

You may also want to check with Centrelink about whether this affects any Youth Allowance/Austudy payments. You will need to fill out a form to withdraw or defer. Forms are available in Student Administration.

Changing Schools

It is possible within a university to switch to another program, but it is most important to get support from the School you intend to move to before you do anything else. You will need to again check procedures within your School, as these things are not automatic.

Taking leave from study

Students can take time away from study, and depending on your School, it may be for a semester or a year. If you are an international student, be aware of the impact on your visa.

Forms are available in Student Administration.

Step 4. What should I do to follow through on my decision ?

If you intend to transfer to another program at UB, you may choose to make a direct application for a place in your chosen program. If you are applying for a place at UB PLUS at other unis at the same time then you MUST apply through VTAC.

You MUST apply through VTAC for a place at another uni. This is the most dramatic step to take so consider all your options. We strongly recommended that you talk with someone within your School or a support person from Student Support before making any decision.

Disappearing without a trace

It would be disappointing for any student not to go through the correct channels when making the decision to withdraw.

If you disappear before the census dates and don't fill out a form you may still be charged program fees.

If you leave the university with outstanding library books, fines or fees, you are jeopardising your chances of ever returning. So simply disappearing will cause you more problems than it will solve.

Finally, try not to act impulsively. Be clear in your decision-making, look at all your options, and remember there is support available.

WHAT NOW?

Here is a checklist of the steps you need to complete before withdrawing from your program:

- > Talk your decision through with the right people;
- > Notify your Year Coordinator and School Office;
- > Complete the Student Administration form for withdrawing or deferring;
- > Notify Centrelink of your decision;
- > Pay any outstanding fines or debts.

Contacts

COUNSELLING

www.ballarat.edu.au/student
— click on Counselling Services
Phone: 5327 9470

For assistance with personal issues, study problems, program advice, decision-making, study options and financial advice.

HEALTH SERVICE

www.ballarat.edu.au/student
— click on Health
Phone: 5327 9477

Health advice and/or medical certificates and prescriptions.

Ballarat Health Services—
Emergency No: 5320 4275

LEARNING SKILLS

www.ballarat.edu.au/student
— click on Student Learning Skills
Phone: 5327 9470

Free assistance for your academic needs.

UNIJOBS

www.ballarat.edu.au/unijobs
Phone: 5327 9833

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

www.ballarat.edu.au/student/sds
— click on Financial Guidance
Student Support: 5327 9470

WITHDRAWING FROM STUDY

www.ballarat.edu.au/student
— click on Enrolment Information
Student Administration:
5327 9564
Student Support: 5327 9470

CAREERS COUNSELLING

www.ballarat.edu.au/student
— click on Counselling Services
Student Support: 5327 9470



Thinking about changing your course or taking time out?

Read this first!



Student Support



There are many reasons why a student may feel like making changes to their studies. Before you make any changes, it's important that you are aware of and understand all the options available to you.

Thinking about making a change?

Making decisions about your future study is not easy. You may have to take into account pressure from your family, peers, and even university staff. Therefore it is important to give yourself... **time**.

In this guide we provide some of the steps you need to go through prior to making any decisions. We outline University procedures you will need to follow if you make changes to your future study.

Remember this is a guide, a guide that points you in the direction of people who can support you in your decision-making.

These are the steps we have identified:

1 Identifying reasons for change

Thinking through as clearly as possible, the reasons for change.

2 Talking it over

Talking your options through with the right people.

3 What are your options?

Understanding withdrawing from units vs. withdrawing from the whole program.

4 Following through on your decision

Step 1. Why do I need to identify the reasons for change ?

For a variety of reasons, students change programs or defer their studies. Making the decision that will instigate that change is complex, and needs to be made with a clear understanding of all the options available. >>> It is common for a student to go through periods where they analyse **why** they are studying. Are they committed enough? Where will their program lead them? This form of questioning helps put everything into perspective. >>> We can, at times, get bogged down in minor elements of our program that we feel are major issues. It's important to get perspective and focus on the 'big picture'. Those students who do question their direction and commitment to study, often keep on track and complete their degrees.

So why do you feel the need to make a change?

Identifying the reason/s why, will help in your decision-making.

Maybe you have experienced one or more of the following:

- > The university just feels too big, unfriendly, and you have a feeling of **disappointment** in Uni in general;
- > The **program** isn't what you thought it was;
- > You're having **difficulties** in balancing work, study, friends and family;

- > Relationship, physical or mental health **issues**;
- > **Financial** difficulties;
- > **Homesickness**
- > or this just might not feel like the right thing to be doing in your life right now!

Step 2. Why is it important to talk over my options?

Once you have identified the reason/s for change it's critical to talk through your decision with someone who will be unbiased. This support can come from within the University or from a good friend or family member. So who should you talk to within the University?

ACADEMIC CONCERNS

You've begun your program but it isn't what you expected. Maybe you're having difficulty with the program content or specific courses. Perhaps you're unclear about why you are doing the program and you don't feel committed enough to your studies.

What to do

Within your School there are people who you should talk with and the most appropriate people are :

- > Your Tutor;
- > The Lecturer in charge of the subject;
- > Your Year Coordinator;
- > Your Transition Coordinator.

STUDY SKILLS ASSISTANCE

If you are having difficulty with the program content then you can visit the Learning Skills Centre located on campus. One of our staff can help you with issues relating to:

- > Assignment writing;
- > Time management;
- > Study and exam stress;
- > Oral presentations;
- > Note-taking and tutorial engagement;
- > Research assistance.

Learning Skills: 5327 9378

CAREERS ADVICE

You may want some advice as to where your program is going to take you, or maybe it's time to put your studies on hold for full-time work.

What to do

- > Talk to your Year Coordinator about where your degree may take you;
- > Seek advice from one of our Careers Advisors;
- > Check out Graduate Careers online. They have information on earnings potential and employment prospects for graduates;
- > Unijobs online has information about resumes and interview techniques.

Career Advice: 5327 9470

Unijobs: 5327 9833

PERSONAL ISSUES

Balancing study and personal issues can be difficult. Personal issues can impact on our ability to focus and organise our thoughts logically. Personal issues can be a variety of things such as accommodation, homesickness, anxiety, grief or relationship issues.

What to do

- > Talk with a Counsellor or Chaplain;
- > Clarify your thoughts;
- > Look at your options;
- > Plan your program of action.

Student Support offers a confidential counselling and Chaplain service free of charge. You can make an appointment by phone, or drop into Student Support.

Confidential Counselling or Chaplain: 5327 9470

FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES

Experiencing financial difficulties, while studying at university, is very common. Learning to budget on the little amount of income you may have is difficult and sometimes impossible for many people. Added financial burden can be placed upon you if:

- > You didn't expect to have to live away from home and your parents can't assist you;
- > You are ineligible for government assistance eg. Youth Allowance / Austudy;
- > You're having difficulty gaining employment.

What to do

- > Contact Unijobs who have part-time and casual employment jobs listed;
- > Construct a budget that is realistic! Student Support has Budget templates you can use. You can speak with one of our Counsellors at Student Support for assistance;
- > Find out about a Student Loan through Student Support;
- > Visit the Student Support office which has emergency food;
- > Contact Student Support for a short-term loan which can be given immediately, or

- > Speak with Student Support about local services that offer free 'stuff' around Ballarat.

Unijobs: 5327 9833

Student Support: 5327 9470

HEALTH ISSUES

Ill health will affect your ability to study effectively.

What to do

- > See your Year Coordinator;
- > See the University Nurse or Doctor at the Health Centre within Student Support;
- > See a Counsellor for a letter of Special Consideration.

Health Centre: 5327 9477

Student Support: 5327 9470

Step 3. What are my options?

Having reviewed your options using the support services available to you at University and your own personal support network, you may have decided to continue in your program without making any changes at this stage. However you may have decided on making a change.

This change could include:

Withdrawing from a course

All Schools within the University have different requirements on whether you can study full-time or part-time. You need to check directly with your School to clarify their requirements. Some programs also have a time stipulation as to how long you can take to do the program – check directly with the School.

Make sure that if you do withdraw from a course you are aware of the course census dates. The census dates are the last day to withdraw without incurring a financial debt and academic penalty.