& FAMILY & FRIENDS

at Griffith everyone belongs
Welcome to Griffith University

Starting university is a significant transition and as a family member or friend it can be challenging for you too. Griffith University recognises the importance of the support and encouragement you provide, and welcomes you as a vital part of the university community.

At Griffith, everyone belongs...
Griffith University is a diverse and exciting community. Our students come from a wide range of cultural and socio-economic backgrounds and are often:
• the first person in their family to attend university
• working significant hours in paid work as well as studying
• devoting time to family and carer responsibilities as well as studying and working
• adult learners resuming tertiary study after a break, or beginning for the first time
• students with disabilities.

With five physical campuses, and a growing digital campus, Griffith is home to 50,000 students from across Australia and more than 130 countries. South Bank, Nathan and Mount Gravatt campuses are situated on the land of the Yugarabul, Yuggera, Jagera and Turrbal peoples. Logan is situated on the land of the Yuggera, Turrbal, Yugarabul, Jagera and Yugambeh peoples. The Gold Coast campus is situated on the land of the Yugambeh/Kombumerri peoples.
What will be different for the new student?

Your student will have to adjust to a new lifestyle, people and learning environment when making the transition to university life. Students will notice significant changes in some of the following areas:

**Academic**

Students will notice changes in teaching and learning styles, in the pace of instruction, and in the expectations and assumptions about the level of self-directed work they need to complete at university.

University students are adult learners and therefore expected to be responsible for their own learning including:

- attendance and participation
- the ability to learn outside lectures and tutorials through their own reading, research and academic writing
- knowing when assignments are due
- the dates and locations of examinations.
Administrative
Students will need to take responsibility for their own administrative affairs. This will include:
• enrolment
• arranging their timetable
• navigating the online requirements of university studies.
The University will communicate directly with students about all administrative matters. All correspondence is addressed to the student and it is the responsibility of the student to check email and post regularly for communication updates.

Financial
University studies require a significant financial commitment. Students will need to budget for:
• tuition costs
• textbooks
• parking permits
• other course materials
• financial commitments outside university.
Adjustments may have to be made for these financial commitments, taking into account the reduced time for paid work.

Environmental
All students will face a period of orientation to a new physical environment. Universities can be like small cities with shops such as a Post Office, eating places and coffee shops. The campus size is generally much larger than a student will have experienced at school, with some class sizes catering for well over 100 students.

Personal
Students will face changes such as the need to:
• make new friends, and manage changes to existing friendships
• gain greater independence
• adapt to a new environment and campus culture
• navigate the role of being a uni student, often as the first person in the family or community to have done so.
There are many new found freedoms such as:
• less structured time
• exposure to a diverse community
• a new range of social activities
• new ways of thinking about things.
While some students may embrace the new social environment, other students may experience times of loneliness or isolation as they begin connecting with a new environment.

Time
Students will experience competing demands for their time. They will need to:
• strike a balance between study, paid work, socialising and family and community commitments
• find and organise the time to attend lectures and tutorials
• commute by public transport or find parking
• speak with lecturers/tutors at the times they are available
• attend classes and group meetings
• read, research, write assignments and think.
It may appear that your student has an excess of free time. Time involved with successful study is more than contact hours spent in lectures or groups and will include all their own private study time. As a guide, a course worth 10 credit points will require roughly 10 hours of work per week, approximately three of which will be hours spent in class. The remaining time will need to be devoted to reading, revision and assessment preparation.
Research shows that students will experience an easier transition to university and greater chance of success if they:

Make a positive start
Students who become familiar with the university environment are more likely to understand what’s expected of them and begin academic tasks better prepared. This helps students to develop an understanding of academic culture, such as how things are done at university, and what is valued and important to succeeding.

Encourage your student to:
• attend orientation and transition activities and find their way around before classes start, including where classes are held, and where parking, services and amenities are located
• find out what’s expected in the student role and how to develop core academic skills.

Make time for study
Students who regularly attend lectures and tutorials are more able to keep up with their work and have greater opportunities for asking questions and meeting new people. Students who dedicate time to regular study are likely to do well in their assessment tasks and successfully navigate the busy periods in the semester.

Encourage your student to:
• attend and participate in their classes
• develop a study routine and set up their study environment to support out of class learning.

‘Halfway through my second semester I realised it was easier to keep up rather than always having to catch up. It changed the way I approached studying.’ Ellen, second year Pharmacy student

Have a sense of purpose
Students who know why they are at uni are more likely to find their study meaningful and rewarding. Having career or personal goals and direction supports academic efforts. This helps with keeping students motivated and interested throughout their years at uni.

Encourage your student to:
• trust in their abilities, strengths and aspirations
• reflect on their interests and progress and investigate their career options and pathways.

Engage with the online environment
Students who know how to navigate their way around the Griffith website, engage with their online course activities and regularly read their student emails are more likely to find the information they need.

‘Orientation was really useful, especially meeting some lecturers and other students. Knowing where I was going and how to use the library really helped in those first weeks too.’ Mohammed, first year Engineering student

“It took me almost 18 months to work out what I was doing here and that since I disliked my degree I was probably not going to like working in that field. And my marks were pretty bad. I finally worked out I wanted to do something completely different and transferred. Now I’m interested in what I’m studying uni is much easier, and I’m doing pretty well.’ Marcus, first year Psychology student
Encourage your student to:
• become familiar with the university website
• use the range of free workshops, consultations and self-help resources provided to develop academic, library research and computing skills.

Take care of themselves
Students who are able to balance their academic and personal responsibilities and look after their health and wellbeing tend to manage the demands of university better and find it less stressful.

Encourage your student to:
• manage time well and look after themselves, especially when the initial enthusiasm wears off and as assessment looms
• stay positive and remind them that most students experience times of stress or uncertainty.

Make connections
Students who have friends on campus and know their teachers develop social and professional networks and are more likely to enjoy their university experience. They often find it easier to find support and help when needed.

Encourage your student to:
• make friends and get involved in life on campus by joining sporting, academic or cultural clubs and associations
• join a mentoring program, meet with academic staff during their consultation times, join a study group.

Know that help is available
Students who ask for help are more likely to do well in all aspects of university, and maintain wellbeing. They are also able to access opportunities to develop skills and gain support and information.

Encourage your student to:
• find out about the range of academic and personal support services available free to them on every campus
• ask questions and seek help from peers and academic and professional staff as soon as an issue or problem arises.

'I got to know some people quickly through orientation and mentoring, but I had to make an effort to catch up with them because we didn’t take all the same classes. It was a bit hard at first because I’m pretty shy with social things, but it did get easier once I knew a couple of people.’ Darren, first year Photography student

'I was pretty confident online with my own email and other stuff, but I still needed help to enrol and pick courses ... and realising everything came to me online was a change from high school.’ Lyndon, first year Education student

‘The hardest part about the first year of uni was managing freaking out about uni.’ Decia, second year Public Health student
Managing financially
Students increase their chances of success at university by being prepared financially and accessing the range of services available.

- Income support such as Austudy, Youth Allowance or ABSTUDY are available for eligible full-time domestic students. For more information contact Centrelink.
- Most students need to work part-time while studying. The Careers and Employment Service helps students find part-time and casual work and assists students to prepare for job search, interviews, and graduate employment.
- Scholarships are available from the University and external organisations for eligible students from disadvantaged backgrounds, or for academic merit, sports or discipline areas.
- The Welfare and Student Liaison Office supports students with a range of free services including assistance with Centrelink payments, interest free student loans provided by the University, budgeting, tenancy and other welfare issues.
- A free online Textbook Exchange Service is available for students to buy or sell second hand text books.

On campus support
Support services are provided free to students to encourage academic and personal success, and participation in life at Griffith.

Student Services offers a range of professional, confidential and free services for students:
- Welfare and Student Liaison Office, Counselling and Wellbeing, Student Diversity and Inclusion including the Disabilities Service, Health and Medical Services, and Chaplaincy.
- Counselling and Wellbeing provides face to face and online counselling, and wellbeing and mental health programs and training. Students can seek our help about any personal issue, including anxiety and depression, relationships, sexual assault, domestic violence, sexual harassment (recent or previous), study issues, grief, sexuality and gender, personal development and challenging life events.
- The Disabilities Service provides a range of support to future and current students with disabilities. Campus based Disabilities Service Officers provide direct support to students and offer specialised outreach and development activities. Students who require this assistance need to make early contact with a Disabilities Service Officer.
- Student Diversity and Inclusion provides a number of initiatives to encourage and support people from educationally and financially disadvantaged backgrounds to consider university study including programs that increase the participation and success of students from low socio-economic backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and students with disabilities.
- Health and Medical Services provide a range of medical and ancillary services for Griffith students and staff, including GP clinics at the Gold Coast and Nathan campuses, emergency and first aid.

“I was very shy of speaking up or asking questions. I found it so hard that I didn’t ask for any help for a while, and I really got behind. I started easier … just with asking another student and then I went to GUMURRII, and they introduced me to the Counsellor. It took a while but I feel okay to ask questions in class and talk to lecturers now.”
Jai, second year Nursing student
treatment, vaccinations, sexual health, and much more. For a full breakdown of services available, visit the Student Services website.

Welfare and Student Liaison provides financial and welfare support assistance.

**GUMURRRII Student Support Unit** is staffed by First Australians to provide cultural, academic and personal support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students undertaking undergraduate and post-graduate studies. This includes enrolment, orientation and transition support and engagement with the Griffith community, academic support via personal tutoring and help with applications for grants and scholarships.

**Learning Services** provide a range of free workshops, one to one consultations and self-help resources to help students succeed at university by developing academic, computing and library research skills.

**Student Administration** provides support for students throughout their academic career, from admission through to graduation. They provide a wide range of services to assist students with the administrative aspects of university including admissions, enrolment support, examinations, assessment, programs and courses.

**International Office** provides enrolment, orientation and transition assistance for international students and domestic students with opportunities to study overseas.

**Griffith English Learning Institute (GELI)** provides English language teaching and support to students at Griffith University. GELI provides nationally accredited and internationally recognised English language courses and programs to international and local students.

**Mentoring at Griffith** provides access to peer mentoring and leadership activity and programs across Griffith University and beyond, as well as sponsorship for eligible students to participate in leadership, community development and networking opportunities.

The **Student Representative Council (SRC)** operates on Brisbane campuses and the **Student Guild** operates on the Gold Coast campus. They promote and support the interests and welfare of students both within and outside the University by providing a range of on campus services, facilities, events and activities free to students.

**Clubs and Societies** are active groups formed by interested students. There is a range of educational, professional, political, cultural, sporting, religious and special interest clubs on campus. Sign on days are held at the start of each trimester.

**Griffith Ally Network** is a visible group of students and staff who assist lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender and intersex students (LGBTI) by providing support, offering guidance and information on LGBTI issues, creating safe campuses and promoting a LGBTI friendly culture.
Important Links

Academic skills
griffith.edu.au/library/study
Accommodation
griffith.edu.au/accommodation
Careers and Employment Service
griffith.edu.au/careers-employment/for-students
Childcare
griffith.edu.au/childcare
Clubs and societies
griffith.edu.au/clubs
Counselling and Wellbeing
griffith.edu.au/counselling
Disabilities Service
griffith.edu.au/student-services/diversity-and-inclusion/students-with-disabilities
Fees and charges
griffith.edu.au/fees-charges
Financial assistance & textbook exchange
griffith.edu.au/welfare
First in Family
firstinfamily.com.au
Griffith ALLY Network
griffith.edu.au/equity/lgbti-inclusion
GUMURRII Student Support Unit
griffith.edu.au/gumurrii-student-support-unit
International students
griffith.edu.au/international

Library
griffith.edu.au/library
Mentoring and Leadership activities
griffith.edu.au/mentoring
Scholarships
griffith.edu.au/scholarships
Security and Safety
griffith.edu.au/security
Sport
griffith.edu.au/sport
Income Support
centrelink.gov.au
Student Complaints
griffith.edu.au/students/student-complaints
Student Diversity and Inclusion
griffith.edu.au/student-services/diversity-and-inclusion
Student Services
griffith.edu.au/student-services
Study at Griffith
griffith.edu.au/study