Starting Higher Education at Charles Darwin University is the beginning of a new adventure. Learning, discovering and forming lifelong friendships are all part of the journey. It’s an exciting time, but it can also be rather daunting.

This Getting Started guide is your go-to companion for any questions you have about your new student life. It contains some great tips on getting a good start and is designed for all new students, on campus and online, domestic and international, undergraduate and postgraduate.

We are here to help you succeed and to support you in the challenges ahead.
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CDU is a big place, with over 24,000 students. There are campuses across the Northern Territory, at Casuarina and Palmerston, on Darwin’s Waterfront and in Alice Springs. We also have centres at Tennant Creek, Katherine, Nhulunbuy and Yulara as well as interstate in Sydney (NSW) and Melbourne (VIC).

Top tips for GETTING STARTED

1 Attend Orientation
‘O Week’ is open to all students and external students are encouraged to attend. This is your day to learn about CDU and your course, meet your teachers and other staff, and make new friends. Check it out at W: cdu.edu.au/orientation.

2 Visit Student Central
This is your one-stop-shop to sort out your student details such as Student ID, enrolment and to pay fees. If staff here can’t answer your questions, they will know who can.
For more information, go to W: cdu.edu.au/student-central.

3 Ask questions
It’s the best way to learn.

CHECKLIST

**ALL STUDENTS**
- Are you enrolled in your course?
- Have you made a note of your course coordinator’s contact details?
- If you think you are eligible for credit transfer have you asked Student Central?
- Have you received your fee invoice?
- Have you activated your online CDU student account?
- Have you got your student ID card?

**EXTERNAL STUDENTS**
- Do you have your timetable?
- Have you made contact with Student Support Services?
- Do you need IT support?
- Have you familiarised yourself with the campus or centre where you are studying?
- Have you logged on to Learnline and reviewed your study material?
As well as learning new things at CDU, you’ll meet many new people. Doing what you can to be organised for class and developing a supportive network will help you achieve your goals.

1. **Get to know your course**
   Read your course outline. Then read it again. It tells you everything that’s required of you; the course aims; your schedule; your assignment due dates and exams. It will also detail any readings or exercises that need to be done in advance of class.

2. **Touch base with your teachers**
   Course coordinators, lecturers and teachers are there to answer your questions. Email is usually the best way.

3. **Find your tribe**
   Making friends in your course will come naturally – you are all in the same boat and starting a tremendous journey together. Social events, student groups and sports clubs are all ways to meet people outside of your course. Social media is a great way for external students to stay connected. Students often set up social media pages, websites and online groups to stay in touch.

“I have chosen CDU because I live in Darwin and it is easier to attend classes. I am studying a Bachelor of Nursing and I am enjoying every moment of it. I had to learn how to be an organised person and juggle study and family timetables, which was quite challenging, but with the help of my course coordinator and my family, I have managed to follow my study plan.”

- PRISCILA SHARPE
Your CDU student account is your personal online portal while you are studying at CDU. It includes your email account, student profile and where you’ll find important information, such as enrolment details and grades. Familiarise yourself with your account, particularly if you are an external student or if your course is in mixed-mode delivery.

It’s important to keep your contact details up-to-date in case we have to contact you in an emergency, such as extreme weather events, or to deliver distance-borrowed library books.

| EMAIL | Email will be your main means of communication with lecturers and other students, so check it regularly. When communicating with lecturers via email remember to include your full name, course and student number. You can generate an e-signature with these details. |
| COURSE WEBSITE | Your course will have a dedicated section on the CDU website. Familiarise yourself with it so you know what’s expected of you, and what learning opportunities are on offer. |
| LEARNLINE | Learnline is CDU’s online learning environment. It’s where reading materials and assessment tasks are posted and where you upload your finished assignments. Taking the time to understand Learnline early on will ease stress when assignments are due. There is a dedicated online hub for students at: W: learnline.cdu.edu.au/support |
| BLACKBOARD COLLABORATE | Blackboard Collaborate is part of Learnline. You will use it often, particularly if you are an external student. W: learnline.cdu.edu.au/units/lbaresources/blackboard_collaborate_presentation/index.htm |
| IT SUPPORT | The Information Technology Management System (ITMS) is CDU’s IT support service. Staff assist with email, internet, phone and voicemail access, software and hardware purchasing, training and student computer lab access and information. W: cdu.edu.au/itms |
| WIFI | All CDU campuses and centres have WiFi access for students. Login details are set up after you get your Student ID. |
Know the Code: How CDU IS ORGANISED

At CDU our many faculties, schools, programs and courses are identified by codes. They will seem foreign at first, but once you know them you will easily find your way around.

**CDU structure**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNIVERSITY</th>
<th>FACULTY</th>
<th>SCHOOL</th>
<th>PROGRAM</th>
<th>COURSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Building codes**

Casuarina campus is divided into colour-coded precincts. Maps of all CDU campuses as well as address details of all centres are at W: cdu.edu.au/campuses-centres.

**What does BLUE 5.1.12 mean?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BLUE PRECINCT</th>
<th>BUILDING 5</th>
<th>LEVEL 1</th>
<th>ROOM 12</th>
</tr>
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</table>

**Study periods**

The academic year has four 12-week semesters: three semesters in the academic year and one Summer semester.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEMESTER 1 (S1)</th>
<th>MARCH – MAY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SEMESTER 2 (S2)</td>
<td>JULY – AUGUST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEMESTER 3 (S3)</td>
<td>AUGUST – NOVEMBER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUMMER SEMESTER (SS)</td>
<td>NOVEMBER – FEBRUARY</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Within these semesters there are:

- Census dates – last day to withdraw from class without financial penalty
- Semester breaks – great for recharging the batteries
- Revision periods (StuVac) – preparation for exams
- Exam periods

Some short courses and postgraduate programs operate differently. There are no classes held on public holidays.

Find important dates at W: cdu.edu.au/current-students/important-dates.
Smart STUDYING

As a CDU student you will be expected to do a lot of work on your own, and to keep up with your coursework.

Your study load will vary during a semester. Early on, when you are being taught new things, your assignment load will be light. This will change as the semester progresses. It’s important to keep up to date early on and to plan your time so you aren’t overwhelmed.

Your course will include different types of teaching and learning.

Lectures
Course content is delivered in a structured way. Some interaction with lecturers and other students.

Recorded lectures
Lectures are uploaded to Learnline for external students and others to access at their convenience. These are handy for exam revision and for assignments.

Group work
Tutorials, seminars and workshops are the place to discuss and ask questions about course content. Attendance is compulsory and non-attendance will affect your grades. Online group work is done via Collaborate.

Readings
Readings provide background and expand on lectures, tutorials and assignments. You will be required to do the reading before the class in order to participate in group work and discussion. Again, participation affects your grade.
Practical classes/studio sessions/laboratory sessions
These are compulsory and attendance counts towards your grade.
The practical sessions are where you learn by doing. It’s important to attend.

Professional placements/work experience
Here you apply what you have learnt in a professional context. It is an excellent way to make connections and it can be a pathway to employment after graduation.

Assessment
Assessment tasks are your opportunity to show you’ve understood your coursework and can apply what you’ve learned. Depending on your course, you will be assessed on:
• Assignments
• Quizzes
• Exams
• Oral presentations

Grades
The grades in Higher Education are: Fail, Pass, Credit, Distinction, High Distinction.

Extensions
Extensions are only granted in exceptional circumstances. You may need to make an application in writing and provide documentation, such as a medical certificate.

10 STEPS to smart studying
1. Login to your Student Account
2. Attend orientation
3. Explore your course website
4. Plan your time
5. Set up a study space
6. Check your email
7. Attend all scheduled classes
8. Get to know other students
9. Explore the library
10. Check out CDU support services and scholarships

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Time management

Managing your time is a big part of studying success. Developing good habits early on will lay a good foundation, particularly during stressful periods such as at exam time and when multiple assignments are due.

"Time management was my biggest challenge; fitting study in between work and my family’s needs, but as a mature age student I wanted to be an example to my kids so I scheduled study time into my day rather than leaving it as the last thing on my ‘to do’ list. This included using childcare at times so I could manage my studies.

- MEL GOETZE"

2. Set a study time at a time when you’re most alert.
3. Write down study goals and tick them off when completed. Reward yourself along the way.
4. Tell family and friends about your study commitments so they understand and support you.
5. Be realistic. Is your schedule manageable? Consider all your commitments. If you need to take a lighter study load, do so before the Census date to avoid financial penalty.
How much time is EXPECTED OF YOU?

The amount of time your study takes up will depend on how many course units you are doing. As a general guide: 1 unit = 8 to 10 hours study per week, including class time.

**Full-time study**
Is the same as having a full-time job: around 40 hours a week, with your other commitments fitting in around this.
It includes contact hours (class time) and independent study (weekly tasks, reading, assignment work).

**Part-time study**
Part-time study means less hours, but it comes with its own challenges. In many cases, part-time students are juggling jobs and families while they study, so time management is essential.

### FULL-TIME STUDY
- **3 or 4 UNITS PER SEMESTER**
- **30 to 40 HOURS PER WEEK**
- Not recommended if you are working full-time or at home with young children.

### PART-TIME STUDY
- **1 or 2 UNITS PER SEMESTER**
- **10 to 20 HOURS PER WEEK**
- Recommended if you are working full-time or if you have not studied for a while.
Staying motivated
If you’re feeling overwhelmed or uninterested in your studies, and unable to concentrate, these tips may help:
• Revisit and reaffirm your goals
• Make study a high priority
• Set mini-goals and reward yourself each time you achieve them
• Think positive
• Talk to a ‘study buddy’ … you’re all in this together

Procrastination
Putting things off until the last minute, choosing less urgent tasks ahead of more urgent ones, spending hours chatting on social media – these are just some of the hundred different ways to procrastinate.
Procrastination knocks your productivity and psyche. Everyone does it, and it gets worse the more stressed and urgent things become.

Beating procrastination
1. Figure out what’s holding you back. Why are you procrastinating? Do you dislike the task? Are you unsure of what to do?
2. Break the task down and set deadlines for each ‘chunk’. Reward yourself when you meet a deadline.
3. Make the task fun: Listen to music while you do it, or do it with a friend.
4. Reach out. If you don’t know how to do something, ask a friend, a teacher, or contact Academic Support Services for advice.

Creating BALANCE
University study is a long-distance run, not a sprint, and a balanced lifestyle will help you go the distance.
1. Enjoy quality time with family and friends.
2. Get enough sleep. (On average 8 hours a night.)
3. Take on work hours that fit around your study.
4. Exercise. Keeping fit will increase concentration.
5. Monitor the balance between study, life and work.

“Time management and organisation is vital. It is the first skill I learnt at Uni and one that I know will help me forever in all aspects of life.
- SABRINA MORIN
Study skills and SUPPORT

If you are starting to struggle with your course, don’t wait until the exams are on or when an assignment is due, contact Academic Language and Learning Success Program (ALLSP) straightaway. This is a free service run by the School of Academic Language and Learning. Help is available in person, via email or by phone.

ALLSP also runs Peer Assisted Study Sessions. These are either group study sessions or workshops which have been requested by students who are having trouble in a particular area.


The Library

CDU’s main library is on Casuarina campus, with branches at Palmerston and Alice Springs. With extensive book and electronic collections, you will be able to access all the resources and information you need for your course.

W: cdu.edu.au/library

Distance and interlibrary services

Through interlibrary loans you can access any book, DVD, journal or other resource in the CDU Catalogue. If you live more than 80km from the Library, you are eligible for Distance Library Services. The Library can send books and other materials to you.

Research help

Professional Liaison Librarians at Casuarina Library can assist you with researching and referencing, either in person, online or by phone.

Referencing

Correct referencing of the resources you use in your work is essential, whether it be found in books or online. At the CDU Library’s Drop-In room, you can get help with referencing and other research matters. Open daily 10am–1pm.

W: libguides.cdu.edu.au/studentwelcome

As a public servant I needed to further my understanding of Indigenous policy, politics and history so I can make a meaningful contribution to Indigenous affairs and make informed decisions. What I’ve learned makes me want to contribute to change. ACIKE offered linguistic subjects in written and spoken Central/Eastern Arrernte language and I had always wanted to learn to speak, read and write my language. The small campus at CDU Alice Springs is good too. It’s right around the corner from home.

- JOEL LIDDEL
Does CDU offer scholarships?
Yes. CDU offers over $800,000 worth of scholarships every year to help students with the costs of study. They vary greatly from one-off payments of $500 to $15,000 over a year. Anyone who is or will be studying at CDU – including online and part-time students can apply. You can apply for as many as you are eligible for. There are scholarships for merit and academic achievement, regional and remote students, leadership, those in financial need and Indigenous students. W: cdu.edu.au/scholarships

I have a disability. How will this affect my studies?
Contact the Disability Service to confidentially discuss any condition that may impact on your ability to access and participate in your studies. The Disability Liaison Officers can provide advice and develop a Learning Access Plan that outlines the agreed adjustments that will be implemented to assist you to complete your studies. Talk with the Disability Liaison Officer as soon as possible to maximise your learning opportunities. W: cdu.edu.au/equity-services/disability-services

How do I find affordable accommodation?
Student accommodation is available at International House Darwin and UniLodge at Casuarina. The Off-campus Accommodation Officer can provide information and advice about off-campus accommodation options and your rights and responsibilities as a tenant. W: cdu.edu.au/sites/default/files/saes/docs/accommodation-options.pdf

Other IMPORTANT THINGS

I started working and realised the path I’d taken was a mistake, then my aunt suggested I try studying again. It’s a magical experience for me to be studying something I really want. CDU has given me a second chance at fulfilling my dreams.”

– MARIUS JARVIN SANTOS
Where do I find career advice?

The Careers & Employment team can assist you with career information and preparing for employment. CareerHub advertises job vacancies, has a 'Resume Builder' and enables you to practice for interviews using 'InterviewStream'. Contact the Careers Counsellor for a confidential appointment.

W: cdu.edu.au/careers

What if personal issues or events affect my studies?

Free and confidential counselling services are available to all students to work through issues impacting on their studies.

W: cdu.edu.au/equity-services/counselling

I’m having second thoughts about my course. Who can I talk to?

- Visit Student Central, speak to your lecturer, course coordinator or counsellor
- Get in touch with a graduate or senior student. Their experience may help you

If you’re still not sure:

- Lighten your load – a few less subjects may make it easier
- Apply for leave (this will give you time to think and protect your place)
- If you do plan to withdraw make sure you know the Census dates

Is childcare available?

CDU has on-campus childcare, however places are limited.

W: cdu.edu.au/university-operations/child-care
1 Living and studying away from home?
- Organise suitable accommodation as soon as possible and make sure you understand your lease
- Make local friends
- Attend all your classes
- Start assessments early and complete all assignments
- Stay in touch with your family
- Ask questions

2 Transferring from another university?
As a small regional university you’ll get to know your lecturers much more quickly than in other larger universities. Talk to them about what you have been studying so they can assist if you need to catch up in any areas, or are advanced in others.

3 An international student?
Welcome to one of Australia's most culturally diverse universities! The International Office can help you with any queries or issues you may have. They also run a dedicated international student orientation.
W: cdu.edu.au/international

4 An Indigenous student?
You may be living away from home and feeling isolated. The Office of Indigenous Academic Support (OIAS) helps Indigenous students adapt to the university environment and receive study support.
W: cdu.edu.au/acike/student-support/ias

5 An elite athlete?
The Elite Athlete Support Program provides personalised support for elite athletes studying at CDU.
W: cdu.edu.au/prospectivestudents/eliteathletes

6 An external or online student?
External study gives you accessibility and flexibility, but it presents particular challenges, especially around time management, motivation and IT. All of CDU’s support services are available to external students.
W: cdu.edu.au/current-students/external-student-support

7 Taking night classes?
There is on-campus security at all campuses, and at Casuarina and Alice Springs there is also a night-time escort service between buildings and the carpark.
T: 1800 646 501 (24-hour security)
W: cdu.edu.au/university-operations/facilities-management

Being a student and an elite athlete can be extremely challenging at times, but studying at CDU makes it a whole lot easier. I am studying a Bachelor of Exercise and Sports Science and will then do a Masters in Teaching to become a physical education teacher. I have studied through other universities but none of them compare to CDU’s understanding and support.
- TESS MADGEN
University life: THE ADVENTURE BEGINS

Student exchange and study abroad
Explore Asia, Europe or Scandinavia while you study at one of CDU’s partner universities.
CDU is also a partner in the NT Fulbright Scholarship Program, which sponsors academics and postgraduate scholars to study in the USA, and the New Colombo Plan, for study in Asia.
W: cdu.edu.au/international

Campus life
On-campus events such as film nights and regular music sessions at the Pirates football club bring students together.
Schools and courses also have their own clubs, which organise social events.

CDU Student Association
The association is run by the students for the students and is designed to keep students up to date on activities and provide links to other clubs and societies.
W: cdu.edu.au/cdusa

Sports groups
You’ll find everything from sepak bola, to sailing to Aussie Rules at CDU. It’s all about taking part and having fun.

Student Ambassador program
Students assist at university wide and corporate events and develop personal, professional and leadership skills.
W: cdu.edu.au/current-students/ambassador-program

Social media
Stay up to date with CDU’s Facebook and Twitter accounts.
Information AND CONTACTS

Academic Language and Learning
Success Program  08 8946 7459
cdu.edu.au/academic-language-learning/allsp

Careers and Employment  08 8946 6288
cdu.edu.au/equity-services/careers-employment

Disability Support  08 8946 6288
cdu.edu.au/equity-services/disability-services

Equity Services  08 8946 6288
cdu.edu.au/equity-services
Crisis Support 1300 93 33 93
(Out-of-hours telephone)

Fees and Payment  1800 061 963 (freecall)
cdu.edu.au/student-central/fees-payments

IT Support  08 8946 6600
cdu.edu.au/itms

Learnline  1800 061 963 (freecall)
learnline.cdu.edu.au/support/index.html

Office of Indigenous Academic Support  08 8946 6485
cdu.edu.au/indigenous-leadership/oias

Office of International Services
08 8946 7215
ccd.edu.au/international/ois-1
Global Mobility 08 8946 6048
cdu.edu.au/global-mobility

Safety and Security
Casuarina campus: 1800 646 501
or 08 8946 7777
Alice Springs campus  0428 816 741

Scholarships  08 8946 6442
cdu.edu.au/student-central/scholarships

Student Advocacy
08 8946 7705
cdu.edu.au/cdusa/whatwedo/advocacy

Student Central
1800 061 963 (freecall)
cdu.edu.au/student-central
W: cdu.edu.au