

# Top tips for university success summary

The Language and Learning Advisors are here to support you. Each member has offered their top tips to get you started at CDU. Explore the Study Skills pages for more ideas to help you manage your studies.

## Just click!

Spend time before the start of semester to explore your Student Portal. It is your access point to important information and resources. You can pin the apps that you think you will use the most. Make sure you can use Learnline because your lecturers will expect you to be able to navigate the pages to find your learning material and assessments. Remember, each unit may be organized slightly differently. Explore the Library pages to find things that are relevant to you.

## Plan

Planning starts by asking yourself key questions, e.g. When are your lectures or tutorials? What preparation is required for my lecture? Consider how much time you need to set aside. This approach is the same for your assignments. Ask yourself how many assignments you have and how you need to prepare for each one. Planning helps you manage the competing priorities in your life. [CDU tools](#) can help you.

## Integrity

The CDU Student Code of Conduct encourages us all to

- Behave with respect
- Show inclusion
- Strive for excellence
- Be accountable
- Act with integrity

This last point includes academic integrity. You need to understand what is expected of you and how you can avoid misconduct such as cheating, collusion, and plagiarism. To make the right decisions, familiarize yourself with the Student Academic Integrity Policy and complete the Academic Integrity Unit in your Learnline.

## Expectations

To be successful at university, you need to understand what is expected of you. Learnline is a good place to start because this is where you will find the Unit Overview, Learning Outcomes, and Assessments. Remember that lecturers may expect you to prepare tasks before class, participate actively in learning activities, and be aware of requirements around referencing, formatting, and even spelling in your assignments. Finally, it is important to check your CDU emails regularly and communicate with your lecturer in a professional manner.

## Assessments

Students can be faced with a wide range of [assignment types](#), including quizzes, essays, reports, reflections, lesson plans, presentations, and lab reports. With any assessment, you need to understand the task, the marking criteria, and how the task relates to the unit learning outcomes. Unpack the task – identify the task words, which tell you what to do; the content words, which give you specific information about the topic you need to focus on; and the scope, which limits the topic to one or two areas. This is important because you have a limited number of words to discuss the topic, so you need

to stay on track. Always check the marking criteria to ensure you are producing an assignment that matches your lecturer's expectations.

## **Read**

You should expect to study 10-12 hours per week for each unit you take. Most of this time will be spent reading, so you need strategies to help you manage. First, prioritise what you read. Locate your reading list for the unit: it may list specified readings and optional readings. Aim to read with two things in mind: 1) building your understanding of the topic and 2) being able to participate in tutorials or group discussions. You are also expected to locate your own reading materials. If you need help with this, you can get support from [subject guides](#), [workshops](#) or [appointments with a librarian](#). When you read, apply different strategies according to your purpose. Skimming helps you review key parts of the text quickly. Scanning helps you find specific information such as a statistic. Be an active reader by highlighting key messages, taking notes, creating diagrams etc. Be a critical reader by asking questions while you read: e.g. Is the argument logical and supported? Do I agree with what the author is saying? Does this view match the other texts I have read?

## **Write**

Although a wide range of written genres and structures exist at university, they share some common features. Academic writing aims to be clear and concise. Adopt a direct style that assists the reader in understanding your point. Another common feature is academic or discipline-specific vocabulary. Academic vocabulary means using words that are appropriate to the academic context, so you should avoid conversational language or slang in most academic situations. Discipline-specific vocabulary refers to those words which are commonly used or unique to your field of study.

## **Participate**

Whether you are a local student, regional or remote, domestic or international, studying online or face-to-face, you will be more successful if you actively participate in your learning. Active participation means you don't simply attend lectures, or view the recordings, but take every opportunity to engage with your lecturers and classmates. This may be in live classes or via tools like Learnline Discussion Boards. Asking questions doesn't just help you to clarify information, it enhances critical thinking, improves understanding, builds confidence and builds relationships. Active participation also means engaging with your learning materials by taking notes, highlighting, or even noting a point of interest for discussion with other students. Getting to know your classmates can be helpful because you are not alone in the student journey. CDU has many student groups catering to range of interests. These groups recognize the importance of creating a student community. PASS or Peer Assisted Study Sessions are available for some units each semester where you work with other students from the same unit.

## **Reflect**

To learn, students need to reflect. This means thinking critically about your experiences so that you can learn from them and apply what you learn in the future. Ask yourself questions such as: what did I learn today? What am I unsure about and what can I do about it? You can also reflect after a lecture or tutorial by looking at your notes and asking the same questions. When you receive feedback for an assignment, use the comments to reflect on your performance to identify aspects of your work you can improve. Reflection is a sign of a growth mindset and will help you move forward in your studies.

## **Seek advice**

CDU provides a wide range of personal support options to assist you with your [life, health and well-being](#). These options include counselling, disability or health support, student advocacy, details about

financial assistance, and opportunities to improve your employability. Other resources focus on what to do if you want to make a complaint and support specifically for First Nations or international students.

When you need support immediately, CDU has a Wellbeing Support Line 1300 933 393 available 24/7.

For information related to your course of study, use the information in the [Student Admin](#) pages or you can type your question into the Ask CDU dialogue box. If you can't find what you need on the CDU webpages, reach out to Student Central either in person on campus or by phone/email.

For information related to a specific unit, the first point of contact is usually your lecturer – check their preferred means of communication first. You have access to online tutoring 24 hours a day 7 days a week which can be accessed in the View Unit Tools section of your Learnline unit. A wide range of support is available through the Library website under the Assessment help tile, where you will find links to [workshops](#), [study skills pages](#) and [subject guides](#). Language and Learning advisors and Librarian are available to support you and can be booked for [individual consultations](#).

## **Resources:**

### **Time planning tools**

<https://www.cdu.edu.au/library/language-and-learning-support/study-skills/resources>

<https://imps.cdu.edu.au/tools/assignment-scheduler/>

<https://imps.cdu.edu.au/tools/time-management/>

### **Library research support**

Subject pages: <https://libguides.cdu.edu.au/dhome>

Workshops: <https://libcal.cdu.edu.au/>

Appointments: <https://libcal.cdu.edu.au/appointments>

### **Study Skills**

<https://www.cdu.edu.au/library/language-and-learning-support/study-skills>

### **Personal support**

<https://www.cdu.edu.au/current-students/life-health-wellbeing>

### **Student admin help**

<https://www.cdu.edu.au/current-students/student-admin>