

**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Assistance Scheme (ABSTUDY)** The student assistance scheme provided by the Commonwealth Government. ABSTUDY provides a means-tested living allowance and other supplementary benefits to eligible Indigenous Australian secondary and tertiary students.

**Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA)** Responsible for the national curriculum from Kindergarten to year 12 in specific learning areas in every school in Australia. It is responsible & accountable for the curriculum to be carried out in all schools. It also gathers and collects reports from each school about the performance and resources

**Academic record** A complete listing of courses, units, results and other information concerning a student's academic studies. Also referred to as an academic transcript

**Academic support** Study support services provided at universities to help students with any academic issue.

**Admission requirements** The minimum qualifications (for example, completion of the VCE) required for you to be considered for a particular university course. Entry to many courses is competitive. The attainment of minimum qualifications does not guarantee you will be offered a place.

**Alumni** Students who have graduated from the school or department - former students

**Associate degree** An Associate degree is a two year qualification that can be undertaken after year 12 or following a Certificate III or IV. Students who complete an associate degree and attain the necessary entry requirements will have the opportunity to enter into a related bachelor degree or advanced diploma.

**Assumed knowledge** Indicates the minimum level of knowledge for students considering a course, but is not used as criteria for entry. Students without the assumed level of study are not prevented from enrolling; however, they may be disadvantaged unless they undertake bridging courses during or prior to the first year of study.

**ATAR (Australian Tertiary Admission Rank)** The overall percentile ranking for students in their final year of secondary school in Australia, that reflects the individual's performance in comparison to other students in the same year.

**Austudy** A scheme of Federal Government support for full-time Australian students aged 25 years and over.

**Bachelor degree** A degree is the award a student gains when they have completed studies in an undergraduate course, which is usually completed in three or four years of full-time study.

**Biology** The study of the natural systems of the living world. It includes studies of the structure, function, growth, origin, evolution and distribution of living organisms.

**Bridging courses** A course that enables a student to take up a new subject or course by covering the gap between the student's existing knowledge and the skills required for the subject or course.

**Bursary** A type of scholarship which contributes towards study fees and/or living costs whilst studying at university

**Campus** The area of land on which the university buildings are located. Many universities have multiple campuses in metro and regional locations and even overseas.

**Census date** The date set by the universities when all enrolment fees must be paid and all HELP arrangements (e.g. HECS-HELP, FEE-HELP) are finalised.

**Chemistry** A subject concerned with the substances of which matter is composed, the investigation of their properties and reactions, and the use of such reactions to form new substances.

**Commonwealth-supported place (CSP)** A place in a course to which the Australian Government contributes direct to the University towards the cost of the student's education.

**Contact hours** The number of hours that a student is expected to spend at university attending lectures, tutorials, or practical/laboratory classes; usually expressed as a weekly amount.

**Continuing student** A student who will continue their enrolment in their course

**Core subject** Mandatory component of a course or study area

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**Course** A programme of university study leading to a degree or other qualification.

**Course Code** A unique identifying number assigned by the university to a program.

**Credit points** The number of points assigned to a unit, study area or complementary studies that count towards the enrolment load and total points to complete a course. Credit points are also an indicator of the amount of work the unit might entail. These points may vary between universities and programs.

**Curriculum** Refers to the combined courses or subjects of study given in a school or college. The Education Department sets the guidelines and the school meets the requirements of the curriculum.

**Deferred entry** Delaying the entry to a course at university. Students who wish to take a gap year after school/college usually defer entry for a year.

**Degree** A degree is the award a student gains when they have completed studies in an undergraduate course, which is usually completed in three or four years of full-time study. See also Associate degree, Associate diploma, and Diploma.

**Doctoral student** A student working towards a PhD usually done by research.

**Domestic fee-paying students** Students who are Australian or New Zealand citizens or permanent residents of Australia who meet the entire cost of their studies through tuition fees.

**Double degree** Some universities offer degree courses which may be combined with a second degree course, such as Science/Law or Business/Marketing - these are called Double Degrees and they are usually completed in a shorter time than studying for two consecutive single degrees.

**Elective** Units that are not part of the mandatory requirements for a course. Elective units can be taken in some courses to fulfil the requirements for that course.

**Enrolment** After you have been offered and have accepted a place in a course you will then be asked to enrol at a certain time. Each institution has its own enrolment procedures and in many institutions special advice is available about courses and enrolment plans. Successful applicants will receive enrolment details with their offer of a placement.

**External study** A mode of study where there is no need to regularly attend classes on campus. However, may involve some instruction through residential workshops or other online instruction.

**Faculty** A term used to describe a division of a university involved in teaching and research in a group of generally related disciplines. Most faculties are made up of a group of 'Schools'. For example, a 'Faculty of Science' may include the 'School of Biological Science'.

**FEE-HELP** A loan for eligible fee-paying students to pay their tuition fees through the tax system. [Read](#) more at the Australian Government site.

**Fee-paying course** A course which requires Higher Education students to pay the full cost of the course upfront (these fees are usually paid at the commencement of each enrolment period).

**Fees** Students pay a range of course fees (fees are usually paid at the commencement of each enrolment period). The amount varies from course to course and also depends on whether you are a local or international student, an undergraduate or graduate student.

**Field Positions (FPs)** Indicates a Year 12 student's rank order position based on overall achievement in authority subjects in up to five fields, e.g., written expression and numeracy skills.

**Field Trip** An activity that involves a student travelling away from school/ campus and is a requirement for a subject/course or for which the student is studying.

**Folio** A collection of personal, artistic or other work demonstrating a student's capabilities. It is used for admission to some university courses.

**Full-time** A standard full-time load is 8 units per semester. "Full time" is defined as 75 per cent or more of a standard full-time load (i.e. 6 units or more per semester for most programs).

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**Gap year** Many students decide to take a year off – a gap year – before going to university; spending time travelling, earning money, or gaining work experience.

**Grade Point Average (GPA)** The average of the grade of the results obtained by a student, weighted by the unit value of each course in which the student enrolled. GPA is determined on a semester basis.

**Graduate** A person who has successfully completed and received their Degree/Diploma.

**Graduate Skills Assessment (GSA)** A test of generic skills which can be administered on a voluntary basis to individual students at the point of exit and entry to university. It measures written communication, critical thinking, problem solving and interpersonal understandings.

**Graduate certificate** A postgraduate course, usually of one semester duration, which can be studied as a self-contained course leading to a Graduate Certificate level qualification, or which leads on to a second semester of study, leading to a Graduate Diploma level qualification.

**Graduate diploma** A postgraduate course, usually of two semesters duration, which can be studied as a self-contained course leading to a Graduate Diploma level qualification.

**Graduate entry** Indicates options available for some programs which are open only to students who have already completed an undergraduate degree.

**Higher Education** Refers to post Year 12 or equivalent studies, leading to awards including bachelor degree, graduate certificate, graduate diploma, masters degree and doctorate.

**Higher Education Loan Program (HELP or HECS-HELP)** A loan scheme available to Australian citizens or the holders of Australian permanent humanitarian visas to enable them to pay their student contributions or tuition fees, or for one or two study periods overseas. Loans are repaid later through the taxation system once income has reached a certain level.

**Honours** An additional year of advanced or more specialised study for students to be awarded an honours degree. Other programs calculate honours based on overall performance in specific years or courses of the program.

**Internal study** Mode of study where students attend classes on campus during the semester.

**International student** A student who is not an Australian citizen or permanent resident, nor a New Zealand citizen, and is enrolled or proposes to enrol at an institution in Australia. Temporary residents of Australia are also classified as international students.

**Lecture** One of the main methods of teaching at universities. A face-to-face class where a lecturer presents course material to students enrolled in a unit of study. Lectures are generally in a lecture room, but may also be available via a video link.

**Marking criteria** A set of agreed scoring guidelines used by teachers/ lecturers to assess students work.

**Masters courses** These are post-graduate courses usually available only to people who have qualified for an appropriate first Degree/Postgraduate Diploma. They are not available to school leavers.

**Masters student** A person who has a degree from a university and is studying for a more advanced qualification. Masters students are required to have **previous** study or experience in the same discipline area. Some courses require completion of a fourth or Honours year of study after completion of the Bachelors degree, as a prerequisite for entry to Masters study.

**Mathematics A** A recommended precursor to further study and training in the technical trades such as toolmaking, sheet-metal working, fitting and turning, carpentry and plumbing, auto mechanics, tourism and hospitality, and administrative and managerial employment in a wide range of industries. It is also an entry level mathematics to tertiary studies in subjects with moderate demand in mathematics.

**Mathematics B** A recommended pre-requisite for any tertiary studies in subjects with high demand in mathematics, especially in the areas of science, medicine, mining and engineering, information technology, mathematics, finance, and business and economics.

**Mathematics C** A recommended companion subject to Mathematics B. It provides additional preparation for tertiary studies in subjects with high demand in mathematics, especially in the areas of science, medicine, mining and engineering, information technology, mathematics, finance, and business and economics.

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**National Assessment Program-Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)** The national testing for all years 3, 5, 7 and 9 students. All students in these year levels are expected to participate in tests in reading, writing, language conventions (spelling, grammar and punctuation) and numeracy. The test provides parents and schools with an understanding of how individual students are performing at the time of the test and is one aspect of the schools assessment and reporting process.

**Open days** An opportunity for prospective students and their families to be shown around universities.

**Orientation** A program of activities and information sessions to introduce new students to the university to assist the transition to tertiary study. They generally occur just prior to the start of each semester or trimester. During orientation you get to explore your campus, find out about the subjects of your course and meet teaching staff and fellow students.

**Overall Position (OP)** An Overall Position assigned to students who complete Queensland Year 12 studies in a certain number of subjects required by the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment and Authority (QCAA)

**Part-time** Enrolment in less than 75% of the standard full-time load for a program (i.e. less than 6 units per semester in most programs). Part-time enrolment is not available to international students studying onshore in Australia.

**Pathway** A general term to describe an alternative means of gaining entrance to university, including recognition of prior learning or life experience.

**PhD** (Doctor of Philosophy) Advanced academic degree that usually involves extensive research and an original thesis.

**Physics** The study of matter, energy, and the interaction between them. The subject matter of physics includes mechanics, heat, light and other radiation, sound, electricity, magnetism, and the structure of atoms.

**Plagiarism** The presentation of work, ideas or data of others as one's own without appropriate acknowledgement.

**Postgraduate courses** These are courses usually available only to people who have qualified for an undergraduate Degree/Diploma. They are not available to school leavers. Examples are Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma, Master or Doctorate.

**Postgraduate student** A person who has a degree from a university and is studying for a more advanced qualification, e.g. an award at graduate certificate, graduate diploma, master or doctoral level. For postgraduate awards, students are required to have previous study or experience in the same discipline area as the award, so that the postgraduate course builds on that earlier study and knowledge.

**Practical session** Generally a laboratory session (usually in science or engineering programs) where experiments or other type of laboratory work are undertaken. Often called "pracs" or "labs", these are classes in which experiments or hands-on activities are conducted under supervision.

**Professor** Senior academic staff, well respected in their field of study.

**Prerequisite subject** A subject/course that must be met by a student before enrolment in a particular university course is offered. A prerequisite course provides the appropriate foundation knowledge in order to progress to the next course.

**Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA)** An sector of the Queensland Government replacing the former Queensland Studies Authority (QSA) that provides Kindergarten to Year 12 syllabuses, guidelines, assessment, reporting, testing and certification services for Queensland schools.

**Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE)** Issued by the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA) to eligible students when they complete the senior phase of learning, usually at the completion of Year 12.

**Queensland Core Skills Test (QCST)** A test administered by the Queensland Studies Authority and undertaken in Year 12 by students seeking to qualify for tertiary admission.

**Queensland Tertiary Admission Centre (QTAC)** The Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC) is the central admissions body for all Queensland undergraduate programs. Australian year 12 students and International students taking year 12 in Australia apply through QTAC for entry into undergraduate programs.

**QTAC Code** A unique code number assigned by QTAC to each individual undergraduate university program.

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**Quota** A limit set by a university on the number of students who may be admitted to a specified course or program in any academic year.

**Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)** The acknowledgement of a person's skills and knowledge acquired through previous training, work or life experience, which may be used to grant status or credit in a course.

**Scholarship** An award carrying financial advantage in undertaking a specified program or course of study. The advantage is usually in the form of a full or partial remission of fees, or meeting of costs associated with the program or course of study such as living costs, purchases of books or accommodation. These are granted to a student on the basis of merit or other factors, e.g., low income, rural or Indigenous background.

**Semester** The academic year is usually divided into first and second semesters. Students can start courses at the beginning of the first and, in some cases, second semester. Some universities have trimesters, with an additional study period over summer.

**Senior Education and Training (SET) Plan** A SET plan is a confidential document that a student develops, in consultation with their parents/carers and their school, to map their learning and career pathways.

**Special Tertiary Admissions Test (STAT)** This is a two-hour, multiple choice test administered by QTAC that enables Australian mature-age applicants to demonstrate aptitude for tertiary study.

**Student ID** Proof of a student's enrolment displaying their student identification number. ID cards are issued to students who have enrolled and paid all fees and charges.

**Syllabus** The description of what students are expected to learn in a course of study or key learning area. It includes aims, objectives, outcomes, content and assessment requirements.

**Tertiary education** All formal education beyond secondary level including studies undertaken at a university.

**Tertiary Preparation Pathway (TPP)** Preparatory programs and bridging studies offered by individual universities to allow a direct and alternate entry into tertiary courses, and prepare you for study.

**Tutorial** A class involving discussion and participation where a small group of students meet with an academic to discuss topics within a unit of study.

**Undergraduate course** An undergraduate course is a course leading to a first Higher Education qualification, such as an Associate degree, an Associate diploma, a Diploma, or a first Bachelor degree. Some universities offer degree courses which may be combined with a second degree course, such as Science/Law or Business/Marketing - these are called Double Degrees and they are usually completed in a shorter time, and at less cost, than studying for two consecutive single degrees.

**Vocational Education and Training (VET)** A work experience and/or training activity within the secondary school curriculum, aimed at providing workplace experience and broadening post-school options in order to prepare a student for the transition between school and work.

**Work Experience** Workplace learning (usually one or two weeks) of unpaid work undertaken by secondary school students to show them the world of work.

**Work Integrated Learning (WIL)** This is a partnership between the hosting organisations, the student and universities that enables students to: develop professional skills in a workplace environment; experience the culture and professional practices of the workplace and enhance their opportunities for employment.

**Work Placement** A number of programs, especially those accredited by professional bodies, require students to undertake work experience relevant to the profession. This may also be referred to as a practicum or work placement.

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