

# THE RIGHT STUDY LOAD FOR ME

**What is my optimum study load? The advice below is for domestic students.**

A full-time study load may be perfect for you. It is the preferred option for many students. Or, it might be causing you avoidable stress. Everyone has different commitments that they need to fit around their studies. At university you can choose the number of units you take each semester.

## TIP

Tailored advice is available to help you plan your degree. Ask for an appointment with a Student Adviser at your Faculty Student Office or online via AskUWA.

Determining the study load that best suits your needs can be a difficult decision and may change across semesters. You will need to think about the other commitments in your life. Here are some myths about reducing your load.

**Myth 1: Reducing my load means I will take longer to complete my degree.**

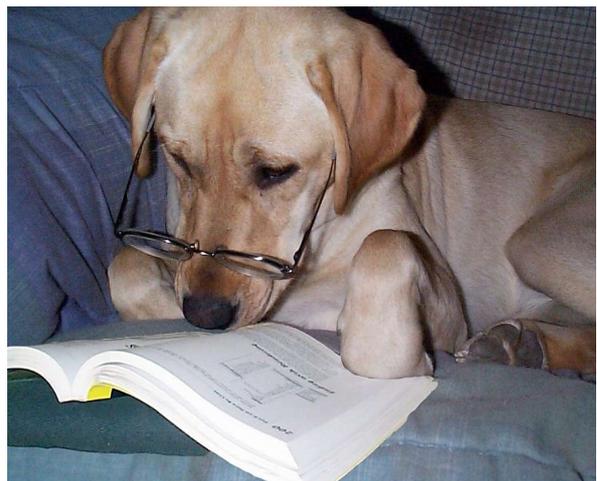
Taking the right load for you often means that you complete your degree *sooner*. This is because you are more likely to pass all units when you take your optimum load. If you are able to match your load to the time you have available, it is also likely that your weighted average mark (WAM) and Grade Point Average (GPA) will be higher. This may affect your eligibility for honours, postgraduate courses, and Study Abroad.

**Myth 2: I might lose touch with people I have got to know.**

You can always make time to keep up with friends outside of class. And if you reach out, you will find that many classmates are looking to make new friends. New cohort= broader network.

**Myth 3: Reducing my load will cost more overall.**

Taking the optimum number of units reduces your chances of failing and incurring a debt for units that don't count towards the completion of your degree.



**Myth 4: Taking fewer units will mean I lose my Centrelink payment.**

Although you should always check the current rules with Centrelink, three six credit point units per semester have long been considered a full time study load for the purposes of Centrelink student payments. If you need to take fewer than three six point units to manage your health, talk to your doctor who may support an application to Centrelink to permit this.

## TIP

There are a number of factors that you should take into account when you consider how many units to take each semester. See overleaf for some of the core considerations.

**Before deciding on your study load, ask yourself...**

**How many hours of paid or volunteer work will I be doing?**

Most students are also working. Whether it's a casual job in retail, volunteer work or a professional role, it all takes time and energy. Make sure you factor in this time, and your financial needs, while planning.

**TIP**

Make sure you check the total time limit for your degree within your course details while planning your study load.

**What are my family or carer responsibilities?**

Many of us care for children, parents, other family members or friends. Make sure you plan for the time required to meet these important responsibilities.

**Is this my first time living away from my family home?**

Fantastic! That first year out can be amazing. Just don't forget to allocate the time you need to shop, clean, prepare food, pay bills and socialise.

**How much travel time will I need?**

Unless you are living in student residences, attending class will mean public transport, or driving and parking time, which you'll need to take into account.

**Am I taking a unit that presumes some knowledge that I'll need to acquire?**

Every unit will have some challenging material. However, if, for example, you are taking that compulsory maths unit after years of avoiding maths, then plan for the extra time you may need to catch up.

**Do I have a medical or learning condition?**

Many students with a medical or learning condition excel at uni. Whether you have migraines, dyslexia, depression, ADHD, painful menstrual cycles or something else, it is important to acknowledge that managing this takes extra time.

**Am I returning to study after a long break?**

Your life experience will help you to be successful as a uni student. However, you will be developing or brushing up on academic skills like essay writing, research and referencing. Take into account that this will take you some additional time in your first couple of semesters as you learn about or reacquaint yourself with academia.

**TIP**

Rules are different for international students, who usually need to maintain a full time study load to meet visa requirements. Please see an International Student Adviser for more information.

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**Any suggestions?**

We would love to hear from you. Email us at [studysmarter@uwa.edu.au](mailto:studysmarter@uwa.edu.au)

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