

Pathways to University



UNIVERSITY OF
NEWCASTLE



Every path welcome, every student celebrated.

Come study at a university ranked in the top 1% in the world¹ and 2nd globally for climate action². Here, you'll prepare for a great career and find your people in our 100+ clubs, societies, and sports teams. Join over 37,000 students from 96 countries on our welcoming and inclusive campuses and make friendships that will last a lifetime.

There's a place for you.

The University of Newcastle offers a wide range of pathways and entry options to give you the best chance of getting in. That's why more than 70,000 students have enrolled in our pathway programs over the last 50 years. Our passionate teachers will support and inspire you as you begin your university journey.



PATHWAYS

We are the largest provider of alternate entry programs in Australia³



TOP 1%

university in the world¹



TOP REGIONAL UNIVERSITY

One of the top regional universities in Australia⁴



1ST IN THE SECTOR

for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student enrolments⁵



The University of Newcastle acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands within our footprint areas: Awabakal, Darkinjung, Biripai, Worimi, Wonnarua, Gomerioi, and Eora Nations. We pay respect to the wisdom of our Elders past and present. We extend our acknowledgement and respect to all Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Nations from which our students, staff and community are drawn.

Our pathways

If you're looking for a career change or didn't get the marks for your preferred degree, we offer a range of pathway programs to help you get started. Many of our programs are free and will help you build the skills you need—not only to gain entry, but to succeed at university and beyond.

newcastle.edu.au/pathways

We want to make sure you have all the support you need, both in and out of the classroom. The pathways team has been offering flexible and supportive pathways for over 50 years. Their mission is to provide top-notch teaching and learning, helping students transition into university with a solid foundation and plenty of support.

When you join a pathway program at the University of Newcastle, you'll also have access to student spaces with Wi-Fi, kitchen, and a welcoming study area designed with you in mind.

Pathway programs

Open Foundation

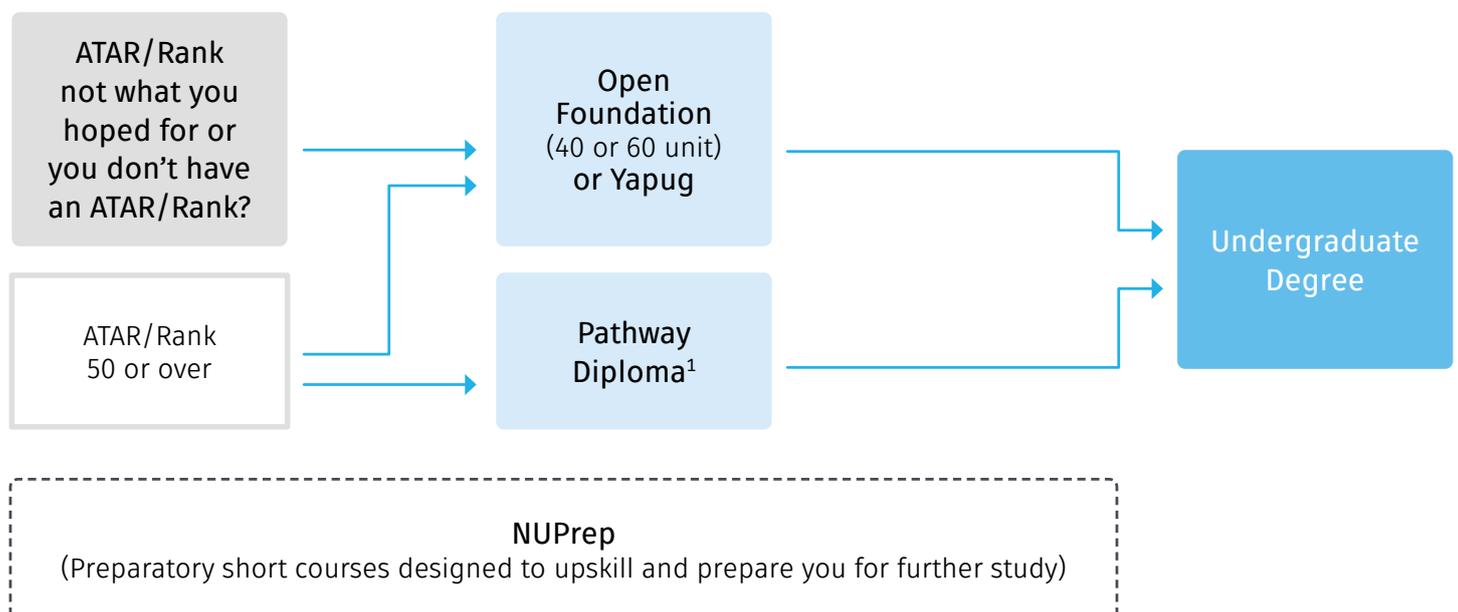
A free pathway program offered at the University of Newcastle for people who do not have the preparation or qualifications required for direct entry into their desired undergraduate degree.

Yapug

A free pathway program designed for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people who want to gain skills and entry into undergraduate degrees at the University. Study while immersing yourself in Indigenous knowledge, history and culture.

Diplomas

A pathway program with a qualification attached. Designed to offer you a more supported start to your undergraduate studies. Our Diplomas offer the opportunity to gain up to 80 units of credit, with entry into the second year of related degree programs. For other degree pathways, guaranteed entry is available, though credit may vary based on your chosen degree.



¹ Please note that diplomas require a minimum rank of 50 without adjustment factors.

Open Foundation

Open Foundation gives you a real taste of what university is like. It's free, flexible, and offered face-to-face at our Newcastle and Central Coast campuses, as well as flexibly online for NSW residents. When you complete the program, you'll receive guaranteed entry into more than 70 undergraduate degrees.

newcastle.edu.au/openfoundation

Open Foundation is designed for people 17 and over who want to gain the knowledge and skills needed for successful entry into an undergraduate degree. It doesn't just help you gain entry into university, but also builds the academic skills needed to succeed at a university level—regardless of your background or previous education.

You can choose to study either 4 or 6 courses (40 or 60 units), giving you the chance to explore different study areas as you build your skills.

Entry requirements



An Australian citizen
or permanent resident
currently living in
NSW Australia

17+

or older prior to
submitting an
application

What you will study

There are many courses to choose from. If you know which degree you'd like to study after Open Foundation, the Course Recommendation List on our website can help you choose your courses. To successfully complete Open Foundation, you're required to complete 40-60 units of courses.

Cost

FREE! There are no tuition fees associated with Open Foundation. However, there are some basic costs associated with studying at university such as textbooks and parking.

How to apply

Apply directly for free on our Open Foundation webpage or via UAC for a fee.

Have further questions?

Check out our Open Foundation webpage, email or call our friendly team for more information.

 1800 353 775

 enabling@newcastle.edu.au

Excellence through Equity (EtE) pathway

The Excellence through Equity (EtE) Pathway to Medicine offers selected students who have completed the Open Foundation program the opportunity to study medicine through the Joint Medical Program (JMP). It opens opportunities for students who have experienced diversity, including educational disadvantage, social inequities and more.

This pathway sets aside up to six places for admission into the JMP for Open Foundation students if the eligibility criteria is satisfied*.



COMPETITIVE ENTRY

into all degrees upon completion and access to our Guaranteed Admissions Scheme



FLEXIBLE STUDY OPTIONS

Full-time or part-time¹



STUDY ON-CAMPUS

in Newcastle or the Central Coast



ONE-ON-ONE SUPPORT

from a dedicated Student Liaison Officer

“Open Foundation is such a supportive way to transition into university especially if you’re feeling unsure or returning to study. The staff really care, and the program builds your confidence step by step. Do not be afraid to ask questions or reach out, there’s so much support available, and you’re definitely not alone.

Without Open Foundation, I wouldn’t be at university at all; it has given me my education back.”

Angela
Bachelor of Education (Primary)

Yapug

If you're an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person and aged 17 or over, Yapug is your key to university. Yapug is designed to help Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people gain skills for entry into undergraduate degrees at the University of Newcastle.

newcastle.edu.au/yapug

Yapug will help you develop the academic skills and self-discipline required to succeed in undergraduate study. This specialty pathway program is specifically for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people wanting to:

- gain admission to an undergraduate degree at the University of Newcastle;
- develop the academic skills necessary to succeed at university level;
- become familiar with the University of Newcastle and its environment; and
- develop different learning methods and skills, including problem-based learning, whilst enjoying a supportive learning environment (culturally, personally and academically).

Yapug offers flexible study options. You can choose to study:

- full-time over one year (two semesters)
- part-time over two years (three or four semesters)

Entry requirements



An Australian citizen or permanent resident currently living in Australia

17+

or older when you commence study



Establish Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander status

What you will study

There are core Aboriginal studies courses to support your cultural education, plus a range of courses to prepare you for the degree you want to study.

To successfully complete Yapug, you're required to complete 80 units of courses.

Cost

FREE! There are no tuition fees associated with Yapug. However, there are some basic costs associated with studying at university such as textbooks and parking.

How to apply

Apply for free directly on our Yapug webpage.

Have further questions?

Check out our Yapug webpage, email or call our friendly team for more information.

 1800 353 775

 wollotuka@newcastle.edu.au

“As I hadn't been in a 'school' environment for such a long time, I decided to do the Yapug program. This was a way to gain entry into university with the support of an 'extended family' right by my side.”

Jack

Bachelor of Environmental Science and Management



When you embark on the Yapug pathway program at the University of Newcastle you will benefit from a range of support services offered by the Wollotuka Institute. Some of the key services offered by the Wollotuka Institute include counselling, tutorial assistance, a well-equipped resource centre, audio and visual materials on Indigenous topics and issues, health support and cultural programs.

NUPrep

Our FREE short courses have been designed to help you prepare for university or provide you a taste of university-style study.

newcastle.edu.au/nuprep

Whether you're looking to brush up on your academic skills, wanting a head start in your university studies or just looking to learn something new, there's a short course for you. Our short courses introduce you to the learning and assessment styles found in our undergraduate and pathway programs. They're delivered flexibly at different stages throughout the year to provide support and access to university experts—both before and during your study. Our courses cover a range of subject areas from university-specific discipline preparation to enhancing academic survival skills. We recommend taking one to three courses aligned to your current or future studies within a NUPrep term.

“I saw NUPrep being advertised as a free head start to prepare for my studies. At the start of the year, I was unsure about how well I would handle the step up into university, by the end of the year, I ended up achieving a High Distinction in seven of the eight courses I took. It was certainly a confidence booster and NUPrep was great to prepare me.”

Noah
NUPrep participant
Bachelor of Mathematics



TAUGHT BY EXPERTS

Courses taught by discipline experts



PROVEN RESULTS*

NUPrep students achieve a higher success rate



AWARD ON TRANSCRIPT

Courses shown on academic transcript

*On average, students who completed NUPrep passed 90.8% of their courses in the first year of their bachelor degree. Source: University of Newcastle NUSar data 2025.

Diplomas

Our diplomas equip you with the introductory skills needed to continue into further study or enter the workforce. They offer guaranteed entry into more than 70 degrees, and you may receive credit that allows you to start in the second year of a related degree.

newcastle.edu.au/diplomas

Our diplomas are designed to give you a supported study experience and a recognised qualification upon completion. These credit-based pathways combine first-year degree courses with free, supported pathway courses to help you build essential skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and innovation.

Taken over one year full-time or up to four years part-time, a diploma allows you to upskill while you work. You can gain up to 80 units of credit and receive guaranteed entry into over 70 degrees if further study is your goal.

While there are entry requirements for these diplomas, if you don't have an ATAR you could still gain entry based on other criteria like past study, work or vocational experience. Throughout your studies, you'll be supported by the pathways team, and have access to academic learning support, counselling, and peer support.

What you will study

Our diplomas cover key study areas. You'll study a combination of first-year degree courses alongside free supported pathways courses that help with the transition to university studies. These courses will teach you vital skills that set you up for success and prepare you for studying at university.

By studying a diploma, you can gain up to 80 units of credit and receive guaranteed entry into over 70 degree programs.

Cost

There are program and course fees associated with studying a diploma. To learn more about fees, visit the fees and scholarships page on our webpage.

How to apply

Apply for free through our Early Entry Program or apply via UAC for a fee. Visit our Diplomas webpage to learn more.

Have further questions?

Check out our Diplomas webpage, email or call our friendly team for more information.



1800 353 775



enabling@newcastle.edu.au

Pathway diplomas

Program name	2026 SR	Intake	Location	Duration
Diploma in Arts and Social Science	50.00	S1, S2	N, G	1 yr FT / 4 yrs PT
Diploma in Built Environment	50.00	S1, S2	N, G, O	1 yr FT / 4 yrs PT
Diploma in Business	50.00	S1, S2	NC, G	1 yr FT / 4 yrs PT
Diploma in Education Studies	50.00	S1, S2	N, G	1 yr FT / 4 yrs PT
Diploma in Engineering	50.00	S1	N	1 yr FT / 4 yrs PT
Diploma in Environmental Science	50.00	S1	N, CC	1 yr FT / 4 yrs PT
Diploma in Exercise and Sport Science	50.00	S1	N	1 yr FT / 4 yrs PT
Diploma in Information Technology	50.00	S1, S2	N	1 yr FT / 4 yrs PT
Diploma in Media and Visual Communication	50.00	S1, S2	NC	1 yr FT / 4 yrs PT
Diploma in Science	50.00	S1	N, CC	1 yr FT / 4 yrs PT
Diploma in Social and Human Services	50.00	S1	G	1 yr FT / 4 yrs PT



GUARANTEED ENTRY
into over 70 degrees



CREDIT
toward an undergraduate degree



QUALIFIED
You will receive a level 5
diploma qualification

“The course outline really drew me in, I knew sociology, how communities work, understanding injustices and colonisation would be instrumental to my career path. Social Science has the promise of evoking real change, and that really appealed to me. I also was enticed by the flexibility, of gaining a qualification at the end of the year of study.”

Gabi

Completed a Diploma in Arts and Social Science
and now studying a Bachelor of Social Science

Student support

We provide a range of support services to assist you throughout your university journey—from careers advice and counselling to financial assistance and peer mentoring.

newcastle.edu.au/support

Academic Learning Support

While a rounded education extends beyond the classroom, your studies will play a central role in your time at university and we want to ensure you perform to your potential.

Academic Learning Support is your first stop if you want help with your workload, to dive deeper into the content or think your marks could improve. Our Student Progress Advisors are experts in connecting you to support services, including 24/7 support via Studiosity and our dedicated Learning Advisors.

newcastle.edu.au/als

AccessAbility

We're committed to providing an equitable learning environment for all future and current students—including those with disabilities and temporary or permanent conditions that may affect their participation, engagement or learning opportunities. Our AccessAbility service aims to support students to reach their full academic potential and create an environment that promotes independence and success.

newcastle.edu.au/current-students/support/personal/accessability

“I have used AccessAbility, as a student with disability, they have developed a reasonable adjustment plan (RAP) for me to have adjustments implemented for my disability. The Adaptive Technology Centre in the Auchmuty Library is a great space for students with Disability to study, with adjustable lighting and ergonomic furniture. It provides me with a space appropriate for my needs to be able to effectively study.”

Kat

Completed Open Foundation and now studying a Bachelor of Biomedical Science



Careers support

The Career Service will help prepare you for success after university. From gaining part-time work while you study, clarifying your longer-term goals, or connecting with industry, we have a service or resource to fit your current needs and help you achieve your career goals.

newcastle.edu.au/careers

Counselling

We provide a range of free services including consultations with a Wellbeing Advisor. These consultations can be accessed quickly (typically within 1–2 days), and can be either face-to-face or online. We also provide after-hours phone support, and a variety of resources to help you improve your wellbeing and reach your academic potential.

newcastle.edu.au/counselling

Financial assistance

Whatever your background and financial status, we have support systems available to help with the costs involved in studying, including scholarships and a range of financial assistance. You also might be eligible for Australian Government assistance with HECS-HELP loans and income support depending on your pathway program.

newcastle.edu.au/financial-assistance

Student Liaison Officers

If you are studying Open Foundation, Yapug or a Diploma you have the support of a dedicated Student Liaison Officer.

Your Student Liaison Officer is here to help you make the most of your experience in your pathway program and can guide you through all aspects of your studies. From enrolment and course selection to exams, they'll be able to provide personalised advice and connect you with support services, should you need them. Towards the end of your time in the program, they'll be on hand to assist you with your application for your undergraduate degree.

Student life

While your education should be the primary focus during your time at the University of Newcastle, finding the right study/life balance is also important.

newcastle.edu.au/uni-life

Activities and events

No matter which campus you study at, there's always something happening during the semester. Take part in study workshops, get involved in health and fitness programs, attend presentations from international scholars, or simply kick back and enjoy watching a movie by moonlight. Our campuses are buzzing with social events throughout the year. Enjoy Welcome Week, band competitions, live music, 'stress less' activities, or snag yourself a sausage sandwich at free weekly lunches.

Clubs and societies

University of Newcastle Students' Association (UNSA) is home to more than 100 clubs, societies and social groups. From cheerleading to arm wrestling, chess, sporting clubs and plenty more—there's something for everyone.

Cafes and live music

Whether you're looking for a good coffee to kick-start your day, a bite to eat at lunch or a place to relax in between classes, we've got you covered with a wide range of cafés, food outlets and bars across our campuses. Plus, you don't have to venture too far to catch some of the world's biggest musicians and bands. Chances are you'll find a gig at Bar on the Hill (Callaghan campus), one of the many venues close to the Newcastle City campus or further down the coast at Terrigal Beach House.

Staying active

NUSport at University (Callaghan), and Harbourside (Newcastle City), is your sport, fitness and leisure destination. You'll find the Hunter Region's premier 50m indoor heated swimming pool, extensive group fitness options and a range of strength and cardio equipment. Indoor courts cater for casual hoops and structured social sport competitions all year. Join one of many sporting clubs or compete in the representative inter-university competition, UniSport Nationals, or apply for support as an elite athlete. Also located at NUSport University is a café and physiotherapy clinic. NUSport (Ourimbah) Pop Up Gym offers fitness equipment and virtual group fitness classes.

nusport.org.au

Getting around



Access via train is available for both Callaghan (Warabrook station) and Central Coast (Ourimbah or Gosford station) campuses and if you're studying at our Newcastle City campus, the Newcastle Light Rail's Civic stop is right at our doorstep.



Beautiful bike paths make riding around campus fun, and our bike hubs at Callaghan, Newcastle City and Gosford Central offer showers and secure storage.



A free shuttle bus loops around Callaghan campus to get you to and from class and runs between our Callaghan and Newcastle City campus every 30 minutes during semester. A shuttle bus runs in the morning and afternoon between Ourimbah and Gosford campus, and a shuttle bus will circle between Gosford Library, Gosford Central, and Gosford Station.



An after hours, on-call security shuttle is also available at Callaghan and Gosford campus. The shuttle can take you back to your car, to Warabrook or Ourimbah train stations and surrounding suburbs near Callaghan.





Newcastle Campus

Callaghan

University Drive,
Callaghan NSW 2308

Newcastle City Campus

NUspace

Corner Hunter and Auckland Streets,
Newcastle NSW 2300

Q Building

Corner of Honeysuckle Drive
and Worth Place,
Newcastle NSW 2300

Conservatorium of Music

Corner of Auckland and Laman Streets,
Newcastle NSW 2300

Central Coast Campus

Ourimbah

Chittaway Road,
Ourimbah NSW 2258

Gosford Hospital

Holden Street,
Gosford NSW 2250

Gosford Central

299 Mann Street,
Gosford NSW 2250

Open Days

Each year we invite you to spend the day with us at our annual Open Days. These events give you the chance to explore our campuses and experience a taste of life at university. You can chat to current students and staff about student support services as well as pathways, degree and study options.

Newcastle—15 August 2026

Central Coast—29 August 2026



DISCOVER
OPEN DAYS



Have a question?

Reach out to our Future Students Support team. We're available Monday to Friday, 9am–5pm on 1300 275 866, or send us an enquiry.



Key dates

Keep up to date on important key dates throughout the year