



## **A Guide to Student Academic Skills Services**

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# What can Student Academic Skills do for you?

Student Academic Skills staff provide a free and confidential service to support students. We work with students across all disciplines, levels of study and abilities. Whether you are a first-year student, a final year PhD student, reaching for that A+, or need some support, we are here to help.

Our services include one-to-one advice, workshops, online and hard copy resources, and peer learning support.

A brief outline of our different services can be found in this brochure, or contact us to find out more (see contact list on back page).



# Academic skills development for students

## Individual consultations

Student Academic Skills (SAS) staff on the Dunedin, Wellington, Christchurch, and Southland campuses are available for individual consultations with students by appointment. They are able to provide practical guidance on topics such as: essay writing, planning and structuring a thesis, improving time management, and preparing presentations.



## Workshops

Writing and study skills workshops are offered on the four campuses. SAS staff also work with departments to provide tailored workshops within courses. Undergraduate and postgraduate workshop topics currently offered on the Dunedin campus are listed opposite. For information about workshops offered on the Wellington, Christchurch, and Southland campuses please contact the campus staff. If you wish to discuss or request a discipline-specific study skills workshop for your course please contact reception at [sas@otago.ac.nz](mailto:sas@otago.ac.nz)

## Study skills workshops

- Managing Time
- Note-taking
- Mind Mapping, Design Jam
- Reading for Understanding
- Presentation Skills
- Exam Revision

## Writing & language workshops

- Writing Better Sentences and Paragraphs
- Science Writing
- Essay Writing
- Essays for Exams

## Research & thesis skills workshops

- The Research Journey
- Engaging with the Literature: The Literature Review and the Whole Thesis
- Managing the Writing Process
- Thesis Writing for Postgraduates: Practical
- Expectations of Examiners
- Preparing for the Oral Examination
- Improving Academic Writing for
- Publications
- Designing an Effective Conference Poster
- Presenting Research at
- Conferences

# Resources

## General study advice flyers

- Getting Started at University
- Balancing Workplace, Classroom and Home
- Make a Semester Plan
- Forming a Small Study Group
- Time Management
- Making It All Fit
- Plan for the Week
- Procrastination Busters
- Exams: Go for Gold!
- Am I on Track? - Academic Health Check-up

## Online resources

Student Academic Skills provides a wide variety of study guides and interactive tutorials designed to help students to improve their learning strategies and writing skills. These are available on our website: [sld.otago.ac.nz](http://sld.otago.ac.nz) or can be ordered from the Student Academic Skills Reception.



## On-line information literacy modules

- Essay Writing with Readings
- Annotated Bibliography
- Business Report
- Scientific Report

- NZ Information Sources
- Searching for Information
- Evaluating Information
- Ethical Use of Information
- Digital Information Literacy
- Pacific Information Sources

## Study guide booklets

- Note-Taking and Note Making
- Writing a Literature Review
- Why Do We Have To Reference?
- What Can I Do To Prepare for Exams?
- What Can I Do To Become a More Successful Student?
- How Can I Get a Better Mark for My Essay?
- How Can I Improve My Use of the English Language?

## Study skills tip sheets

- Note Taking Leaflet
- Oral Presentation
- Paraphrase and Summarise
- Perfect Your Punctuation: Colons and Semi-Colons
- Writing a Reflective Journal
- The Quirky Comma
- The Dreaded Apostrophe
- Effective Reading
- Writing an Exegesis
- Power pointers (Effective Power Point Presentations)
- Writing a Critique

# Peer learning & support programmes

The Student Academic Skills has developed a number of peer learning and support programmes for undergraduate students.



## PASS (Peer Assisted Study Sessions)

PASS is a weekly interactive study session led by successful former students who act as facilitators and role models. Course material is not “retaught”; rather, the facilitators promote collaboration and discussion around subject-related problems and questions to help students develop a better understanding of the course material and the skills required to succeed in the paper. Participants not only learn **what** to learn, but **how** to learn.

Check online to see what papers are offered in the PASS programme.

## AMP (Accelerated Maths Programme)

Like PASS, AMP is facilitated by successful students who are in their second year of study. They are excellent communicators who have been trained to develop your numeracy knowledge in an emotionally safe, concept-driven learning environment. You can find more information about AMP at:

<https://www.otago.ac.nz/hedc/students/numeracy/index.html>

## Peer writing support

Peer writers are senior students trained to support students to develop effective writing skills, and give guidance on assignment writing skills such as:

- unpacking the assignment question
- planning/structuring the assignment
- grammar and punctuation
- sentence and paragraph structure

Assistance with writing assignments focuses on developing students’ self-help skills generally, and self-editing skills in particular. A drop in and appointment service is offered.

## Transition support for first year students

- Locals Academic Orientation Programme
- PASS
- Peer Mentoring Groups
- UniStart Orientation for Mature Students

For more information on the Locals Programme go to <http://locals.otago.ac.nz>

## Conversational English

SAS offers conversational English groups for students and non-students for whom English is an additional language. These weekly informal sessions held during semester time are facilitated by a peer leader and provide a safe space to ask questions and practise speaking English.



## English Language Mentors

English Language Mentors support students from the University of Otago who have English as an additional language.

Contact Summer Ellis ([summer.ellis@otago.ac.nz](mailto:summer.ellis@otago.ac.nz)) for further information or to register for the programme.

## For SAS information, please contact

**Student Academic Skills Reception**

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