CONSIDER AND CHOOSE TOP UNIVERSITY OPTIONS

☆ SEEK INFORMATION ONLINE

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

Students decide they want to apply for ACU.

Students seek information about ACU and courses on offer via the ACU website.

Students seek information about ACU and courses on offer via Facebook groups.

WHAT MINDSETS DO STUDENTS HAVE?

→ I want to study at ACU because my family recommended it.

→ I want to study at ACU because of its reputation for what I want to study.

→ I want to study at ACU because I didn't receive the marks for another university.

→ I want to study at ACU because it's a local university.

→ I want to specialise. PG

→ I was advised to consider PG study by an ACU lecturer. PG

→ I don't feel ready to enter the job market yet. PG

→ I want to re-train/change my career. MA

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Students are attracted to ACU's reputation for being a caring university.

✓ Students are attracted to ACU's reputation within particular industries, especially nursing and teaching.

✓ Students perceive the fees to be lower at ACU, which affects their decision to apply.

✓ To prospective students, ACU stands out particularly as having supportive and knowledgeable staff, being student centric with personalised interactions aligned with being a small university. ◆

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ All prospective student cohorts find researching and choosing a university and degree challenging. Comparing universities is complex, with many variables to consider, and researching can feel like hard work. ●

⊘ School leavers are facing great change, and can experience fear, excitement and anticipation. Year 12s want universities to be a voice of encouragement and to play an active role in their communications about bridging Year 12 and University. ●

⊘ There are many pressures students face around achieving particular ATAR results, and many use ATAR/OP calculators to predict and re-predict their results. Because of this, students seem to have a better understanding of their likely ATAR earlier than release date, and struggle to find clear pathway information for ACU. ●

⊘ The biggest barriers to consideration are not offering the desired course, location, religious affiliation and perceived poor reputation. Religion is a stronger barrier for prospective undergraduates. ◆

⊘ Many students base their decision on the course rather than the institution. Communicating points of difference is critical to remaining at the top of their list. ●

⊘ ACU is strongly associated with Teaching and Nursing, however this potentially narrow perception of the course portfolio could prevent students considering ACU for other areas. ◆

⊘ Students want earlier and longer placement opportunities. There is a perception that ACU's industry partnerships are not as strong as they once were, and also when compared with other universities. ◆

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"My mum studied nursing at ACU many years ago and I always heard good things."* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"My Dad told me ACU is best for nursing, so I came here."* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"I didn't get into the uni I originally wanted, I saw that ACU does physio so I applied."* **UG, Ballarat**

💬 *"I decided to come to ACU because I decided to retrain. My previous degree was 10 years ago."* **UG, Sydney**

WHAT MINDSETS DO STUDENTS HAVE?

→ When I experience a sense of overwhelm I react with a "laid back and avoidant" mindset. ●

→ When I experience a sense of overwhelm I react with a "head on/direct" mindset. ●

→ When I experience a sense of overwhelm I react with a "methodical and planned" mindset. ●

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Google is the default starting point to reach relevant content directly. ✳

✓ Students have a heavy reliance on the ACU website when seeking course information. ✳

✓ Given the intangible nature of a university degree, prospective students respond well to any element that helps bring them closer and connect with a University course. ●

✓ Some students use the printed course guide. For the non-school leaver audience this gave a feeling of having something physical to represent the course that they were buying. ✳

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ Course information on the website does not have sufficient detail to meet the needs of prospective students. ✳

⊘ Prospective students get easily lost in the detail on a website and can find it hard to re-navigate to important information. Language and terminology is not always user-friendly. ●

⊘ Too many choices can be paralysing for students. For smaller universities like ACU, too many courses on offer may call into question ACU's ability support so many programs well. ●

⊘ Students sometimes find out-of-date content, which generates negative perceptions of ACU at this critical time in the decision making process. ✳

⊘ A University degree is intangible — you can't see it, touch it, or test-drive it before investing in it. This heightens the risk surrounding the choice. This overall intangibility is one of the key reasons course guides are still seen as a critical touch point. ●

⊘ Non-School Leavers especially can experience uncertainty and a lack of confidence. They question their ability to not only fit study in but undertake it successfully. "Can I even do this?" ●

⊘ International students that don't have contacts in Australia find it difficult to imagine what their life might look like. INT

⊘ Student's perceive ACU's voice to be unclear or ambiguous. There can be a disconnect between the voice presented across touch points like school visits, the course guide and the current website. ●

⊘ Current school leavers are less able to 'try out' degrees due to rising cost of Higher Education and feel much more pressure on making the 'sensible' choice. Students want an increased emphasis on degrees with practical experience and clear career outcomes. ●

⊘ For those who don't have the agency to reach out, particularly for NSL and PG cohorts the website can be the only touch point with the University. ●

⊘ School leavers are savvy but can become overwhelmed with information quickly. When seeking solutions, they tend to call for digital tools to help solve e.g. course builders, pathway connectors. ●

⊘ NSLs can feel vulnerable returning to study. They are conscious that they are returning to study amongst school leavers and can feel conspicuous – evidence that they will be part of a like minded and aged cohort is critical. ●

⊘ Investment in a PG education is very high – from a money point of view but also in terms of time away from work and family. Potential PG students don't have the same support network as SLs, so they need ACU to provide them with confidence that they are making the right choice. ●

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"Every first year student has the question, what is uni going to be like? It took me going through the experience to figure it out."* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"I was worried that online wouldn't be enough — but it does make you competent. I wish I knew that upfront, I would be more relaxed."* **PG, Melbourne**

💬 *"I had limited info before applying so I was afraid. I was lucky I had a friend here prior to coming so I could feel safe coming to Australia"* **UG International, Brisbane**

💬 *"I stopped uni for seven years, so I almost forgot everything. I was nervous"* **PG, International, Melbourne**

💬 *"You're making a commitment, signing up and being aware that you are spending the money"* **PG, Mature Age, Melbourne**

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

All students want to come to ACU because of its great reputation — it's one of their top choices.

Students understand the differentiating points for ACU — the culture and the practical nature of courses.

Students understand what financial aid is available to them.

Students find the ACU website simple to navigate — the content is relevant and timely. Website comms provide a sense of the warm culture at ACU.

Students are able to find their way into course guides easily, and the course guides are detailed. The guides explain what practical experience students can expect, and provide an understanding of potential career outcomes.

PG and NSL students find reassurance that they will find a like-minded cohort at ACU.

Students find a desired course at ACU.

☆ ATTEND OPEN DAY

HEAR

INTERACT

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

- Students attend events on campus (Open Day, University Experience Day, Campus Visit). ❋

- Students seek advice from family members, especially if their family member is in a career they also want to pursue.
- Students seek advice from peers (Influencers, careers advisors). ❋
- International students receive information and recommendations about ACU from their agents.
- International students rely on the experiences of friends and family already living in Australia to decide whether they are interested in moving here.
- PG students that are currently studying a UG course at ACU seek advice about continuing study from their lecturers.

- Students interact with ACU at off-campus events. ❋
- Some students attend Careers Expos.
- Students attend the 'know your options' event.
- Students interact with staff, often course coordinators, on the phone or face to face.

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Open Day is highly influential and a positive experience. ❋

✓ University Experience Days were also mentioned as a significant factor in cementing the decision to apply to ACU. ❋

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ Visiting campus had the power to change perceptions. Experiencing the intimacy of campus and the friendliness of our staff made a big impact. Not all students heard about the Experience Days, and would have liked the opportunity to attend. ❋

⊘ Students need to get a sense of what uni is like, before they arrive. Online students need reassurance about how their study will feel. Students need more opportunities outside open days to meet this need.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"Open day helped me to make the decision to go to ACU instead of Federation Uni — the small campus and the vibe"* **UG , Ballarat**

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ When deciding where to apply, students reach out to influencers such as parents, relatives and friends. ❋

✓ Students also are aware they can access support from Careers Advisors, but only accessed this when they felt they needed it. ❋

✓ Students appreciate connecting with current ACU students/alumni to get advice.

✓ Current UG students appreciate getting advice from their lecturers about continuing study — it makes them feel a sense of belonging.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ Negative comments made by influencers stick. Experiencing something positive about ACU themselves can change a student's perception. ❋

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"My friends talked highly about the uni experience and the different range of people at ACU compared to mainstream unis. "* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"I went to an education agent because I didn't want to apply alone. She was Sri Lankan too, so we had the same sense."* **PG, International, Melbourne**

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Some students are visited at their high school by ACU. This is particularly impactful when visited by a student ambassador. ❋

✓ Positive interactions with ACU staff at this stage are crucial for mature age students and often are the key decision point about going to ACU.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ Students want university communications to keep them focused on the end goal, connect them to what University life will be like, raise excitement levels, and manage expectations around the transition into uni. ●

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"I called ASK ACU and they said to contact the course coordinator, I was happy with the one on one chat, it was refreshing, you felt privileged to be here, unlike other unis. That was a tipping point, I enrolled that afternoon."* **UG, Mature Age, Melbourne**

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

- Students get a sense of the culture and atmosphere on their ACU campus without attending an open day.
- Students attend open day and enjoy the experience as it helps them imagine their future. 👍
- Students only hear positive reviews about ACU from family, peers, and advisors.

- Students are aware of opportunities to attend ACU events prior to application.
- Students (especially NSL and PG) interact with staff to help them make their decision, and find the staff helpful and honest. 👍
- Students find the off-campus events helpful and informative. 👍

CAP

SCHOOL LEAVER: APPLY

☆ NON-SCHOOL LEAVER: APPLY

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

CAP
Students apply for early entry via CAP.

SCHOOL LEAVER: APPLY
- Students enquire about application with AskACU. ✳
- Students apply for courses via TACs. ✳
- Students access special pathway programs.
- International students get their agent to manage their application.

NON-SCHOOL LEAVER: APPLY
- Students apply to UG courses through TACs.
- Students apply to ACU through direct admissions. They submit evidence of higher education qualification and write a statement where applicable.
- Students go through the direct route from UG at ACU to PG study at ACU. They write a statement where applicable.
- International students get their agent to manage their application.
- Students pass any required tests e.g. SATs, IELTS, LANTITE etc.
- Students access special pathway programs e.g. Clemente etc.

CAP

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?
- ✓ Students who apply via the Community Achievers Program are highly positive about this experience. It relieves stress and creates an early sense of belonging to the university. ✳
- ✓ Students value CAP as an opportunity for an early offer, but speed is critical. We are competing with others in this space. ✳
- ✓ CAP makes students feel like they are ahead of the game going into uni.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?
- ⊘ Some students miss out on CAP because they're not aware of this opportunity.
- ⊘ Students find the CAP application process long, although they persevere as they know it will be worthwhile. ✳

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?
- 💬 *"CAP was an easy process but long."* **UG, Melbourne**

SCHOOL LEAVER: APPLY

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?
- ✓ Students find applying through the TAC system quick and straightforward.
- ✓ School leavers have a support system around them when applying (parents, teachers).
- ✓ Students find AskACU helpful in providing information and makes an effort to find what is needed. ✳

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?
- ⊘ Applying via a TAC causes confusion where course codes are hard to find/understand. ✳
- ⊘ Students who receive generic or passed-on responses are deeply impacted by this experience. ✳
- ⊘ For some students, understanding scholarship opportunities can be the main decision making factor when choosing to go into higher education. Scholarship information is often unclear or unavailable.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?
- 💬 *"Applying through QTAC was very easy and straightforward."* **UG, Brisbane**
- 💬 *"The application process was easy. I was pretty excited."* **UG, Melbourne**

NON-SCHOOL LEAVER: APPLY

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?
- ✓ Once NSLs know which entry pathway to take, they find the admissions process straightforward.
- ✓ Applying to university is easier for students who have attended university not too long ago.
- ✓ NSLs appreciate personal support during application — they often contact AskACU or course coordinators directly to get advice and reassurance.
- ✓ UG ACU students going into PG study appreciate that ACU has all their previous study documentation which simplifies the application process.
- ✓ Students appreciate the opportunity to take the ACU English test instead of IELTS, as it's cheaper. Students refer to it as 'inclusive'.
- ✓ Mature age students are grateful for the opportunity to enter study.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?
- ⊘ Non-school leavers are often unclear about which application process to follow, as there are many pathways.
- ⊘ Non-school leavers often feel disadvantaged, because they don't have the same support network as school leavers.
- ⊘ Some NSLs are unclear on what documentation they need to have ready to apply to ACU.
- ⊘ UG ACU students going into PG study find it inconvenient that they have to fill in basic personal information during application — they expect that sort of information to be seamlessly transferred.
- ⊘ The application process takes a long time, which is difficult for people who work full time before they start their studies.
- ⊘ For some students, understanding scholarship opportunities can be the main decision making factor when choosing to go into higher education. Scholarship information is often unclear or unavailable.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?
- 💬 *"I wasn't sure if applying through VTAC was an option for a non-school leaver."* **UG, Melbourne**
- 💬 *"There was a process where you could go straight to masters with evidence you completed a course and by writing a 1500 word application. I got rejected so I contacted them and they asked for the same thing and it kept being rejected. It just needed a document showing I graduated, I didn't know that."* **PG, Mature Age, Melbourne**
- 💬 *"I went to the QTAC application, it was really confusing, there was no info for mature age students."* **UG, Mature Age, Brisbane**
- 💬 *"I chose ACU because for other unis you have to sit a test, at ACU you can write an essay"* **PG, International, Melbourne**
- 💬 *"I applied on the website and the process was pretty streamlined."* **PG, Brisbane**
- 💬 *"I felt that the application system was pretty guided, it told me what I needed to do."* **UG, Melbourne**

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

CAP
All students are aware of the opportunity to apply through CAP and understand eligibility.

SCHOOL LEAVER: APPLY
- Students find applying via TAC straightforward. 👍
- Students find course codes easy to understand.
- All students fell confident about their course choice.

NON-SCHOOL LEAVER: APPLY
- Non-school leavers understand their options when applying.
- Non-school leavers know which pathway to choose to apply to university.

WAIT

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

- Students wait to receive an offer. ✴
- Students contact AskACU for assistance. ✴
- Students apply and receive offers from other universities whilst waiting to hear from ACU.

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Students applying via a TAC are generally aware of what to expect. They understand offer round dates and know how long the wait period will be. ✴

✓ AskACU are reported as very helpful by students who contact them at the offer/accept stage. ✴

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ Students become anxious while waiting for an offer. There is a risk of losing affinity with ACU during this wait period. ✴

⊘ Students find the 'silence' during this period unsettling.

⊘ For school leavers this is heightened by the stress of the exam period and the pressure they feel to achieve a high ATAR. ✴

⊘ For non-school leavers this is a time they can lose confidence; they don't always know what should be happening or what they should be doing. They show a desire to start 'getting organised' even before they have their offer. ✴

⊘ Applicants to CAP report feeling less anxiety during this period as they know they may have a chance of receiving a lower offer. The wait period is a period of high anxiety.

⊘ Some students reported not receiving an ACU course offer until the 2nd or 3rd round, despite having the CAP offer. This caused them confusion and stress. ✴

⊘ Students often wait for the offer so long that they decide to go with another University. Those who decide to wait until they hear from ACU find this a very stressful period.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"The personal treatment wasn't very good. Waiting for the offer took so long, I missed out on other offers waiting for ACU."* **PG, International, Sydney**

💬 *"I enrolled at Federation uni cause I didn't know the status at ACU. Once I got the offer from ACU, I swapped."* **UG, Ballarat**

💬 *"Then [after application] it went into absolute silence and then we were supposed to find out by a certain date and we didn't hear anything."* **PG, Melbourne**

☆ RECEIVE (CAP)

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

- Students receive CAP offer. ✴

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Students who receive a CAP offer are unanimously positive about this. They talk about the relief of having an early offer. This is a significant moment for them and they perceive this as 'taking the pressure off.'

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ The conditional nature of the CAP offer is difficult for some. ✴

⊘ Some reported CAP offers came later than they were expecting. This devalued the CAP opportunity and the perception of ACU. ✴

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"I received the offer early because of the entry scheme, it was easy to accept the offer."* **UG, Canberra**

💬 *"I came in through the early achievers program. It was good to find out early."* **UG, Canberra**

☆ RECEIVE (OTHER)

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

- TAC offers are clinical, although students expect this. These are received before the ACU offer; via SMS, email or by checking the TACs online portal.
- Students receive the ACU course offer. ✴
- Students receive conditional offer.

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Significant relief is felt when the offer is received.

✓ Students appreciate an SMS at this moment. Many view the offer email on their mobile device. Some students talked of receiving the offer via the UAC app.

✓ When an offer comes earlier than expected, this is highly impactful.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ ACU's offer email and SMS come after the TAC offer, sometimes several days afterwards. Some students find this strange.

⊘ ACU's offer email seems to celebrate ACU rather than the achievement of the applicant. This jars with the recipient, who by this point don't feel they need to know more about ACU.

⊘ When students are given a conditional offer, some don't understand the nature of it, which causes stress.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"I was stressing heaps but was so happy to get the ACU email."* **UG, Melbourne**

☆ ACCEPT

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

- Students accept offer. ✴
- Students complete their offer condition and accept offer.

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ The acceptance process is considered quick and easy. ✴

✓ Some students change preferences at this stage. How they are feeling about ACU and our competitors makes a big impact on these decisions. ✴

✓ Some love the proactive calling by AskACU, and this had a big impact on their experience. ✴

✓ Students can change preferences at this stage, but the majority we spoke to were already decided on ACU. ✴

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ Some students express surprise at how quickly they are required to accept the offer. ✴

⊘ Students don't like answering calls from unknown numbers. ✴

⊘ The wait period after an offer is accepted causes anxiety. Students don't really know what to expect, or if there is anything else they could be doing. There is an eagerness to 'get started' with organising and preparing for what comes next. ✴

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"I followed the link to accept — easy."* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"It had been a long time between accepting my offer and orientation so it would have been nice to get something in between"* **UG, Brisbane**

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

- Students receive updates on progress from ACU when waiting for their offers.
- The CAP offer comes when expected, or even earlier.
- Students understand the conditional nature of the CAP offer.
- The offer comes when expected, or even earlier.
- The letter of offer feels personal, and celebrates the achievement of the student.
- Students understand the conditional nature of their offer.
- Students accept their offer quickly and easily.
- Students feel reassured that they have secured a place at ACU and are clear on next steps. 👍

ACCEPT & DEFER

LAPSED OFFER/DECLINE

APPLYING FOR SCHOLARSHIP

APPLY FOR VISA

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

Students accept their offer and defer their start date.

Students decline their offer, or allow their offer to lapse.

Some students choose not to study altogether, others accept offers at other instituations.

Students find out which scholarships are available to them. Scholarships are most likely found via word of mouth or an individual search. 🔍

Students apply for scholarships. 🔍

Students receive/don't receive their scholarship.

International students apply for a student visa.

ACCEPT & DEFER

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?
- ✓ Some students heard from ACU during their deferral period which was received positively.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?
- ⊘ Students who defer the offer are not always clear on what happens next, and when they can return. ✳

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?
- 💬 *"I went online, accepted the offer, and deferred it for a year. It was an easy process."* **UG, Sydney**

LAPSED OFFER/DECLINE

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?
- ⊘ Both SLs and NSLs opt away from ACU because they received a higher preference offer and ACU was their back up. Others go elsewhere because their chosen uni is either closer to home or had a better reputation for the course they hope to study. ◆
- ⊘ PGs also opt for another university because ACU was their back up, however some also have a preference for their Alma Mater or felt they received their ACU offer too late. Some PG students also opt away from ACU due to lack of flexible study options and lack of commonwealth supported places. ◆
- ⊘ PG applicants were more likely to cite administration issues as a reason not to enrol at ACU. Detractors mention limited support/ assistance from staff, disorganisation and limited or unclear communication, and lack of culture. ◆
- ⊘ Campus Life has emerged once more as a concern amongst prospective (and current) students with ACU not perceived as having a fun or lively campus experience. This has emerged in previous studies as being a key weakness of ACU. ◆
- ⊘ ACU's performance has decreased in key areas like career progression, connections to industry, academic skills and offering highly regarded degrees. This drop in performance may hinder future growth. ◆
- ⊘ Prospective undergraduates don't have a strong sense of who ACU is. ◆

APPLYING FOR SCHOLARSHIP

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?
- ✓ Early offers via the CAP program mean students are able to focus on applying for scholarships.
- ✓ Receiving a scholarship is a big relief.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?
- ⊘ Students find it difficult to understand which scholarships they are eligible for.
- ⊘ Students feel scholarships are not well advertised.
- ⊘ Students sometimes receive their letter of offer too late, and then cannot apply for scholarships.
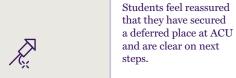
WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?
- 💬 *"I got a scholarship but I found it myself. It's not well advertised."* **UG, Brisbane**
- 💬 *"There were not many scholarships I was able to apply for."* **PG, Melbourne**
- 💬 *"I don't see any scholarship opportunities. There is a lack of info."* **PG, International, Brisbane**

APPLY FOR VISA

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?
- ⊘ International students often expect that AskACU can help them with visa enquiries. They feel that ACU does not provide sufficient advice and support with visas.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?
- 💬 *"AskACU could not help with my visa. If I had a magic wand I would get the international support office to help with visas."* **PG, International, Strathfield**

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

Students feel reassured that they have secured a deferred place at ACU and are clear on next steps.

Few students decide not to accept their ACU offer, as it was one of their top choices.

Those who decide to go somewhere else still perceive ACU as a good university.

Students are aware of scholarship opportunities and understand eligibility criteria.

Students receive all necessary documentation from ACU in a timely way, ensuring that they are able to apply for a scholarship.

International students receive advice on visa applications from AskACU.

FOLLOW THE ENROLMENT PROCESS IN THE PORTAL

CHOOSE HOW TO PAY

☆ OFFICIALLY JOIN ACU

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

Students follow the step-by-step enrolment process in the student portal. ✳

Students find information about timetabling during enrolment, however for many timetabling is not available at this time. ✳

Students access Student Connect to choose how they want to pay their fees.

Students select how they want to pay their fees. ✳

Students create their student ID card. ✳

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Students find following the link in the offer letter easy and straightforward. ✳

✓ Students like that this process is broken into step-by-step chunks. ✳

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ There is confusion about the difference between enrolment and timetable allocation. Students often see this as one large chunk, and use the terms 'enrol' and 'timetabling' interchangeably. Students even often define enrolment as 'starting university.' Students who reach this step in the enrolment and orientation, when timetabling isn't yet open, get confused about how and when to return to this activity. ✳

⊘ International students can only enrol after they physically present their documents on campus, which means they get access to enrolment later than everyone else. This creates confusion — international students are often unsure when this system opens for them.

⊘ Students report usability issues where they are taken back to earlier steps. Some keep repeatedly submitting 'just to be sure'. ✳

⊘ There is a consistent lack of reassurance that things have been completed successfully, leading students to repeat steps and contact AskACU for confidence they're on track. ✳

⊘ Students find the enrolment experience long and overwhelming. They expect it to be quicker and find simple things are overcomplicated and get frustrated when things don't make sense. ✳

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"Enrolment to me is my application, getting an offer, and accepting it."* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"Enrolment is getting into the uni, like getting the timetable."* **PG, International, Sydney**

💬 *"I felt like I was filling out forms forever."* **UG, Melbourne** ✳

💬 *"I did all my enrolments online, it was straightforward."* **PG, Melbourne**

💬 *"When they started enrolment they had links and they were fine."* **PG, Strathfield**

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Students find it easy to choose if they intend to pay up front or wish to defer the cost of their course using the online form. ✳

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ Not all students go into this step well informed of their options. At the time of making these choices, students are unclear about what terms like SSAF and HECS actually mean. ✳

⊘ Some students report that they only know what they have chosen and what this means when they receive the first invoice; and even this is confusing. ✳

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"I found finance straightforward. Something so complex is well explained."* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"I find the HECS easy to use, I just need more clarity surrounding fee incursions for late payments."* **UG, Strathfield**

💬 *"Process of paying fees is very easy."* **UG, Brisbane**

💬 *"The HECS thing is easy but I wish I could see how I'm going each year."* **UG, Melbourne**

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ This moment signifies to students that they now are official ACU students. ✳

✓ The process of loading and collecting a photo is considered by most to be easy, but sometimes inconvenient. ✳

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ Students report technical issues with printing ID cards.

⊘ Not all students were ready to upload a photo or wanted to take one at this moment. ✳

⊘ Students wanted the option to return and do this later. ✳

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"I picked up my card really easily."* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"I was confused with the student ID card as I didn't know if I had to take a photo before or do it at the uni."* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"There's always a lot of confusion about ID cards — the printer to print them doesn't work ever, but then Ask ACU doesn't have access to do it the other way. It took ages."* **UG, Mature Age, Brisbane**

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

Students quickly and easily follow the link in the offer letter to access enrolment. 👍

Enrolment is open at the same time as timetabling.

The enrolment platform is intuitive — students can see how much progress they've made and it's clear when steps are complete.

Students find choosing how they want to pay for their fees straightforward. 👍

Students understand how they can check their fee progress in the future.

Students seamlessly create their ID card.

EXPLORE UNITS

☆ SELECT UNITS

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

Students use the course enrolment guide to explore units.

Students find out which units to enrol in.

Students contact AskACU for help.

Students meet with their course coordinator to find out what units to enrol in.

Students find and select units in Student Connect to add them to their enrolment.

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Students value the opportunity to learn from peers, especially those ahead in their journey. ✳

✓ Some students book course advice meetings. They consider this helpful, although most don't know if they can do this before they start. ✳

✓ Students appreciate getting help from staff with enrolment — most commonly they contact AskACU or their course coordinators.

✓ Some students love the proactive calling by AskACU to assist with enrolment. ✳

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ Students do not realise they have to enrol in the full year. ✳

⊘ Course enrolment guides are seen as a helpful, but insufficient resource. Students expect the kind of information that they can find in unit outlines to be available at this stage. This information is so important to them that they sometimes enrol in units they intend to take later just to be able to see the outline (and then un-enrol).

⊘ Because the system is so open, students can see units that they are not eligible for/units that are available only in other locations. This sometimes results in disappointment.

⊘ Students often don't understand the university language used in enrolment — majors, minors, electives, pre-requisites etc.

⊘ Students often expect to understand what placement entails at this stage, as they want to understand how it will affect their schedules.

⊘ Wait times to reach AskACU by phone are not good during busy periods. ✳

⊘ International students often struggle to understand the enrolment system.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"I'm paying for this, there should be more guidance on what to do, when. I spent hours trying to find what units I need to take."* **UG, Melbourne** ✳

💬 *"Unit outline would have been helpful upon enrolment."* **PG, international, Strathfield**

💬 *"The biggest frustration is not seeing the subject outline before I enrol in it. As an online student it's nice to know what the outline is so I can gauge the workload, when assignments are due. For some curriculum subjects I'm doing, I enrolled last year so that I know what is involved, just to give myself an idea and help me get up to speed."* **UG, Brisbane**

💬 *"I'd like a blurb about the subject. You can google it, but I thought I was writing music, but it was actually writing *about* music. The film history subject is completely different from the title — it's writing about history, not the films."* **UG, mature age, Brisbane**

💬 *"I didn't know where to look for general electives, so I just looked through every course."* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"I've just enrolled in my next semester. I used Ask ACU cause I couldn't enrol in 2 units. I had problems, they told me these units are not available for me."* **UG, international, Sydney**

💬 *"The only concern that I have is that at some point I have to do a placement. How it will impact my course is worrying."* **UG, mature age, Melbourne**

WHAT MINDSETS DO STUDENTS HAVE?

→ When enrolling once timetabling is open — I enrol based on the timing of classes.

→ I select units with clear career outcomes in mind.

→ I select units I'm interested in.

→ I select units based on whether they're online or face to face.

→ I select units based on assignment type.

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ In course with little to no choice, enrolment is straightforward, and prerequisites are easier to understand. This is more common for Postgraduate students, as their courses tend to be more structured.

✓ Some PG and mature age students who have gone to university before find enrolment easier than students who do it for the first time. This is because they are familiar with the process and they often have clearer goals in terms of what they want to study. This is as long as they graduated not too long ago — some mature age students find this process difficult because it's different to how they did it when they went to university.

✓ Once students know which units to select, the system itself is fairly easy.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ Students struggle to make informed decisions because the information they're looking for is often not available at this stage: especially the timing of classes.

⊘ In courses with a lot of choice, students find enrolment overwhelming

⊘ Where there is no choice it seems stupid to students that they have to search and select units. They expect this to be done for them. ✳

⊘ It's easy to make mistakes in enrolment because units that students shouldn't be doing are shown (e.g. units in other campuses or units they shouldn't be doing that given year)

⊘ Because the system is so open, students find it hard to 'filter' classes and often select units they are not eligible for.

⊘ Many students don't follow the typical degree route (e.g. they study part-time) and they end up creating personalised course maps with their course coordinators. While they appreciate the help, this add an additional step and makes their course complicated to follow.

⊘ When enrolment mistakes occur, staff often manually tries to fix the problem, or they even tell students to ignore the system

⊘ Prerequisites have multiple layers, and it's hard to see what unit is a prerequisite vs. which units require prerequisites, resulting in confusion.

⊘ Students found unit names and codes between the CEG and the system were different, meaning the search didn't return what they needed. ✳

⊘ Students often wish they had more opportunities to take units during summer and winter breaks to condense their course

⊘ Students lack confidence that they've done this step correctly. Some check and recheck several times. ✳

⊘ Students often call AskACU just to check they have enrolled correctly and done everything they need to do. There is a lack of reassurance during the enrolment steps which drives people to AskACU. ✳

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"In Bachelor of Arts, the world is your oyster, so narrowing down is what you need help with."* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"It was difficult to know which major to take."* **UG, Ballarat**

💬 *"Enrolment is confusing, there is not enough info for nursing."* **UG, Brisbane**

💬 *"I got all the way through the enrolment and realised I was applying for a position in Sydney. Why is this even showing for me."* **PG, Melbourne**

💬 *"When I applied for UNCC100 it said 'uncredited' but I emailed <name of staff> and he said it's all fine."* **UG, Sydney**

💬 *"Enrolment was smooth in comparison to USYD."* **UG, Mature Age, Strathfield**

💬 *"Now that I met with course advisors they have given me a personalised course map. I emailed them and met with them to get the map. It gets complicated when you're out of sequence."* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"My course coordinator personalised my course map. It was important to fit it around work experience."* **PG, Mature Age, Melbourne**

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

Students confirm available credit prior to choosing additional units.

Students have access to unit outlines when exploring units which makes them feel informed.

Unit names and codes are consistent, and students understand the enrolment language.

Students understand placement requirements and get started with preparations e.g. vaccinations if they wish.

Students can only see units that they are eligible for in their course and location, and they are automatically enrolled for compulsory units.

Students understand pathways available to them, and know how their unit choices may affect their course later.

Students understand how the units they choose may affect their career options later.

The enrolment system is intuitive to use.

Students are confident that they have completed all the required steps.

APPLY FOR CREDIT

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

Students apply for credit or RPL. ✴

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ To those who think they may be eligible for credit or RPL, getting confirmation of this is highly important to the point of influencing conversion. ✴

✓ A handful of students find the credit application process straightforward, as long as both their previous university and ACU are clear on requirements and provide timely responses to any enquiries.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ Students expect to be able to confirm available credit prior to enrolment. They need this in order to know which units they should select. ✴

⊘ Many students find the credit enquiry and application process long and frustrating. ✴

⊘ Those who reach out for help with credit and RPL find it difficult to get the information they need from AskACU and the School. ✴

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"Website was hard to navigate to find info regarding credit."* **UG, Melbourne** ✴

💬 *"Applying for credit was so hard I didn't even bother. There was so much criteria."* **UG, International, Brisbane**

💬 *"I found the [credit application] process took a long time, I wouldn't recommend it to students."* **UG, Sydney**

💬 *"It was easy to apply for credit. It was an easy process, I emailed and saw my course coordinator and then got it."* **PG, International, Sydney**

TRACK COURSE PROGRESS & RE-ENROL

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

Students track their progress using their own system.

Students track progress using their course maps.

Students track progress using their personalised course maps.

Students re-enrol for the next year of study.

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Re-enroling gets easier every time, as students get familiar with the system and they know how to 'hack it', and they know where to look for help.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ Course changes happen often and they are not immediately reflected in the CEGs and course maps, making it difficult to keep track.

⊘ Students have low awareness of the course progression tab in Student Connect.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"I rang ASK ACU to show me how to enrol and then I remembered it later."* **PG, Mature Age, Melbourne**

💬 *"Re-enrolment was easy. It was easier with each year."* **UG, Canberra**

💬 *"It's easier now that I know where to look for things I need to know."* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"In the first semester I didn't know what I should do. In the second semester I launched into the system and I knew how to enrol."* **PG, International, Strathfield**

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

Students find re-enrolment easy and intuitive based on prior experience. 👍

WAIT FOR SYSTEM TO OPEN

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

- Students search for the time and date the system will open for them.
- Students wait for the timetable system to open.

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

- ✓ Students reach out to peers who have experience with the system. They see this as a way to gain an advantage. ✳
- ✓ Students plan for timetabling in advance. Some seek confirmation about when it opens, just to be sure. ✳

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

- ⊘ Not all students are clear when the system opens for them, and find the dates difficult to find. This causes high stress. Some students miss the information about timetabling completely, only to find out later that they missed the chance to choose timetable preferences.
- ⊘ There is confusion about the difference between enrolment and timetable allocation. Students often see this as one large chunk, and use terms like enrol, timetabling, units and classes interchangeably. Students who reach this step in the enrolment and orientation, when timetabling isn't yet open, get confused about how and when to return to this activity.
- ⊘ There is no flexibility in when students can timetable. This is a particular problem for students who can't change their work or sporting commitments. In these examples it was common for students to hand over their ID and login to a family member or friend. ✳

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

- 💬 *"How does it work? Have I missed it? The communications left too much time for stressing."* **UG, Ballarat**
- 💬 *"I didn't even know about the student portal and completely missed the chance to choose my timetable."* **UG, International, Brisbane**
- 💬 *"I didn't know when the website opened. I missed the window and had to take what was available."* **UG, Melbourne**
- 💬 *"Because I was late to the party I got all my classes out of order. Everyone knows you do lectures first, then tutorials then prac. I did that in later years."* **UG, Melbourne**

EXPLORE THE SYSTEM

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

- Students seek to find the timetable system. (From 2020 onwards, students receive a link via email).
- There are many ways students access the timetabling system. No one way seems to work for all students.

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

- ✓ Students appreciate reminders about timetabling. This is such an important moment that missing it is not an option. ✳

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

- ⊘ Students find it hard to locate the link to timetabling in the Student Portal. They reported clicking back multiple times through the enrolment and orientation flow.
- ⊘ Students find various ways into the system. Multiple user journeys were described. They need the system to be easy to find due to the urgency of getting in when it opens. ✳

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

- 💬 *"Once I got the email about what I had to use and when, I was fine."* **UG, Ballarat**

PRACTICE

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

- Students create a draft timetable.

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

- ✓ The draft timetable is seen as a valuable way to get a head start by practicing in the system and becoming familiar with what is required. ✳
- ✓ Students who extensively plan draft timetables feel better prepared and are able to more quickly select different options when the system opens. ✳
- ✓ Students felt like there is adequate support for timetabling. Many students reported reaching out to staff to navigate problems.
- ✓ Prior experience with any timetabling system creates a smoother experience. PG and returning students feel better prepared as they have had a chance to 'learn the system'.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

- ⊘ Students like the opportunity to draft a timetable, but they would like to be able to reuse it and make it live when the system opens. ✳
- ⊘ Students who spend time creating multiple drafts report this helps them make quicker selections when their first choice isn't available, but otherwise the activity isn't seen as an advantage from a selection perspective. ✳

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

- 💬 *"Once I drafted the timetable, allocating classes wasn't difficult — only a matter of getting a class before it filled up."* **UG, Sydney**
- 💬 *"Despite pre-planning the timetable, when logging in at 9am I never got my first preference as everything was already full."* **UG, Sydney**

LOG IN

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

- Students are ready before the system opens, and constantly refresh their browser until they can access it.
- Students log in and access the system.
- Students report having multiple devices open to up their chances.
- Students expect getting the best classes to be competitive.

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

- ✓ A minority of students report that they have no issues in logging in and accessing the system. ✳
- ✓ Students with EIPs get early access to the timetabling system, which they greatly appreciate.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

- ⊘ This is one of most crucial moments for a student; emotion is high and anxiety has been building for weeks/months. ✳
- ⊘ A large number of students experience issues logging in and accessing the system. Students expect allocation to be competitive, however anxiety is exacerbated when they can't log in when they are told to or when the login time has changed. ✳
- ⊘ Some students find that links sent to them in emails take them to generic pages. This adds frustration at a moment when students consider time to be of the essence and just want to get straight in. ✳
- ⊘ International students can only enrol after they physically present their documents on campus, which means they get access to enrolment and timetabling later than everyone else. This creates confusion — international students are often unsure when this system opens for them.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

- 💬 *"The system was not designed for the visually impaired. I engaged with the disability support team to create an EIP and that lessened my anxiety."* **UG, Sydney**
- 💬 *"The system would crash a lot. There was pressure to try to get what you wanted."* **UG, Mature Age, Ballarat**
- 💬 *"The system kept crashing. It's even harder because I was working full time."* **UG, Mature Age, Brisbane**
- 💬 *"Allocation is stressful, I didn't sleep the night before"* **UG, Melbourne**
- 💬 *"I'm always prepared. I make sure I know what time to get up. Half an hour early. I'll already be on the website. I'll eat early. I'll know all my numbers. I'm very thorough. By the time it's 10min to go, I'm refreshing. I want that timetable."* **UG, Sydney**
- 💬 *"What if I work on that day? If the internet isn't fast enough? If you have to go to work and you're on the train?"* **UG, Sydney**

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

- Students know when the timetabling system will open.
- The timetabling system opens at the same time as enrolment.
- Students can seamlessly access the timetabling system from the student portal.
- Students practice creating their timetable. 👍
- Students create a draft timetable they can reuse when the system opens.
- Students receive a reminder that the system will open soon.
- Students access the system seamlessly from the link in the email/ from the student portal.
- Students reuse their draft timetable.

☆ BUILD TIMETABLE

RECEIVE

SEEK HELP

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

Students rush to select their preferred classes before the availability runs out.

Students may need to choose their 2nd or 3rd class preferences if their 1st preference is full.

Students receive their timetable. ✳

Students seek help / instructions. ✳

Students reshuffle or swap classes to achieve a more ideal timetable.

Students who did not receive their preferred timetable can go on a waitlist for spaces in their preferred classes to become available.

BUILD TIMETABLE

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Students in simple courses or courses with smaller cohorts often discover they do not have more than one choice for their timetable. This circumstance takes the pressure off.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ Students can feel as though the system has let them down or is inadequate. For example, it is not designed to accommodate those who are vision impaired, and often crashes.

⊘ Time pressure causes students to feel panicked or unprepared to make informed decisions about the way to structure their timetable. They have to make rushed decisions on the fly.

⊘ The speed at which classes book out causes intense pressure at this moment.

⊘ Searching for units in the timetabling system is a clunky experience.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"You've got to be quick! This semester it opened at 9:00am and I was on at 9:03 and I couldn't get the classes I needed."* **UG, Mature Age, Melbourne**

💬 *"The worst thing about LEO is timetabling. A minute of pure hell."* **UG, Mature Age, Ballarat**

💬 *"I didn't know at the time that we're such a small course that we don't pick, we just get given. So when I was new, I was stressing."* **UG, Ballarat**

💬 *"I had no timetabling issues, probably because it is not as big."* **PG, International, Sydney**

💬 *"Class allocation was a nightmare. I was refreshing constantly. ACU stages it, but after 2 minutes all the classes are gone."* **UG, Strathfield**

RECEIVE

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Some students like the printable format of the timetable. ✳

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ Timetabling outcomes can have major impacts on a student's life. Students report having to leave their jobs, missing out on a unit they wanted to study, being forced to attend classes late at night, or facing big challenges to managing childcare.

⊘ Students express pain with the reality of classes scheduled back to back — they would like clearer explanation of 10min travel time (if it's available) and to know up front where the classes are located. ✳

⊘ Students would like to migrate the timetable into their preferred format and save it to their device. ✳

⊘ International students do enrolment and timetabling at the same time, but they cannot see their timetable straight away — it takes a while for it to go 'live' which is confusing.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"I couldn't change the time of classes so I had to leave my job."* **PG, International, Strathfield**

💬 *"I got allocated a tutorial on Friday between 6-8pm. Being a single mum, the time became a big issue. I failed the unit by 2 marks."* **UG, Sydney**

💬 *"I had to drop a subject that I wanted to do because of a clash."* **UG, Mature Age, Melbourne**

SEEK HELP

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

→ Forge: If I don't like the result of my timetable I will contact someone to try and make the timetable work better for me.

→ Follow: I accept how things are and will make sure my life fits around the timetable.

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ AskACU are generally considered helpful when students seek help and support at this time. ✳

✓ Students often need face to face help to resolve clashes, and value the alerts to identify potential clashes.

✓ The course coordinator often acts as a point of escalation in this situation.

✓ At times, staff can pull strings to squeeze students into classes that are already full.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ Because timing is a major decision-making factor that students often can't see during enrolment, timetabling extends for a few weeks. Students shuffle things around to make the timetable work for them.

⊘ Clashes are common and can be confusing to resolve.

⊘ Some students wait for people to drop out of their preferred classes before they confirm their timetable. For them, the timetabling experience can last several days, as they continually refresh to check availability. ✳

⊘ Some students who are unhappy with their timetable will ask staff (often course-coordinators, tutors or lecturers) to move things around or to squeeze them in

⊘ Some students feel less positive about AskACU when they call with system issues and can't get clarity on what is happening and what is being done to fix it. ✳

⊘ Students report long wait times on the AskACU phone lines during the timetabling period. ✳

⊘ Students prefer upfront information. They want confirmation when they've completed things, and they want to be able to find out what they need to do next. ✳

⊘ After completing the timetable students expect to be told the date and time they are first expected on campus. ✳

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"They email me before [timetabling] let me know what my potential clashes will be, then I can plan."* **UG, Mature Age, Sydney**

💬 *"I would like timetabling not to clash. That was very stressful. I had no replies to my concerns."* **PG, International, Sydney**

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

Students timetable for a whole year, and they know they won't be punished if they need to change something.

Students choose their top preferences for timetabling and they are confident that ACU has their best interest in mind. The preferential system has a timetable (grid) view.

Students can still re-arrange their timetable if necessary.

Students are happy with the final result of their timetable.

After receiving their timetable, students are clear on next steps.

☆ ARRIVE FROM ANOTHER LOCATION

FIND INFORMATION & PLAN ORIENTATION

ARRIVE ON CAMPUS

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

Students arrive in the city that they will be studying in.

Students seek or receive information about orientation.

Some students access the orientation planner.

Some students make a trial trip to campus before orientation.

Students arrive on campus for orientation, for some this is their first visit.

Some students arrive back on campus after participating in open days, tours or know your options days.

ARRIVE FROM ANOTHER LOCATION

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

- ✓ Students who have personal networks in their chosen location rely on them for support during the initial arrival period.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

- ⊘ Students often feel 'lost' when they first arrive.
- ⊘ Some international students wish they knew more about Australian culture before they arrived.
- ⊘ Transport and getting around can be stressful at the beginning.
- ⊘ Finding affordable accommodation is difficult..

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

- 💬 *"Arriving in Australia was easy with relatives here."* **PG, International, Strathfield**
- 💬 *"I came to Australia because I have relatives here. I stayed with them for 2 months before starting."* **PG, International, Brisbane**
- 💬 *"I was a bit anxious coming from country Victoria, mostly nervous about getting around."* **UG, Melbourne**
- 💬 *"It would have been good to learn more about the culture in Australia and Melbourne in the beginning."* **PG, International, Melbourne.**
- 💬 *"We applied for 16 rental properties before we were accepted for one."* **UG, Ballarat**

FIND INFORMATION & PLAN ORIENTATION

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

- → I want structure — I want to have a plan for the day.
- → I want to explore — I won't be making a plan.

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

- ✓ Students appreciate clear and detailed information about what to expect during orientation.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

- ⊘ Some students are not aware of orientation.
- ⊘ Some students find it difficult to know what to prioritise at orientation.
- ⊘ Students see orientation as their 'first day' and often feel as though they don't have the information they need to feel fully prepared.
- ⊘ Students wish they could connect with other students before orientation.
- ⊘ Students want to understand the physical space before orientation. They often suggest video content as a way to get a sense of the campus atmosphere.
- ⊘ Students want more detail on what they will be learning, and who will be teaching them.
- ⊘ Students find that the planner is unnecessary as they often don't have much choice of activities.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

- 💬 *"I found orientation easy because they gave us an email, and it said, this is what everything is about, a map, it was easy to find."* **UG, Ballarat**
- 💬 *"I got enough time and information to know what I needed to do and which room to go to for orientation."* **PG, Melbourne**
- 💬 *"An extra open day or interactive open day would be nice — a lot of things aren't clear until you get here."* **UG, Melbourne**
- 💬 *"Knowing what we know now, it would be good to get all your logins before o-day."* **UG, Brisbane**
- 💬 *"Academics don't want you to go through LEO, but students want it. Can we make it a hurdle task for students before orientation to be able to access it?"* **PG, Sydney**

- 💬 *"It would be good to have a login to LEO [before orientation] because that's where I get everything."* **UG, Brisbane**
- 💬 *"You could start creating connections before going, a facebook event would be good for us to post questions."* **UG, Brisbane**
- 💬 *"I was looking for some friends to go to orientation with. We could make a group chat to find friends in a similar situation."* **UG, International, Melbourne**

ARRIVE ON CAMPUS

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

- ✓ Students appreciate the opportunity to visit campus before orientation, as it creates a sense of confidence.
- ✓ Arriving on campus for the first time helps students imagine their student life.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

- ⊘ Some students find room numbers difficult to navigate.
- ⊘ Some students find working out transport stressful.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

- 💬 *"We did a test run of going to campus so I wouldn't get lost."* **UG, Melbourne**
- 💬 *"When we rocked up, they walked us through the campus."* **UG Ballarat**
- 💬 *"I didn't struggle as much once I learned the room codes."* **UG, Melbourne**

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

- Students are picked up by an ACU team from the airport/ the station and taken to their destination.
- Students who relocated to attend ACU have access to temporary ACU accommodation that they can use before finding their more permanent place.
- All students are aware of when orientation will be taking place.
- Students understand that they can tailor orientation to their specific needs, and that it is not an event only for School Leavers.
- Students have the opportunity to connect with their course cohort prior to orientation, so that they can find familiar faces on orientation day.
- Students are able to find out more about what to expect in classes — who will be teaching them, and what are the differences between the types of classes e.g. lectures vs tutorials.
- Students engage with content online that gives an understanding of the physical space on campus.
- Students gain access to systems like LEO prior to orientation to help them feel prepared.
- Students have many activity options and can easily filter them to make a customised plan for the day.
- Students arrive on campus for orientation and they find a positive atmosphere and friendly staff. 👍
- Students find peers that they connected with prior to orientation.
- Students who appear alone are approached by volunteers.

☆ ENGAGE IN ORIENTATION

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

- Students engage in social activities.
- Students learn about platforms, systems, and facilities.
- Students look for clubs to join.

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

→ I am after practical information.
→ I want to make connections.

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Volunteers and staff stand out as incredibly friendly and helpful.
✓ Students value learning practical skills, tours of facilities and information sessions about university systems.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ Some students expect orientation to be focused on socialising, and feel there are not enough tailored opportunities to find their tribe.
⊘ Students feel that there are not enough clubs to join.
⊘ Mature age students would like a more detailed orientation of systems and processes.
⊘ Students want more course specific information during orientation.
⊘ Some students experience strong warnings from staff about course challenges and the lack of holidays. This causes anxiety.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"The student association were so welcoming — I made so many friends. It completely changed my uni experience."* **UG, Strathfield**

💬 *"Orientation was quite scary. They didn't have anything tailored to my course. I didn't meet my cohort. I felt lonely. I actually left orientation early."* **UG, Canberra**

💬 *"Orientation should be fun! Not just a cup of tea and a balloon"* **PG, Sydney**

💬 *"There were different sessions in the day for the para-med students, it was quite structured, it covered everything I needed to know"* **PG, Melbourne**

💬 *"They should have talked about LEO and the student portal. It wasn't until week 3 that I realised LEO was super critical."* **PG, Mature Age, Melbourne**

💬 *"It tended to be more general, rather than course specific info"* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"For a mature aged student, things have changed, deep orientation of systems and the library would have been great."* **UG, Mature Age, Melbourne**

💬 *"Harsh information was given during orientation. No holidays, hectic schedules... It's not encouraging to freak us out."* **UG, Brisbane**

💬 *"Awareness of clubs at orientation would be wonderful."* **PG, International, Strathfield**

💬 *"Orientation wasn't what I expected. I thought I'd meet my lecturers, sit in my class, it was way more general"* **UG, Melbourne**

NOT ATTEND

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

- Some students miss orientation because of life circumstances or commitments.
- Some mature aged students actively avoid orientation because they assume it's tailored to younger students.

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

→ I (especially PG students and mature age students) go to ACU intending to focus only on study. I miss orientation because I assume that orientation is about socialising.
→ I assume orientation is not designed for me.

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Students that miss orientation see Ask ACU as a primary point of contact.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ Missing orientation makes students feel left out and decreases a sense of belonging — even if it was their own decision not to go.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"I didn't know that there was a mature age meet and greet. If I knew, I would have gone to orientation."* UG, mature age, Ballarat

💬 *"I didn't go to orientation. Not to be rude, but I didn't want to be around a bunch of new kids."* **UG, Mature Age, Melbourne**

💬 *"I missed the initial o-week and so I leaned a lot on Ask ACU — I asked them a lot of questions"* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"I missed orientation because of a delay in my visa. I went to the international students office and Ask ACU to sort out enrolment."* **UG, Sydney**

VOLUNTEER

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

- Students volunteer at orientation.

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

→ My own orientation experience was positive due to the helpful, friendly volunteers. I want to volunteer now because I want to give back.
→ My own orientation experience was negative, so I want to volunteer to make sure others don't have the same experience

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Volunteering at orientation is a chance for personal development

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"I actually helped organise orientation this year, I made sure to speak to a lot of students, so they had someone to talk to, so they weren't like me."* UG, Canberra

💬 *"The staff were so proactive! I actually volunteered in 2nd year because it was so good,"* UG, International, Brisbane

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

- Students are offered structured ways of meeting people in a similar circumstance to them.
- Students find others who are also looking to socialise and find friends to party with.
- Students find others who are also looking to meet their course peers.
- Non school leavers find other non school leavers.
- Students receive practical information about systems, tech and facilities. 👍
- Students (especially mature age students) receive an in depth orientation into systems, tech and facilities.
- Students find an array of student clubs to join or can easily start one on the spot.
- Students who cannot attend orientation understand how they can orientate themselves independently.
- Students volunteer at orientation and find the experience rewarding. 👍

☆ SETTLE IN

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

Settling in extends beyond orientation and can take longer than expected — often for the entire first semester.

Students rely heavily on AskACU at the beginning of their journey. Later they find other sources of more tailored information.

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Facing adjustment challenges is easier when you have friends to problem solve with.

✓ International students love the international office/team, and feel supported as they adjust to life at Australia and ACU.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ Students take time adjusting to a new way of learning that is more independent. There can be changes in pace or course load to adjust to. e.g. High school, overseas learning styles, part time to full time.

⊘ Students want someone to acknowledge that the adjustment period is hard.

⊘ Students are often unsure where to get help at the beginning, and rely on AskACU. Over time their enquiries become more specific, and AskACU can't always help, so they need to find new sources of help within their faculty or among friends.

⊘ Some international students find it hard to adapt to the new culture, which directly affects their sense of belonging.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"Even if someone called you and asked how are you going, where are you at, have you enrolled...that was my biggest anxiety."* **UG, Ballarat**

💬 *"It took me a semester to settle in, to know what I need in order to go to classes, to understand what they're looking for in assignments"* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"I think it would be good to have a coordinator for the first 4 weeks to ask how you're going, how you're finding it, is there anything we can help with."* **UG, Mature Age, Melbourne**

💬 *"I always meet my international coordinator Michelle once a month. She is like my second mother in Melbourne."* **PG, International, Melbourne**

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

AskACU contacts each student a few weeks into the semester to ask whether they need help. Students have had a chance to settle in a little by then, so they feel they can ask good questions. Their questions are answered, or they receive informative advice on where to get help.

Students feel settled in to university life early in the first semester.

☆ PREPARE FOR STUDY

ARRIVE ON CAMPUS

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

| Students find semester dates. | Students read course guides. | Students download and read unit outlines in great detail. | Students purchase text books listed in their unit outline. | Students apply for a learning and inclusion plan. |

| Students take public transport from home to campus. | Students drive from home to campus. | Students navigate campus. |

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Students value course guides as they equip them to plan their time and help outline what to expect.

✓ The few students we spoke with that went through the learning and inclusion plan application found the process easy and the staff helpful. 🔍

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ Students have difficulty finding course starting and end dates, both for on campus and online units.

⊘ Students wanted to know why unit outlines were received so close to the course start date, especially if the course was run in previous semesters.

⊘ Receiving unit outlines as early as possible makes a big impact. It allows students to order text books, make plans for work, childcare, or even simply to get a head-start on required readings. Late course information is a large pain point.

⊘ Incorrect, outdated or inconsistent information about units exists across various channels (forum, outline, course coordinator) and causes confusion and distress. For example, outdated book lists cause students to spend money on text books that are not needed.

⊘ Students want text book suppliers affiliated with ACU to have more resources and better levels of stock.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"It's frustrating that we don't get the unit outline until a week ahead. We need to know about textbooks and lecturers."* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"It was annoying that none of our unit outlines were available until a few days before I started"* **UG, Brisbane**

💬 *"When you're waiting for the unit to open and get your course outline it's frustrating when its so late. I've got kids, commitments, I'd like to plan my time."* **UG, Mature Age, Ballarat**

💬 *"ACU has been much better [than another uni] at learning and inclusion, I didn't have to re-tell my story to every lecturer."* **UG, Mature Age, Melbourne**

💬 *"It was quick and easy to get a learning and inclusion plan. My mum was sick."* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"Its not clear what week 19 is, you need to give us the dates"* **UG, Brisbane**

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Students find ACU's campuses to be smaller than other unis, and therefore less intimidating.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ Some students find navigating campus is difficult, and room numbers are confusing. This is especially true for bigger campuses.

⊘ Public transport is often a stressful part of life for students who live further away from campus. Timetable issues or strict attendance policies are exacerbated by long commute times or disruptions.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"I live in Caroline Springs, it takes 1.5 hrs each way. I leave at 6:30am. The main problem is when buses replace trains. If you're even 1 min late you're marked absent."* **UG, International, Melbourne**

💬 *"I live in Kilmore. The tutorial didn't finish until 8pm and then the next train was at 10pm. I ended up getting it changed."* **PG, Mature Age, Melbourne**

💬 *"I found the campus very cheerful, small and compact — so I knew I wouldn't get lost on campus"* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"I feel ACU is more high school than uni, especially on this campus. If you look at someone the wrong way it gets spread around the uni."* **UG, Mature Age, Brisbane.**

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

| Students revisit unit outlines they received during enrolment to prepare for study. | Students purchase required textbooks, and the books arrive before the first week of semester one. | Students are familiar with how to use the student portal, LEO, and the library before they begin their study. |

| Students know how to navigate campus and find signage and room numbers easy to understand. | Students aren't punished for being slightly late. |

☆ ATTEND LECTURES, TUTORIALS, PRACTICALS

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

- Students attend lectures, tutorials, and practical classes.
- Students attend units from the core curriculum.
- Students build relationships with lecturers and tutors.

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

- ✔ Most teaching staff are viewed by students as kind and helpful.
- ✔ Students deeply value ACU's approach to practical learning, and often describe how much they enjoy the opportunity to learn in a hands-on way.
- ✔ Some students build meaningful connections with lecturers, calling them by name, feeling confident to reach out to them both during and far beyond the completion of their class.
- ✔ Students are often surprised by how much value they gain from ACU's core curriculum. It is seen to strike the right balance, with multiple perspectives on ethics and faith.
- ✔ Many students see the smaller classes as an intrinsic part of the ACU value proposition. Small class sizes give them more direct access to lecturers, better discussion, and space for questions.
- ✔ Whenever students need more overarching course advice, or help with a larger issue, they feel comfortable reaching out to their course coordinator. The course coordinator can make or break their experience.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

- ⊘ Many students felt that the content in their course was delivered out of order. For example, prepping for placement after the placement had already been completed, or prepping CV's after the applications for graduate positions had already closed.
- ⊘ Students felt some lecturers were uncaring or unprepared, and they had trouble with receiving feedback or responses in a timely manner.
- ⊘ For particular units, students felt they did not learn what they expected to. Some students reported online units that relied too heavily on a list of readings. Nursing students repeatedly brought up having to learn about pharmacology independently.
- ⊘ Some students reported irrelevant or outdated content that was recycled from year to year.
- ⊘ Some students felt units were too content heavy, or that content heavy units scheduled at the same time resulted in huge workloads.
- ⊘ Whilst students generally enjoy the core curriculum, some feel the units are too repetitive, taking time away time from learning more critical content.

- ⊘ For the bigger courses, many students often feel the lectures are not as valuable as tutorials. Big class sizes don't allow for as much discussion and sometimes there is not enough time to cover all content.
- ⊘ Mature Age students can feel more 'responsible' than they'd like for younger peers in the learning environment. They describe being called on more frequently to participate in tutorial discussion or being 'parentified' by other students.
- ⊘ At times, students find additional, non-compulsory work experience or placement positions. This can be motivated by the fear that they are not getting enough practical experience in their course.
- ⊘ Some students experienced contradicting perspectives from lecturers across states. This is an alignment problem connected to the remote/distributed approach to course delivery.
- ⊘ Students find that if the same subject is taught across multiple locations, the lecturers only have one space on LEO for it, so the information there is often confusing or lacking.
- ⊘ Sometimes the way that students engage with ACU feels a bit like "high-school".

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

- 💬 *"I had to do quite a lot of lab hours which gave me a lot of experience."* **UG, Melbourne**
- 💬 *"We were being taught stuff at uni that when we went out on prac it was wrong and there was new research"* **Alumni**
- 💬 *"There were three ethics classes. I did all my pharmacology study independently."* **UG, Melbourne**
- 💬 *"Lack of medication units prevents me from working at BHS. Fed Uni offers this unit"* **UG, International, Ballarat**
- 💬 *"I had a meeting with a course coordinator to discuss a study break. She was so good, it was like chatting to a friend."* **UG, Ballarat**
- 💬 *"The sequencing wasn't always good. We always did maths and English together, and they are by far the most intense."* **PG, Mature Age, Melbourne**
- 💬 *"All content is prepared by the course coordinator. Some lecturers can't get through the content in 2 hours and have to skip stuff. I'd be happy to extend it to 3 hours if it meant getting the content."* **UG, international, Brisbane**
- 💬 *"We usually meet with our course coordinators once a week. They ask us how we are going. It's so helpful, especially in the beginning."* **UG, International, Melbourne**

- 💬 *"Until my last year tutors were flexible with timing, but then a new course coordinator cracked down on that, which made it hard."* **PG, Melbourne**
- 💬 *"When you get stuck the course coordinator is the only one who can help — that's who everyone directs you to"* **PG, Melbourne**

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

- All course content is relevant, timely, non-repetitive and aligns with the unit outline.
- Core, important subjects are always delivered face to face (not online).
- Big lectures still provide an opportunity to engage in discussion and questions.
- Tutorials are practical and hands-on.
- All students feel there is safe space to participate and ask questions during class.
- Units are organised in a logical sequence — students feel that they are studying things in the right order.
- Students learn practical skills that they can apply during their placements and later in their career.
- Students enjoy the core curriculum — it enhances their study and doesn't take time away from studying other units they need/want to take.
- When units are taught in multiple locations by various lecturers, students understand that the content might vary slightly and they know that they should follow the advice of their of lecturer for things like assignments.

☆ ONLINE & REMOTE LEARNING

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

- Students study units online.
- Students dial in to lectures.

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Online learning is considered very convenient. Many students find the flexibility allows them to fit study around their life.

✓ Students find lecture recordings very useful. They are able to keep up with their learning even if unable to attend a lecture, or go back and review challenging content a second time.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ Some students felt that online units were not appropriate for key content that they considered critical to their overall learning. This was especially relevant to units with a practical element.

⊘ Students are highly critical of online lecturers that are not as available as students think they should be, or only offer surface level support.

⊘ Students enrolled in face to face units that integrate digital content delivery often find the tech lets them down. Glitchy video and wasted time connecting at the start of each session do not meet the student's expectations of a face to face course.

⊘ Students feel that ACU's online learning systems and features need updating to give them wider capability, for example, feedback recorded and uploaded to soundcloud. Many students perceived ACU's tech to be lagging behind other universities.

⊘ Students are highly critical of lecturers who deliberately don't upload lecture recordings — all students need to miss class sometimes, and this makes it difficult to catch up. Some like to re-watch difficult lectures to make sure they understand the content.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"Important, core classes like epidemiology or biostatistics should not be online, I've learned nothing from those courses. It should have face to face time."* **PG, International, Melbourne**

💬 *"I don't know if this is reflective of all the online courses, but I paid for a lecturer and didn't get one. Not even resources."* **PG, Mature Age, Melbourne**

💬 *"When people asked questions [online] they got useless answers like 'have you read chapter 5?'"* **PG, Mature Age, Melbourne**

💬 *"The recordings of the lectures really helped when I had to look after my mum [who had chronic health issues]"* **PG, Melbourne**

💬 *"No technology ever works, no screens in lectures ever worked. Lecturers don't have the skills needed"* **UG, Sydney**

💬 *"Stopping recordings drives people crazy. She did it in first year to punish people who didn't turn up."* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"I have concerns that ACU is a national university and lecture content varies"* **UG, Melbourne**

☆ MANAGE DAY-TO-DAY STUDY

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

- Students access the Student Portal as a gateway to other platforms.
- Students look at their timetable daily to plan their time.
- Students use LEO to access unit content and information.

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Students see LEO as the central point for managing their day-to-day study.

✓ Some students use the Student Portal as a 'gateway' to other platforms. They find 'quick links' particularly useful.

✓ Students enjoy when lecturers organise content on LEO week by week, as it's easiest to navigate.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ Students create shortcuts or bookmarks to get to LEO because the way the system is structured today means it's hard to access without going through multiple steps.

⊘ Most students don't use the Student Portal for anything other than administrative tasks at the beginning of each academic year/semester.

⊘ Students find it painful that lecturers use LEO in varied ways. Lecturers structure information differently, upload identical info in different places, and with different levels of detail and frequency.

⊘ Students often find incorrect information on online platforms, and the same piece of information can differ across channels. This creates the need to cross-check.

⊘ Students find that a lot of information is transferred by lecturers face-to-face, or through personal channels like email, instead of formal, public channels. This means that it's easy to miss out on crucial pieces of information.

⊘ When things change, students find the system is slow to reflect those changes.

⊘ Students find that there is a lot of irrelevant information shown in LEO — for example units they've completed are not removed, or units from UG are shown to PG students.

⊘ Students do not find the ACU app user friendly. It logs them out of all platforms after 6 hours, and the mobile view of the platforms is seen as clunky.

⊘ As students need to look at their timetable everyday, they often create static versions of it, such as mobile screenshots or printouts, as they find them easier to access.

⊘ Students find that they are overwhelmed with notifications on forums. Because of this they are reluctant to post questions themselves. Students end up ignoring notifications because they are repetitive and difficult to sort through.

⊘ Many students are not aware of the purpose of the E-portfolio on LEO, or don't understand its value.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"I don't take advantage of the portal much, only if I have to do stuff like enrolment."* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"LEO should have a link to the portal, not the other way around."* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"LEO is where we go for everything."* **UG, Ballarat**

💬 *"It's all on LEO."* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"At ACU conversations happen in person and everything is open to interpretation."* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"Your friends are responsible for you, if you don't have a close friend, you might miss something."* **UG, Ballarat**

💬 *"We just have conversations in class and assume everyone hears."* **PG, Melbourne**

💬 *"They need to make LEO content more consistent. Maybe staff needs to be trained. Make all units have the same tabs."* **PG, Melbourne**

💬 *"I'm very confused because it's a different layout for each unit."* **PG, International, Brisbane**

💬 *"The grade section has never worked properly, but it could be the way the lecturers put things in"* **UG, Mature Age, Brisbane**

💬 *"There should be a unified statement on what is acceptable for things. Each coordinator, each tutor has a different opinion. Information depends on who you are talking to. That's very disempowering as a student"* **PG, Mature Age, Brisbane**

💬 *"I get 1000's of notifications about whats happening in Brisbane, when I'm not here, I don't really care"* **UG, Mature Age, Brisbane**

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

- Online units contain both theoretical and practical content.
- Students feel connected to the lecturers who deliver online units.
- Students who dial into lectures do so seamlessly, without disrupting the beginning of lectures.
- Students who dial into lectures feel that they have opportunities to engage and ask questions.
- All lectures are recorded, so that students can watch them in their own time if they miss class.
- LEO is the central point that acts as a gateway to other areas such as the Student Portal. The important info (which is found on the Student Portal forum today) is available on LEO instead.
- Information in LEO has a consistent structure, and lecturers have flexibility to go above and beyond that basic structure.
- All unit content is structured by week, and uploaded ahead of the lectures. Lecturers upload same pieces of info in the same places for each unit e.g. grades are always published in the same place.
- All information in the unit outlines is correct.
- Students are only notified of relevant information, and important notifications are formally captured and communicated to students digitally, as well as in lectures.
- The systems students use are up to date and they only show relevant, correct information.
- The ACU app is accessible and it doesn't require a log in to see info needed day to day like timetables.

GO ABROAD

LEAVE UNI

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

Students apply to study abroad.

Students travel and study abroad.

Students leave ACU before the completion of their course.

Students take a leave of absence/ defer.

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Going abroad to study is considered a very positive experience, and for some, a highlight of their time at ACU.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"Being able to do your core curriculum abroad was amazing. I went to New York."* **UG, Canberra**

💬 *"They also have community engagements. I got to go to East Timor to educate people there about healthcare. I found that opportunity really rewarding."* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"There are ways for people to do [a study tour] even if you don't have tonnes of money."* **UG, Mature Age, Melbourne**

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

🚫 Postgraduates students who have left ACU are more likely to have opted out of study all together where as School Leavers and Non-School Leavers are more likely to leave ACU to study at a competitor institution. ◆

🚫 The top reasons for both PG and UG applicants leaving higher education completely were a change in personal circumstances and financial barriers. NSL are more likely to leave due to financial barriers. ◆

🚫 41% of Postgraduates leave ACU because they have a change of direction. Other major reasons include financial barriers or poor course experience. ◆

🚫 Some school leavers leave ACU for another more convenient university, others receive an offer from their back-up or higher preference uni. Some found the course content unappealing, and others felt ACU had a poor reputation/ lack of prestige. ◆

🚫 Most non-school leavers are leaving ACU for another more convenient university, others receive an offer from their back-up or higher preference uni. A smaller number simply have a change in direction. ◆

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

All students are aware of opportunities to study abroad.

Students study abroad and find the experience enriching. 👍

Few students leave ACU because of a negative experience — those who leave do so mostly due to life circumstances.

Students feel supported by ACU when making a decision to leave.

Those who leave ACU still think that ACU is a great university.

COMPLETE ASSIGNMENTS & EXAMS

☆ ACCESS SUPPORT ABOUT ASSESSMENTS

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

- Students complete ongoing assessments individually.
- Students complete group work assessments.
- Students prepare for exams.

- When students need information, they first try to find it themselves, then they reach out to peers, and if that is not sufficient, they reach out to staff.

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

→ I start my assignments as early as possible.

→ I start my assignments closer to submission dates.

→ I study a little bit everyday so I just have to revise before exams.

→ I cram during the exam period.

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Students refer to unit outlines often to understand assignment criteria.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ Students dislike group work. They find it challenging to balance the effort of group members fairly, and find it difficult to align schedules.

⊘ Students feel that the mechanisms to report poor experiences with group work are often ineffective due to timing. For example, students need to provide evidence over time to alert lecturers, but often issues don't arise until the time of submission.

⊘ Students often find assessment criteria ambiguous.

⊘ Students sometimes find conflicting information about assignments in the unit outline, on the forums, or in class. For example, it's common for due dates to be incorrect in the unit outlines. In most extreme cases, students refer to outdated assignment criteria, which means they waster working on an incorrect assignment.

⊘ Students find that some assessment weightings are unreasonable — there are big assignments worth very little.

⊘ Students find that too many exams happen in a small period of time. They find it stressful, especially if they don't do well in exam settings.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"At the start of the semester the assessments were outlined and I tried to complete them early. The course outline allows you to prepare."* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"I don't like group work, it's stressful because some people don't contribute."* **UG, Strathfield**

💬 *"Assessments should be staggered to alleviate stress. You can't put in your best work this way."* **PG, Melbourne**

💬 *"Some assessments were unrealistically big for just 20%."* **PG, International, Sydney**

💬 *"Guidelines in the assessment changed, we were told it was a report, and then we were told it was not a report."* **PG, Sydney**

💬 *"Unit outlines are not always correct. They overtype the old template and leave incorrect info like assignment due dates."* **PG, Melbourne**

💬 *"Assessment criteria is ambiguous. Sometimes lecturers don't understand it."* **UG, Strathfield**

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

→ I feel bad contacting lecturers because they're busy.

→ I chase lecturers because they don't respond to my enquiries fast enough.

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Some lecturers are responsive and helpful. Students notice the lecturers who go above and beyond to help with assessments e.g. through live chats.

✓ Students communicate with each other about assessments on Facebook groups, because it is a safe, informal space.

✓ Students value advice from peers who are ahead in the journey, as they have great tips and hacks.

✓ Students often form study groups.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ Some students find that lecturers don't answer their questions, which is stressful.

⊘ Students find that they are overwhelmed with notifications on forums. Because of this they are reluctant to post questions themselves, and they end up creating support groups outside of the ACU platform.

⊘ Students often email lecturers directly because they don't want to publicly ask their question.

⊘ If a unit is taught by multiple lecturers in different locations, their advice tends to differ, creating confusion.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"There were a lot of supporting programs for assessments on LEO. You could submit questions."* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"Lecturers were not responsive and there was lots of miscommunication about exams. Melbourne students heard that there would be anatomy in the exam, so I asked the lecturer in Brisbane about it — he didn't respond."* **UG, Brisbane**

💬 *"On Facebook we talk to each other about when assignments are due, word counts, what they're looking for in the assignment…"* **UG, Melbourne**

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

- Students are clear on assessment criteria.
- Assessment criteria and due dates are easy to find online and are correct across all channels.
- Assessment weightings are appropriate to the assessment size.
- Final exams are not stacked within a short period of time.
- Students understand the value of group work.
- Frequently asked questions about assessment are consolidated and easy to find in LEO.
- Students can easily reach lecturers to ask specific questions about assessments.
- Students receive peer to peer support about assessments in LEO.

☆ RECEIVE FEEDBACK & RESULTS

☆ EXTENSIONS & SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

Students engage with the feedback they received.

Students receive results of their assessments and exams.

Students receive the final result for a completed unit.

Students apply for an extension through a form on LEO. 🔍

Students apply for a special consideration through a form on LEO. 🔍

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Many students appreciate the extensive, constructive feedback given by lecturers.

✓ Students generally find that they receive final results quickly.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ The feedback given by lecturers is inconsistent. While some lecturers are excellent at it, others give very little feedback in the form of one-word comments.

⊘ Many students find that the feedback for ongoing assessments doesn't come back in time for the to improve for their next assessment in that unit.

⊘ Many students mention that they struggle with referencing, and that they often lose points for it with no explanation on how to do it properly next time.

⊘ As lecturers use LEO in different ways, grades are published in different places depending on the unit, which is time consuming and often stressful for students. E.g. some publish the grades in the 'grades' section, while others publish it in the submission area.

⊘ Some students reported waiting for results for longer than expected, with no clear communication about the reasons for the delay.

⊘ Students notice and hear that others cheat. They hear that other students pay someone to complete their assignments. This is very disheartening, especially for students who put in the work.

⊘ Some students want access to feedback for longer, so that they can use it in the first few years after graduation. Feedback is important to ensure students have the skills they need for their job. 🔍

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"Feedback for assessments was so good, I got good at the assessments over time. Feedback in LEO was very clear."* **PG, International, Melbourne**

💬 *"I'd like proper feedback on how to improve. I prefer practical assessments."* **PG, International, Strathfield**

💬 *"Assessments take a long time to come back, the anxiety starts to set in — the lecturers would start talking about it 'some people are doing well' before releasing the results."* **UG, Ballarat**

💬 *"Results come back very quickly."* **UG, Sydney**

💬 *"When ACU archives all our grades in LEO you can no longer see assignment feedback and comments from lecturers. It would be nice to see that. Sometimes when you're doing prac subjects you don't get that info back for weeks and then it's archived. I had to do a whole unit plan without seeing it."* **UG, Mature Age, Brisbane**

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Students who need extensions/special consideration often find ACU supportive of their situation.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ Students are unclear about when to apply for an extension and when to apply for a special consideration. They find that the rules vary by lecturer.

⊘ Some students find the special consideration process lengthy.

⊘ If students get stuck in the process of applying for an extension or special consideration, the course coordinator is their point of escalation.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"I experienced a lot of medical issues and they were very flexible with assessments."* **UG, Brisbane**

💬 *"The response time for special consideration took a long time."* **UG, Sydney**

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

Grades are always published in the same place.

Students receive feedback on ongoing assessments and final results within the 3 promised weeks.

If the feedback/results are late for any reason, students are aware of this and the high level reason behind it.

Students find all feedback constructive, and it helps them improve.

Students understand the difference between extensions and special consideration.

Rules around extensions and special consideration are consistent and clear.

☆ UNDERSTAND & COMPLETE PLACEMENT REQUIREMENTS

FIND PLACEMENT

GET ASSIGNED TO A PLACEMENT

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

UNDERSTAND & COMPLETE	FIND PLACEMENT	GET ASSIGNED
Students understand placement requirements through searching online and asking for advice.	Students use the list provided by ACU to find a placement.	ACU assigns students to a placement.
Some students use the WIL system to research requirements.	Students reach out to their networks to arrange placement for themselves.	Students swap placements with each other.
Students complete pre-placement units.	Students establish new networks to find a placement.	
Students independently complete pre-placement requirements (both standard and organisation-specific).		
Students use the In Place platform to track progress (Note: FLB students do not use this platform, and work with their faculty to arrange placement).		

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Students who understand requirements early find the process of completing them straightforward.

✓ Students like using InPlace as it consolidates everything in one place.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ Students often realise that they should have started their preparation for placement earlier e.g. vaccination rounds. Students would like clearer communication about placement requirements earlier in their journey.

⊘ Students feel that the pre-placement units are informative but stressful as they happen just before placement.

⊘ Students who need to arrange their own placement find navigating requirements difficult, and they would like more support.

⊘ Some students find it hard to navigate the long list format in InPlace.

⊘ Sometimes it's difficult to see what's been uploaded and what's missing in InPlace.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"It was easy for me to access info about placements."* **UG, Brisbane**

💬 *"It would have been good to have a placement info system, it was hard and not well explained."* **UG, Sydney**

💬 *"I didn't know that pre-placement was a thing at the beginning. I looked at WIL and talked to a friends mum who is a nurse."* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"Paperwork for placement is not well explained. I was told to figure it out in a way so that I can fit in holidays, but I have no idea how to do that!"* **UG, Brisbane**

💬 *"They only tell us about pre placement requirements halfway through second year, the fix is to tell us about them at the beginning."* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"InPlace always says 'missing docs' but doesn't say what's missing."* **PG, International, Melbourne**

💬 *"It took 6 months to get my documents approved."* **UG, Sydney**

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Students with exisiting networks find placements easily.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ Many students feel that finding a placement is too difficult and competitive. The lists provided by ACU are helpful, but insufficient.

⊘ Students who don't have pre-existing networks find the process of finding a placement difficult and stressful.

⊘ Some students report the placement office is unhelpful or unresponsive.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"We had to find our own placement. We had a subject on it but there was not enough help."* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"It's hard to find a placement as an international student, I don't have a network here."* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"I didn't find placement difficult, I used my lecturers and personal networks, I didn't have to use the placement office."* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"There is basically no communication from the placement office. They told me 8 days late I had no placement."* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"We need more communication about placement. We often feel lost and left behind."* **UG, International, Brisbane**

💬 *"I worked with my lecturer who had personal connections at St. V's to organise a part time placement."* **UG, Melbourne**

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

→ I like that ACU organises the placement for me.

→ I do not feel in control of the process.

→ I will try and make placement work for me.

→ I will just deal with what's handed to me.

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Many students appreciate ACU's help with arranging placement and feel that the process is easy, as long as they end up in a placement that is close to home and in a reputable institution.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ Sometimes rules and guidelines around getting an assigned placement are not enforced consistently. Students often mention that they are not allowed to look for their own placement, and then last minute they are asked to do so by the placement office.

⊘ Students often get assigned to a placement far from their homes so they need to find a student who is willing to swap with them.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"I can't complain about placement, I got mine in major hospitals."* **PG, Melbourne**

💬 *"My placement was fantastic, it was near home."* **UG, Strathfield**

💬 *"I've learned the system. I swapped my placement with someone to make the locations work."* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"Because it was so unorganised, I found my own placement, the course coordinator just signed it off, even though the rules state you can't seek your own placement."* **PG, Strathfield**

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

Students have a high level understanding of the placement process early in their journey.	Students are aware of pre-placement requirements that take a long time to arrange early in their journey.	Students feel they have sufficient time to complete pre-placement requirements.	Students find in the InPlace platform easy to navigate, and it's easy to see which documents are missing.	Students are given an extensive list of potential placement organisations.	Students are given advice from the placement office on how to best find and arrange a placement.	Students are assigned to a placement with enough notice.	Students are assigned to a placement that is in their area of interest, and in a location that works for them.

☆ ORGANISE LIFE AROUND PLACEMENT

☆ ATTEND PLACEMENT

FINALISE PLACEMENT

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

ORGANISE LIFE AROUND PLACEMENT:
- Students re-arrange their work to make placement fit into their lives.
- Students temporarily move to live closer to their placement.
- Students re-arrange their family duties around their placement.

ATTEND PLACEMENT:
- Students attend placement.
- Students connect with their placement coordinator.

FINALISE PLACEMENT:
- Students finalise placement with their organisation. Supervisors sign off on documentation.
- Students submit forms and assessment documentation.

ORGANISE LIFE AROUND PLACEMENT

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

🚫 Students find out about placements last minute. This means that they have to re-arrange their lives quickly to make the placement work for them.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"We have to come one week early for placement prep, I had to take time off work."* **UG, International, Brisbane**

💬 *"We can't plan any holidays, just in case something comes up."* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"I got my placement on a Friday for a Monday start. I worry it makes me look unprofessional."* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"Travelling time for placement should be considered. Mine was 2 hours away and I had to change."* **PG, International, Brisbane**

💬 *"Placement is stressful. You might get placed in Warnambool and then you are frantically calling around – can you pick up the kids?"* **PG, Ballarat**

ATTEND PLACEMENT

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Most students appreciate the practical nature of placements and the opportunity to build a network.

✓ If anything goes wrong during placement, students feel well supported by ACU.

✓ Most placement coordinators are considered helpful and supportive.

✓ Students appreciate when a placement coordinator connects with them to check in on their progress.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

🚫 Students often feel thrown at the deep end with placement and find that some units that would be helpful during placement happen too late/after the placement.

🚫 The placement/course coordinator is often the escalation point if anything goes wrong during placement.

🚫 Some students start placement late, which can have a flow on effect for the rest of their course.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"We'd come back from teaching a real class and then had a fictitious class practice at uni, it's out of order."* **PG, Melbourne**

💬 *"I did not know what to expect for my placement. They didn't realise how much I didn't know, which was so confusing. I had no idea."* **UG, mature aged, Melbourne**

💬 *"I'm blessed that my placement coordinator is very supportive. She got me a laptop and a mobile."* **PG, International, Brisbane**

💬 *"Our placement coordinator gives us everything on a silver platter."* **UG, Brisbane**

💬 *"I found out a few days ahead it would be postponed. Because of that, my other placements were delayed."* **PG, International, Melbourne**

💬 *"I found out about my placement 3 weeks after I was supposed to start"* **UG, Melbourne**

FINALISE PLACEMENT

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Students find lectures about placement processes informative.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

🚫 Processes vary between courses for submitting placement documentation, which can cause confusion.

🚫 Problems or delays when finishing placement can result in major impacts to future placements or even course completion.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"There was a dropbox to submit the forms, but I didn't know that until I contacted the guy in Sydney. I haven't finished a placement yet because of that reason, I need to have 2 to graduate next year."* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"We had a lecture [on how to do placement assessment] so that was good."* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"It's been a bit inconsistent, a few pieces of info got put out on forums, how to sign stuff off — e.g. 3 x 80 hours counts as one placement."* **UG, Melbourne**

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

ORGANISE LIFE AROUND PLACEMENT:
- Students don't have to change their life around placement — they can stay where they live and they can keep their part time jobs.

ATTEND PLACEMENT:
- Students learn practical skills on placement and find the experience informative and rewarding. 👍
- ACU keeps in touch with students throughout placement, which makes them feel supported. 👍

FINALISE PLACEMENT:
- Students are clear on what steps to take to finalise their placement, and they are able to finalise these in a timely manner.
- Students understand how to apply what they learned in placement in their assignments and later in their career.

☆ MAKE FRIENDS

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

- Students look for opportunities to meet like-minded people.
- Students make friends with peers — this often takes them longer than expected.
- Students establish connections with staff.

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

- → I have the confidence to try new things, so I make friends easily.
- → I need structured ways of meeting new people.
- → I am not actively looking to make friends, I already have a social circle (predominantly PG and mature age students).

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

- ✓ Some students love the calm culture at ACU, and they feel a sense of belonging.
- ✓ The friendly atmosphere makes it easier for students to approach strangers.
- ✓ Students form strong, small cohorts of friends, especially in their courses. This happens earlier for those with smaller cohorts, and on smaller campuses.
- ✓ Connections with staff foster belonging. Some students form close relationships with staff members, especially on smaller campuses.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

- ⊘ Students feel that there are not enough opportunities to engage with people outside of their course.
- ⊘ International students often feel that it's difficult to connect with local students.
- ⊘ Some students feel that the party culture is missing.
- ⊘ Mature age students often feel that there are not enough opportunities to connect with other mature age students, and it's more difficult for them to feel a sense of belonging.
- ⊘ Students who study online find it harder to make connections with peers and staff, making it difficult to feel a sense of belonging.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

- 💬 *"I made friends in my course really easily, I have a network of lifelong friends."* **UG, Canberra**
- 💬 *"There's a warmth to ACU that I'm not sure that other unis have."* **UG, Melbourne**
- 💬 *"If more socialising was encouraged I would have a stronger relationship with the uni. I would have more fond memories."* **PG, Melbourne**
- 💬 *"I didn't make my first friend until 3rd year."* **UG, Melbourne**
- 💬 *"For mature age students, it's a bit of a solo scenario here. I eventually met a few older people."* **UG, Melbourne**
- 💬 *"I don't feel connected with domestic students, sometimes I do not feel like I'm in Australia."* **UG, Strathfield**
- 💬 *"I started feeling belonging in the ACU community at the middle of semester 1 last year — until then, I really felt like I just came and went."* **PG, Melbourne**

ATTEND EVENTS & EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

- Students find out about events by walking past one, through word of mouth, and sometimes through the Student Portal.
- Students attend social events.
- Students attend industry workshops/events.

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

- ✓ Over time, some students develop a sense of agency to get out there and try new things. Until then, they wish ACU played a more active part in encouraging structured ways to meet new people.
- ✓ Students love events on campus that involve free food — they are popular so they are a great way to connect with others.
- ✓ Many students enjoy the university games as a way to connect with peers.
- ✓ Many students love the stressless days — they feel that the event brings campus to life.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

- ⊘ Students feel that events are not communicated well enough.
- ⊘ Students often express that there are not enough events available.
- ⊘ Some students felt that certain events are financially inaccessible.
- ⊘ Some postgraduate students wish there were more academic skills/industry workshops to connect with others while learning something new.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

- 💬 *"I made friends with people from classes. I would like more events to connect with people outside of my faculty."* **PG, International, Sydney**
- 💬 *"We mainly go to food type events like R-U-OK day because we're here already."* **UG, Melbourne**
- 💬 *"I love the event nights of the student association, we get freebies all the time."* **UG, International, Brisbane**
- 💬 *"I would like to see more social activities, like at orientation. You only feel like you belong when you have a friend."* **UG, Brisbane**
- 💬 *"As an international student you don't know anyone. ACU could introduce more sessions for international students. It would improve mental health. I was lonely in my first year."* **PG, International, Melbourne**

TAKE PART IN A STUDENT CLUB

- Students join a student club.
- Students start a new club.

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

- ✓ Highly engaged students that lead initiatives and clubs feel they have insider information, as their network is wider.
- ✓ Some students respond to the perceived gap in structured ways to meet like-minded people by starting their own communities, and they appreciate having the autonomy to do so.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

- ⊘ Many students find that there are not enough student clubs to join.
- ⊘ Students find that starting a new club is not encouraged enough, and they are often unclear how to go about the process.
- ⊘ Students feel that the minimum requirements to start a club (e.g. 5 members) are too harsh.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

- 💬 *"There are not enough clubs in general. Many students don't know you can start one."* **UG, Strathfield**
- 💬 *"It's difficult to start a new club. It's unclear what's the process, who to speak to..."* **UG, Sydney**
- 💬 *"I didn't find a great range of clubs. Other unis I come across have clubs and parties."* **UG, Melbourne**
- 💬 *"ACU is a good uni, but procedures need work. Even to get a club started. You send an email, it goes to three different people, and then they finally ask questions."* **UG, Mature Age, Brisbane**
- 💬 *"There was a nursing association but it was hard for me to find other associations like for women, or adults or gays. There's nowhere to go to find a list of clubs."* **UG, Mature Age, Brisbane**

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

- Students are able to find like minded people early in their degree.
- Students find that there are a lot of opportunities to attend events and meet new people.
- Students are able to easily find types of events they're interested in e.g. socialising events, skills workshops.
- Students are aware of existing student clubs, and they feel there are many to choose from.
- Students join the student clubs they're interested in.
- Students understand how to start a new club and can do so easily.

Student Life

CAMPUS MINISTRY | ☆ USE CAMPUS FACILITIES | ☆ ACCESS SUPPORT | LIVE IN STUDENT ACCOMMODATION

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

CAMPUS MINISTRY
- Students engage in campus ministry meetings.
- Students attend mass.
- Students get involved in the campus ministry e.g. join the choir.

USE CAMPUS FACILITIES
- Students use the spaces on campus.
- Students use parking facilities.
- Students use the library.
- Students go to the campus cafe/ canteen.

ACCESS SUPPORT
- Students learn about support services available to them.
- Students engage with support services. 🔍
- Students go through the Complaints and Appeal Process. 🔍

LIVE IN STUDENT ACCOMMODATION
- Some students in Ballarat live in campus accommodation. 🔍
- Some students in Sydney live in the off-campus accommodation. 🔍

CAMPUS MINISTRY

WHAT MINDSETS DO STUDENTS HAVE?
- → I am Catholic and I am deeply engaged with the campus ministry.
- → I am not religious but I enjoy the morals and ethics of the Catholic students and staff.
- → I respect the Catholic culture, but I appreciate that I'm not pushed to engage with it.

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?
- ✓ Students who do not wish to engage with the Catholic culture at ACU do not feel pressured to do so.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?
- ⊘ Some students feel that the Catholic culture is not strong enough at ACU.
- ⊘ Some students feel that the morals and ethics associated with Catholic culture are the reason why the party culture is missing at ACU.
- ⊘ A few students felt that the campus ministry students form a tight group that is difficult to break into.
- ⊘ Some students feel that the communications from campus ministry could be improved.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?
- 💬 *"I went to a catholic school, I like the spiritual side of ACU."* **UG, Melbourne**
- 💬 *"There was no choir opportunities and no emails about mass."* **UG, Canberra**
- 💬 *"Catholicism isn't pushed on you."* **UG, Brisbane**
- 💬 *"Once I came here I realised that the Catholicism wasn't a big deal."* **UG, Melbourne**
- 💬 *"The initial thought is that it's all going to be religion, but it's a misconception. The values and ethics are so high, it's beautiful."* **UG, Melbourne**
- 💬 *"If I had to physically be on campus the single most beneficial thing ACU could do is have traditional latin mass, not just the English one. It would make me feel very welcome."* **PG, Melbourne**

USE CAMPUS FACILITIES

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?
- ✓ Small campuses make it easier to feel a sense of belonging, as students make connections faster with each other and with staff.
- ✓ Many students find the library space and resources good and the staff friendly.
- ✓ Ballarat students truly enjoy their campus facilities. They especially love the food canteen.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?
- ⊘ Students feel that there are not enough spaces that encourage social activities, simply spaces to 'hang out'. This directly affects their sense of belonging.
- ⊘ Some students find that due to the lack of social spaces on campus, students end up hanging out in the library, which makes it loud and cramped.
- ⊘ Many students feel that the classrooms are too small.
- ⊘ Students find that there are not enough food options on campus, especially healthy, affordable food. (Especially in Melbourne & Brisbane)
- ⊘ Some students don't understand the library system.
- ⊘ Students find that there is not enough parking space available to them. Many also complain that when lectures run over, they end up with parking tickets.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?
- 💬 *"There are no places to relax. The library is too loud, even the security staff chat amongst themselves."* **UG, Melbourne**
- 💬 *"The library is too small, there are no group rooms."* **UG, Strathfield**
- 💬 *"The library were a great support with my assessment."* **UG, Sydney**
- 💬 *"The rooms are small and they overbook them, you can't fit tables."* **PG, Melbourne**
- 💬 *"There's not enough food options and they're expensive."* **UG, Brisbane**
- 💬 *"The cafe is too expensive, and there is not enough choice."* **UG, Strathfield**
- 💬 *"Parking is very stressful, you get fines when tutorials run over."* **UG, Ballarat**

ACCESS SUPPORT

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?
- ✓ Students see the academic skills unit as a valuable resource to help them succeed.
- ✓ Students consider the counselling service on campus to be of excellent quality.
- ✓ Disability support is seen as excellent, and the ability to create an EIP takes the pressure off students.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?
- ⊘ Across the board, students feel as though the support available to them is not communicated well enough, or early enough.
- ⊘ Counselling and disability services are considered excellent, but sometimes difficult or time consuming to access.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?
- 💬 *"I failed my subjects and went to academic skills unit throughout my learning experience. It would have been helpful to have such information at an early stage, e.g. orientation."* **UG, Brisbane**
- 💬 *"Mental health counsellors are fantastic, but could be a 2 week wait to get in, which isn't good."* **UG, Strathfield**
- 💬 *"Student services has a bunch of cool stuff, but they don't promote it so it's often late or poorly communicated."* **PG, Mature Age, Melbourne**
- 💬 *"It would have been good to promote academic services in first year."* **UG, Sydney**
- 💬 *"The ladies at academic skills are great but the process of booking with them is horrible."* **UG, Mature Age, Brisbane**
- 💬 *"OSS is fantastic but I think it's important to make people more aware of this service. Maybe counsellors can come to classes and say hi."* **UG, Canberra**

LIVE IN STUDENT ACCOMMODATION

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?
- ⊘ International students wish that there was more student accommodation available. Especially when they arrive in Australia, they are seeking a 'transition' accommodation that gives them reassurance that they will have a home before they find their place.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?
- 💬 *"I wish there was cheap accommodation."* **UG, International, Strathfield**
- 💬 *"I wish I knew more about accommodation before coming to Australia."* **UG, International, Brisbane**

IDEAL EXPERIENCE
- Interested students receive regular communications from the campus ministry.
- Students engage with campus ministry and find the experience rewarding. 👍
- Students can easily find a space to relax and meet others.
- Students can easily find a spot at the library and they find the library quiet.
- Students can easily park on campus.
- Students feel there are enough, varied food options on campus.
- Students find classrooms spacious and practical.
- All students are aware of support services available to them.
- All students are aware of support services available to them.
- Students use support services and feel listened to and cared for.

WORK

VOLUNTEER

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

Students work part time outside of ACU.

Students work part time at ACU.

Some PG students work full time and study online.

Students participate in volunteering programs through ACU.

Students volunteer independently.

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Students who work at ACU love this opportunity. They find that it pays well and it provides them with insider knowledge and support.

✓ Those who need to work full time appreciate the opportunity to study online in their own time.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ Balancing work and study is overwhelming for many students — especially those who need to do placement as part of their study.

⊘ Some students find that the careers support at ACU could help them more with finding part time work.

⊘ Finding part time work is difficult for international students.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"Balancing time constraints and a new job was my main challenge."* **PG, Sydney**

💬 *"I've found it hard to balance work life and uni life because it changes every 6 months. I've been told at work that I'm unpredictable."* **UG, Strathfield**

💬 *"I was working full time, 38 hours at a time, and studying. I could work on weekends so it was convenient but it was difficult."* **UG, Ballarat**

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Those who engage in volunteering opportunities find them extremely rewarding.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ Some students feel that volunteering opportunities are not communicated well enough and that ACU does not have a diverse range of volunteering opportunities available.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"I got so much out of community engagement - working with people living with HIV. They got me involved and helped me make a difference."* **UG, mature age, Strathfield**

💬 *"We have volunteering options throughout the year which I enjoy. I volunteered at an airport, good to be part of something different."* **PG, international, Sydney**

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

Students receive helpful advice on CV/resume writing and interviewing for part-time work.

Students receive information on how and where they can find a part-time job outside of ACU.

Students receive helpful advice on how to get a part-time job at ACU.

Students love working at ACU.

Students are aware of volunteering opportunities.

Students find engaging in volunteering opportunities rewarding.

SEEK CAREERS ADVICE

☆ **COURSE COMPLETION**

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

- Students access careers service to get advice.
- Students talk to lecturers and tutors to get career advice.
- Students talk to peers and family about their career options.

- Students start preparing for course completion in advance.
- Students apply for course completion.
- Students complete payments.
- Course coordinators check off requirements for course completion to be finalised.
- Students receive final transcripts.

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

→ I have a clear career goal in mind.

→ I am exploring my career options.

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Students appreciate that they can speak to their lecturers about their career, as they can give tailored and industry-specific advice.

✓ Many students appreciate the CV checks and mock interviews at the careers service.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ Students are often unaware that the careers service exists.

⊘ Some students find that careers support is vague, and they are not getting industry specific advice from the careers service.

⊘ Some students feel that careers advice is given to them too late.

⊘ Some students find that job-seeking related subjects and workshops happen too close to graduation when they have already started looking for jobs.

⊘ For many students, graduate pathways are unclear. They are afraid of the competitive nature of graduate positions and are unsure what are the non-standard pathways.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"Career? It's not really come up much, I assume that's because it's first year."* **UG, Mature Age, Melbourne**

💬 *"Every time I ask, 'what can I do after I finish theology and philosophy?' [lecturers] answer, we will discuss when you get closer to graduating."* UG, Brisbane

💬 *"The career hub helped me with my CV, they were clear and concise."* **UG, Melbourne**

💬 *"I got great support in grad year with resume workshops and pretend interviews."* **UG, Ballarat**

💬 *"At my previous uni the career advisor gave me contacts, ACU advisor didn't."* **PG, Sydney**

💬 *"I didn't get good career advice. Al they told me was generic advice like 'update your CV'. I needed them to tell me where to look! How to apply."* **PG, international, Melbourne**

💬 *"My course coordinator helped me with my resume, she made me feel confident."* **UG, Canberra**

💬 *"I used career services but it wasn't very good. I needed help with my resume and they just sent me a link to look at."* **UG, Sydney**

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Students independently ensure they have all requirements checked off. They start this process early, even a year in advance.

✓ For those who have completed all necessary requirements this is a straightforward process.

✓ Course completion is a moment of big relief for students.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

⊘ At this stage, some students realise that they haven't completed some requirements to graduate. This is extremely stressful as it results in extending their study.

⊘ Sometimes course completion doesn't happen in a timely manner due to system issues. This can affect job application processes and the registration process for nurses and teachers.

⊘ When mistakes or errors occur with results or transcripts it can cause major repercussions for course completion.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"I'm so pissed. Final results were supposed to be released but they're three weeks late because some people cheated. It's a huge difference, it might affect my registration."* **PG, Melbourne**

💬 *"I studied 4 years and in 3rd year the course enrolment guide changed. It's creating an issue with getting my course completion letter."* **UG, Brisbane**

💬 *"I wanted to work at a Catholic school but realised I needed a subject for it. It was an elective — I didn't know about this! I had to fly to Sydney to finish this unit. It was very expensive. It delayed my job hunting, I missed out on the best time to hunt for jobs."* **PG, Melbourne**

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

- All students are aware of the careers service, and know that they should engage with it throughout study.
- Students find practical career advice on CV/resume writing and interviewing.
- Students receive industry specific career advice from the careers service and from lecturers.

- Course completion happens automatically.

PROFESSIONAL REGISTRATION

APPLY FOR GRADUATION, REGISTER & PAY

☆ ATTEND GRADUATION

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

Some students go through the professional registration process.

Students apply for graduation.

Students obtain tickets for graduation.

Students attend their graduation.

Students celebrate with friends and family.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

🚫 All students are going through registration for the first time. They feel the process can be unclear and they don't get enough support from ACU at this time.

🚫 Placement timing can affect course completion and registration, which can be a major disruption.

🚫 The job search and job offers can happen before course completion. Late registration can affect job commencement.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"Everyone is stressed out in the final year, no one knows what's going on, we're all doing it for the first time."* **Alumni**

💬 *"We need more detail on when you should apply for registration. It wasn't clear. You actually need to do it 6 weeks before course completion. It wasn't clear but I managed it"* **Alumni**

💬 *"I didn't finish my prac until the 21st of December. I emailed my CC and said I was worried. You just hope that it works out behind the scene"* **Alumni**

💬 *"I sent my contract [to APRA] so that they could prioritise my application and I could start my job"* **Alumni**

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

→ I will leave applying for graduation until later, I am not in a celebratory mindset yet and must focus on wrapping up.

→ I apply for graduation early to make sure I get the number of tickets I'm looking for.

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ The majority of graduates found the communications from ACU clear and easy to understand during the lead up to their graduation ceremony. This experience was consistent across campuses. ■

✓ Graduation registration opens early. Some students get right onto it, and apply immediately.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

🚫 Students are allocated a certain number of tickets for the graduation ceremony. If they need spares they communicate or negotiate with one another to find additional tickets. Some struggle to find enough.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"There were some spare tickets that people could give up. We struggled with getting extra tickets. Obviously they have to cap the numbers, but we were able to help one another out."* **Alumni**

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Attendees' perceptions of the ACU Graduation Ceremony are positive. Guest experiences seem to be slightly more positive than graduates. ■

✓ Students tend to prefer ACU's graduation ceremony when comparing it to previous graduation experiences. They like the short duration and smoother organisation of the ACU ceremonies. ■

✓ Ratings for all the ceremony aspects (excluding the music), are high. The printed program, the length of the ceremony and the awarding of degrees are the strongest elements of the ceremony. ■

✓ The length of the ceremony across locations is rated highly. ■

✓ The professionalism and good organisation are top standouts for both the graduates and the guests. ■

✓ Students enjoy the speeches, and find them motivational, direct, and representative of the occasion. ■

✓ The process of returning academic gowns / regalia was rated high. ■

✓ Graduation is a moment that matters for the feeling of belonging. When cohorts graduate separately, it can affect the experience.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

🚫 Graduates suggest shorter wait times before the ceremony start. ■

🚫 Graduates suggest better signage/navigation at the ceremony for things like photography, toilets and exits. ■

🚫 Ratings for the music are lower than other aspects across all ceremonies. ■

🚫 Quality and extent of the food/ refreshments is poorly rated. ■

🚫 Photography services are perceived as overpriced, not up to standard, and with long queues. ■

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"Graduation was great! I was very nervous. It was well organised the speeches were amazing, and everyone was happy to be there"* **Alumni**

💬 *"It was long! It went for about 3 hours"* **Alumni**

💬 *"Graduation was a really organised day. They brought us in 2 hours before to run us through everything"* **Alumni**

💬 *"It was enjoyable. It was good to see everyone together and catch up."* **Alumni**

💬 *"Its really rough that Brisbane only has one a year. If you graduate mid-year you have to wait 6 months which takes the fun out of it"* **Alumni**

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

Students feel supported through the professional registration process.

Students apply for graduation and can get the number of tickets they need.

Graduation is an engaging, special event. 👍

Students get to graduate with their cohort all at the same time.

MISS GRADUATION & RECEIVE DIPLOMA

BECOME AN ALUMNI & FIND A JOB/CONTINUE TO STUDY

WHAT ARE STUDENTS DOING?

Some students miss graduation and receive their diploma by mail.

Students apply to become an alumni.

Students become alumni and set up an alumni email address.

Students receive alumni communications from ACU.

Students find employment.

Students continue on to further study.

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Students find missing graduation and receiving their certificate by post straightforward.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"I didn't actually go to graduation because I had a back injury and I just got them to send me my certificate."* **Alumni**

WHAT WORKS FOR STUDENTS?

✓ Students find ways to keep in touch with the network/cohort they built at ACU, often via pre-existing Facebook groups that were used during their time at ACU.

✓ When asked what advice they would give their former selves, Alumni regularly express they wished they said yes to more extra curricular activities.

✓ Similar to orientation, good and bad experiences can drive students to helping people later — both current students or each other beyond graduation.

✓ Many students, even those with poor experiences, end up reflecting positively on their time at ACU.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK FOR STUDENTS?

🚫 Alumni aren't always aware of opportunities to get involved. Those who were involved as a student are more likely to be involved later.

🚫 Moving into a career after uni is hard. Some students wish that they had started thinking about it earlier. Sometimes they blame themselves, sometimes they blame ACU.

WHAT ARE STUDENTS SAYING?

💬 *"I enjoy being part of something, I'm keen to be an active alumni member to help support others. First experience wasn't good as I can't get my email set up. I've tried and it's never happened."* **Alumni**

💬 *"You graduate and hit reality. I felt a bit lost to be honest. You realise that you wont get a job right away"* **Alumni**

💬 *"You graduate and hit reality. I felt a bit lost to be honest. You realise that you wont get a job right away"* **Alumni**

💬 *"I've had a positive experience. I recommend ACU to other people that want to study"* **Alumni**

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

Students only miss graduation for personal reasons, never because they don't want to attend.

Becoming an alumni happens automatically.

All alumni are aware of how they can engage with ACU.

Many alumni happily give back to ACU and engage in initiatives, attend events, and help current students.