



Making the most of Trimesters

2017 / 2018





What is a trimester?

There are three trimesters per academic calendar year, each with a 12 week teaching period. The previous Academic Calendar was based on two compulsory semesters of study per year, with the option of completing Summer Semester during the end of year break. The two compulsory semesters included 13 weeks of teaching.

When did trimesters commence?

Trimesters commenced in 2017 with Trimester 1 commencing in February, Trimester 2 in July and Trimester 3 in October.

Why did Griffith change to a trimester system?

The new trimester model offers students increased study load flexibility, additional industry engagement opportunities and, for some programs, the opportunity to accelerate their degrees and graduate sooner.

Are all trimesters compulsory?

Students may not be required to study in all three trimesters. However, students are still required to undertake minimum study loads to ensure they meet Centrelink or Department of Immigration and Border Protection requirements. For domestic and international students, Trimester 1 and Trimester 2 are compulsory with Trimester 3 optional. Refer to the [programs and courses](#) website for specific details about your program.

How will the trimester system benefit me?

The new trimester model provides some students with the option to accelerate their study and complete their degree sooner. Depending on the program, trimesters also offer some students greater flexibility to balance work, study and lifestyle commitments. Some students may also have program structures which may allow for a lighter workload and enable them to spread their units of study across the 3 trimesters.

Will all programs be offered in Trimester 3?

No, not all programs will be offered in Trimester 3. Program offerings are still being developed and availability will depend on degree popularity and market demand. Please refer to the Griffith [Degree Finder](#) for program specific trimester study options.

Domestic students - how will trimesters affect my Centrelink payments?

Refer to the [Australian government website](#) for details about eligibility for Student Income Support.

To be classed as a full-time student you are required to enrol in a minimum number of credit points each standard study period. Currently the workload to be deemed full-time for each study period is 0.375EFTSL or above, representing 75% of the normal full-time workload of that study period. Refer to the information published on the [Programs and Courses](#) website for your particular degree.

Here are some guidelines for undertaking study in the trimester model and retaining eligibility for Student Income Support:

- If you study in Trimester 1 you must undertake a full-time study load in Trimester 1.
- Similarly if you study in Trimester 2 you must undertake a full-time study load in Trimester 2.
- As Trimester 3 is an optional study period continuing students moving from one year to the next will not be required to study during this trimester and can still be paid student income support as continuing student if they meet the continuing student guidelines. Continuing students normally are those moving from one program to the next or from one compulsory study period to the next compulsory study period within their current program.
- Students commencing in Trimester 3 must undertake a full-time study load in Trimester 3 to be paid from the onset of their program. When the first enrolment cycle has been completed, future enrolments in Trimester 3 will then be optional.

International students - how will trimesters affect my visa requirements?

To ensure you continue to meet your visa requirements, please see the below guidelines:

- If you commence in Trimester 1, Trimester 1 and 2 will be compulsory and you must undertake a full-time study load. Study in Trimester 3 will be optional.
- If you commence in Trimester 2, you must undertake a full-time study load in both Trimester 2 and Trimester 1 the following year.
- If you commence study in Trimester 3, you must undertake a full-time study load in Trimester 3 and also the following Trimester 1 and 2. When the first enrolment cycle has been completed, future enrolments in Trimester 3 will then be optional.

Can I study part-time across all trimesters?

Part-time study across all trimesters will be dependant on course availability and offerings. Part-time study across all trimesters will not be available to domestic students who require Centrelink support or international students who need to comply with student visa requirements.

Will trimesters affect the length of student vacation periods?

Yes. The mid-year break has been reduced from 3 weeks to 2 weeks. If you elect to study in Trimester 3, you will no longer have a long summer break. Refer to the [Academic Calendar](#) for a complete list of vacation dates in 2017/2018.

If semesters had 13 teaching weeks and trimesters only have 12, does this mean students will miss out on a week of tuition?

No. All programs from 2017 onwards will be redeveloped to ensure all course content fits into the new 12 week trimester structure.

How will trimesters affect my current or pending ‘Leave of Absence’?

The introduction of trimesters will not affect your current Leave Of Absence. If you were previously due to return to study in Semester 1, you will now return to study in Trimester 1. This also applies if you were previously due to return in Semester 2, you will now return in Trimester 2. Please refer to the [Academic Calendar](#) for the specific trimester dates. If you are wishing to apply for a Leave Of Absence in the future, you will be required to indicate which trimester you will be returning to study, in the online form.

Will the change to trimesters affect my graduation date?

Ceremony dates and times are usually confirmed 6 to 8 weeks prior to the ceremony, therefore ceremony information for 2018 and beyond is not currently available.

If you complete your program requirements outside the due date for registration for a graduation ceremony, you will be considered for the next conferral round. Conferral rounds allow the University to award degrees without holding a graduation ceremony. Your graduation documents (testamur, complimentary Official Academic Transcript and Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement (AHEGS)), will be sent to your mailing address as listed in [myGriffith](#).

If you graduate in a conferral round you will receive an invitation to attend the next graduation ceremony.

Find out more about graduation ceremonies and the steps to graduating at the Graduations [website](#).