

# FIRST YEAR GUIDE 2011

ESA

UQ ECONOMICS SOCIETY

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## PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

Dear First Years,

Welcome to university and congratulations on being accepted into one of the top ranked economics schools in the country. For most of you, this is your first year at university, which is an experience that can be both exciting and daunting. This Guide is aimed to help steer you around some of the common pitfalls that face first year students and to help you make the most of your time at university.

As you begin your time at university, it is important to be aware that university is about a lot more than lectures and tutorials. The University of Queensland has a great campus culture with all sorts of clubs, societies, sports and activities. As a first year student, it may seem like you have a long time before you finish your university education, any older student will tell you the time goes by very quickly so make the most of every opportunity.

The University of Queensland Economics Society (UQES) was established to provide students with social and career services with an economics focus. We hold a number of events throughout the year and produce several publications. I have included a brief summary of some of our events and publications below, but for more information please visit our website: <http://www.uqes.com.au/>.

Finally, while the University of Queensland is a big place, it is not impersonal. There are plenty of people who are happy to help you with any problems, whether they are academic, career or personal. I hope that this Guide helps ease the transition from high school to university and that we see you around at UQES events throughout the year.

Best of luck with 2011,

Mitchell

UQ Economics Society President

## ABOUT THE UQES

### Events for 2011

#### Semester One

Launch Party (Wed 02/03/2011)  
First Year Dinner (Tues 08/03/2011)  
YE Networking event (Thurs 10/03/2011)  
Flood, Tears & Beers (Thurs 24/03/2011)  
Careers & Cocktails (Wed 30/03/2011)  
Sporting Day (Sun 22/04/2011)  
End of Semester Party (TBD)

#### Semester Two

Launch Party (TBD)  
Formal Dinner (TBD)  
Sporting Day (TBD)  
Annual General Meeting (TBD)  
End of Semester Party (TBD)

### UQES Card



In addition to the First Year Guide, the UQES produces a Careers Guide, which is released on our Careers and Cocktails night, and produces a quarterly journal of high quality student work in Creative Distraction. For more information visit: [www.uqes.com.au/publications](http://www.uqes.com.au/publications)

UQES participates in the UQ Social Sports Competition. If you would like to be involved in our sports team please email: [reegan.piper@uqes.com.au](mailto:reegan.piper@uqes.com.au).

Also, if you have any questions about your first year or anything don't hesitate to e-mail: [nicholas.see@uqes.com.au](mailto:nicholas.see@uqes.com.au)

## 2011 EXECUTIVE BODY

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Email</b>
Mitchell Piper	President	<a href="mailto:mitchell.piper@uges.com.au">mitchell.piper@uges.com.au</a>
Lucy Wark	Vice President Corporate Sponsorship & Publications	<a href="mailto:lucy.wark@uges.com.au">lucy.wark@uges.com.au</a>
Rachael McCririck	Vice President Social Sponsorship & Events	<a href="mailto:rachael.mccririck@uges.com.au">rachael.mccririck@uges.com.au</a>
Ting Wang	Secretary	<a href="mailto:ting.wang@uges.com.au">ting.wang@uges.com.au</a>
Karl Stacey	Treasurer	<a href="mailto:karl.stacey@uges.com.au">karl.stacey@uges.com.au</a>
Cara Turnley	Sponsorship Officer	<a href="mailto:cara.turnley@uges.com.au">cara.turnley@uges.com.au</a>
David Elms	Sponsorship Officer	<a href="mailto:david.elms@uges.com.au">david.elms@uges.com.au</a>
Gordon Owens	Publications Officer	<a href="mailto:gordon.owens@uges.com.au">gordon.owens@uges.com.au</a>
Carl Tessman	Publications Officer	<a href="mailto:carl.tessman@uges.com.au">carl.tessman@uges.com.au</a>
Claire Morris	Social Officer	<a href="mailto:claire.morris@uges.com.au">claire.morris@uges.com.au</a>
Jay Hammond	Social Officer	<a href="mailto:jay.hammond@uges.com.au">jay.hammond@uges.com.au</a>
Nicholas See	First Year Officer	<a href="mailto:nicholas.see@uges.com.au">nicholas.see@uges.com.au</a>
Ellamarie Ramos	Marketing Officer	<a href="mailto:ellamarie.ramos@uges.com.au">ellamarie.ramos@uges.com.au</a>
Reegan Piper	Sports Officer	<a href="mailto:reegan.piper@uges.com.au">reegan.piper@uges.com.au</a>
Andrew Barnes	IT Officer	<a href="mailto:andrew.barnes@uges.com.au">andrew.barnes@uges.com.au</a>

## GETTING READY FOR UNIVERSITY

### WHAT SUBJECTS SHOULD I BE TAKING?

While four subjects per semester is a 'standard' course load, many students particularly those undertaking dual degrees, take five courses at some point in their degree. University enrolment rules specify that students may only take four subjects in their first semester and can only take five subjects if their GPA exceeded 4.5 in the previous semester.

It is also possible to enrol in six subjects but this requires special permission, generally from the Head of the School.

It is very important to have an idea of what subjects you need to take to complete your degree/s from the beginning. All first year economics students and economics dual students, in their first year, should be taking:

- ECON1010 (Introductory Microeconomics)
- ECON1020 (Introductory Macroeconomics)
- ECON1310 (Quantitative Economics & Business Analysis A)

For more information on course requirements and course planners for an economics degree visit: <http://www.bel.uq.edu.au/program-plans>. For information on dual economics degrees visit: <http://www.uq.edu.au/myadvisor/dual-program-plans>.

It is also important to be aware that there are specified pre-requisites if you plan to undertake Honours in Economics. Accordingly, ECON1050, ECON2050, ECON3010, ECON3020, ECON3360/ECON3350 must be undertaken. A grade of 5 or higher is required in each of these subjects and a cumulative GPA of 5.5 or higher is also needed. For more information, contact Dr Fabrizio Carmignani ([f.carmignani@uq.edu.au](mailto:f.carmignani@uq.edu.au)) or Cheryl Paolucci ([c.paolucci1@uq.edu.au](mailto:c.paolucci1@uq.edu.au)) or visit the School of Economics website.

## WHAT TEXTBOOKS SHOULD I BE BUYING?

The 'Learning Resources' section of the Course Profile lists the required and recommended texts for the course. Every subject you are enrolled in should appear on your Blackboard page and the Electronic Course Profile should be accessible through its own button. It is common for a course to have one required text and several recommended texts, which may be of varying usefulness throughout the semester. If this is this case, you will usually only need to purchase the required text and can rely on the library to get sufficient access to the various recommended texts.

It is also **highly recommended** that you **wait** until you have completed your **first lecture** before you go out and purchase textbooks or alternatively, contact your lecturer beforehand and check which texts are necessary to buy. Textbooks are expensive and it may be that some of the recommended texts will only be used for a small section of the subject and may be provided in handouts. Also, remember that all textbooks in the course profile should be available in the library so borrowing them out is another option if you only need them for a small section of the course. However, if you plan on borrowing out textbooks make sure you get in early, as they tend to disappear, particularly in the lead up to exams.

Finally, it may be possible to use older editions of the required and recommended texts. You should check with your lecturer first before purchasing a second hand text. However, sometimes the changes between editions are largely cosmetic and/or sometimes substantive. It is common for the ordering of chapters to change between editions so make sure you match up the chapters before commencing your readings.

## WHERE SHOULD I GET MY TEXTBOOKS?

There are four main places from which UQ students purchase textbooks.

### 1. Co-Op Bookshop

The Co-Op Bookshop is located on the St Lucia Campus between Wordsmiths' Cafe and the newsagents and in front of Print on Demand (POD). It stocks required textbooks for all courses taught at university and can order in books for you if they have sold out. While this is the most expensive of the three options, it is probably also the most popular and you can line up for quite a while if purchasing books in the first week or two. The Co-Op will sometimes charge you a lower price if you can accurately show that it is cheaper at QU Books or if you sign up for a membership card.

**Website:** [www.bookshop.uq.edu.au/](http://www.bookshop.uq.edu.au/)



## **2. QU Books**

QU Books is located at 9/39 Campbell St Toowong, a short drive from the St Lucia Campus. QU runs a free shuttle bus to its store from the roundabout on Hawken Drive, at the exit of Chancellor's Place, every twenty minutes for the first two weeks of university. Textbooks are consistently cheaper at QU and additional discounts are available for holders of student society cards, like the UQES Card and the L Card. You can generally find any book you need for your courses there but they can also order books in for you. While they are not located on the St Lucia Campus, they deliver free to colleges and to neighbouring suburbs for a small fee.

**Website:** [www.qubooks.com.au](http://www.qubooks.com.au)

## **3. UQ Union Second-hand Bookshop**

The Second-hand Bookshop is located next to the lolly shop, on the hill slightly above the Abel Smith building. It is possible to get significant discounts on textbooks here but make sure you check with your lecturer as to whether you can use them for the course before purchasing, as they may be outdated. The Second-hand Bookshop also has a limited range, but it is usually quite easy to get the recommended texts for large, compulsory economics courses.

## **4. Noticeboards**

A number of students sell their used textbooks using the noticeboards around the bottom floor of the Colin Clark Building (Building 39). You can also find UQ students selling their textbooks over the internet. This may be a great way to save money but be aware that some books may be out of date, so check with your lecturer first.

Finally, if you have a friend who had completed the subject already you may be able to borrow the textbook off them.

## HOW DO I GET TO UNIVERSITY?

- **Public Transport**

You can get to the St Lucia campus on public transport by bus or CityCat/Ferry. Buses arrive either at Chancellor's Place or at the UQ end of the Eleanor Schonell Bridge (Green Bridge). The fastest way to get from the St Lucia campus to the City is to catch the 109 and 412 buses that leave regularly from the St Lucia end of the Eleanor Schonell Bridge or Chancellor's Place respectively. The closest train station to St Lucia is Toowong, although Indooroopilly is not much further away. It is possible to catch a bus from both of these stations to Chancellor's Place. For more information visit: [www.translink.com.au](http://www.translink.com.au).

- **Private Transport**

If public transport is not for you, then you can brave the traffic and drive to university. While this is usually simpler and easier than catching public transport, once you arrive on the campus, you face the additional challenge of parking. Parking at St Lucia has become increasingly difficult over the past two years to the point where it is not advised that you arrive at university between 10am-12pm, unless you can afford to spend an hour driving around looking for a park.

There are several main parking options at St Lucia.

1. The cheapest and most popular parking option is all-day parking (indicated by the colour green on the parking guide maps) which costs three dollars.
2. More expensive parking options are long-term parking (indicated by the colour purple on the parking guide maps)
3. Short-term parking [maximum of 90-minutes] (indicated by the colour yellow on the parking guide maps).

Each of these options is managed by pay & display machines. Pay & display machines do not give change, and it is the user's responsibility to tender the correct fee. However, change machines are located on level two of the Conifer Knoll car park, and in the UQ Centre car park.

The other popular parking option that works slightly differently is the Multi-Level parking. Parking in the Multi-Level costs \$5 for the day and is often the last place you can find a good park in the morning. You will get a ticket as you enter the Multi-Level, which you must place in a pay machine, along with five dollars, once you are ready to leave and then finally, place in the machine to open the gate to allow you to exit. There are signs and information explaining this process near the pay machines.

Finally, be very careful parking without paying, even if you are only parking for a few minutes. The UQ Parking Officers are some of the most effective in the world and they have heard every excuse many times before, and will rarely be moved by what you may consider an extenuating circumstance. Furthermore, be careful parking the streets surrounding the St Lucia campus. Parking on these streets is reserved for residents within university hours and, while it may only be enforced by the City Council sporadically, it should be cheaper in the end to try to find a legitimate park on campus.

For more information visit: <http://www.uq.edu.au/parking/>.

## STUDYING AT UNIVERSITY

### CAN I ATTEND DIFFERENT LECTURES/TUTORIALS TO THE ONES I AM SIGNED ON FOR?

While it is recommended that you attend the lectures and tutorials you are signed on for, there is some flexibility with lectures and varying degrees of flexibility with tutorials, depending on the subject. With lectures, the main constraint is available seating. Most lectures will not be full after the first week or two of semester until the week before exams but this is not always the case. If a lecture is consistently full and there are people sitting on the floor or having to leave because they cannot get a seat, then it is possible that the lecturer will bring an attendance list and make sure only people who are signed on are attending. Therefore, you should be fine attending your lecture of choice as long as it is not full. However, be aware that some subjects, such as ECON2020, have in-lecture assessment. If this is the case, you may be able to attend different lectures but you must sit the assessment in the lecture you are signed on to.

Tutorials are generally less flexible than lectures but the same rule, that if there is available space you should be able to attend, applies. There are two main reasons why it is not a good idea to attend different tutorials. Firstly, there may be tutorial participation marks or in-tutorial assessment, in which case there is no flexibility unless you can change your sign-on via the course administrator. For first year economics courses, the administrator is Lauren Summerson, who can be contacted at [l.summerson@uq.edu.au](mailto:l.summerson@uq.edu.au). The second main reason is that, even if you do not have tutorial assessment or participation, part of the benefits of tutorials is building a rapport with your tutor so that you feel more comfortable asking questions and approaching them if you need extra assistance.

## CAN I RECORD A LECTURE?

It is necessary to ask the permission of the individual lecturer before or at the first lecture before recording the lecture. The lecturer will then ask the class whether they mind being recorded, and if no one has any particular objections, the lecturer will give you formal permission. Many students find it handy to have a laptop with them to take down notes and avoid having to type them up later. If you do not have one/ are not willing to lug it into uni, handwriting on lecture notes is still a very popular option.

Many lectures, particularly for compulsory subjects with large cohorts, are recorded and put up on Lectopia. Lectopia, which is accessible via Blackboard, allows you to view the lecture at any time after it is recorded. It is not recommended that you use Lectopia as a substitute for attending lectures, as not all aspects of the lecture are recorded.

## WHAT IS P.A.S.S?

PASS stands for Peer Assisted Study Sessions and are held for ECON1310/1320, ECON1010/1020 and starting in 2nd Semester this year, ECON1050. PASS sessions are made up of classes roughly the size of tutorials that are led by second or third year students that have done well at the subject recently. The structure of a PASS session is a lot more informal than tutorials and leaders will teach the subject in an interactive fashion, which in turn helps you to grasp concepts quicker. Usually, PASS leaders go over the important bits of the lectures and diagrams that are heavily examined in a quick review at the beginning of the session and then go through questions from the PASS workbook. The workbook is basically a collation of previous exam questions and good practice questions, so it's definitely worth having a look at them even if you miss a PASS session.

A good reason to attend PASS sessions is for the summary sheets. Every week, one leader attends the lecture and summarises it into a revision sheet, which is then handed out to every student attending PASS. Summary sheets are not posted online, so attending sessions is the only way to get your hands on them. Finally, PASS leaders put together their own practice exam at the end of each semester, which is very helpful in anticipating the types of questions you may receive in your actual final exam.

Students who attend PASS do statistically better than those who do not - so it is highly recommended that you attend!

# ASSESSMENT

## TIPS FOR WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

### Read the stimulus and marking guide

While this may seem obvious, it is one of the most common mistakes made by students when writing their assignments. Make sure you read over the stimulus several times and if you are unsure of any aspect of it, ask your lecturer for further clarification.

### Citation

Citing your work is a lot more important at university than in high school. If you do not properly cite work that you have copied from other sources than you may be accused of plagiarism which can result in expulsion from university. Most economics assignments use the Harvard Style Referencing Guidelines, although some lecturers give students a choice of academic referencing styles. More information about this can be found on the Harvard Style on the library website at:

[http://www.library.uq.edu.au/training/citation/harvard\\_6.pdf](http://www.library.uq.edu.au/training/citation/harvard_6.pdf).

Furthermore, while Wikipedia may be a great source of information, particularly when you are starting on an assignment, **NEVER** cite Wikipedia in a university assignment. At most, use it as a starting point to access academically credible sources.

### Make sure your language is not too casual

While the writing style in economics is more informal than in other subjects, such as law, it is still generally a lot more formal than in high school. Do not use colloquialisms, sexist or prejudiced language and do not refer to yourself excessively.

### **Speak to your lecturer or tutor**

It is a good idea to speak to your lecturer/tutor at least once before handing in your assignment. While lecturers have a lot less interaction with students than high school teachers, they are still happy to assist you, particularly if you see them during their consultation hours or before or after lectures. Tutors are there to help you learn and understand the subject at hand and therefore should be utilised especially during consultation hours.

While lecturers will generally not read over whole assignment drafts and write where they should be improved, they will usually be willing to let you know if you are heading in the right direction and on how you should structure it generally.

[For more information on writing assignments see:](#)

School of Economics Assignment Writing Guide:

[http://www.uq.edu.au/economics/student-info-files/guid\\_for\\_assign\\_pres.pdf](http://www.uq.edu.au/economics/student-info-files/guid_for_assign_pres.pdf)

Student Services Assignment Writing Page

<http://www.uq.edu.au/student-services/Assignment+writing>

## TIPS FOR STUDYING FOR EXAMS

### Do Past Exams

Past exams can be the most useful tools in preparing yourself for the actual exam. Not only do they give you an understanding of the types of questions that will be asked and the amount of time necessary to complete the exam, some exam questions, particularly if you go back several years, are recycled. You should not go into your exam without doing at least one past exam.

### Do Tutorial Questions

Tutorial questions are usually indicative of exam questions and, like past exam questions, maybe copied almost identically from the tutorial to the exam. This, combined with PASS summary sheets and practice exams, will give you a fairly good idea of what you need to know in first year exams.

[For more information on preparing for exams see:](#)

Student Services Exam Preparation Page

<http://www.uq.edu.au/student-services/Exam+preparation>

## CAN I GET AN EXTENSION?

Extensions are generally given at the discretion of the lecturer. You are far less likely to be able to get an extension for a subject with a large cohort than for an elective subject with a small cohort. Your chance of success also depends on the nature of the lecturer, what other assessment they may be dealing with and the nature of your reason for wanting an extension.

It is better to ask early than late, you should not be emailing your lecturer the day before the assignment is due. Finally, be aware that there are specified penalties for handing in an assignment late, whether that is five minutes or five days late. There is always a rush to the BEL Faculty Resource Centre at around 3.30pm in the afternoon so it is recommended that you get in early, just to be safe.



## ASSESSMENT FEEDBACK

After your assignment has been marked and the results have been released you are generally able to collect it and read what the marker has written. Often, due to time restraints, the marker will not elaborate on what can be improved so it may be helpful to see the lecturer for more information. While lecturers will occasionally schedule time for this to happen it is far more common that you will have to contact the lecturer yourself and arrange a time to meet to discuss your results. General feedback about assignments is often given on the Blackboard website.

Feedback on exams is usually provided in feedback sessions held after the special and supplementary exams have been held. While the number of feedback sessions varies depending on the size of the course, there is usually more than one. If there were no scheduled feedback session or you would like further information you can arrange to meet with your lecturer. Remember, markers do occasionally make errors when marking so it is recommended that you view your exams unless you are entirely happy with your mark.

## WHAT IS A SPECIAL EXAM?

If you miss or cannot complete an exam due to medical grounds or some non-medical grounds, such as a death or funeral notice, documented vehicle accident or breakdown, then you may be eligible for a special exam. A special exam is in the same style and has the same weighting as the normal exam and so, differs from supplementary exams, which may assess different content to the normal exam.

Applications must be submitted no later than five (5) calendar days after the date the original examination was held and you require supporting documentation, such as a medical certificate.

For more information visit: <http://www.uq.edu.au/myadvisor/index.html?page=2995>

## WHAT IS A SUPPLEMENTARY EXAM?

If you fail a course (generally with a grade of three), you may be permitted a "second chance" to pass the course by being granted a supplementary assessment. Supplementary assessment will be granted only where the General Award Rules and your Program Rules allow. Official rules can be found under the Program Rules and Requirements link for each program on the Programs and courses website (<http://www.uq.edu.au/study/>).

If you apply for and are granted supplementary assessment in a course, the assessment might involve an examination or another type of assessment. Generally you will be required to make a formal application for a supplementary assessment. This application must be made within five (5) calendar days of the release of results. Online applications can be submitted and progress tracked via my SI-net.

For more information, visit: <http://www.uq.edu.au/myadvisor/index.html?page=2954>

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### I DON'T KNOW WHERE MY CLASS IS, WHERE CAN I FIND OUT?

When you are logged into SI-Net, click on the 'Timetable' option within the menu bar located on the left hand side. Click on 'Classes View List', then on the corresponding 'Building number' for the appropriate class you wish to attend. This will bring up a map of UQ, upon which a red circle will be around the building.

There are also maps situated around the campus for when you cannot reach a computer.

### WHICH LIBRARY SHOULD I BE GOING TO?

For undergraduate economics students the Social Sciences and Humanities Library (SS&H) at the Eastern end of the Forgan Smith Building. The main entrance to the Library is from Campbell Road into Level 1 of the Library, Duhig Building (Building 2). There is another entrance from the Great Court into Level 2 of the Library, Duhig Building. The library is open from 8am-8pm Monday to Friday and from 9am-5pm on weekends.

### I DUXED ECONOMICS IN HIGH SCHOOL, SO I SHOULD GET STRAIGHT 7'S RIGHT?

It is important to remember that you are now in an environment where everyone did extremely well at high school. So do not be too surprised or upset if your first piece of assessment does not return the grades you were expecting. Also, remember that in many ways first year is the most difficult year as you are getting used to a completely new system of teaching and assessment. Even though courses become more difficult in terms of content as you progress through your degree, you become better at understanding what the marker wants from you and so many student's grades improve in later subjects. Finally, getting good grades in economics is not about studying until your eyes burn and your brain feels like sludge, it is about studying smart. See the **Assessment section** for tips.