

STUDENT ORIENTATION

SYDNEY CAMPUS Trimester 3, 2026

A very warm welcome to our New
Students from the GCA Staff

Today's Topics

- ◆ Welcome message
- ◆ Introduction to GCA
- ◆ Living in Australia and Sydney
- ◆ Our Sydney CBD Campus
- ◆ Key GCA Staff
- ◆ Academic Support Services
- ◆ Non-Academic Support Services
- ◆ Communication
- ◆ Important Procedures
- ◆ Facilities and Resources
- ◆ Policies and Procedures
- ◆ Reminders

Acknowledgement of Country



We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters across Australia where our campuses are located and where we gather to meet and learn. Today, I honour the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, on whose land we are based and all the lands we gather from today.

We pay respect to Elders past and present, whose wisdom, cultural heritage and care for these lands have guided countless generations, just as we strive to guide our students. Inspired by their commitment to learning and community, we walk together toward a future of mutual respect, understanding, and shared opportunity.

Welcome Message

Dear Students,

Welcome to Group Colleges Australia (GCA)

You are embarking on an exciting journey of learning and growth. At GCA, we are dedicated to providing you with the knowledge, skills, and support needed to excel in your chosen field. Our focus is on practical, industry-relevant education, equipping you to thrive in an ever-changing world.

Your time here is a unique opportunity to challenge yourself, explore new ideas, and build lifelong connections. Make the most of it, and remember, our team is here to support you every step of the way.

We are thrilled to have you join our community and can't wait to see all that you will achieve.



Professor Alan Bowen-James

Interim Chief Executive Officer and Interim Chief Academic Officer, Group Colleges Australia

Introduction to GCA

GCA is a nationally recognised business school and higher education provider of undergraduate and postgraduate programs that prepare you for the challenges of the global business marketplace.

Our Programs

Bachelor of Accounting

Bachelor of Business (Business Management, Project Management, Hospitality Management)

Master of Business Administration (MBA)

- *Accounting*
- *Entrepreneurship*
- *IT Management*
- *Marketing*

Student Experience Survey (2025)



Introduction to GCA – cntd.

GCA Mission

To provide transformative learning experiences that develop capable professionals through the integration of academic rigour and practical application. We cultivate environments where critical thinking, professional capabilities, and ethical practice prepare graduates to make meaningful contributions to organisations and society.

GCA Values

- Excellence underpins the commitment to high academic standards, rigorous quality assurance, and investment in staff.
- Critical Thinking and Innovation guide the development of micro-credentials, hybrid delivery modes, and student-centred learning environments.
- Effective Communication shapes stakeholder engagement strategies, from agent training to student-facing marketing.
- Professional Responsibility ensures alignment with regulatory frameworks, accreditation standards, and the ethical treatment of students and staff alike.

Ref: <https://www.gca.edu.au/about-gca/>

Introduction to GCA – cntd.

GCA Commitment

It is GCA's objective to prepare you to be work ready in the business world after completion of your degree.



GCA Governance

Universal Business School Sydney (UBSS) is a trading name of Group Colleges Australia (GCA), an educational institution based in Australia.

The Board of Directors has ultimate responsibility for GCA performance and operations as an accredited higher education provider.

Academic governance is delegated to the Academic Board (AB) by the Board of Directors in accordance with GCA's Constitution.

Management is delegated to the Chief Executive Officer, who is supported by the Executive Leadership Team and committees that monitor and advise on health and safety, staff and student wellbeing and operational matters.

Governance and Leadership

<https://www.gca.edu.au/about-gca/>

GCA Registration

GCA is registered as a higher education provider in Australia by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA). The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA), registers all Australian institutions, including government and private universities, that offer courses at the higher education (tertiary level) and accredits their courses for delivery in Australia and/or offshore locations.

CRICOS is the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students. CRICOS registration means that UBSS is authorised by the Australian government to enrol international students in its courses.

When you attend university or an approved higher education provider, you can get a FEE-HELP loan to pay all or part of your tuition fees (for Australian citizens and some special New Zealand visa holders only).

Registration and Accreditation

<https://www.gca.edu.au/registration-and-accreditation/>



Australian Government
**Tertiary Education Quality
and Standards Agency**



Professional Accreditation



Living in Sydney

"Australia is a stable democratic and culturally diverse nation with a highly skilled workforce and one of the strongest performing economies in the world."

<https://www.gca.edu.au/living-in-australia/>

**Global Recognition
Safe Environment**



**Growing Destination
Cost of Living**



**Multicultural Society
Work**



Living in Australia

Important information while living in Australia:

Emergency Contacts: 000 (triple zero) = emergency number in Australia

<https://www.triplezero.gov.au>

Safe work in Australia: Covid 19 information for workplaces

<https://covid19.swa.gov.au/covid-19-information-workplaces>

Beach Safety: <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/beach-safety>

Key facts:

- Always swim between the red and yellow flags on patrolled beaches
- Always swim with someone else
- Never swim after drinking alcohol or taking drugs

Overseas Student Health Insurance:

<https://www.studyaustralia.gov.au/en/plan-your-move/overseas-student-health-cover-oshc>

Legal Advice: <http://www.study.sydney/live/support-services>



Living in Sydney

“With a population of over four million people, Sydney is the largest city in Australia, the hub of social events, close to many tourist attractions and an ideal place to experience the Australian culture and lifestyle.”

<https://www.gca.edu.au/living-in-sydney/>



Our Sydney CBD Campus

Ground Floors and Level 3, 187 – 189 Thomas Street, Haymarket, NSW, 2000, Australia

<https://www.gca.edu.au/our-campuses/>



Key GCA Staff



Associate Professor Wayne Smithson

Academic Programs Director

Sydney CBD Campus

wayne.smithson@gca.edu.au



Dr Mack Meshkati

Academic Success Manager

Melbourne CBD Campus

Mack.Meshkati@gca.edu.au



Maya El Ramy

Academic Programs Manager and

Campus Manager

Sydney CBD Campus

Maya.El.Ramy@gca.edu.au

Sydney Campus Lift Access

Students are advised that the lifts are locked at 7:00 PM daily for the safety and security of all staff and students on campus.

Please note that for the evening classes, students wishing to leave the campus after 7:00 PM will not be able to re-enter.

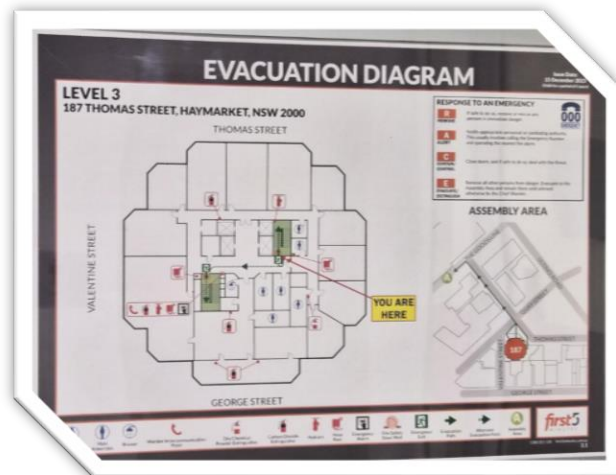


Campus Evacuation Procedure

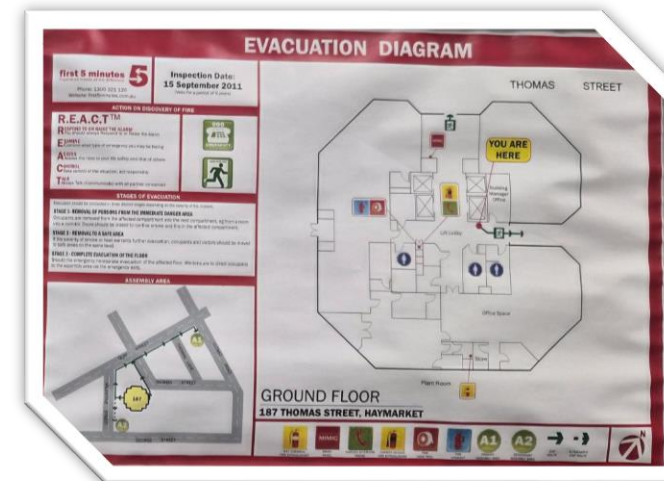
Evacuation Plans are posted on every floor near the lifts.

During an evacuation, please remain calm, follow staff instructions, and proceed quickly to the designated assembly point for your safety.

Ground Floor



Level 3



Campus Evacuation Procedure

Fire Wardens

- James Applegate
- Jason Whitfield
- Pedram Layegh
- Abhilekh Pradhan
- Maya El Ramy

First Aiders

- James Applegate
- Pedram Layegh
- Abhilekh Pradhan



Power boards and Extension Cables

Students are advised to fully charge their electronic devices before attending classes and assessments.

Power boards and extension cable will not be provided.





Academic Support Services

At GCA

Support for Students Policy: <https://www.gca.edu.au/policies-and-procedures/>

Academic Staff Roles

The **Lecturer** will be responsible for:

- Direct teaching on their specialist subject
- Creating teaching materials

The **Tutor** will be responsible for:

- Delivering the tutorial materials
- Invigilating in-class assessments for their subject cohort
- Mark all assessments

The **Academic Success Manager** will be responsible for:

- Supporting students' academic growth and success
- Providing academic support and tailored learning assistance



Student Success

Focus areas include:

- Assisting students with their learning and associated skills development.
- Providing individual advise and guidance to students on a range of matters academic.
- Providing individual consultation with students as required.
- Providing lecture and tutorial support as required.
- Assisting with bookings as required.
- Working co-operatively with the campus staff to create a positive and welcoming environment; and taking an active role in hybrid and face to face supervision.



Other Student Success Services

- Academic Progression Monitoring and Intervention Policy
<https://www.gca.edu.au/policies-and-procedures/>
- Learning Resources/ Student Central
<https://www.gca.edu.au/learning-resources/>
- Video recordings of class lectures via Moodle <https://moodle.ubss.edu.au/>
- E-libraries
<https://www.gca.edu.au/learning-resources/>



Official Point of Contact

For all enquiries regarding the support services that GCA offers to students, please contact:

Student Services

1300 422 422

studentservices@gca.edu.au



Non-Academic Support Services

At GCA

Support for Students Policy: <https://www.gca.edu.au/policies-and-procedures/>

Non-Academic Student Support

Non-Academic Support Services include:

- Assisting students with enrolment processes
- Activating student accounts both in the learning management system (LMS) and the student management system (SMS)
- Ensuring ongoing access to the necessary applications and software
- Supporting enrolment variations
- Providing directory assistance
- Enabling leave applications
- Ensuring student welfare and being available to students for a range of other queries in a timely way



Non-Academic Student Support

Other Non-Academic Support Services include:

- Wellness Support
<https://www.gca.edu.au/student-support/>
- Student Orientations
<https://www.gca.edu.au/orientation/>
- Visit <https://www.gca.edu.au/policies-and-procedures/>

Student Orientation Policy

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression Policy

Indigenous Australian Education Policy



Non-Academic Student Support

For further Support and other essential information to help you navigate studying, living, and working in NSW as a student, please visit:

<https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/guide/support-for-international-students>

<https://www.education.gov.au/international-education/support-international-students>

- Language and interpreter services
- Living in NSW (including accommodation information)
- Identity cards and documents
- Safety and emergency help
- Health and wellbeing
- Transport and travel

Financial Support for Students - ask our Student Services department for more information or visit:

<https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/services/financial-support-students>

<https://www.education.gov.au/international-education/financial-assistance-international-students>

Communication

At GCA

Communication

Effective communication between GCA and student is VERY important. The main ways of communicating:

- **GCA Webmail:** all students have an email account (studentID@studentmail.gca.edu.au)
- **SMS to mobile:** text messages are sometimes sent for urgent messaging.
- **UBSS Mobile App:** we might send you notifications via UBSS Mobile App, so make sure you download it.



Communication

- **GCA Bulletin:** bulletins are sent out so you don't miss anything important. They will automatically appear once you log into your ourGCA account.
- **TV Monitors:** these are placed all over campus to provide you with student information and occasionally some “words of wisdom”.
- **Online Surveys:** we like to hear from you. Through our online surveys we manage student satisfaction and feedback.



Social Media

Social media is a very important part of GCA student experience. We strive to provide our students with high- quality, relevant and useful content at GCA.

We provide daily content related Business, Entrepreneurship, management and UBSS related news.

We invite all students to like and follow our social media accounts, including Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube.



UBSS Australia



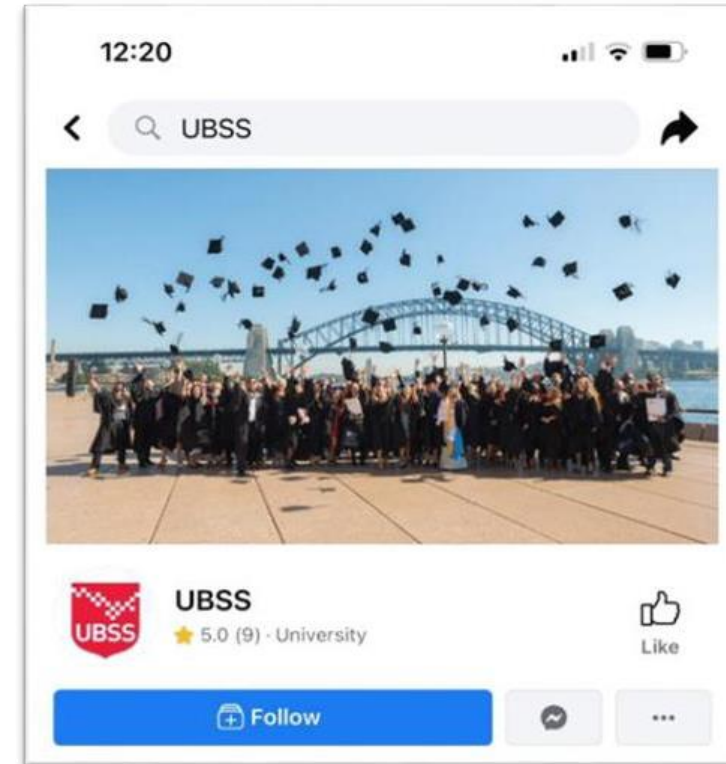
UBSS Australia



UBSS Sydney



UBSS Australia



Policies and Procedures

At GCA

Policies and Procedures

You can find all GCA Policies and Procedures on our website.

<https://www.gca.edu.au/policies-and-procedures>

This is the standard behaviour that GCA expects of everyone.

GCA reserves the right to suspend or expel any student who in any way breaches its Code of Conduct or any associated rules.

- Student Code of Conduct Policy
- Grievance and Appeals Policy (Non-academic)
- Grievance and Appeals Policy (Academic)

Academic grievances

Students are able to pursue academic grievances related to:

- Course progress
- Assessment
- Curriculum
- Award in a course of study

Policies and Procedures

Process for Student Grievances and Appeals (Academic and Non-Academic)

If you have a grievance, your first point of contact should be Student Services or the Student Success Manager, as per existing policies. You can reach them in person during GCA opening hours, or via email or telephone.

You can also schedule appointments with your Academic Programs Director to address any issues related to your experience at GCA.

Please follow the procedures outlined in the relevant policies, such as the Grievance and Appeals policies (Academic and Non-Academic) and the Student Code of Conduct.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome after following these procedures, you may contact the Commonwealth Ombudsman for higher education student complaints:

<https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/complaints>

You may also contact the National Student Ombudsman at any time: <https://www.nso.gov.au/>

Compliance (DHA)

Department of Home Affairs (DHA)

DHA deals with:

- Student visas
- Student visa holders monitoring

DHA is interested in:

- Your academic progress
- Where you live (via your myGCA account)
- Your employment (Student visa holders: **48 hours a fortnight** when your course of study is in session).

Important: Group Colleges Australia / UBSS have a legal responsibility to report students who do not meet the DHA requirements.



Australian Government

Department of Home Affairs

Compliance (DHA)



Australian Government

Department of Home Affairs

Academic and non-academic intervention strategies are available to you. For more details, refer to Policies and Procedures located on our website.

<https://www.gca.edu.au/policies-and-procedures/>

Unique Student Identifier (USI)

What is the Unique Student Identifier (USI)?

To commence studies with UBSS, the Australian government requires all students to have a Unique Student Identification (USI) number. The USI will create a single government identifier for your entire tertiary education journey wherever you study in Australia. This will help simplify information management for students, education providers and the Australian government.

For students who will graduate after 1 January, 2023 the Australian government requires all students to have a Unique Student Identification (USI) number. The USI will create a single government identifier for your entire tertiary education journey wherever you study in Australia. This will help simplify information management for students, education providers and the Australian government.

What do you need to do?

You will need to read and accept the [\(USI\) Terms and Conditions](#) to use the USI portal.

Select the appropriate option below to either supply your previously obtained USI or apply for a new USI.

If you don't have your USI yet, apply for one today at: www.usi.gov.au

Medical Leave

Apply for Medical Leave via **myGCA**

When you visit your Doctor ask for a medical certificate.

Doctors are registered with the Australian government and will have a Medicare Provider Number.

Approved Leave

If you wish to take time off from your current study period, you may be able to apply for a leave of absence. If you are an international student with a student visa, you will be subject to student visa conditions and ESOS requirements.

To lodge an application for approved leave, click the Apply Now button.

Apply now

UPLOAD YOUR MEDICAL CERTIFICATE and other documents where applicable.

You must keep the original of all medical documents.

DHA may wish to view the document.

Holidays

End of trimester holidays are listed on your Academic Calendar available on the GCA Student Central website.

<https://www.gca.edu.au/academic-calendar/>

If you would like to apply for holidays during your regular study periods you will need to apply for a deferment (3-month leave). For more information about this, please see our Course Deferral Policy at

<https://www.gca.edu.au/policies-and-procedures/>

Please send all Deferment enquiries to info@gca.edu.au or studentservices@gca.edu.au

Refund and Cancellation

The Refund Policy is outlined in your Offer Letter.

For more details refer to:

Fees and Refund Policy

<https://www.gca.edu.au/policies-and-procedures/>

Information on Tuition Protection Service

<https://www.gca.edu.au/esos/>



Security and Health



Security

UBSS Sydney CBD Campus has 24/7 security cameras to ensure your safety on campus. DO NOT leave your belongings unattended anywhere.

Health



For all health-related matters, you can visit the World Citi Medical (3-minute walk from the campus)

Telephone: + 61 2 92817311

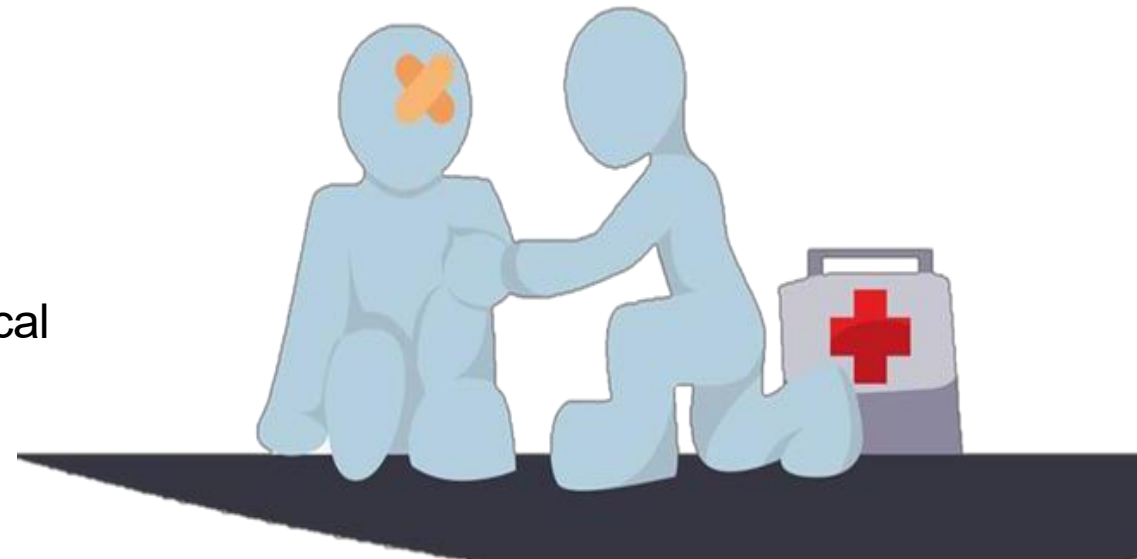
Address: Level 1, 722 George St, Haymarket, NSW, 2000

First Aid

There are First Aid Officers on campus.

- James Applegate
- Pedram Layegh
- Abhilekh Pradan

Please visit Student Services if in need of medical assistance or call triple zero (000)



Places of Worship

There are no prayer rooms on campus.

Please visit the link below to find places of worship near the campus.

<https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/customer-service-centres/customs-house-information-desk>

Hygiene on Campus

1. **Cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough.**

The flu virus can travel through the air when a person coughs or sneezes. When you cough or sneeze you should:

- * Turn away from other people
- * Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve
- * Use disposable tissues rather than a handkerchief (which could store the virus)
- * Put used tissues into the nearest bin, rather than a pocket or handbag
- * Wash your hands, or use an alcohol hand rub, as soon as possible afterwards.

2. **Wash your hands**



1 Wet your hands, then apply soap



2 Lather vigorously for 15–20 seconds



3 Rinse with water

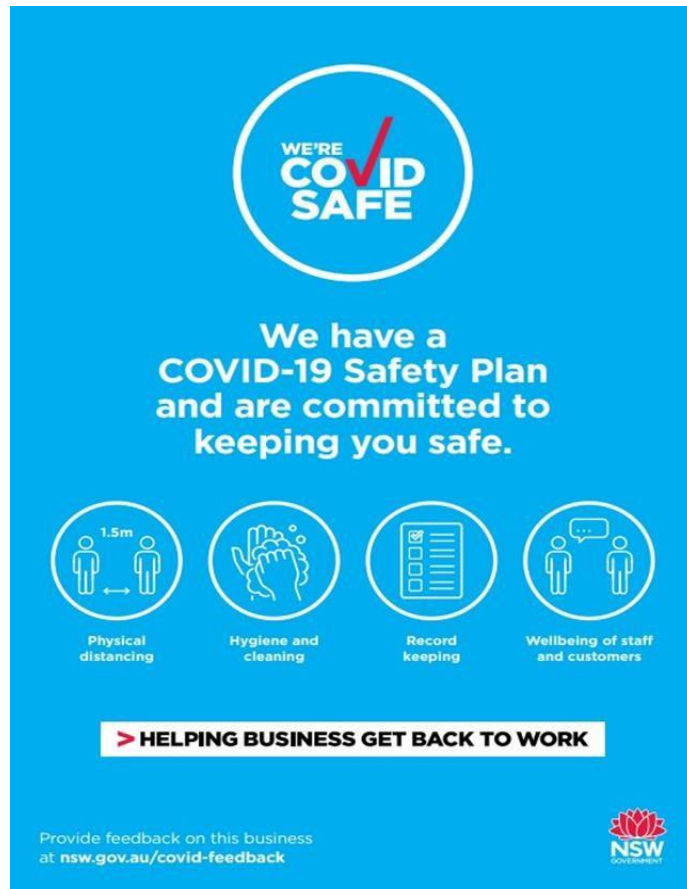


4 Dry your hands afterwards with a clean towel



Australian Government
Department of Health

Hygiene on Campus



Students are to keep bathrooms clean and tidy.
Consider others- **clean up after yourselves.**



Paper towel is to go in the bin provided.

All sanitary items **MUST** go in the bins provided.



Please remember...

At GCA

Wellness and Support

At GCA we focus on all aspects of student wellness and creating a safe environment for all students.

GCA has a dedicated WHS & Wellness Committee and support staff who are the first point of contact if you feel unsafe.

If an incident were to occur on the premises during class hours, inform your lecturer/facilitator and/or contact the following staff:

Maya El Ramy– Campus Manager, Sydney CBD campus

Maya.El.Ramy@gca.edu.au

Dr Mack Meshkati - Academic Success Manager, Melbourne CBD campus

Mack.Meshkati@gca.edu.au

Visit <https://www.gca.edu.au/policies-and-procedures/>

- Student Sexual Misconduct, Prevention and Response Policy
- Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Counselling

Are you having personal problems?

Do you need to talk to someone?

GCA suggests the following:

Contact [Overseas Student Health Cover \(OSHC\)](#)

<https://oshcaustralia.com.au/en>

or Call: Lifeline on 13 11 14 or Beyond Blue on 1300 22 4636

What are your rights at work?

Know your rights

There are some things you should find out from your employer as soon as possible. This includes:

- your pay rate
- whether you're full-time, part-time or casual (this affects your hours of work, pay rate and leave entitlements)
- your hours of work
- what your job duties will be
- whether there's an award or registered agreement that covers your job (this affects your pay rate, hours of work and other entitlements)
- if there's a probation period for your job.

Know your responsibilities

You have responsibilities as an employee. These include performing the duties of your job, being punctual and reliable, and following any workplace policies, procedures, and health and safety rules.

A new job can give you a lot of opportunities - try to make the most of it. Check with your employer to see how you're performing and look for ways to improve how you work.

For more information on your rights and responsibilities at work, visit the website:

<https://www.fairwork.gov.au/find-help-for/young-workers-and-students>



Important: Pay your fees

- You will be **non-compliant** with the conditions of your **Student VISA**
- Your **CoE** will be cancelled, and the **DHA** will be informed
- You **will not have access** to your **myGCA** account
- You **will not have access** to our online course materials on **Moodle**
- You **cannot** sit **assessments**
- You may be reported to **debt collectors**

THANK YOU!

Welcome to GCA !