



**If not you,  
who?**



**ACU**

AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY

**Non-school leaver  
study guide**





# A culture of life-long learning

By studying at ACU, you'll join a diverse community of students with a range of beliefs, backgrounds and ages. In fact, more than half of our current students cohort are non-school leavers, meaning they have not come to university straight out of high school.

## WHAT IS A NON-SCHOOL LEAVER?

You are considered a non-school leaver if it has been more than three years since you completed Year 12, or you are over the age of 21.



## Acknowledgement of Country

In recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' deep spiritual connection to Country, and in continuing the university's commitment to reconciliation, it is customary to acknowledge Country as we pass through it. We acknowledge and pay our respects to the First Peoples, the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waterways where Australian Catholic University campuses are located, and we thank them for their continued custodianship.



# Applying to ACU

We know that applying for a uni course can seem a bit confusing at times. So, we've broken it down into three easy steps.



**1.**

**Choose the course you'd like to study, and check the entry requirements**

- Visit [acu.edu.au/courses](https://acu.edu.au/courses)



**2.**

**View our entry and pathway programs**

- Visit [acu.edu.au/pathways](https://acu.edu.au/pathways)



**3.**

**Apply for your chosen course through UAC, QTAC or VTAC – depending on your location**

- UAC (NSW and ACT) at [uac.edu.au](https://uac.edu.au)
- QTAC (Qld) at [qtac.edu.au](https://qtac.edu.au)
- VTAC (Vic) at [vtac.edu.au](https://vtac.edu.au)
- For select courses, you can apply directly to ACU.

[acu.edu.au/apply](https://acu.edu.au/apply)

# Embarking on a career change

There's a time in almost everyone's career that things don't seem quite right. You might be bored, stressed or unfulfilled, and feel the urge to pursue a path more aligned with your passion. You find yourself scouring job boards, careers blogs and university websites, searching for a way out of your predicament.

But how do you know if a career change is right for you? And what do you do next?

## 1 Is a career change even an option?

Don't let fear of change make your decision for you. Career changes are more common than you may think. Job mobility makes a great deal of sense in today's world, where one graduate can expect to work in 18 jobs and go through six career changes in their lifetime.\*

## 2 Is a career change for me?

Chieh Huang, an entrepreneur, identifies three things to consider while deciding if a career change is a good idea.

- 1. Are you still learning?** If you're not being given the opportunities to learn, or you simply don't have the care factor to get better at your job, it's time to consider moving on.
- 2. Trust your gut.** If you find yourself waking up in the morning with butterflies in your stomach at the thought of heading to work, there's a good chance your gut is trying to tell you something.
- 3. Pain shouldn't be a factor.** If the problem is short-term, like a boss or a colleague who you don't get along with, or a project that is causing you grief, that's probably not a good reason to change careers. All jobs have pain points.



\*McCordle (2019), 'Gen Z and Gen Alpha Infographic Update'





### 3

#### Where do I want to go?

This is the big question. Once you've identified a career change is for you, you need to decide what career you want to change to.

Think about: What do you enjoy? What are you passionate about? What are you good at (or could learn to be good at)? And what do you want a career change to bring to your life?

There are a lot of reasons you may want a change. Maybe you want more money, more independence, more seniority, less stress, a better work/life balance or more purpose. There is no right or wrong choice, it all depends on where you want to go, and why you want to get there.

### 4

#### How do you get there?

There are a lot of paths you can take to a new career. You can apply for internships or mentorships, or just take a plunge and apply for jobs.

Most careers, however, require qualifications. Once you've identified your goal – look at what education paths are available to give you the skills and qualifications you need to succeed.

A university degree is an excellent way to learn new skills and gain qualifications vital to many roles.



# University is for all

Everyone should have the opportunity to study at university. At ACU, we have initiatives to help students from a range of backgrounds and experiences gain access to uni and thrive during their studies.

Visit [acu.edu.au/our-values](https://acu.edu.au/our-values) to learn more.

## **ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STUDENT SUCCESS**

We support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' ambitions to study at university through entry programs, culturally safe spaces, Indigenous Higher Education Units, scholarships and Away from Base programs.

## **ACCESS AND DISABILITY SERVICE**

Students with a temporary or ongoing mental health/medical condition or disability, as well as those who are neurodivergent or have significant carer responsibilities, are supported by access and disability advisors who will work with them to develop a plan to help manage their studies.

## **ACU ALLY NETWORK**

The ACU Ally Network is a visible network of staff who support our pastoral commitment to providing a safe, inclusive and respectful university environment for people who identify as being lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, gender diverse, intersex, queer and asexual (LGBTIQ+).

The ACU Ally Network aims to:

- promote understanding and awareness of LGBTIQ+ issues that affect staff and students
- promote and advance our commitment to providing a safe, inclusive and respectful place of work, learning and support for staff and students who identify as LGBTIQ+.

## **AUTISM AT UNI**

The Autism at Uni program aims to ensure autistic students at ACU get the chance to reach their full potential and academic success by supporting them during their studies, and through research and advocacy.

## **CLEMENTE AUSTRALIA**

Our Clemente program aims to empower Australians experiencing challenging life circumstances, and to break the cycle of poverty, inequality and social injustice, by providing the opportunity to study a humanities subject at university.



“I’d been married for nearly 20 years, and through domestic violence, I had found myself homeless. During this process, I found out about the Clemente program. The effect the program has had on me and my kids, it’s huge. I’m the first person in my family to go to university, and I’ve actually taken my children on campus just to show them where I study. They’re in complete awe, and it’s changed all of our lives for the better.”

**Tabitha, Clemente graduate**  
Theology and philosophy student



# A culture of support and excellence



## IN AUSTRALIA

### 5 stars

LEARNER ENGAGEMENT,  
SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND  
STARTING SALARY

*Good Universities Guide 2023*, for undergraduate students



### Top 7

GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT

Graduate Outcomes Survey – Longitudinal 2022,  
medium-term, full-time employment 2020 – 2022 for  
domestic undergraduate students



### No. 1

ENERGY EFFICIENT UNIVERSITY

Tertiary Education Facilities Management Association  
Annual Survey 2021



### 100%

POWERED BY RENEWABLE  
ELECTRICITY ON AUSTRALIAN CAMPUSES



## IN THE WORLD

### Top 2%

UNIVERSITIES

*Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2023*.  
Percentage calculated as ACU's world rank as a proportion of  
the total number of universities in the world: *International  
Handbook of Universities 2019*, Palgrave MacMillan



### Top 10

CATHOLIC UNIVERSITIES

*Times Higher Education World University Rankings  
2022*, ranked IFCU members



### Top 40

YOUNG UNIVERSITIES

*Times Higher Education Young University Rankings 2022*



# Gaining entry to your course

There are many ways you can be assessed for entry to a course at ACU. While each applicant is unique, and your selection rank can be calculated from a variety of factors, below are some of our common admission pathways and entry programs.

| ADMISSION PATHWAYS                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Year 12 results</b>                         | <p>Even if you completed Year 12 many years ago, your results will still be valid and can be used to calculate your selection rank. In fact, Year 12 results are valid indefinitely.</p> <p>Whether this result is considered for an offer to a course will depend on whether you have additional qualifications (including other recognised qualifications completed while at school or after school).</p> <p><a href="http://acu.edu.au/undergraduate-entry-requirements">acu.edu.au/undergraduate-entry-requirements</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Vocational Education and Training (VET)</b> | <p>VET qualifications can be used to gain entry to university. The minimum standalone VET qualification to enter ACU is a Certificate IV.</p> <p>We have a number of formal partnership agreements with TAFE and VET providers to give their graduates guaranteed entry into a relevant ACU degree and/or credit for previous studies. To see if your VET provider is one of our partners, you can search our articulation database at <a href="http://acu.edu.au/articulation">acu.edu.au/articulation</a></p> <p>If your VET provider is not formally partnered with us, you will need to apply through a tertiary admissions centre (TAC) – either QTAC, UAC or VTAC, depending on which state you plan on studying in. As part of this application, your VET qualification will be assigned a selection rank.</p> <p><a href="http://acu.edu.au/vocational-education-and-training-pathway">acu.edu.au/vocational-education-and-training-pathway</a></p> |
| <b>Previous higher education</b>               | <p>If you have completed a minimum of two units at another recognised higher education provider, these studies can be used as part of your application to study with us.</p> <p>You will be assigned a selection rank based on this previous study level, duration and your grade point average (GPA). Your selection rank is applied during the admission process. You don't need to fill out any additional forms with us – you simply need to apply via a TAC or directly with ACU.</p> <p><a href="http://acu.edu.au/undergraduate-entry-requirements">acu.edu.au/undergraduate-entry-requirements</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Special Tertiary Admissions Test (STAT)</b> | <p>If you are 21 years or older and have no formal education qualification, you should consider sitting the Special Tertiary Admissions Test (STAT).</p> <p>The STAT is an aptitude test that helps applicants demonstrate their potential for tertiary study. The test can be a multiple choice test or a written English test, but please note ACU accepts only the multiple choice test results.</p> <p>The test is widely accepted and used by many Australian institutions and a STAT result may improve your chances of selection for your course.</p> <p><a href="http://acu.edu.au/stat">acu.edu.au/stat</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Pathway certificates and diplomas</b>       | <p>By studying a pathway certificate or diploma, you can take advantage of lower entry requirements to begin studying what you love. We will then use any completed grades to help secure your spot in a bachelor-level course.</p> <p><a href="http://acu.edu.au/pathway-certificates-and-diplomas">acu.edu.au/pathway-certificates-and-diplomas</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |



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|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Work and life experience</b></p>                                      | <p>Your work and life experience can help you gain entry to a university course. To be eligible for a selection rank based on your employment history, you must have been in paid employment for a minimum of six months full-time (or equivalent). This might be continuous employment with one employer, or periods of employment doing the same job with different employers.</p> <p>You will need to provide a statement of service from your employer about the role performed and the length of time you have been employed. If you were self-employed or had periods of self-employment, you must provide a statement from your accountant, solicitor or tax agent confirming the role performed and the duration you were self-employed in this role.</p> <p><a href="http://acu.edu.au/work-and-life-experience-pathway">acu.edu.au/work-and-life-experience-pathway</a></p> |
| <p><b>Foundation Studies Program – Blacktown and Melbourne campuses</b></p> | <p>If you haven't got an ATAR, or your ATAR isn't what you were hoping for, don't stress – our Foundation Studies program provides you with another path into university. Develop the skills and confidence to thrive at university and gain guaranteed entry into an ACU undergraduate degree if you achieve the required grade point average (GPA) for your chosen degree. This fee-free program will prepare you for study at ACU by immersing you in university life while introducing you to a range of foundation units. Please note, this course is currently offered at our Blacktown and Melbourne campuses only.</p> <p><a href="http://acu.edu.au/fs">acu.edu.au/fs</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                |

**ENTRY PROGRAMS**

|                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Veteran Entry Program (VEP)</b></p>                             | <p>If you are a current or former member of the Australian Defence Force (ADF), or a family member of ADF personnel, you may be eligible for ACU's Veteran Entry Program (VEP). We'll assess your service in the military and convert it to a selection rank, so you can gain entry to an ACU program. You may also be eligible for credit towards your university degree through our recognition of prior learning program. Once you're an ACU student, our Student Veteran Support Program (SVSP), as well as a range of other services offered by the Student Veteran Services team, will give you the tools and support you need to transition to student life and succeed.</p> <p><a href="http://acu.edu.au/veterans">acu.edu.au/veterans</a></p> |
| <p><b>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Admission Process</b></p> | <p>If you are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander you may be eligible to apply for entry to an ACU course through our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Admission Process. This process considers factors other than your Year 12 results. Through the process, you will meet with a member of the Indigenous Higher Education Unit (IHEU) and a faculty representative. Your potential to undertake study will be based upon any of your previous studies, life experiences and achievements. Applications for most courses are made directly through the relevant state TAC (UAC, QTAC or VTAC).</p> <p><a href="http://acu.edu.au/atsi">acu.edu.au/atsi</a></p>                                                                                |
| <p><b>Elite Athlete and Performer Program (EAPP)</b></p>              | <p>The Elite Athlete and Performer Program (EAPP) is designed to help you balance elite sporting and performance commitments with your studies and university life. Program benefits include access to early and flexible timetabling, academic support, financial scholarships, representative subsidies and gym access on campus. EAPP-eligible students also qualify for course entry assistance to study at ACU. Apply to the EAPP via our website.</p> <p><a href="http://acu.edu.au/eapp">acu.edu.au/eapp</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

**WHAT IS A SELECTION RANK?**

Your selection rank is essentially an entry score – it is calculated by TACs (QTAC, UAC or VTAC) and used to determine if you are eligible for entry to an undergraduate degree. For example, if you have an ATAR or OP from Year 12 studies, your selection rank will be your ATAR/OP combined with any adjustment factors you are eligible for. VET courses, work experience and STAT tests can also be used to calculate a selection rank. Most universities will assess you for entry to a course based on your selection rank. Please note, Year 12 students no longer graduate with OPs in Queensland, but with ATARs – so most documents now only list ATAR requirements.

If you have an OP, you can find OP to ATAR conversion tables on QTAC's website. If you need more help, contact AskACU. [acu.edu.au/askacu](http://acu.edu.au/askacu)

# Life at ACU

## Find your place in a place that cares.

Your wellbeing is our biggest priority. And we know the support of a caring community will help you achieve your best.

At ACU, you'll join a vibrant campus community, make friends for life, and have the support you need to thrive during, and after, your studies.

## Be supported

### ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STUDENTS

Our Indigenous Higher Education Units on each campus offer cultural connections as well as academic and social support in a welcoming space where you can meet, eat, study and relax.

[acu.edu.au/indigenoussupport](http://acu.edu.au/indigenoussupport)

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### ACADEMIC SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Set yourself up for academic success with help from our academic skills development team. Take part in workshops, explore online resources or have a one-on-one consultation. We've also partnered with Studiosity, so you can benefit from free 24/7 online study support. Plus, first-year students can take part in PASS: free weekly peer-led study groups for units that students can find challenging.

[acu.edu.au/academic-skills-development](http://acu.edu.au/academic-skills-development)

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### CAREER ADVICE

Enhancing your employability is our job. Access career advice, application and interview assistance, workshops and professional development. We'll also help you engage with employers, seek a student job on campus or develop your entrepreneurial skills.

[acu.edu.au/careersupport](http://acu.edu.au/careersupport)

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### DISABILITY AND CARER SUPPORT

If you are a student with disability or a temporary or ongoing mental health/medical condition, you are neurodivergent or you have significant carer responsibilities, our access and disability advisors will work with you to put together a plan to help you manage your studies.

[acu.edu.au/disability-support](http://acu.edu.au/disability-support)

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### STUDENT ADVOCACY

We offer information, advice and a referral service to help you navigate university policies and procedures. The service is confidential, free and available to all current ACU students.

[acu.edu.au/student-advocacy](http://acu.edu.au/student-advocacy)

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### COUNSELLING

Free and confidential counselling is available to all ACU students who are experiencing personal, study, relationship, work-related or mental health issues. We also offer a range of workshops to help you manage life, work and study.

[acu.edu.au/counselling-services](http://acu.edu.au/counselling-services)

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### SAFETY

We want you to flourish on campus. That's why we're committed to making our university a place of safety and respect for all students and staff.

[acu.edu.au/student-safety](http://acu.edu.au/student-safety)

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### MEDICAL SERVICES

ACU has medical centres on our Brisbane, Melbourne and North Sydney campuses. They offer comprehensive, high-quality healthcare services to students, staff and the local community. Bulk billing is available.

[acu.edu.au/medical-centres](http://acu.edu.au/medical-centres)

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### SCHOLARSHIPS

We offer a range of scholarships to both new and current students. These range in value from \$1,000 to \$160,000, and are available to eligible students studying in every discipline across all of our campuses.

[acu.edu.au/scholarships](http://acu.edu.au/scholarships)

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### STUDENT VETERAN SUPPORT PROGRAM

If you're a current or former member of the Australian Defence Force (ADF), or you're a family member of ADF personnel, we offer a range of support services and academic resources to help ease the transition into uni life. From the big exam to balancing your studies, we'll be in your corner every step of the way.

[acu.edu.au/svsp](http://acu.edu.au/svsp)

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## Get involved

### ORIENTATION

Before you start classes, make sure you head to your campus orientation. Get a feel for uni life, join your campus student association, take a campus tour, join some clubs, meet your peers, talk to your course coordinators, eat lots of free food, listen to bands, and generally get a feel for where you'll be enjoying the next few years.

[acu.edu.au/orientation](http://acu.edu.au/orientation)

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### GET AHEAD BY GIVING BACK

At ACU, we're all about making an impact. And you can start making a difference while you're studying. We offer a huge range of community engagement and volunteering opportunities: on campus, locally, nationally and overseas. Volunteering is a great way to meet like-minded people, learn transferable employability skills, and help to make the world a better place.

[acu.edu.au/acuengagement](http://acu.edu.au/acuengagement)

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### SPORT AND FITNESS

Enjoy the many opportunities available on your campus to get and stay active. Join a sport club or social sport program, represent ACU at UniSport and intervarsity events, take part in daily sport, health and wellbeing activities, or watch live sport on campus. At select campuses, visit us at The Track – a student space where you can hang out, relax and get involved in a variety of competitions. You can also join ACU Active, our facilitator of health, fitness and wellbeing programming. Access our gym, fitness classes and personal training services at on-campus gyms, partner gyms or online, all with the support and guidance of highly qualified staff.

[acusport.acu.edu.au](http://acusport.acu.edu.au)

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### JOIN A CLUB

One of the best ways to make friends, learn skills and develop your leadership potential is by getting involved in clubs and societies. Take the pressure out of starting uni by getting together with like-minded people in a relaxed setting and explore the many communities at ACU. We have more than 100 clubs for you to choose from: sport, culture, ethnicity, faith, social justice, faculty, professional, special interest and more. And if you can't find a club that suits your needs, you can start a new one.

[aculife.acu.edu.au](http://aculife.acu.edu.au)

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### CAMPUS MINISTRY

Our Campus Ministry teams work to bring the distinctive Catholic identity and mission of ACU to life. Offering a range of activities and services, our teams work to build an inclusive student community, care for your pastoral needs and spiritual wellbeing, and encourage you to see the world in new and different ways.

[campusministry.acu.edu.au](http://campusministry.acu.edu.au)

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### STUDENT ASSOCIATION

At ACU we take the student voice seriously. Our student associations are run by students, for students, and provide services, activities and representation for you. Each campus has its own student association including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, postgraduate and international representatives. Involvement in student associations – whether as a member or as a member of the executives, councils and committees – provides great opportunities for leadership development, networking and friendships that will last a lifetime.

[acu.edu.au/student-association](http://acu.edu.au/student-association)

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### STUDENT ACCOMMODATION

Our residences are more than just a place to stay; they're living and learning communities. Everything about our accommodation is designed to help you make the most of your university experience. Our Residential Life Program helps to create welcoming and enriching communities to ensure each resident feels included. Located on or near campuses, close to transport links and social centres, and providing 24/7 support, our residences allow students to find a healthy balance between their studies, fun and relaxation. We also offer a range of accommodation scholarships.

[acu.edu.au/studentaccommodation](http://acu.edu.au/studentaccommodation)

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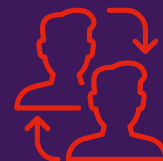
### SPACE FOR ALL FAITHS

You don't need to be Catholic to study with us. Across our university, staff and students of all faiths – or none – find their place at ACU. Our chapels and multi-faith prayer rooms are for students and staff of all faiths and offer a welcoming and quiet space to pray and reflect.

[acu.edu.au/all-faiths](http://acu.edu.au/all-faiths)

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## Succeed in first year with Connect2Uni



The Connect2Uni team offers services and programs to support you during your first year at uni. Our Virtual Welcome is an opportunity for ACU offer holders to connect with other commencing students and the ACU community. Our Online Quest is a fun way to learn about what to expect at uni and where to go for help. The Getting Started Transition Program will familiarise you with the campus environment and equip you with key academic skills, and our Student Mentoring program enables commencing students to get advice, tips and hacks from current ACU students. Welcome Fair is a fun day to meet commencing students and experience all that ACU has to offer. We also offer one-on-one support and will help you navigate university systems, answer your questions and guide you in the right direction for further help if you need it.

[acu.edu.au/connect2uni](http://acu.edu.au/connect2uni)



## Join us at Open Day

Every year we throw open our doors and invite you to join us on campus. If you've got questions, we'll be waiting with the answers at Open Day.

[openday.acu.edu.au](https://openday.acu.edu.au)

## Explore our campuses

Book a campus tour to see what sets us apart.

[acu.edu.au/campus-tours](https://acu.edu.au/campus-tours)

## One-on-one consultations

Book a one-on-one consultation with us for an opportunity to discuss your study options and find out how to reach your career goals.

[acu.edu.au/one-on-one-consultations](https://acu.edu.au/one-on-one-consultations)

## Join us at an event or information session

We run a range of other events throughout the year designed to help you with your study options. Depending on the event, you can join us online, on campus or via the phone.

[acu.edu.au/future-students](https://acu.edu.au/future-students)

# Got a question or feeling social?

**AskACU: [acu.edu.au/askacu](https://acu.edu.au/askacu)**

**We're here to help**

If you've got a question, our AskACU team has you covered. You can search the FAQs, text us, live chat or call one of our friendly AskACU staff – whatever works for you.

 [facebook.com/Australian.Catholic.University](https://facebook.com/Australian.Catholic.University)

 [@acuimages](https://www.instagram.com/acuimages)  [auscatholicuni](https://www.snapchat.com/add/auscatholicuni)

 [@ACUmedia](https://twitter.com/ACUmedia)  [ACUsocial](https://www.youtube.com/ACUsocial)

Send us your details and we will keep you in the loop about courses, events, information sessions and more.



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*Australian Catholic University attempts to ensure the information contained in this publication is correct at the time of production (March 2023). However, sections may be amended without notice by the university in response to changing circumstances or for any other reason. Check the course browser on the ACU website for the most up-to-date information.*