



Centre for
Social Justice and
Inclusion

A photograph of three people from behind, embracing each other. The person in the center has long dark hair and is wearing a light-colored, textured knit top. The person on the right is wearing a red and white striped shirt. The person on the left is wearing a light blue floral top. They are all wearing blue jeans. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with greenery and a pinkish structure.

A guide to support UTS students who are carers or parents



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Acknowledgement of Country

UTS acknowledges the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation, the Boorooberongal People of the Dharug Nation, the Bidiagal people and the Gamaygal people upon whose ancestral lands our university stands. We would also like to pay respect to the Elders both past and present, acknowledging them as the traditional custodians of knowledge for these lands.

Introduction

At UTS we are committed to supporting student carers and parents with access, support and flexibility throughout their studies. As part of our commitment to social justice and inclusion, we want students with caring responsibilities to feel valued, respected and included in our university community.

Student carers frequently develop skills like resilience, flexibility and adaptability, and UTS values these skills as an asset to our university.

Caring responsibilities, whether they involve caring for a child, an older person or a person with a disability can be rewarding but can also present certain challenges when trying to balance the demands of caring with university study.



This guide details services and assistance currently available at UTS, that aim to provide the best possible support to our students who are carers and parents.

This guide has been developed following consultation with a sample of UTS student carers. See the 'Carers we see you' UTS student consultation report by the Centre for Carers Research, Centre for Social Justice and Inclusion and the Design Innovation Research Centre:

uts.edu.au/research-and-teaching/our-research/institute-public-policy-and-governance/about-institute/centre-for-carers-research/about-us/our-work

We would like to ensure that this guide meets your needs as a student carer or parent. If you have feedback or ideas for this guide email: **equity@uts.edu.au**

RELEVANT UTS POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

- Equity, Inclusion and Respect Policy
- Staff and Students with Carers' Responsibilities
Vice-Chancellor's Directive
- Student complaints policy and management procedures

Visit: uts.edu.au/about/uts-governance/policies

- Breastfeeding at UTS Guideline

Visit: Uts.ac/BreastfeedingGuideline

Who is a 'carer'?

We understand that some people may clearly identify with the term "carer". Others may not identify with this term for a range of reasons and this may impact on their awareness of available support options.

At UTS, if you are a student carer, we want you to know that we see you.

"I find that carers have the most amazing time management."

UTS ALO staff member

"There are skills you don't know you had."

UTS student

We feel it is important to increase awareness about who is considered a carer to ensure that if you are a carer and need assistance or support, you are aware of what options are available to you.

A person with carer responsibilities at UTS is any individual who takes responsibility for caring for another person on an unpaid basis in line with the Staff and Students with Carers' Responsibilities Vice-Chancellor's Directive. This defines care relationships in line with Federal and State legislation in an inclusive way and includes a wide range of family relationships including same-sex and defacto partners, former partners, along with parental and other family relationships.

A legally recognised carer relationship may exist with:

- Your child
- The child of your current or former partner
- Any adult of whom you are the legal guardian

- Any immediate family member:
 - your partner
 - your former partner
 - your grandchild
 - the grandchild of your current or former partner
 - your parent
 - the parent of your current or former partner
 - your grandparent
 - the grandparent of your current or former partner
 - your brother
 - the brother of your current or former partner
 - your sister
 - the sister of your current or former partner.

This includes carers as defined by the Carer Recognition Act 2010.



DEFINITION OF A 'CARER' (UNDER THE NSW CARER RECOGNITION ACT 2010)

A 'carer' as defined by this Act is someone who provides ongoing, unpaid support to a family member or friend who needs help because of a disability, medical condition including chronic or terminal illness, mental illness, or is frail and aged.

Given the profound social and familial nature of caring, we will all be both recipients and providers of care, flowing in and out of caring roles across our lives. At any time, one in ten people in Australia will be caring for family and friends.

Carers come from all walks of life, cultural backgrounds and age groups and every situation is different. Some carers provide 24-hour nursing to a family member with high care needs, helping with daily needs and activities like feeding, bathing, dressing, toileting, lifting and moving, and administering medications. Other carers support people who are fairly independent but may need someone to keep an eye on them, or help them with tasks like banking, transport, shopping and housework. People become carers in different ways.

Sometimes it happens gradually, helping out more and more as a person's health and independence deteriorates over time. It may also happen very suddenly, after a health crisis (like a stroke or heart attack) or an accident.

You are still a carer:

- whether or not you receive a carers allowance
- whether or not you are a primary carer
- whether or not you live with the person you care for.

For more information visit the Carers NSW website: carersnsw.org.au

See page 24 of this guide for contact details.

"I struggle with the word carer...I'm a mother, daughter, friend, wife."

UTS student

"The impact of looking after a sibling is a whole different world...it's always with you."

UTS ALO staff member

In 2015, there were over 2.7 million unpaid carers in Australia and 272,000 carers were under the age of 25, which equates to around 1 in 10.⁵

We appreciate that your circumstances, experiences and needs as a carer are unique and we understand that the impact of these responsibilities on your time and other resources are often difficult to predict and we are committed to providing you with a supportive and flexible environment.

At UTS we recognise the value carers make to our community and this value is summed up nicely in the NSW Carers Charter:

DID YOU KNOW THAT WE HAVE A CARER-IN-RESIDENCE HERE AT UTS?

This role, based in the Centre for Carers Research, is a flexible part-time role that has been developed to guide their research and policy work with and for carers. You can read about the UTS Carer-in-Residence on the Centre for Carers Research page on the UTS website:

uts.edu.au/research-and-teaching/our-research/institute-public-policy-and-governance/about-institute/centre-for-carers-research/about-us/our-work/carer-in-residence

NSW CARERS CHARTER

Schedule 1 of the NSW Carers (Recognition) Act 2010

1. Carers make a valuable contribution to the community

- (a) NSW recognises the valuable social and economic contribution that carers make to the community.
- (b) Carers should have the same rights, choices and opportunities as other Australians.
- (c) Carers' unique knowledge and experience should be acknowledged and recognised.
- (d) The relationship between carers and the people they care for should be respected.

2. Carers' health and well-being is important

- (a) Carers should be supported to enjoy optimum health and well-being and to participate in family, social and community life, employment and education.
- (b) Carers should be supported to balance their caring role with other roles, such as work and education.

3. Carers are diverse and have individual needs within and beyond their caring role

- (a) The diverse needs of carers should be acknowledged and recognised in policy, programs and service delivery, taking into consideration culture and language, age, disability, religion, socio-economic status, place of residence, gender identity and sexual orientation.
- (b) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander values, heritage and concepts of caring should be respected and valued.
- (c) The additional challenges faced by carers who live in rural and remote areas should be acknowledged and recognised.
- (d) Children and young people who are carers should be supported to reach their full potential.

4. Carers are partners in care

- (a) The choices, views and needs of carers and of the people they care for should be taken into account in the assessment, planning, delivery and review of services provided to the people they care for.
- (b) Carers should be referred to, and assisted to access, appropriate supports and services.
- (c) Support for carers should be timely, responsive, appropriate and accessible.

facs.nsw.gov.au/carersact



The first step – contact your Academic Liaison Officer (ALO)

In most cases, your faculty's ALO should be your first point of contact as a student carer. We understand that sometimes it can be tricky to navigate various University procedures. ALOs are there to help guide you through some of these processes and to help make this a little easier.

ALOs are academic staff in each faculty whose role includes assisting students with carer responsibilities and students who are pregnant.

ALOs are responsible for approving assessment arrangement variations for students with carer responsibilities. They can provide you with advice and information to support you during your studies and are also able to liaise with other staff in your faculty on your behalf in relation to work experience placements and assessment deadlines.

To find an ALO in your faculty visit the ALO List on the UTS website: **uts.edu.au/current-students/students-with-accessibility-requirements/accessibility-service/services-and-3**



1 Contact your faculty ALO.

2 Discuss your circumstances and needs as a carer. Provide relevant documentation.

3 ALO will discuss the next steps with you based on your individual needs.

4 For a carer-related adjustment to your assessment (eg extension), contact subject coordinator and tutor and copy in ALO. Or email your ALO directly. Make sure you have evidence as required.

5 Keep subject coordinator and tutor updated. Alert them in advance if possible if you have further carer-related impacts.

6 Refer to ALO for carer-related academic support as and when needed.



What support is available for students with carer responsibilities?

The University offers a range of support options including flexible study loads, assessment adjustments, special considerations, counselling and financial assistance.

STUDY LOAD

UTS offers flexible study loads as well as the opportunity to withdraw without academic and financial penalty before the semester census dates. If you need assessment arrangements for tasks other than centrally-conducted exams your ALO will advise the relevant lecturers.

It is possible for adjustments to be made to the time frame of assessments if:

- you have significant carer responsibilities or
- your assessment will be significantly affected by your pregnancy.

Study load requirements can be checked in the UTS Handbook or discussed with an advisor in your faculty's Student Centre. Please check with your lecturers after the assessment task is scheduled to ensure they are aware of any arrangements made.



Please note that there is limited flexibility in subject load for international students. If you are an international student, consult with UTS International on Commonwealth Government requirements to discuss your individual circumstances. International students on an exchange or scholarship program should check the enrolment requirements of their program.





ASSESSMENT ADJUSTMENTS – THE APPLICATION PROCESS

We understand that you may need some flexibility when it comes to assessments due to your caring responsibilities. Students who have family or carer responsibilities or are pregnant can apply for assessment adjustment arrangements for their study.

If this applies to you, contact your ALO prior to the census date to discuss this. If you are enrolled in a double degree, you will need to speak to your ALOs in both faculties. Your ALO will carry out a full assessment and will be able to explain your options to you. If you are not satisfied with the ALO's arrangements, you can appeal to your Responsible Academic Officer (RAO) and/or Associate Dean. A list of RAOs is available on the UTS website: **gsu.uts.edu.au/academicboard/raos/responsibleacademicofficers.html**

FOR YOUR MEETING WITH YOUR ALO, YOU WILL NEED TO BRING THE FOLLOWING:

1. Documentation outlining your carer responsibilities and the impact on your study, such as:
 - a letter from your GP/counsellor/other health professional
 - a copy of your Medicare card (indicating dependents)
 - relevant documentation from Centrelink or Medicare
 - birth certificates
 - or a statutory declaration (available at newsagents, post offices or UTS Student Services).

if you have any difficulty obtaining documentation, please consider contacting the UTS Counselling Service who can discuss documentation options in more detail with you.

2. A list of your subjects and any available course outlines.
3. A completed “Application for assessment adjustment arrangements for students who are primary carers or students who are pregnant form.”

Visit: **uts.edu.au/sites/default/files/CARE_0807.pdf**

SPECIAL CONSIDERATION

We understand that there may be times when your performance as a student carer may be significantly affected by extenuating or special circumstances beyond your control such as illness. In these circumstances, you may be eligible for special consideration. Although please note that special considerations are not automatically granted and may not result in a study or mark adjustment.

All special consideration applications must include current supporting documents as evidence to support your claim. You may be required to supply originals of these documents at any time during your studies at UTS.

The supporting documents must clearly indicate the severity and/or gravity of the circumstances and include the period of time you were affected (e.g. the start and end date of your illness, injury or misadventure).

Special consideration applications will be declined if no documentation is provided or the documentation provided does not support your claims.

The Counselling Service may be able to provide Special Consideration Professional Authority statements to students who have sought assistance in relation to managing their carer responsibilities or documentation to assist students with applications for assessment adjustment arrangements.

More information about applying for Special Consideration is available on the UTS website: [**uts.edu.au/current-students/managing-your-course/classes-and-assessment/special-circumstances/special**](https://uts.edu.au/current-students/managing-your-course/classes-and-assessment/special-circumstances/special)

UTS COUNSELLING SERVICE

Being a carer can be really challenging at times and it can be easy to forget to look after yourself. There may be times when you would benefit from some extra emotional support or just an opportunity to talk through some of the challenges you are experiencing.

UTS Counselling offer free and confidential counselling to help with a wide range of personal, psychological, study-related and administrative difficulties.

All students are welcome to contact the Counselling Service to make an appointment.

In addition to personal counselling, UTS Counselling also offers a wide range of self-help resources on their website.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

We understand that one of the key challenges experienced by many carers relates to finances. You can apply to the Financial Assistance Service for interest-free student loans and small grants to assist with managing financial difficulties related to your carer responsibilities. Students on a low income may be able to apply for Diversity Access Scholarships. For more information on financial assistance that is available at UTS visit the Financial Assistance Service website.

See 'Useful UTS Contacts' on page 22 for contact details for the Counselling Service and Financial Assistance.



Specific support for parents and carers of children

We offer a range of support for students before having a baby, during pregnancy, and also after the arrival of your baby.

BEFORE YOUR BABY ARRIVES: PREGNANCY AND PRE-ADOPTION

Expecting a new baby can be a very special and exciting time but we understand that it may also present certain challenges and support is needed at this time to enable you to effectively manage your studies.

HEALTH AND SAFETY RISKS DURING PREGNANCY

If you are considering pregnancy, are pregnant or are breastfeeding, it is important that you consider any potential health and safety risks such as:

- exposure to chemicals, ionising and non-ionising radiation, or biological hazards
- working with animals
- relevant immunisations
- manual handling, repetitive lifting or prolonged standing.

If you are pregnant and cannot continue to meet the requirements of your studies because of illness or health and safety risks associated with your pregnancy, speak to your Academic Liaison Officer.

IF SOMETHING GOES WRONG

We understand that sometimes things do not go as planned and we want to ensure that you still feel as supported as possible at these difficult times. If you experience a miscarriage, premature birth, stillbirth, or death of your baby, you and your immediate family can access free, confidential counselling via UTS Counselling should you need some extra support at this time.

To apply for adjustments to learning arrangements, complete the “Application for assessment adjustment arrangements for students who are primary carers or students who are pregnant form:”

uts.edu.au/sites/default/files/CARE_0807.pdf



BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT ON CAMPUS

Many people returning to study after having a baby will want to continue breastfeeding. We recognise that not all parents will want, or are able to, breastfeed however, UTS is committed to supporting all parents and carers in our community, and offers a range of support specifically for breastfeeding parents.

UTS welcomes all staff, students and visitors who wish to breastfeed in public places across our campus and we also offer dedicated spaces for those wanting a private space for breastfeeding/feeding a baby, expressing milk and/or changing nappies. These rooms have:

- a private space (either a lockable door or curtain)
- a chair for breastfeeding
- a side table
- a power point
- sink/hand washing facilities.

Most rooms include a nappy change table with nappy disposal unit and some have a refrigerator/freezer and lockable storage.

If you are a student who needs regular access to these rooms, you can contact Security on **9514 1192 (or ext.1192)** or email **security.general@uts.edu.au** and request access to be added to your UTS student card. For other queries about these rooms email **equity@uts.edu.au** or call **9514-1084**.

UTS also offers students the flexibility to take lactation breaks during their study day.

More information is available in the Breastfeeding at UTS Guideline on the UTS website: **uts.ac/Breastfeeding Guideline**



Federal and state anti-discrimination legislation provides protection against discrimination on the grounds of breastfeeding.

The Australian Breastfeeding Association (ABA) is Australia's leading source of breastfeeding information and support. Visit: **breastfeeding.asn.au** for further information or contact them on **1800 686 268**.





UTS Childcare – Blackfriars



UTS Childcare – Blackfriars

CHILDREN ON CAMPUS

We recognise there may be occasions when parents or carers may need to bring a child onto campus.

Students are advised to seek permission from their lecturer or tutor, who can consider possible class disruptions, as well as any safety issues.

Carers may take children into the UTS library if they are always accompanied by their parent or carer and kept away from quiet areas if required.

Children will not be permitted to enter some areas of the university, such as workshops and laboratories, which are intrinsically hazardous.

UTS aims to provide facilities that are accessible to those accompanied by children, such as stroller entrances in buildings and ramps throughout the campus, parents' rooms, high chairs in food court areas, and baby change facilities in selected male and female toilets.

For change room locations, phone the Concierge Desk on **9514-9953 / 9954** or the UTS Switchboard on **9514-2000**.

Refer to section 5.3 of the Staff and Students with Carers' Responsibilities Vice-Chancellor's Directive.

UTS CHILD CARE

UTS aims to provide affordable child care facilities for students and staff to meet a range of needs, including long day care for babies and pre-school aged children.

It is a good idea to start looking at child care options as soon as your pregnancy or placement of a child in your care is confirmed. Most child care centres have waiting lists for children under 2 and an expectant parent may need to put their child's name down before their child is born.

There are two not-for-profit long day care centres that service the UTS City campus at Broadway:

- Blackfriars Children's Centre
- Magic Pudding Child Care Centre.

These centres provide high quality, affordable care that meet the needs of children from the University community and other groups. If you are a parent of a before school-age child, or are currently pregnant, you can apply for childcare at these centres.

The centres are open from 8am-6pm Monday to Friday.

Information about UTS child care centres and contacts details are available on the UTS website: **uts.edu.au/partners-and-community/initiatives/uts-child-care/overview**

If UTS childcare is not suitable or not available when you need it, you can access useful information about other child care availability from the My Child Australian government website: **childcarefinder.gov.au**

“The centre philosophy is excellent, the environment is welcoming and engaging for children.”

Parent

“UTS Blackfriars Childcare Centre offers an invaluable service to the UTS community. Its excellent service and proximity to the campus provide staff and students the knowledge that their child is well care and they are able to reach their child quickly in the event of any problems.”

Parent



Powerhouse Museum



Powerhouse Museum

UTS SUBSIDY FOR POWERHOUSE MUSEUM SCHOOL HOLIDAY WORKSHOPS

At UTS, we offer a special subsidy to support students who are parents or carers of school-age children for an engaging school holiday program at the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences (MAAS) Powerhouse Museum (available for selected school holiday periods and conditions apply).

Some examples of previous workshops include:

- Minecraft Futures
- YouTube Sound Designer
- Little Computer Scientist
- YouTube Let's Play
- Masterclass in Game Design

For more information email equity@uts.edu.au

BRIGHT FUTURES

Bright Futures is a school holiday learning program for primary and secondary (Year 4 – 8) students who are curious about the world, passionate about learning and starting to think about the paths they will take in the years ahead. The workshops offer a unique combination of eye-opening experiences based around subjects studied at UTS.

As a UTS staff member, you have an exclusive 5% discount. Please request the promotion code via ircyf@uts.edu.au

For more information visit brightfutures.uts.edu.au

“My son was bubbling with excitement. He was happy to talk about the day, what he'd done, and had really enjoyed himself.”

UTS parent - Powerhouse program

“This was brilliant on so many levels! Location. Experience. Staff at Powerhouse Museum. Course offerings. Subsidy in value. It actually felt like a lovely day too to have my daughter travel in with me, and be so close during the day. Brilliant. Just brilliant, thank you.”

UTS parent - Powerhouse program

Useful UTS contacts

ACADEMIC LIAISON OFFICERS (ALOs)

To find an ALO for your faculty and their contact details refer to the UTS ALO list on the UTS website:

uts.edu.au/current-students/students-with-accessibility-requirements/accessibility-service/services-and-3

UTS COUNSELLING

The Counselling Service is open throughout the year and can be accessed five days a week:

- 8.30am-8.30pm
Monday-Wednesday
- 8.30am-8pm Thursday
- 9am-5pm Friday

For an appointment:

Phone: 9514 1177

Email: student.services@uts.edu.au

Location: UTS Building 1,
Level 6 (city campus)

UTS Counselling Service website:

uts.edu.au/current-students/support/health-and-wellbeing/counselling-service-and-self-help

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE SERVICE

This service can assist you with the practical and financial aspects of university life.

Phone: 9514 1177 to book an appointment.

Appointments are offered Monday to Friday, 9.30am – 4.30pm. Appointments are in Building 1, Level 6.

Financial Assistance Service website: **uts.edu.au/current-students/support/financial-help/financial-assistance-service**

For general enquiries email **financial.assistance@uts.edu.au**

ACCESSIBILITY SERVICE

We understand that many carers may have a disability, medical or mental health condition themselves.

The Accessibility Service is the University's central contact point for all students living with one or more disability, medical or mental health condition. The main purpose of the service is to enable student participation in learning and coursework by providing assistance to access services, to make requests for assessment arrangements and reasonable adjustments. Reasonable adjustments aim to minimise the impact of disability and health conditions upon study as far as possible, while maintaining academic integrity.

Phone: 9514 1177

Email: accessibility@uts.edu.au

Location: Student Services Unit,
UTS Building 1, Level 6
(city campus)



MEDICAL SERVICE

The UTS Health Service, based at UTS city campus (Building 1, Level 6) provides confidential medical services for students, staff, alumni and their families.

Phone: 9514 1177

For more information visit:

uts.edu.au/current-students/support/health-and-wellbeing/medical-service

CENTRE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND INCLUSION

The Centre's Equity and Diversity Unit provides specialist advice and support on policy development, training and social justice initiatives. This includes initiatives to support staff and students who are carers and parents. The unit also provides advice on equity-related matters of concern and complaint resolution (ie. those relating to harassment and/or discrimination).

For queries email **equity@uts.edu.au** or phone **9514 1084**.

For more information visit:

uts.edu.au/partners-and-community/initiatives/social-justice-uts/equity-and-diversity



STUDENT CENTRE

The UTS Student Centre provides a range of advice and guidance to students, future students and stakeholders.

You can send an online enquiry via the UTS website: **uts.edu.au/current-students/managing-your-course/ask-uts/ask-uts**

Phone: 1300 ASK UTS
(1300 275 887)

9am – 5pm Monday – Friday

Visit: UTS Building 10 and Building 5
(City campus).

UTS STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION (SA)

This is an independent association run by students, for students. The SA runs campaigns based on student issues, provides free student services, and supports student collectives and clubs in their initiatives. SA provides a range of services for UTS students including advocacy and support.

Phone: 9514 1155

Email:

students.association@uts.edu.au

Visit:

utsstudentsassociation.org.au

Additional contacts

UTS CENTRE FOR CARERS RESEARCH

The Centre produces and disseminates high quality research that provides evidence for effective policies and programs with and for carers. For more information visit the Centre for Carers Research pages on the UTS website:

uts.edu.au/research-and-teaching/our-research/institute-public-policy-and-governance/about-institute/centre-for-carers-research

CARERS NSW

Carers NSW is the peak non-government organisation for carers in NSW and a member of the National Network of Carers Associations. Their focus is on improving the lives of carers.

They provide support for people caring for someone with a disability, ongoing medical condition, drug or alcohol dependency, chronic condition, terminal illness or who are frail. They offer a six-week group counselling program called Talk-Link. The program is run over the telephone and is free for carers across NSW.

For carer information, support and counselling contact Carers NSW between 9am and 5pm on **1800 242 636**.

For carers wanting emergency respite call **1800 052 222**.

After hours service call Lifeline **13 11 14**.

Or visit the Carers NSW website: **carersnsw.org.au**

YOUNG CARERS NSW

Young Carers is an initiative of Carers NSW that provides free services to young carers including counselling, phone counselling and referrals. Young carers are children and young people, 25 years or under, who help to support a family member or friend who has a disability, mental illness, drug or alcohol dependency, chronic condition, terminal illness or who is frail.

For more information visit the Young Carers NSW website: **youngcarersnsw.org.au**

Phone: 1800 242 636
(9am – 5pm, Monday – Friday)
(Freecall except mobiles)

Email: yc@carersnsw.org.au

For carers wanting emergency respite call 1800 052 222.

After hours service call Lifeline 13 11 14 or Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800.







