>The subjects you'll need to study (and in a suggested order) so you keep on track to graduate.</p> <hr/>	<hr/> <b>Session</b> <p>A period of time during which classes are held.</p> <hr/>	<hr/> <b>Workplace learning</b> <p>Time spent in hands-on learning. This may be in actual workplaces in the community, in Charles Sturt's clinics and enterprises, or in specialist facilities on campus.</p> <hr/>
<hr/> <b>GPA</b> <p>A student's grade point average, calculated from the results in each subject completed.</p> <hr/>	<hr/> <b>Subject</b> <p>A unit of study, with a number of subjects making up a course.</p> <hr/>	



# Weekly planner

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
7am							
8am							
9am							
10am							
11am							
12pm							
1pm							
2pm							
3pm							
4pm							
5pm							
6pm							
7pm							
8pm							
9pm							
10pm							

**Want to learn more?**

Get the low-down on career paths,  
courses and uni life on our blog.

→ [insight.csu.edu.au](https://insight.csu.edu.au)



1800 275 278 (free call within Australia)  
+61 1800 275 278 (callers outside Australia)



[study.csu.edu.au](https://study.csu.edu.au)



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