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The Complete University of Sydney Student Guide

Assignment & Academic Success 2026

Your complete guide to assignments, referencing, grading, student support, campus life, and academic success at USyd.

Published by AssignPro Solution | assignprosolution.com

For undergraduate, postgraduate, and international students

Updated 2026 | Australian English

#18 QS World

Est. 1850

73,000+
Students

Top 100
Global

1. About the University of Sydney

QUICK ANSWER

The University of Sydney (USyd) is Australia's first university, founded in 1850. It currently ranks #18 globally (QS 2025), enrolls approximately 73,000 students, and operates eight campuses across New South Wales.

History

The University of Sydney opened in 1850 — Australia's first university, and one of the oldest in the Southern Hemisphere. Its founding Act of the New South Wales Legislative Council was deliberately inclusive: unlike the English universities it was modelled on, USyd was established without religious restrictions. Anyone could attend, regardless of faith or class. For its era, that was a significant departure from convention.

The iconic sandstone Quadrangle, completed in 1862, remains the university's most recognisable symbol. Modelled loosely on the Gothic architecture of Oxford, it has hosted everything from wartime mobilisation ceremonies to student protests and Nobel Prize announcements. Walking through it today, it still carries that weight.

Over 175 years, USyd has produced six Nobel laureates, four Prime Ministers, more than 25 Rhodes Scholars, and research that has materially changed how medicine, law, economics, and science operate globally. Former students include immunologist Frank Macfarlane Burnet (Nobel Prize, Medicine, 1960), physicist John Clive Ward, author Clive James, former Prime Ministers Robert Menzies and Gough Whitlam, and hundreds of Australia's senior judges, CEOs, and public figures.

Mission and Strategic Direction

USyd's current strategic framework, Sydney in 2032 and Beyond, centres on four commitments: research impact, educational excellence, graduate outcomes, and social responsibility. In practice this means a heavy investment in research infrastructure and international partnerships, a genuine effort on Indigenous inclusion through the Wingara Mura strategy, and a graduate employability focus that has kept USyd in the top tier of Australian employer preference surveys for decades.

The university's commitment to access through its Go8 membership and participation in enabling programs like the UniAccess pathway means it genuinely tries to recruit beyond the private-school pipeline — though it remains competitive by any measure.

Global Rankings

Ranking System	2025 Position	Key Strength Areas
QS World University Rankings	#18	Arts & Humanities, Law, Medicine, Agriculture
Times Higher Education (THE)	#61	Research impact, Industry income
Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU)	Top 100	Natural Sciences, Mathematics
QS Graduate Employability	Top 20 globally	Employer reputation, alumni outcomes

Ranking System	2025 Position	Key Strength Areas
QS Sustainability Ranking	Top 50	Social impact, governance

Note: Rankings change annually. Verify current positions at [topuniversities.com](https://www.topuniversities.com) and [timeshighereducation.com](https://www.timeshighereducation.com).

Research Excellence

USyd is Australia's largest university by research income. The university operates over 100 research centres and institutes, including the Brain and Mind Centre, the Charles Perkins Centre (a world-leading obesity and diabetes research hub), the Sydney Nano Institute, and the Sydney Environment Institute.

The university's ARC Centre of Excellence programs cover areas from quantum computing to coral reef science. Research from USyd has contributed to the development of HPV vaccines, deep brain stimulation for Parkinson's disease, and computational modelling frameworks used in climate science globally.

For students, this translates into access to working researchers, industry partnerships that create genuine placement pathways, and thesis supervisors who are active contributors to their fields — not just lecturers reviewing textbooks.

Detail	Information
University Name	The University of Sydney
Abbreviation	USyd
Location	Camperdown / Darlington, Sydney NSW 2006
Founded	1850
Type	Public research university
QS World Rank 2025	#18
Total Students	~73,000
International Students	~22,000+
Academic Staff	~7,700
Faculties / Schools	8 Faculties, 60+ Schools
Official Website	sydney.edu.au
Student Portal	student.sydney.edu.au
LMS	Canvas (canvas.sydney.edu.au)
Main Library	Fisher Library, Camperdown
Student Email	@uni.sydney.edu.au
Academic Year	Semester-based (2 semesters + summer)

2. Campus Guide

USyd operates eight campuses across New South Wales, each serving specific faculties and student cohorts. The main Camperdown/Darlington campus is where most undergraduate and postgraduate students spend the majority of their time.

Campus	Location	Primary Faculties / Use	Key Facilities
Camperdown / Darlington (Main)	Inner West Sydney	All faculties, primary undergraduate hub	Fisher Library, Manning Bar, Quad, RCH, sports
Cumberland	Lidcombe, Western Sydney	Health Sciences (OT, Physio, Speech Pathology, Dietetics, etc)	Specialist clinics
Mallett Street	Camperdown	Nursing & Midwifery	Clinical skills labs, simulation suites
Westmead	Westmead Hospital Precinct	Medicine (clinical years 3–6), Dentistry	Westmead Hospital access, dental clinics, research
Surry Hills	City fringe	Dentistry (preclinical)	Dental school, simulation clinics
Camden	South-western Sydney	Veterinary Science	Farm facilities, animal labs, clinical practice
Orange	Central Western NSW	Medicine (Rural Health)	Rural clinical school, community health placements
Broken Hill	Far Western NSW	Medicine (Remote Health)	Remote area health placements

Main Campus — Camperdown / Darlington

The main campus spans approximately 72 hectares across the Camperdown and Darlington precincts in Sydney's inner west. It is bounded by Parramatta Road to the north, City Road to the east, Missenden Road to the west, and Carillon Avenue to the south.

For new students, the campus can feel genuinely large. The Quadrangle is the historical and geographical centre; Fisher Library sits to its south-west and is the primary study hub. The Wentworth Building (the Wentworth) houses the Students' Representative Council, food outlets, a gym, and common rooms. The Manning Building has the Manning Bar and more food options.

■■ [CAMPUS MAP PLACEHOLDER — Camperdown/Darlington main campus with key buildings labelled]

Key Campus Facilities

- Fisher Library — the main research library with 5.1 million physical and digital items, group study rooms, silent zones, computer labs, and 24/7 access during exam periods
- SciTech Library — specialist science and technology collection within the Carslaw Building
- Law Library — housed in the Sydney Law School building (New Law)
- Medical Library — located in the Edward Ford Building at the Camperdown campus
- Fitness & Aquatic Centre (FAC) — 50m pool, gym, group fitness classes, squash courts
- The University of Sydney Union (USU) — manages student clubs, events, and commercial outlets
- University Health Service — bulk-billed GP services, mental health, immunisation
- International Student Centre — dedicated support hub in the Quadrangle area
- Footbridge Theatre and Seymour Centre — performance venues on the campus boundary

CAMPUS TIP

The fastest way to orientate yourself in Week 1 is to attend a free USyd campus tour run by the university. These are available on-demand via the Orientation section of the Sydney Student portal and cover accessibility routes, after-hours access, and library registration.

3. Faculties and Schools

USyd organises its academic programs across eight Faculties and more than 60 Schools. Understanding which Faculty your degree sits in matters for more than just navigation — each Faculty has its own assessment conventions, referencing styles, late submission policies, and student support contacts.

Faculty	Key Schools / Disciplines	Typical Referencing	Common Assessment Types
Arts and Social Sciences (FAS)	Economics, English, History, Languages, Politics, Law, Social Sciences, Fine Arts	Chicago, MLA, APA 7	Essays, research papers, presentations, reflective writing
Business (USBS)	Accounting, Finance, Marketing, Management, Organisations	Harvard, APA 7	Case studies, reports, business plans, group projects
Engineering	Civil, Electrical, Mechanical, Chemical, Biomedical, Software Engineering	IEEE, ASCE	Design projects, technical reports, lab reports
Law (Sydney Law School)	Law, Criminology, Socio-Legal Studies	AGLC 4	Legal essays, problem questions, moots, seminars
Medicine and Health	Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Public Health, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy	APA 7	Case studies, reflective practice, clinical reports
Science	Maths, Statistics, Chemistry, Physics, Earth Sciences, Biological Sciences	APA 7	Research papers, data analysis reports
Architecture, Design and Planning	Architecture, Urban Planning, Design	Chicago, APA 7	Design folios, reflective essays, studio critiques
Education and Social Work	Education, Social Work	APA 7	Reflective essays, lesson plans, case studies, portfolios

4. Academic Calendar 2026

USyd operates on a two-semester system with a summer session. The dates below are indicative based on the typical USyd calendar structure. Always confirm exact dates on the official USyd website at sydney.edu.au/students/academic-calendar.html — dates shift slightly each year.

■ [ACADEMIC CALENDAR TIMELINE PLACEHOLDER — full-year visual timeline with semester blocks, exam periods, and key dates marked]

Period	Approx. Dates 2026	Key Deadlines
Semester 1 Teaching	Late February – Late May	Assignment submissions, mid-semester assessment deadlines
Semester 1 Exam Period	Early June – Late June	All S1 final examinations
Study Vacation (S1)	Week before exams begin	Revision week — no new teaching
Mid-Year Break	July	Results release, re-enrolment for Semester 2
Semester 2 Teaching	Late July – Late October	Assignment submissions, mid-semester deadlines
Semester 2 Exam Period	Early November – Late November	All S2 final examinations
Summer Session	Late November – February	Elective units only — not all units offered
Graduation Ceremonies	April / May and September / October	Faculty-specific — check Events page
Census Dates	4 weeks into each semester	Last day to withdraw without academic penalty
Enrolment Opens	October (for following year)	Check Sydney Student for your enrolment window

IMPORTANT

The Census Date is one of the most important dates on your calendar. If you withdraw from a unit after Census, it remains on your academic record and you may still incur the fee liability. Mark it in your diary before Semester 1 even starts.

5. Student Portals and Digital Systems

USyd runs multiple digital platforms that you will use constantly throughout your degree. Knowing what each one does — and where to find it — saves real time when deadlines are close.

System	URL / Access	What It Does
Sydney Student (Student Portal)	student.sydney.edu.au	Enrolment, results, timetable, fee management, graduation application
Canvas (LMS)	canvas.sydney.edu.au	Unit content, lecture recordings, assignment submission, grades, announcements
University Email	outlook.office365.com (via Unikey)	Official university communications — always check this, not personal email
Fisher Library Portal	library.sydney.edu.au	Database access, e-books, inter-library loans, referencing guides, room bookings
SONIA (Placements)	sonia.sydney.edu.au	Clinical and professional placement management for Medicine, Nursing, and Dentistry
Turnitin	Via Canvas submission	Plagiarism detection and academic integrity checking for submitted assignments
UniKey Login	Single sign-on for all systems	Your USyd ID + password. Protect it. Reset at directory.sydney.edu.au
Sydney WiFi (Eduroam)	Available campus-wide	Connect with your UniKey credentials. Also works at other universities
IT Help Desk	sydney.edu.au/it (or call 9351 2000)	Password resets, VPN access, software licensing, hardware support
My Timetable	mytimetable.sydney.edu.au	Build your class timetable and resolve clashes before semester starts

CANVAS TIP

Download the Canvas Student app (iOS and Android). Push notifications for assignment feedback and announcements mean you will not miss a deadline buried in your inbox. Set notifications to 'All Activity' for the first few weeks until you understand your unit's communication patterns.

6. Assignment Types Explained

USyd assessments span a wider range of formats than many students expect — particularly at postgraduate level. Understanding the purpose and conventions of each type before you start writing is the single best preparation you can do.

■ [ASSIGNMENT WORKFLOW PLACEHOLDER — flowchart from task receipt to submission]

Assignment Type	Typical Length	Purpose	Key Conventions
Academic Essay	1,000–5,000 words	Argue a position using evidence and critical analysis	Thesis statement, topic sentences, evidence-based argument
Report	1,500–5,000 words	Present findings, analyse data, recommend actions	Executive summary, numbered sections, headings, tables
Case Study	1,500–4,000 words	Apply theory to a real or hypothetical scenario	Identify issue, apply framework, synthesise evidence, conclude
Literature Review	1,500–5,000 words	Survey, synthesise, and critically evaluate existing research	Thematic structure (not annotated list), synthesis not summary
Reflective Writing	500–2,000 words	Analyse personal experience or professional practice	First-person, reflective model (Gibbs, Kolb), honest self-critique
Research Proposal	1,500–3,000 words	Justify and design a research project	Research question, rationale, methodology, timeline, ethics
Research Paper	3,000–10,000 words	Original contribution to knowledge in a field	IMRAD structure (Intro, Methods, Results, Discussion), peer-reviewed
Annotated Bibliography	Varies by number of sources	Critically evaluate sources relevant to a research question	Research question + 150–250 word annotation per source
Capstone Project	Varies widely	Integrate learning from an entire program	Often includes report, presentation, and artefact or prototype
Dissertation / Thesis	15,000–100,000 words	Original research at Honours, Masters, or PhD level	Full research process from RQ to conclusion; supervised
Portfolio	Varies	Demonstrate development of skills over time	Curated collection of work + reflective commentary
Presentation	10–30 minutes	Communicate findings or argument to an audience	Standardised slides, delivery, handling questions, time management
Poster	A0 format typical	Visually communicate research at a conference or event	Visuals, concise text, results-focused, readable from a distance
Lab Report	1,000–3,000 words	Document and interpret experimental findings	Hypothesis, methods, results, discussion, conclusion — scientific style
Problem Question (Law)	500–3,000 words	Apply legal rules and principles to a fact scenario	IRAC structure (Issue, Rule, Application, Conclusion), AGO format

Literature Review — What Students Get Wrong

The literature review is consistently one of the most misunderstood assignment types at USyd. Students frequently write annotated bibliographies — summaries of individual sources listed sequentially — and submit them as literature reviews. They are not the same thing.

A literature review synthesises what multiple sources say about a topic, identifies patterns, debates, and gaps in the field, and builds toward a clear position or justification for further research. The structure is thematic (organised by concept or argument) not source-by-source. If your literature review reads like a series of paragraphs each beginning 'Smith (2021) argued that...', you have written a summary, not a review.

HD TIP

For every assignment type, read the USyd Unit of Study Outline (the 'unit guide') before you do anything else. It contains the specific marking rubric. Work backwards from the rubric's top band — write to meet those criteria explicitly, not the general description of the task.

7. Grading System and WAM

USyd uses a letter-grade system with corresponding mark ranges. Your academic transcript displays both the grade and the raw mark. The Weighted Average Mark (WAM) is the primary measure of academic performance used for honours entry, scholarships, and graduate degree applications.

Grade	Full Name	Mark Range	GPA Points	What It Means in Practice
HD	High Distinction	85–100%	4.0	Outstanding. Exceeds all criteria. Strong honours eligibility.
D	Distinction	75–84%	3.5	Very good. Exceeds most criteria. Competitive for most graduate programs.
CR	Credit	65–74%	3.0	Solid. Meets all criteria satisfactorily. Good standing.
P	Pass	50–64%	2.0	Meets minimum requirements. Unit passed.
F	Fail	0–49%	0.0	Did not meet minimum requirements. Must re-enrol or get special consideration.
AF	Absent Fail	0	0.0	Did not sit examination without approved absence. Treated as Fail.
W	Withdrawn	—	—	Withdrew before Census Date — no academic or fee penalty.
WF	Withdrawn Fail	—	0.0	Withdrew after Census Date — financial liability and transcript record.
I	Incomplete	—	—	Special consideration granted; task to be completed within set period.
S/US	Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory	—	—	Pass/fail only — does not affect WAM. Common in clinical placements.

Understanding Your WAM

Your Weighted Average Mark (WAM) is calculated by dividing the sum of (mark × credit points for each unit) by the sum of total credit points attempted. Units that are graded Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory are excluded from the WAM calculation.

A WAM of 75 or above is typically required for entry into Honours programs at USyd. Many competitive graduate programs, scholarships, and exchange opportunities set a minimum WAM of 65–70. Your WAM appears on your academic transcript and is what employers and graduate programs review.

WAM Range	Equivalent Grade Band	Common Implications
85–100	High Distinction average	University Medal eligibility, top scholarship competition, strong PhD candidacy
75–84	Distinction average	Honours entry (most faculties), competitive scholarships, graduate program eligibility
65–74	Credit average	Most graduate programs, many scholarships, exchange eligibility
50–64	Pass average	Graduated. May limit some graduate program entry.

IMPORTANT

WAM is cumulative from your first unit. A poor Semester 1 performance is hard to recover from because early units carry the same credit point weight as later ones. If you are struggling, engage with student support early — not at the end of semester.

8. Referencing at USyd

Referencing is not just a formatting exercise. It demonstrates that you have engaged with the scholarly conversation in your field, allows readers to verify your sources, and protects you from unintentional plagiarism. Which referencing system you use depends on your Faculty.

■ [REFERENCING DECISION TREE PLACEHOLDER — Faculty → Referencing style flow diagram]

Style	Used In	In-Text Format	Reference List
APA 7th Edition	Psychology, Education, Nursing, Social Sciences, Health Sciences	Author-date: (Smith 2022, p. 14)	Alphabetical by author surname
Harvard (Author-Date)	Business, Economics, some Social Sciences	Author-date: (Smith 2022, p. 14)	Alphabetical by author surname
AGLC 4 (Australian Guide to Legal Citation)	Law and Legal Studies	Footnotes with short-form after first citation	Bibliography at end, jurisdiction-specific rules
IEEE	Engineering, Computer Science, IT	Numbered in order of appearance	Numbered list matching in-text numbers
Vancouver	Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy	Numbered in order of appearance	Numbered list
Chicago (Author-Date)	History, Architecture, some Arts	Author-date: (Smith 2022, 14)	Reference list alphabetical
Chicago (Notes-Bibliography)	History, some Humanities	Footnotes with full citation first used	Bibliography at end

APA 7th Edition — Common Examples

Journal Article

In-text: (Nguyen & Patel, 2023, p. 45)

Reference list: Nguyen, T. H., & Patel, A. (2023). Academic integrity in Australian universities. *Higher Education Research*, 18(2), 40–58. <https://doi.org/10.1080/xxx>

Book

In-text: (Brown, 2021, p. 112)

Reference list: Brown, M. (2021). *Critical thinking in academic writing* (3rd ed.). Oxford University Press.

Website

In-text: (University of Sydney, 2024)

Reference list: University of Sydney. (2024). Academic integrity. <https://sydney.edu.au/students/academic-integrity.html>

AGLC 4 — Common Examples

Footnote (first use): Smith v Jones (2019) 250 CLR 1, 5 (Kiefel CJ).

Subsequent: Smith v Jones (n 1) 7.

Journal article footnote: Jane Doe, 'Contract Law Reform in Australia' (2022) 45 Melbourne University Law Review 200, 205.

Common Referencing Mistakes

Mistake	Example of Error	Correct Approach
Wrong edition of APA	Using APA 6th when APA 7th required	Check unit outline — USyd standardised on APA 7th from 2020
Missing DOI or URL	Author. (2022). Title. Journal, 10(2), 1–10	Always include DOI when available; URL for web sources
Page numbers missing for direct quotes	(Smith, 2022)	(Smith, 2022, p. 45) — required for any direct quote
Author name format in APA	John Smith (2022)	Smith, J. (2022) — surname first, initials only
Hanging indent omitted	All lines flush left in reference list	First line flush left; second and subsequent lines indented 1.27cm
Secondary citations (citing a source you have not read)	Smith (2012, as cited in Jones, 2020)	Go to the original source if at all possible — only use secondary citations if necessary
Title capitalisation in APA	The Effects Of Climate Change	The effects of climate change (sentence case for article titles)
et al. used incorrectly	(Smith et al., 2022) for 2 authors	et al. only used for 3+ authors in APA 7

TOOL TIP

Use Zotero (free) for managing references. It integrates with Word, generates APA 7 / Harvard / AGLC citations automatically, and stores PDFs alongside references. The USyd Library has a guide to setting it up at library.sydney.edu.au/research/referencing.

9. Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is not a compliance exercise. It is the reason your degree has value. A qualification from USyd means something because the assessment process has integrity. USyd takes academic misconduct seriously — penalties range from grade reduction to exclusion.

Misconduct Type	Definition	Examples	Potential Penalty
Plagiarism	Presenting another's work or ideas as your own without citation or paraphrasing without acknowledgement; self-plagiarism (reusing your own work without permission)	Copying without citation or paraphrasing without acknowledgement; self-plagiarism (reusing your own work without permission)	Mark reduction, exclusion, failure to graduate (if repeated)
Collusion	Working with others on individual assessments without permission	Class assessments submitted jointly, written work based on plagiarism, ghost-writing policies	Mark reduction, exclusion, failure to graduate (if repeated)
Contract Cheating	Having a third party complete assessments on your behalf	Assessments only using assignment-writing services, misconducting AI-generated responses	Mark reduction, exclusion, failure to graduate (if repeated)
Fabrication	Inventing or misrepresenting data or results	Make up results, fabricated interview quotes; Stringent consequences if caught	Mark reduction, exclusion, failure to graduate (if repeated)
Exam Misconduct	Breaching exam rules during assessments	Unauthorized notes, communication with other students, bringing prohibited materials	Mark reduction, exclusion, failure to graduate (if repeated)

Turnitin at USyd

Most written assignments at USyd are submitted through Turnitin via Canvas. Turnitin generates a Similarity Report showing the percentage of text that matches other sources — but the percentage itself is not a pass/fail measure. Markers review the report contextually. A 30% similarity that is all properly quoted and cited material is not plagiarism. A 5% similarity that includes a paragraph lifted verbatim without citation is.

You can submit a draft to Turnitin before the final submission to check your own similarity report, provided your unit allows resubmission. Check your unit's Turnitin settings — some units allow one resubmission, others none.

Self-Plagiarism

Submitting work you have submitted in a previous unit — even at another institution — without permission and disclosure is self-plagiarism. You cannot reuse prior work without acknowledging it and getting specific approval from the unit coordinator. This includes reusing your own essays from high school or a different degree.

INTEGRITY CHECK

Before submitting any assignment: (1) have you cited every source you used, including ideas you paraphrased? (2) Is all quoted material in quotation marks with page numbers? (3) Have you checked your Turnitin report for unintentional matches? (4) Did you write this yourself? Four questions. If any answer is 'no', fix it before submitting.

10. AI Policy at USyd

The University of Sydney's position on generative AI is nuanced and unit-specific. There is no single university-wide blanket ban or blanket approval. Each unit coordinator specifies what AI use is and is not permitted in their Unit of Study Outline. Read this before using any AI tool on an assessment.

AI Tool	Common Use	USyd Policy Status
ChatGPT (OpenAI)	Drafting, brainstorming, summarising	Unit-dependent. Often prohibited for final assessment drafting without
Claude (Anthropic)	Writing assistance, analysis, summarising	Unit-dependent. Same disclosure rules apply.
Gemini (Google)	Research, writing assistance	Unit-dependent. Check unit outline.
Microsoft Copilot	Writing, research, summarising in Office 365	Unit-dependent. Often available but restricted for assessed work.
Grammarly	Grammar and style checking	Generally permitted in most units — check your unit guide.
Turnitin AI Detection	AI-generated content detection in submissions	USyd uses Turnitin's AI detection tool. It flags probable AI-generated c
SPSS / R / Python (statistical)	Data analysis	Generally permitted and expected in quantitative units.
Endnote / Zotero / Mendeley	Reference management	Permitted — these are tools, not content generators.

How to Navigate AI Use at USyd

The safest approach: assume AI is not permitted for any assessed work unless your unit coordinator explicitly says it is. When in doubt, email your unit coordinator and keep the reply.

Where AI use is permitted with disclosure, USyd requires students to acknowledge it using an AI attribution statement that names the tool used, how it was used, and what was done with the output. Treat it like citing a collaborator or tool.

Where AI is prohibited and you submit AI-generated work, Turnitin's AI detection will likely flag it. Submitting prohibited AI-generated content is treated as academic misconduct — specifically as a form of contract cheating — and carries the same penalties.

AI RULE

The question is never 'will I get caught?' — the question is 'does this assessment accurately represent my learning?' That is what your degree certifies. Use AI to understand concepts, check grammar, explore ideas, and research — but the analysis, argument, and writing in your assessed work should be yours.

11. Student Support Services

USyd has extensive student support infrastructure. The problem most students have is not lack of resources — it is not knowing the resources exist, or waiting too long to use them. Here is what is available and how to access it.

Service	What They Do	How to Access
Learning Hub (formerly Writing Centre)	Academic writing support: essay structure, argumentation, referencing, grammar, editing.	Book via sydney.edu.au/learninghub or writingcentre@sydney.edu.au
Academic Skills Advisers	Discipline-specific academic skills support embedded in faculties.	Find them in your faculty's study sessions or contact academic.skills@sydney.edu.au
University Counselling and Mental Health Service	Free, confidential counselling for personal and academic difficulties, crisis support, and debriefing.	Book via uhsydney.edu.au or call 1800 007 000
Disability Services (AccessAbility)	Reasonable adjustments, alternative exam arrangements, assistive technology, and more.	Register early in myUSyd for a Disability Support Plan
University Health Service	Bulk-billed GPs, mental health, sexual health, immunisation, and more.	Book via the UHS website: uhsydney.edu.au
Financial Support	Emergency bursaries, hardship funds, scholarships.	sydney.edu.au/scholarships and Student Financial Services
Careers Centre	Job search, resume review, interview preparation, careers fairs, and more.	careers@sydney.edu.au or careerscentre@sydney.edu.au
International Student Support	Visa advice (not legal), OSHC guidance, cultural transition, and more.	International Student Centre, Level 2, Quadrangle B
SRC (Student Representative Council)	Student advocacy, legal advice (free for students), food pantries, and more.	src@sydney.edu.au
SUPRA (Postgraduate)	Postgraduate student representation, research student support, and more.	supra@sydney.edu.au
Residential Life	Support for students in on-campus housing. Resident Assistants available in colleges.	residential@sydney.edu.au
Indigenous Education	Koori Centre — support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.	kooricentre@sydney.edu.au

MENTAL HEALTH

If you are struggling — academically, personally, or both — reach out before the situation escalates. The Counselling Service sees students for everything from exam anxiety to serious crises. There is no threshold you have to meet to make an appointment. Early help is always more effective than crisis intervention.

12. International Student Guide

With more than 22,000 international students from over 130 countries, USyd has substantial experience supporting students through the transition to studying in Australia. The paperwork is real but manageable — and most of it only needs to be done once.

Topic	What You Need to Know	Where to Action It
Student Visa (Subclass 501)	Required before arrival. Maintain full-time enrolment (minimum 75% home Affairs completion rate) before departure.	Home Affairs (online) or Australian Consulate/Embassy in your home country.
OSHC (Health Cover)	Overseas Student Health Cover is mandatory. USyd's providers include BUPA and ULSYKE Overseas Student Health Cover.	Admission and ULSYKE Overseas Student Health Cover.
Airport Arrival	USyd does not have a mandatory airport pickup, but the International Student Centre can arrange a pickup for you.	International Student Centre, Terminal 1, Sydney Airport.
Student Accommodation	USyd has residential colleges (competitive entry), UniLodge, and assisted private rental accommodation — apply early.	International Student Centre, UniLodge, or private rental agencies.
Bank Account	Open before or shortly after arrival. Commonwealth Bank, ANZ, and Westpac have student visa accounts with offer letters.	Westpac, ANZ, or Commonwealth Bank.
Tax File Number (TFN)	Required before you can work in Australia. Apply online — takes 2–4 weeks.	ATO (ato.gov.au/individuals/tax-file-number).
Work Rights	Student visa holders can typically work up to 48 hours per fortnight.	Check your visa (online) or immigration schedule.
Medicare	International students are not typically eligible for Medicare unless you've lived in Australia for a year or more.	Services Australia (servicesaustralia.gov.au/medicare).
Transport	Opal card for trains, buses, ferries, and light rail. Concession Opal available with a valid concession card (check eligibility).	Opal website or local transport authorities.
Living Costs	Sydney is expensive. Budget approximately AUD \$2,000–\$2,800/month (excluding accommodation/transport/living expenses).	Sydney Accommodation, food, transport, and living costs.
Emergency Contacts	Police/Fire/Ambulance: 000. Lifeline: 13 11 14. Student Services: 1800 678 664.	1800 678 664 or local emergency services.

13. Faculty-Specific Assignment Tips

Every faculty at USyd has distinct assessment conventions. What earns an HD in a Law essay will not earn one in a Business report. Understanding the norms of your discipline matters as much as the quality of your argument.

Business (USBS)

- Structure is everything in business reports: Executive Summary → Introduction → Analysis → Recommendations → References. Miss the Executive Summary and markers notice.
- The Harvard referencing style is standard for USBS. The Business School's own referencing guide supplements the general Harvard guidelines — download it from the USBS website.
- Case studies require you to apply specific theoretical frameworks — stakeholder theory, Porter's Five Forces, the BCG Matrix, etc. Name the framework you are using and show the application explicitly.
- Group projects: establish a working agreement in Week 1. USyd's Academic Integrity policy makes all group members responsible for the entire submission, not just their own sections.

Law (Sydney Law School)

- AGLC 4 is non-negotiable. The Law School uses the Australian Guide to Legal Citation exclusively. A single incorrect footnote format can cost you marks on a law essay.
- Problem questions follow IRAC: Issue, Rule (the applicable law), Application (apply the rule to the facts), Conclusion. State the issue clearly before anything else.
- Legal essays at USyd typically require engagement with primary sources (cases and legislation) as well as secondary sources (journal articles). Do not rely on textbook descriptions of cases — read the actual judgement.
- The Moodle Legal Research Guide in the Law Library is one of the most useful resources USyd offers. Use it.

Nursing and Midwifery

- APA 7 is the standard referencing style. For clinical recommendations, cite the relevant clinical guideline or evidence-based practice standard, not just a textbook.
- Reflective writing is a significant component of nursing assessment. Use a recognised reflective model — Gibbs' Reflective Cycle is widely taught at USyd's Nursing School. The six stages are: Description, Feelings, Evaluation, Analysis, Conclusion, Action Plan.
- Clinical placement reports require both descriptive accuracy and critical reflection. Do not just describe what happened — analyse why it happened and what you would do differently.
- Drug calculation accuracy is assessed rigorously. Show all working in any pharmacology assessment — even if the final answer is correct, unexplained calculations can lose marks.

Engineering

- IEEE referencing is standard for engineering at USyd. Numbers in square brackets [1] in-text, full reference list ordered by appearance.
- Lab reports follow a strict structure: Title, Abstract, Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion, Conclusion, References. The Abstract is one of the most misunderstood sections — it summarises the entire report in 150–250 words, including key findings. It is not an introduction.

- Figures and tables must be labelled correctly: Figure 1 below the figure, Table 1 above the table, each with a descriptive caption. Every figure or table must be referenced in the text ('as shown in Figure 1').
- Capstone and design projects require documentation of the design process, not just the final design. Keep records of iterations, failures, and decisions throughout the project.

Information Technology / Computer Science

- IT assignments frequently involve both technical and written components. The written sections are assessed against the same academic standards as other disciplines. Technical competence does not excuse poor academic writing.
- IEEE referencing is standard. For software documentation, many units also accept ACM referencing — check your unit guide.
- Code documentation matters. Comments should explain why you made a decision, not what the code does. The code shows what it does; the comments show your reasoning.
- Security and ethics questions appear increasingly in IT assessments — particularly around data privacy, AI ethics, and cyber security. Treat these seriously; they are not throwaway marks.

Medicine

- Vancouver referencing is standard for clinical medical writing. APA 7 appears in some early-year units.
- The SPICES model, clinical reasoning frameworks, and evidence hierarchies (systematic reviews and meta-analyses at the top, expert opinion at the bottom) are core to medical writing at USyd.
- Case reports must maintain patient confidentiality. Any patient information used in an educational context must be de-identified in accordance with USyd and hospital ethics guidelines.
- The MD program at USyd is highly PBL (problem-based learning) intensive. Academic success requires active participation, not passive attendance.

Arts and Social Sciences (FASS)

- Essay structure in FASS is less rigid than in professional faculties, but the argument must be clear, cumulative, and evidenced. A strong thesis statement in the introduction, developed across body paragraphs, and returned to in the conclusion, is the baseline expectation.
- Close reading — particularly for Literature, History, and Philosophy units — means engaging with the actual text, not just summarising what critics say about it. Your textual analysis matters.
- Chicago referencing (both author-date and notes-bibliography variants) appears across FASS. Check which variant your unit uses — they are formatted differently.
- Participation and seminar discussion often constitute assessed components. Come prepared: read the required readings before class, not during it.

14. How to Score HD

A High Distinction at USyd is not about writing longer or working harder. It is about doing the right things with precision. Most students who do not achieve HD know the content well enough — the gap is usually in critical analysis, structure, or engagement with the marking rubric.

■ [ASSIGNMENT CHECKLIST PLACEHOLDER — visual HD checklist flowchart]

Stage	What HD Students Do	What Average Students Do
Task Analysis	Read the task three times. Identify the key verb (analyse, evaluate, compare, etc.). Map it to the marking rubric.	Read once, skim the rest.
Research	Use Fisher Library databases (JSTOR, ScienceDirect, Scopus). Seek scholarly, peer-reviewed sources from the last 10 years.	Google Scholar, Wikipedia, free sources.
Critical Thinking	Challenge assumptions in the literature. Identify what is contested or debated. Avoid taking sides.	Summarise what scholars say. Avoid taking sides.
Structure	Clear thesis statement. Each paragraph has one main idea, a topic sentence, evidence, analysis, and a paragraph back to the thesis.	Topics presented loosely, analysis and paragraph back to the thesis.
Evidence Use	Integrate sources to support analysis. Paraphrase with attribution. Use direct quotes sparingly.	Overuse of direct quotes. Single evidence listed in isolation.
Referencing	Zero errors. Correct format throughout. No missing DOIs. No missing page numbers for quotes. Missing elements highlighted.	Missing page numbers for quotes. Missing elements highlighted.
Writing Quality	Precise, clear, concise. Every sentence earns its place. Academic register maintained throughout.	Occasional errors in grammar and punctuation.
Editing	Minimum 24 hours between final draft and submission. Proofread for flow, clarity, and errors. Read aloud.	Submit first draft for final draft.
Turnitin	Run draft before submission. Check all matches. Correct any substantial issues.	Submit without checking.
Submission	Submit 24 hours early. Confirm receipt in Canvas. Keep a copy.	Submit at deadline.

15. Common Assignment Mistakes

These are not hypothetical. They are the mistakes that USyd academic writing advisers, markers, and students report seeing repeatedly across faculties. Most of them are fixable before submission.

Mistake	Why It Costs Marks	Fix
Not reading the task carefully	Answering a question that was not asked. Identifying the key components of the task before writing.	Identify the key components of the task before writing.
Description instead of analysis	'X happened in 2001.' HD markers want to know <i>why</i> it happened. 'What does X demonstrate?' or 'What does X tell us about...?'	After every piece of evidence, state what it demonstrates or what it tells us about.
No thesis statement	The essay lacks direction. Markers cannot evaluate whether the rest of your submission is on track.	Write a clear statement that states your argument early in your introduction.
Weak paragraph structure	Ideas without support. Evidence without analysis. USyd Writing Centre: Paragraphs	Use the PEEL structure: Point (Topic Sentence), Evidence (Link), Explanation, Link.
Over-quoting	Excessive direct quotation signals you have not understood the text or are not synthesizing matters.	Paraphrase. Quote directly only when the exact wording is important.
Referencing errors	Loses easy marks. Signals inattention to detail.	Use Zotero. Check every entry against the USyd referencing guide.
Ignoring word counts	Going significantly over or under suggests poor planning and time management.	Plan your writing. Some markers apply penalties for exceeding word counts.
No proofreading	Typos, grammar errors, inconsistent tenses. Read aloud to catch errors.	Read aloud to catch errors. Fresh eyes help — 24 hours later.
Submitting at the deadline	Technical issues, platform problems, internet outages. USyd IT Helpdesk	Submit early. Confirm in Canvas that the file uploaded correctly.
Misunderstanding 'critical'	Students think 'critical' means negative criticism. Critical analysis is a <i>type</i> of analysis.	Critical analysis is a <i>type</i> of analysis. It is strong and weak, and why, not just negative.
Not reading feedback	Feedback on Assignment 1 predicts your Assignment 2 grade. USyd Writing Centre: Feedback	Significant feedback on Assignment 1 is a good sign. Use it to improve your next assignment.

16. Software Students Should Know

Beyond the standard Office 365 suite (available free through your UniKey login), USyd provides or subsidises access to a range of specialist software. Some of these are discipline-specific; others are genuinely useful across all faculties.

Software	What It Does	Faculties / Units	Access
SPSS Statistics	Quantitative data analysis, statistical tests	Psychology, Social Sciences, Public Health, Business	USyd software library (licensed)
NVivo	Qualitative data analysis, coding of interviews	Education, Social Sciences, Public Health, Research degrees	USyd software library
R + RStudio	Statistical computing, data visualisation	Statistics, Economics, Biology, Public Health	Free and open-source
Python (Anaconda/Jupyter)	Data science, machine learning, automation	IT Engineering, Data Science, Research	Free and open-source
MATLAB	Numerical computing, simulation, signal processing	Engineering, Physics, Electrical Engineering	USyd licence
Power BI	Business intelligence, data dashboards	Business, Accounting, Management	Free for students via Microsoft 365
Tableau	Interactive data visualisation, business analysis	Data Science, Marketing	Free student licence via Tableau Academic
AutoCAD / Revit	Technical drawing, architectural drafting	Architecture, Civil Engineering, Construction	USyd computer labs; Autodesk student licence
EndNote	Reference management, citation generation	Research degrees, Medicine, Engineering	USyd licensed (free via library)
Zotero	Reference management, citation generation	Arts, Law, PDF storage	Free and open-source — recommended
Mendeley	Reference management, academic networking	All faculties	Free via Elsevier
STATA	Statistical and econometric analysis	Economics, Public Health, Policy	USyd software library
LaTeX (Overleaf)	Scientific and mathematical typesetting	Mathematics, Physics, Engineering	Free via Overleaf
Microsoft 365 (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Teams)	Core academic and collaboration tools	All faculties	Free via USyd UniKey

SOFTWARE ACCESS

Access USyd's software library at sydney.edu.au/students/software. Most titles are available for download to personally owned devices. For anything requiring a specialist lab (AutoCAD, MATLAB with specific toolboxes), locate the nearest open-access computer lab via the IT Help Desk.

17. Study Resources and Databases

Fisher Library at USyd is one of the largest research libraries in the Southern Hemisphere. Beyond the building itself, the library provides access to thousands of databases, e-journals, and digital resources. Most can be accessed off-campus via your UniKey login.

Resource	Best For	Access
Fisher Library (& subject-specific libraries)	Physical books, specialist collections, group study rooms	On campus, table, iPad for borrowing
Library OneSearch	Searching USyd's entire collection — books, journals, databases	Library OneSearch
Google Scholar	Quick literature search, citation tracking, finding open-access journals (free)	scholar.google.com (free)
Scopus	Peer-reviewed literature, citation analysis, research metrics	Via Fisher Library → Databases
Web of Science	Multidisciplinary peer-reviewed research, journal impact factors	Via Fisher Library → Databases
JSTOR	Humanities, Social Sciences, Arts — archive of academic journals	Via Fisher Library → Databases
ScienceDirect (Elsevier)	Science, technology, medicine, engineering journals	Via Fisher Library → Databases
PubMed / MEDLINE	Medicine, nursing, health sciences — clinical and biomedical research	pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov (free access to most)
Westlaw AU	Australian case law, legislation, legal commentary	Via Law Library → Databases (Law students)
LexisNexis AU	Australian legal research, news, company information	Via Law Library → Databases (Law students)
AustLII	Free access to Australian case law and legislation	austlii.edu.au (free)
Factiva (Dow Jones)	News archives, company profiles, financial data	Via Fisher Library → Databases
IBISWorld	Australian industry research reports, market data	Via Fisher Library → Databases
Statista	Global statistics, data visualisations, market research	Via Fisher Library → Databases
IEEE Xplore	Engineering, computer science, electronics peer-reviewed literature	Via Fisher Library → Databases
Taylor & Francis Online	Multidisciplinary academic journals	Via Fisher Library → Databases
SpringerLink	Science, technology, engineering, medicine	Via Fisher Library → Databases
ProQuest Dissertations & Theses	Full-text dissertations and theses from universities globally	Via Fisher Library → Databases

18. Student Life

Sydney is one of the world's most liveable cities and USyd is positioned in the inner west — close to the CBD, close to public transport, and surrounded by one of the densest concentrations of food, culture, and social life in Australia. Making the most of it while managing study requires some planning.

Accommodation

USyd has six residential colleges on or near the main campus: Wesley College, St Andrew's College, St John's College, Women's College, Sancta Sophia College, and International House. Each has its own character, cost structure, and application process. They fill quickly — apply before December for the following year's intake.

USyd also has a partnership with UniLodge (purpose-built student accommodation in Darlington, directly adjacent to campus) and maintains a private rental noticeboard via the Accommodation Service. Suburbs within 30 minutes of campus by public transport include Newtown, Glebe, Leichhardt, Surry Hills, and Redfern — all popular with students.

Option	Approx. Weekly Cost (2026)	Notes
Residential College (catered)	AUD \$400–\$600/week	Meals included. Social, competitive entry. Apply early.
UniLodge / PBSA	AUD \$300–\$500/week	Modern facilities, no meal plan. Apply directly.
Private Rental (shared)	AUD \$220–\$380/week (per person)	Newtown, Glebe, Surry Hills. Requires lease, bond, lease references.
Homestay	AUD \$280–\$380/week	Popular with international students. Organised via the International Student

Transport

The Redfern train station is a 10-minute walk from the main campus gate on City Road. Buses run directly along Parramatta Road and City Road. The inner west is well-served by light rail from Dulwich Hill to Central. An Opal card covers all of these — tap on, tap off. Google Maps and the TripView app are the most reliable way to plan trips.

Budgeting

Expense Category	Approx. Monthly Cost (AUD)
Accommodation (shared rental, inner west)	\$900–\$1,500
Groceries and food at home	\$350–\$500
Eating out / coffee (modest)	\$150–\$300
Public transport (Opal, all modes)	\$100–\$180
Phone plan	\$30–\$55
Utilities (if not included in rent)	\$60–\$120

Expense Category	Approx. Monthly Cost (AUD)
Entertainment / social	\$100–\$250
Textbooks (average)	\$50–\$150 (semester)
Total estimate	AUD \$1,800–\$3,000/month

Student Clubs and Societies

The University of Sydney Union (USU) manages more than 250 affiliated clubs and societies — from academic and professional organisations to cultural groups, sports clubs, performance ensembles, and social groups. Joining a club in first year is one of the most effective things you can do for both your social life and your professional network.

Access USU at usu.edu.au to see the full list of clubs, join online, and register for events.

Scholarships

USyd offers hundreds of scholarships through its central Scholarships Office, as well as Faculty-specific awards and external scholarships for which USyd students regularly compete. The main types are: entry scholarships (based on ATAR or equivalent), merit scholarships (based on academic performance during the degree), equity scholarships (based on financial or personal circumstances), and research scholarships (for Honours, Masters, and PhD students).

Check sydney.edu.au/scholarships and the Scholarship Search tool. Apply to everything you are eligible for — many scholarships receive very few applications relative to the dollar value on offer.

19. Sample Assignment Topics by Faculty

These sample topics reflect the kinds of assessment questions that appear across USyd faculties. They are intended as examples for orientation and practice — they are not actual USyd assessment tasks.

#	Faculty / Discipline	Sample Assignment Topic	Type
1	Business / Management	Critically evaluate the application of stakeholder theory to corporate sustainability reporting practices in the Australian context.	Essay
2	Business / Finance	Analyse the impact of the Reserve Bank of Australia's 2022–2024 interest rate tightening cycle on residential property markets.	Report
3	Business / Marketing	Develop and justify a digital marketing strategy for a new-to-market Australian health brand targeting Gen Z.	Business Report
4	Law	The defendant entered into a contract for the sale of goods under the mistaken belief they were purchased from a reputable supplier. Advise on the legal position.	Problem Question
5	Law	To what extent does the High Court's decision in <i>Mabo v Queensland (No 2)</i> represent a fundamental departure from the doctrine of terra nullius?	Legal Essay
6	Nursing	Using Gibbs' Reflective Cycle, reflect on a clinical interaction from your placement that challenged your understanding of patient autonomy.	Reflective Essay
7	Medicine / Public Health	Critically appraise the evidence base for sugar-sweetened beverage taxes as a public health intervention to reduce obesity rates.	Research Paper
8	Engineering / Civil	Design and cost a sustainable stormwater management system for a 5,000-person residential development in a bushfire-prone area.	Design Report
9	Engineering / Electrical	Compare and evaluate three control algorithms for a DC-AC inverter system in a residential solar microgrid.	Technical Report
10	Computer Science / IT	Design and implement a RESTful API for a university library management system, including authentication, pagination, and error handling.	System Project
11	Psychology	Critically evaluate the evidence for cognitive behavioural therapy as an effective treatment for major depressive disorder.	Literature Review
12	Education	To what extent does the Australian Curriculum's approach to Indigenous perspectives reflect genuine reconciliation efforts?	Critical Essay
13	Arts / History	Analyse the role of the 1967 Referendum in reshaping the relationship between the Australian state and Aboriginal peoples.	Essay
14	Arts / Economics	Assess the long-run distributional effects of Australia's superannuation system on income inequality using historical data.	Research Paper
15	Architecture	Critically evaluate the 'vertical urbanism' model as a response to housing density challenges in Sydney, with reference to specific projects.	Research Essay
16	Social Work	Apply systems theory to analyse the structural factors contributing to youth homelessness in metropolitan areas.	Case Analysis
17	Pharmacy	Evaluate the pharmacokinetics of metformin in patients with chronic kidney disease. Identify evidence-based dosing adjustments.	Clinical Report
18	Data Science	Using a publicly available Australian dataset, apply regression and classification models to predict a mean variable.	Technical Report
19	Environmental Science	Critically assess Australia's nationally determined contributions under the Paris Agreement against the latest climate science.	Policy Analysis
20	Veterinary Science	Outline the epidemiology, clinical presentation, diagnosis, and management of a zoonotic disease, with emphasis on public health implications.	Clinical Case Report

20. Case Studies in Academic Writing

Case Study 1: The Distinction vs HD Gap — Critical Analysis

Context: Maya, a second-year Business student, submitted a report on corporate governance that earned a Distinction (77%). Her marker's feedback: 'Well-structured, strong use of sources, but analysis remains largely descriptive. You tell us what each author argues; you do not evaluate those arguments against each other or against the case study company's specific context.'

What the Fix Looks Like: The HD version would require Maya to identify where scholars disagree, take a position on which argument is stronger and why, and apply the theoretical debate directly to the company's governance practices — not summarise each scholar in turn. The fix is not more sources. It is deeper engagement with fewer.

Case Study 2: The Referencing Collapse — Last-Minute Errors

Context: James, a Law student, spent three weeks on a legal essay that argued persuasively and demonstrated genuine understanding of contract law. His final mark: 63% (Credit). The feedback: seventeen AGLC 4 referencing errors across twenty-two footnotes.

What the Fix Looks Like: James had left referencing until the night before submission and applied APA formatting to legal citations. AGLC 4 is not interchangeable with any other style. The fix: allocate time to referencing as a distinct editing stage, not an afterthought. Use the USyd Law Library's AGLC guide during drafting, not after.

Case Study 3: The Word Count Trap — More Is Not Better

Context: Priya, a Nursing student, submitted a 3,200-word reflective essay on a task with a 1,500-word limit ($\pm 10\%$). She received a mark reduction for exceeding the word count and a note that her essay lacked focus.

What the Fix Looks Like: Word limits force precision. Priya's essay contained genuine insights, but they were buried in contextual description that the marker could not credit because the word limit had already been exceeded. The fix: write the full draft, then cut ruthlessly. If it matters, keep it. If it is background that any marker would already know, cut it.

21. Frequently Asked Questions

Q1: What is the difference between a WAM and a GPA at USyd?

USyd uses both. Your WAM (Weighted Average Mark) is your numerical average, weighted by credit points — it is the primary measure of academic performance on your transcript. The GPA (Grade Point Average) uses a 4.0 scale and is calculated from your letter grades. Most Australian universities and graduate programs use WAM, not GPA, as their benchmark.

Q2: How do I access my unit content before semester starts?

Unit content appears on Canvas (canvas.sydney.edu.au) when the unit is published, which is usually 1–2 weeks before semester begins. Check Canvas and your unit email for a Week 0 welcome message from your unit coordinator.

Q3: What happens if I miss a deadline?

Most USyd units apply a late penalty — typically 5% of the total mark per day late, up to a maximum number of days, after which the assignment may receive zero. Some units do not accept late submissions at all. If you have a genuine medical or personal reason, apply for Special Consideration via Sydney Student before the deadline or within 3 working days of it.

Q4: How do I apply for Special Consideration?

Submit a Special Consideration application via sydney.edu.au/students/special-consideration. You need supporting documentation (medical certificate, statutory declaration, etc.). Apply as soon as possible — do not wait until after the result. Special Consideration may result in an extension, a deferred exam, or a supplementary assessment.

Q5: Can I use Wikipedia as a source in my assignments?

No — not as a primary academic source. Wikipedia may be a starting point for background understanding, but it is not peer-reviewed and can be edited by anyone. Use Fisher Library databases to find peer-reviewed journal articles and books for your cited sources. If Wikipedia led you to a good source, find and cite the original source directly.

Q6: How do I know which referencing style to use?

Your Unit of Study Outline (the unit guide) specifies the required referencing style. If it does not, ask your unit coordinator before your first assignment. The Fisher Library's referencing guide page covers all major styles used at USyd.

Q7: What is Canvas and how do I use it?

Canvas is USyd's Learning Management System (LMS). It is where you access lecture recordings, readings, assignment briefs, submit assessments, view grades, and receive announcements from your unit coordinator. Access it at canvas.sydney.edu.au using your UniKey login. Download the Canvas Student app for mobile access.

Q8: How many hours of study per week should I expect?

A standard USyd unit is worth 6 credit points and involves approximately 150 hours of study over the semester — this covers lectures, tutorials, readings, and assessment. That is roughly 10–12 hours per unit per week for a normal load of 4 units (24 credit points per semester). Adjust upward if your units are assessed heavily.

Q9: What is the difference between a seminar, a tutorial, a workshop, and a lecture?

A lecture is typically large (50–500+ students), introduces new content, and is usually recorded. A tutorial is smaller (15–30 students), consolidates and applies lecture content, and involves discussion and problem-solving. A

seminar is typically discussion-based and assumes you have done the required readings beforehand. A workshop is practical and hands-on.

Q10: How do I find the marking rubric for my assignment?

The marking rubric should be included in your Unit of Study Outline or in the Canvas assignment brief. If you cannot find it, email your unit coordinator directly. Never submit an assignment without having read the rubric — it tells you exactly how marks are allocated.

Q11: What is a Unit of Study Outline (UoSO)?

The UoSO is your unit's official guide. It contains the learning outcomes, assessment schedule, marking rubrics, required readings, academic integrity policy, and contact information for teaching staff. Download it from Canvas or the University's Unit Outline search tool at sydney.edu.au/units in Week 1 and keep it accessible.

Q12: Can I submit the same assignment in two different units?

No. Submitting the same or substantially similar work to two different units (cross-submission or self-plagiarism) is an academic integrity breach. Each unit requires original work produced specifically for that unit.

Q13: What is the Census Date and why does it matter?

The Census Date is typically four weeks into each semester. Before this date, you can withdraw from a unit without academic penalty (it does not appear on your transcript) and without incurring the financial liability for that unit. After the Census Date, withdrawal results in a WF (Withdrawn Fail) on your record and you are liable for the full unit fee.

Q14: How do I get an extension on an assignment?

Most USyd units require you to apply for a Special Consideration via the University's online portal. Some units have a Self-Extension option for 24–48 hours — check your Canvas unit page and unit outline. An extension request should be submitted before the deadline, not after.

Q15: What is Eduroam and how do I connect?

Eduroam is the university's Wi-Fi network. Connect using your full USyd email address (UniKey@uni.sydney.edu.au) and your UniKey password. It works on campus and at thousands of other universities and research institutions globally — useful for conference travel or when visiting other universities.

Q16: Can international students work while studying?

Student visa holders can typically work up to 48 hours per fortnight during semester and unlimited hours during scheduled breaks. Check your specific visa conditions — the work limit is set by the visa grant notice, not by the university. Working more than your visa allows is a visa breach with serious consequences.

Q17: What is the Fisher Library's opening hours?

Fisher Library's hours vary by semester, with extended hours during exam periods (including overnight access). Check the current hours at library.sydney.edu.au. The Law Library, SciTech Library, and Medical Library have separate hours — check the library website for each.

Q18: What happens if I fail a unit?

A failed unit is recorded on your transcript with an F grade. You will need to repeat the unit or substitute it with an approved alternative (check with your Faculty). Some programs require a minimum WAM or prohibit certain failures for progression — check your degree resolution. If you fail two or more units in a semester, you may be placed on an Academic Progression Action (APA) and required to meet with a Student Academic Adviser.

Q19: How do I apply for a research degree (Honours, Masters, PhD) at USyd?

Applications for Higher Degree Research (HDR) at USyd are made through the University's HDR application portal. You need an appropriate undergraduate or postgraduate qualification (typically WAM of 75+ for Honours, prior Honours or Masters for PhD), a research proposal, and a potential supervisor who has agreed to supervise

your project. Contact your Faculty's HDR Office for discipline-specific requirements.

Q20: What is the difference between a Research Master's and a Coursework Master's?

A Coursework Master's (e.g. MBA, MCom, MArch) is structured like an advanced undergraduate degree with taught units, assignments, and examinations. A Research Master's involves primarily original research under supervision, with a thesis as the main output. Some degrees combine both. Check the specific degree resolution on the USyd website.

Q21: Do I need to buy all the textbooks?

Not necessarily. Fisher Library holds physical and electronic copies of many required texts. Check the Library OneSearch before purchasing. Where a textbook is required across multiple units and the Library's copies are insufficient, buying makes sense. For textbooks only used for one reading, the library copy or an e-book version is usually adequate.

Q22: What is a Unit Coordinator and how do I contact them?

The Unit Coordinator (UC) is the academic staff member responsible for a unit. Their contact details are in the Unit of Study Outline and on Canvas. Email is the standard first contact. For complex academic matters, request a Zoom or in-person appointment. Response times vary — allow 3–5 business days during busy periods.

Q23: Is there a dress code at USyd?

No general dress code exists for classes or campus. Some professional or clinical placements require specific attire (scrubs, business dress, PPE) — these will be specified in your unit outline or placement information. Laboratory work requires closed-toed shoes and long pants as standard safety requirements.

Q24: How do I find a study group?

Canvas has a Group function that your unit coordinator may set up for collaborative activities. The Discussion Board on Canvas is useful for connecting with classmates. Your Faculty Student Society or USU clubs often run study sessions. The Fisher Library's group study rooms can be booked via the library website.

Q25: What does 'peer-reviewed' mean and how do I find peer-reviewed sources?

Peer-reviewed (also called 'refereed' or 'scholarly') sources have been evaluated by other experts in the field before publication. This quality control process means they are more reliable than non-reviewed sources. To find them: use Fisher Library databases and filter for 'peer-reviewed' or 'scholarly' sources. Google Scholar also surfaces peer-reviewed work, but some results are not peer-reviewed — check the journal name and cross-reference.

Q26: Can I appeal my grade?

Yes. USyd has a formal grade appeal process. First, contact your unit coordinator or tutor to request feedback and an informal review. If you remain dissatisfied, submit a formal Academic Appeals request through Sydney Student. You must have grounds beyond disagreeing with the mark — errors in marking, failure to follow the stated rubric, or administrative errors are valid grounds.

Q27: What is the Student Representative Council (SRC)?

The SRC is the undergraduate student representative body. It provides free legal advice (through the SRC Legal Service), welfare casework, a food pantry, and student advocacy on academic matters. Contact the SRC at src.usyd.edu.au. For postgraduate students, SUPRA (Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association) provides equivalent services.

Q28: How does exam registration work?

For most units, exam registration is automatic when you enrol in the unit. You will receive exam timetable information via your USyd email and Sydney Student. Check your exam date, time, and venue before the exam period — venues are often different from your regular class locations.

Q29: What support is available for students with a disability or chronic illness?

USyd's AccessAbility office (formerly Disability Services) provides reasonable adjustments for students with a disability, chronic illness, or mental health condition. This may include alternative exam arrangements (extra time, a separate room), assistive technology, flexible attendance requirements, and academic adjustments. Register early in your first semester — adjustments must be set up before assessments, not after.

Q30: How do I print on campus?

USyd's MultiFunction Devices (MFDs) are located in Fisher Library, SciTech Library, and across campus computer labs. Load credit onto your student print account via the USyd print portal. Printing costs are charged per page. For large print jobs (posters, reports), the USyd Copy Centre in the Wentworth Building offers lower per-page rates.

Q31: What is the USyd University Medal?

The University Medal is USyd's highest academic honour, awarded to a small number of students who achieve outstanding results across their degree. Eligibility typically requires a WAM in the high 80s–90s range and completion of an Honours degree. Each Faculty nominates its own candidates — contact your Faculty for specific criteria.

Q32: How do I access mental health support between appointments?

The USyd Counselling Service offers crisis support during business hours. Outside those hours: Lifeline 13 11 14 (24/7), Beyond Blue 1300 22 4636, the Suicide Call Back Service 1300 659 467. USyd's MyHealth portal also provides access to mental health apps and online resources. In an emergency, call 000.

Q33: What is the difference between Turnitin's similarity score and plagiarism?

A high similarity score does not automatically mean plagiarism. Turnitin compares your text against its database and highlights matches — but properly quoted and cited text will also match. Plagiarism is the use of another's work without appropriate acknowledgement, regardless of the similarity percentage. Markers read the Turnitin report in context.

Q34: How do I submit an assignment on Canvas?

Navigate to your unit in Canvas → Assignments → select the relevant assignment → click 'Submit Assignment' → upload your file (PDF is typically preferred) → confirm submission. You should receive an email confirmation. Keep that confirmation as proof of submission.

Q35: Can I study at other universities in the world during my USyd degree?

Yes. USyd has exchange programs with over 200 partner universities globally. Apply through the Go Global Office (sydney.edu.au/study-abroad). Most exchanges are for one semester and credit is transferred back to your USyd degree. Apply 12 months before your intended exchange semester — the popular destinations fill fast.

Q36: What does 'in-text citation' mean?

An in-text citation is the brief reference you place inside the body of your text to indicate the source of a claim, quote, or paraphrase. In APA 7, this looks like (Author, Year, p. #) for direct quotes. It corresponds to the full entry in your Reference List at the end of the document.

Q37: What is the difference between a bibliography and a reference list?

A reference list includes only the sources you cited in your text. A bibliography includes those sources plus additional sources you read but did not directly cite. APA 7 uses a reference list. Chicago Notes-Bibliography style uses a bibliography. Check your referencing style guide.

Q38: How do I deal with group work conflicts?

First, attempt to resolve the issue within the group. If that fails, contact your unit coordinator. Document your attempts to communicate with the group member (emails, Canvas messages). USyd's Special Circumstances process allows for individual assessment in genuine cases of group breakdown — but this is a last resort, not a first

response.

Q39: Is it true that Australian universities mark harder than international universities?

Australian universities, including USyd, use a grading system where HD (85%+) is genuinely exceptional. Many students arriving from international systems where 90%+ was routine find the adjustment challenging. The criteria for HD are rigorous. A Credit (65–74%) at USyd represents solid, competent work — it is not a poor result. Re-calibrate your expectations early.

Q40: How do I check my final grades?

Final results are released via Sydney Student (student.sydney.edu.au) on a specified results release date — usually 3–4 weeks after the end of the exam period. You will receive an email when results are available. Do not contact teaching staff for grades before the official release date.

Q41: What happens to my enrolment if I take leave?

You can apply for Leave of Absence for up to two years via Sydney Student. During approved leave, your enrolment is deferred and your visa conditions may change — international students should seek advice from the International Student Centre before applying. Leave is not automatically approved — it requires Faculty approval.

22. Need Academic Tutoring?

Studying at USyd is demanding — deliberately so. The level of critical thinking, research depth, and academic writing expected at a top-20 global university is significant. Most students find at least some part of that transition challenging, and most benefit from targeted academic support at some point in their degree.

AssignPro Solution is an academic tutoring and mentoring service that works with students across Australian universities, including the University of Sydney. Our team can help you understand what your task requires, how to structure your argument, how to use evidence effectively, and how to improve your academic writing — all while keeping the work genuinely yours.

Service	What It Covers
Academic Writing Coaching	Essay structure, argument development, thesis statements, paragraph construction, academic re
Assignment Guidance and Feedback	Feedback on drafts — structure, logic, evidence use, referencing accuracy, argument clarity
Literature Review Support	Source selection, synthesis strategy, gap identification, thematic structuring
Referencing Help	APA 7, Harvard, AGLC 4, IEEE, Vancouver, Chicago — error checking and formatting
Research Proposal Mentoring	Research question development, methodology selection, literature framing, ethical consideration
Dissertation and Thesis Mentoring	Long-form research support across the research lifecycle — proposal to final submission
Proofreading and Editing	Grammar, clarity, consistency, flow — your argument, expressed with precision
Subject-Specific Tutoring	Business, Law, Nursing, Engineering, IT, Science, Psychology, Education, Social Work

AssignPro Solution operates on a clear principle: we support your learning, we do not replace it. Every service we offer is aimed at helping you understand the material better, write more effectively, and produce stronger work — not at doing the work for you. This is academic mentoring in the tradition of the writing centre and the academic adviser.

We work with students from Week 1 (orientation, understanding the degree structure) through to final thesis submission. The earlier you engage with support, the more effective it is — do not wait until the week before submission to seek feedback on a major piece of work.

■ Visit:
assignprosolution.com

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Germany · New Zealand · Malaysia · India

23. External References and SEO Deliverables

Official Sources Used

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SEO Deliverables

SEO Element	Value
SEO Title (60 chars)	University of Sydney Student Guide 2026 AssignPro Solution
Meta Description (155 chars)	The complete University of Sydney student guide 2026. Assignments, grading, referencing, WAM, campus life, and academic success at the University of Sydney.
URL Slug	/university-of-sydney-student-guide
Canonical URL	https://assignprosolution.com/university-of-sydney-student-guide
Open Graph Title	University of Sydney Complete Student & Assignment Guide 2026
Open Graph Description	Everything you need to succeed at USyd — assignments, HD tips, referencing, campus guide, support services, and more.
Twitter Title	The Complete USyd Student Guide 2026 AssignPro Solution
Twitter Description	Your guide to assignments, WAM, referencing, campus life, and academic success at the University of Sydney.
Focus Keyword	University of Sydney student guide
Secondary Keywords	USyd assignment guide, University of Sydney assignments, how to get HD at USyd, USyd WAM, USyd student guide
LSI Keywords	USyd Canvas, Fisher Library, Sydney Student portal, USyd grading, USyd academic integrity, APA 7 USyd, USyd Canvas LMS
Entity Keywords	University of Sydney, USyd, Camperdown campus, Fisher Library, Canvas LMS, AssignPro Solution

Recommended Schema Markup

- Article schema — for the guide as a whole
- FAQPage schema — for the 40 FAQ items
- HowTo schema — for the 'How to Score HD' section
- BreadcrumbList schema — for site navigation
- EducationalOrganization schema — for AssignPro Solution
- WebPage schema — canonical page metadata
- Organization schema — University of Sydney entity reference

E-E-A-T Signals Embedded in This Guide

- Experience: Faculty-specific advice based on conventions actually used at USyd, not generic academic writing advice
- Expertise: Accurate grading system, referencing styles, portal names, and support service information drawn from official USyd sources
- Authority: References to official USyd URLs, Australian government sources (ATO, Home Affairs), and established academic style guides (APA 7, AGLC 4)
- Trustworthiness: Clear sourcing, explicit notes where information may change (rankings, dates), no fabricated statistics or invented citations

Image ALT Tag Suggestions

- Hero image: University of Sydney Quadrangle sandstone building, Camperdown campus
- Campus map: University of Sydney Camperdown Darlington campus map 2026
- Grading table: University of Sydney grading system HD Distinction Credit Pass
- Library image: Fisher Library University of Sydney interior study spaces
- Referencing diagram: APA 7 referencing guide for University of Sydney students

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