



# Rural Students Guide 2017



## **Welcome first year rural students to UNSW Medicine!**

Congratulations on earning your place in the course and the hard work that has allowed you to be here.

The transition from high school to university is difficult for many students, but it can be even more challenging if you are also moving from a rural area to the city.

This guide has been written in 2017 by second year students who have made the same transition that you are currently, featuring tips and tricks for overcoming some of the challenges they have faced.

Beyond this guide, there are many other great resources to help you, including the UNSW Medicine and UNSW websites, the Faculty of Medicine, MedSoc, older students, and of course your fellow first years, with whom you will be sharing the journey.

Congratulations again and good luck for the year ahead!

**Dayna Duncan & David Tighe**  
**Medsoc Second Year Representatives**

# SPORTS & EXERCISE

As a medical student, or just a human in general, exercise is super important for maintaining a healthy well being and preventing diseases. Because it can become quite tiresome beating the footpath and repetitively running laps of the block, here are some suggestions for exercising on and around campus.

The UNSW gym and swimming pool offers discount memberships for students living on campus. These memberships include unlimited access to group fitness classes and cost a total of \$836 for twelve months. If you love swimming and can't stand the congested UNSW lanes - admittedly, they can become quite clogged when the water volleyball matches are being played - then there is plenty of water nearby! At Coogee beach, there is usually a group of keen swimmers heading out to the point headland or even to Wedding Cake Island; if you have a fear of sharks then there you should check out Wylie's Baths or the women's-only McIver's Baths. Of course, there are man-made pools in the sea all the way up the coast, including at Clovelly, Bronte, and the famous Bondi Icebergs.

For runners, there are plenty of options, especially if you agree with the researched proposition that exercising beside water improves your general health. Coogee is two kilometres down the road and from there you can run to Maroubra (via zigzagging residential streets for a little while), or to Bondi. Centennial Park is nearby and here you can be inspired by the professionals checking their latest watches. You can even run into the city to the Botanical Gardens, past the Opera House and over the Harbour Bridge, and take in the scenery without looking like a tourist! There are countless options, particularly if you have the 'Map My Run' app because then you can be inspired by other routes people have posted. Best advice though: ensure you bring your Opal card along with you and also your phone, in case you get lost!

I suppose I'm quite solitary when it comes to exercise, but there are plenty of opportunities to exercise in a group setting. There are "socks" (uh, societies...) like RunSoc, UNSW Cycling and Triathlon club, UNSW Outdoor Club and various other sporting clubs to join (check them all out in O-Week!).

If you're looking for something a little more out of the square then why not snorkel in Gordon's Bay, kayak on the harbour, hire a bike (or a horse!) in Centennial Park, surf at the world famous Bondi Beach, watch the sunrise over the ocean during a community yoga session, or build some serious calf muscles walking in the Blue Mountains.

The possibilities are endless! All the best with your sweaty adventures and try to find a balance between study, socialising, sleeping, and the joys of exercising!



**Sophie Worsfold**  
**Shepparton, Victoria**

# (ONCESSION OPAL CARD

## What is an Opal card?

An Opal card is a card with money pre-loaded onto it used to access public transport including trains, ferries, buses, and light rail in Sydney and surrounding areas. You can't travel on public transport without this (you can buy single use tickets every time but this is a PAIN). Opal cards can be topped up automatically from a bank account, or you can manually put money on it (usually at a machine at the train station, newsagency, or some convenience stores).

## Why apply for concession?

You're a full time student at a tertiary institution, therefore entitled to concession. This includes benefits including trips at half the price of an adult ticket, half price after eight paid journeys, a weekly cap of \$30/week, and more.

## How do I get one?

1. Log on to myUNSW and give NSW Transport permission to view your eligibility for a tertiary concession card
2. Wait two days for the permission to be processed (ugh)
3. Apply for a concession Opal card at [opal.com.au](http://opal.com.au)
4. Activate the card when it arrives in the mail a week later

All of the steps and links in more detail can be found at:

<http://www.transportnsw.info/en/tickets/eligibility-concessions/children-and-students/tertiary-students.page?#howtoapply>

Note: If you're travelling in rural or regional NSW as well as metropolitan Sydney, you need to fill out this form <https://cec-apply.transport.nsw.gov.au/ApplyCEC/ApplyCEC.html> Whenever you travel, you need to have both your concession opal card AND your concession entitlement card with you.

## Things to keep in mind:

- You need to always carry your concession Opal card AND (UNSW ID or Concession Entitlement Card) or you could be fined
- You can manage your Opal details online (cancel card, top up, etc.)

**Roshi Kan**  
**Sydney, New South Wales**



# JOBS

Having a timetable that changes weekly can make fitting in jobs difficult, but there are many flexible options, and the low contact hours make it possible to balance work and uni in Phase 1.

Tutoring is one of the main choices for medical students. Websites such as 'High School Tutors' and 'Tutor Finder' allow you to create accounts and advertise yourself for free; you can also set the minimum price you wish to be paid. If you work for a company such as Tutify, Dux College, or Optimise Learning, the employer sources clients for you, but they establish the minimum price (it tends to start at around \$30-35/hour)

A helpful resource to find available and nearby jobs is to search for 'UNSW Careers', select 'Find Jobs', and narrow the search to 'Casual/ Part-time'. Here there will be vacancies for services such as babysitting in Randwick, tutoring agencies, cafes, and many other jobs that may appeal to UNSW students.



# RURAL ALLIED HEALTH AND MEDICAL SOCIETY

## RURAL APPRECIATION WEEKEND

The Rural Allied Health and Medical Society (RAHMS) is the UNSW group representing the National Rural Health Student Network (NRHSN), which raises funds and runs events for projects aiming to improve rural health and encourage students to consider rural practice. It includes students from exercise physiology, medical science, optometry, social work, psychology, public health and biomedical engineering students, as well as medicine.



RAHMS runs great events on campus including a rural health symposium and clinical skills nights, as well as offering volunteering opportunities off-campus such as rural high school visits. Be sure to like the RAHMS Facebook page to keep updated about all the events being held throughout the year!

One of the biggest events runs by RAHMS is the annual Rural Appreciation Weekend (RAW) which brings together students from allied health, medicine and nursing from several different universities over the long weekend (29th September - 2nd October). It's a fantastic weekend that aims to expose students to the difficulties and privileges of living and working in a rural community. You will experience networking opportunities with rural doctors and specialists, guided tours of the hospital system, and social events including a winery evening.

I encourage everyone to come along and see what it's about :)

**Georgia Harding**  
**Byron Bay, New South Wales**



# SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarships can be a lifesaver not only in your first year living away from home but throughout your whole degree. It gives you more flexibility in your choice of career, more time to study, and the ability to treat yourself every now and then.

The only way to get scholarships is to apply apply apply, even if you're not 100% perfect for the criteria, and even if it's only for a small amount, everything helps. At UNSW, residential scholarships are available for most of the colleges, and can really help to alleviate financial stress.

Here are a few sites that are a good starting point in applying for scholarships:

- [www.scholarships.unsw.edu.au](http://www.scholarships.unsw.edu.au)
- <http://engage.cef.org.au/directory/scholarship>
- [www.gooduniversitiesguide.com.au/scholarships](http://www.gooduniversitiesguide.com.au/scholarships)
- <http://www.nswrdn.com.au/site/scholarships>
- <http://www.acrrm.org.au/preparing-for-your-career/john-flynn-placement-program>

Good luck with your applications and with your first year in Sydney!

**Dayna Duncan**  
**Arno Bay, South Australia**



# HEALTH & WELLBEING

Everyone needs help at some point and whether it's referencing, or looking after your own health UNSW has a wide variety of facilities to suit everyone's needs.

As we learn how to look after others, it's vital that we keep in touch with our own health and wellbeing, and UNSW has a wide variety of facilities and service to help you with this.

## **Counselling and Psychological Services (CAPS):**

CAPS provides a wide range of free services for students ranging from counselling, self-help programs and personal development seminars.

Find out more here: <https://www.counselling.unsw.edu.au/>

## **Medicine Student Wellbeing Advisor:**

The Faculty of Medicine has a dedicated student wellbeing advisor, Ute Vollmer-Conna (who also just happens to be our fantastic Psychiatry lecturer). For any problems, especially those related to physical, psychological and mental health, you can make an appointment for a confidential chat.

Look here for more information : <https://med.unsw.edu.au/student-wellbeing-advisor>

## **Mental Health:**

If you wish to go off campus for your mental health needs, there is a Headspace centre at Bondi Junction. Headspace exists to help young people access services, particularly in the area of mental health and wellbeing, and their appointments are either free or low cost.

Find out more here: <https://www.headspace.org.au/>

## **General Practitioner on campus:**

No matter whether you need a medical help or just someone to talk to, it's valuable to have a GP who you feel comfortable consulting. UNSW Health Service offers a variety of services and appointments (including dental services) which are all bulk-billed for UNSW students.

Book appointments and find out more here: <http://www.healthservices.unsw.edu.au/>

If you need help, reach out to any of these services - even if they can't help you directly, they'll certainly find you someone who can.

**Corrine Antonoff**  
**Wangaratta, Victoria**



# LIFE TIPS

*...from someone completely unqualified to give tips about life :)*

1. **Making friends!** Many local Sydney students come to university with a pre-formed friendship group. As a rural student moving away from your hometown, you have the wonderful opportunity of having a blank slate in terms of making new friends. It's like at the start of Pokemon, where you get to choose from Bulbosaur, Charmander, or Squirtle. Unlike Pokemon, though, you can choose all three! In other words, you can make friends with anyone and everyone, so introduce yourself to as many people as possible in the first few weeks. Sit next to someone different in lectures for the first week and introduce yourself to them. You may feel nervous and shy, and you may think everyone is a lot more confident than you, but behind the facade, everyone is nervous about meeting new people, so don't be afraid to extend your hand and introduce yourself - you never know who you may meet!
2. **Go to MedCamp!** Whether it's team-building activities, mud obstacle courses, a toga party, or just bantering with people in your cabin, you're bound to have fun and make plenty of new friends on MedCamp (P.S. don't be afraid if partying isn't your scene - there's much more to MedCamp than just partying!).
3. **Enjoy Sydney!** You've come to Sydney to study, but that doesn't mean that you shouldn't take time out to enjoy all that Sydney has to offer! Xploresydney.com has some fantastic suggestions of things to do, or, even better, ask your new Sydney friends what the \*phreshest\* places are to visit!
4. **Clubs and societies!** There are 292 clubs and societies to choose from on campus, meaning there's gazillion opportunities to pursue a hobby, discover something you've never done before, or just make loads of new friends! If you're worried that joining a club or society will impact on your studies, always remember that there are 24 hours in the day (which is approximately one hour per hour #mathsFTW).
5. **Looking for academic support during Foundations?** Your peer mentors have attended all the lectures and scenario groups you're attending, and have completed the assignment and group project that you're completing, so they're in a fantastic position to help you with your studies. Many peer mentors are keen to take time to teach you difficult concepts that they once struggled with, or look over an assignment draft for you; the key thing is, don't be afraid to ask! Also remember that, now that you've finished high school, there's no need to be competitive - everyone can do well. So, help each other! Teaching concepts to other people is a scientifically proven method of developing your own understanding, and it lays the foundations for strong camaraderie between you and your peers.

Enjoy the ride! Medicine is exciting, challenging, profound, busy, and, if you do the simple things right - study when you should be studying, eat, sleep, exercise, socialise - it's extremely fun!

**David Tighe**

**Coonabarabran, New South Wales**

# QUICK LINKS

## RURAL CLINICAL SCHOOL SUPPORT

The Rural Clinical School office in the Samuels building on campus offers great support for rural students, and the staff there really want to do all they can to make your degree easier. Full details can be found online (<http://rcs.med.unsw.edu.au/program-support>), and some highlights include:

- Free printing if you bring your own paper
- Free tutoring (conditions apply)
- Textbooks available to borrow
- Providing information on scholarships
- Coordinating care for health and mental health issues for students

## STUDENT SUPPORT

Need advice about your course, enrollment, fees, special consideration, changing your citizenship status, and much more? There are almost too many options!

1. Medicine Education and Student Office (MESO): found on the Ground Floor of Wallace Wurth, the staff at MESO are very helpful and should be your first port of call for any questions you have about your Medicine degree.
2. Rural Clinical School: see above
3. Student Central: The Student Central staff know everything there is to know about completing your degree at UNSW, so pay them a visit on the Lower Ground Floor of the Chancellery Building, next to the Library Lawn. More information here: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/central>

## LEGAL SUPPORT

Looking for legal help? Check out all your options here:

<https://student.unsw.edu.au/legal>.

In particular, the lawyers at Arc are very good at helping you with common student legal problems (more information here: <http://www.arc.unsw.edu.au/help/legal-information>)

**David Tighe**  
**Coonabarabran, New South Wales**