

February 2025

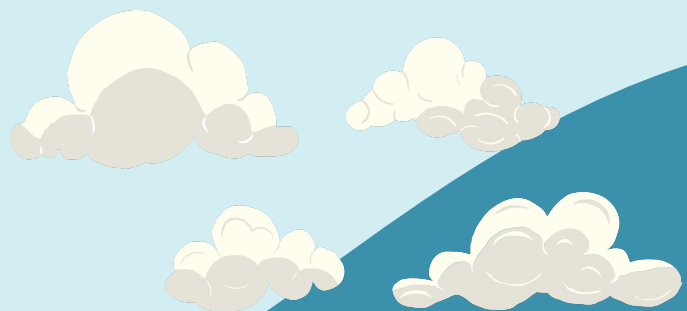
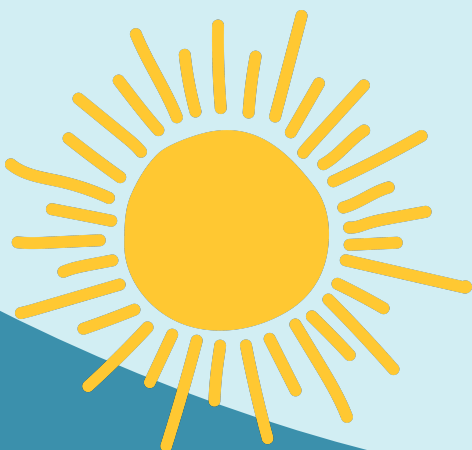
UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA **MEDICAL AND COUNSELLING STUDENT NEWSLETTER**

Hi students,

We hope you enjoyed the O Week festivities and are ready to kick off 2025 with a successful semester.

In this edition we will be covering:

- **Sun Safety & Skin Checks**
- **Medical & Counselling's Sexual Health Clinic**
- **Meet the Psychs**
- **Medical & Counselling's Group Programs**
- **Social Connections at UC**
- **More supports!**



SUN SAFETY & SKIN CHECKS

at Medical & Counselling



Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer globally. Due to our proximity to the equator, low pollution levels, and the earth's elliptical orbit, UV rays are about 7% stronger in the Southern Hemisphere during summer. With many Australians having less melanin in their skin, they're more prone to skin damage, and 2 in 3 will be diagnosed with skin cancer in their lifetime.

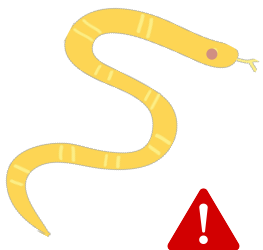
People with darker skin have more melanin, however while melanin offers some protection, it doesn't prevent skin cancer. It is essential to use sunscreen and cover up with hats, sunglasses, and clothing, regardless of skin type.

At the Medical & Counselling Centre, we offer **free** skin checks to enrolled students. Regular checks help monitor your skin, detect unusual changes early, and protect your health. If you notice a new lesion, mole, or spot, or any change in size, color, or shape of an existing one, it's important to have it checked.

Stay safe in the sun and remember to get checked! Book in a skin check at the Medical & Counselling Centre [here](#).¹



¹ <https://cancerwa.asn.au/news/why-does-australia-have-so-much-skin-cancer-hint-i/>



BEWARE OF SNAKES



on campus

The UC campus is surrounded by beautiful native Australian bushland, which means native wildlife, including snakes, can sometimes be nearby. While sightings are rare, it's important to stay vigilant—especially during the warmer months (October to March), when snakes are most active. They can be out and about both during the day and at night and are **venomous**.

Tips for staying safe:

- **Be aware of your surroundings:** Watch where you're walking, and use a torch at night to help spot any potential hazards.
- **Wear protective clothing:** Always wear shoes outdoors. If you're walking through long grass or bushland, consider wearing long pants and boots to protect yourself.
- **If you see a snake – DO NOT APPROACH:** Keep your distance and back away slowly and quietly. Most snakes are shy and will try to escape if given the chance.

Snake Bite First Aid

If you or someone you're with is bitten by a snake, here's what to do:

1. **Call 000 and request an ambulance immediately.**
2. **Keep still:** Lie the person down in a safe spot and keep them as still as possible to slow the spread of venom.
3. **Apply a pressure bandage:** Use a wide, elasticized bandage or something you can tie tightly (e.g a cloth or strip of clothing) to cover the bite and the entire limb. Apply firm pressure, similar to a sprained ankle.
4. **Monitor the person:** Stay with them, keeping a close eye on their breathing, consciousness, and temperature until help arrives.

Our staff at the UC Medical & Counselling Centre are all trained in First Aid. If you ever need immediate assistance, call 02 6201 2351.



UC Medical & Counselling's **SEXUAL HEALTH CLINIC**

stay safe & Informed

The UC Medical & Counselling Centre offers a free Sexual Health Clinic for UC students. This clinic includes screening and treatment for sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and free condoms! You can also ask our doctors at the Sexual Health Clinic anything you want to know about sex, contraception, consent and healthy relationships.

How do I book?

The Sexual Health Clinic is open every Wednesday at the Medical & Counselling Centre. You can book an appointment via the **HotDoc Booking app**, or by calling reception on **6201 2351**.



Book online!



MEDICAL & COUNSELLING'S FREE GROUP PROGRAMS for UC Students

At UC Medical & Counselling, our psychologists offer free group programs for enrolled UC students. These groups provide support for a range of common issues in a group setting, bringing together students who share similar experiences. These groups are an opportunity to meet with a psychologist weekly, connect with new people, learn from others and develop coping and communication skills.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM GROUP SESSIONS

Participation during the groups is voluntary and the facilitators encourage respectful and supportive engagement by participants. Skills are introduced to the group for you to practice in the group and/or in your own time.

Over time, as the group gets to know one another, it is likely you will meet people with similar concerns and feel more comfortable engaging with the group. However, if you prefer to keep to yourself, that is readily accepted and supported.

Appointments with the psychologists or doctors at the Medical & Counselling can be booked if additional support is needed.

More info 

**MEDICAL & COUNSELLING
CANVAS PAGE**



MEET OUR PSYCHS



Meet Vicki!

Vicki specializes in personal growth and performance excellence in demanding environments, using her expertise in coaching and clinical psychology to help clients optimize performance and wellbeing. Additionally, Vicki facilitates Placement Prep and the ADHD Management Group.

She is well-equipped to help her clients address complex mental health challenges, including stress, anxiety, depression, trauma, relationships, confidence building, and self-actualization. Vicki aims to be innovative and inspirational, fostering personal growth and insight, wellness and resilience so individuals can pursue their goals with happiness and health.

Stuart is a registered psychologist and sport and exercise psychologist with over 20 years of experience in a variety of settings. He has over 50 peer reviewed publications on topics of clinical and sport psychology.

Stuart's counselling techniques include Cognitive-Behaviour Therapy, Mindfulness, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, and Schema Therapy.



Meet Stuart!



Meet Michelle!

Michelle facilitates the Weekly Psych Session and co-facilitates the ACT for Anxiety and Emotion Skills groups. She is a registered psychologist with over 20 years of experience providing counselling and support groups for individuals in university settings.

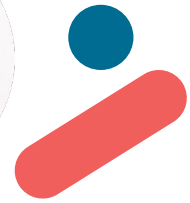
Michelle is experienced in assisting with stress management, identity issues, motivation, grief, trauma, sexuality, and relationship issues, as well as anxiety and depression.

Emily will be co-facilitating the Emotion Skills Group in Semester 1, 2025. She has 20 years of experience as a clinical psychologist in public health and private practice and provides assessment and therapy for issues like depression, anxiety, PTSD, grief, and relationship problems.

Emily tailors her methods to each client's needs and fosters a warm, compassionate, and non-judgmental environment.



Meet Emily!



Meet Ross!

Ross will be co-facilitating the ACT for Anxiety group in Semester 1, 2025. Ross is committed to inclusion in the education space and is neurodiversity affirming – working with people to discover their strengths, show self-compassion, and build great lives.

Ross can help with procrastination and goal setting, anxiety and depression, family and friendship difficulties, managing stress, and many other difficulties.



Jess facilitates the ACT for Anxiety Group and Emotion Skills groups. Jess is a clinical psychologist with extensive experience working in mental health settings.

Jess recognises the importance of a person-centred approach and works collaboratively with clients to better understand their difficulties. She helps clients draw on existing strengths to develop strategies to cope effectively with ongoing challenges.



Meet Jess!



Meet Cobus!

Originally from South Africa, Cobus has gained experience at a psychiatric hospital, working with severe disorders such as psychosis, mood disorders, depression, trauma, and substance abuse. He conducted risk assessments, CBT, psychotherapy, and psychoeducation for individuals and families. In private practice in Australia, Cobus has worked with anxiety, phobias, OCD, ADHD, ASD, trauma, and substance abuse.

GROUPS

ACT FOR ANXIETY

The ACT for Anxiety program aims to provide skills and strategies to better manage anxiety and improve day-to-day life.

It is based on Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), which aims to help people to accept what is out of their control and commit to actions that improve and enrich their lives. ACT does this by teaching skills to effectively manage painful thoughts and feelings, helping you clarify what matters most and use that insight to motivate positive change.

This group meets for a 1-hour session each week for a total of 6 weeks.

EMOTION SKILLS

The Emotion Skills group is designed to provide students with the skills and strategies to manage emotions and communicate effectively. The content is informed by resources from Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) and will include mindfulness and strategies to tolerate distress, understand and manage emotions, and develop interpersonal and communication skills. This program is not a formal DBT treatment but will act as an introduction to some of these valuable skills.

This group meets for a 1.5-hour session each week for a total of 8 weeks.

How do I become involved?



To participate in the ACT for Anxiety and Emotion Skills groups, you need a referral from a UC psychologist or GP. If you already see a psychologist or GP at Medical & Counselling, you can ask them to refer you.

If you haven't seen a GP or psych at Medical & Counselling before, you can book an intake appointment by contacting UC Medical and Counselling reception on **6201 2351** or book via **HotDoc**.

ADHD MANAGEMENT

The ADHD Management Group is a free, weekly group for UC students who have been diagnosed with or think they may have ADHD.

This group looks at understanding and developing strategies to manage the commonly experienced difficulties those with ADHD often face at university.

Topics we consider formally and informally, include procrastination, motivation, memory, decision making, relationship challenges, emotional regulation, time management.

No formal ADHD diagnosis required.

Register via **Humanitix**

THE WEEKLY PSYCH SESSION

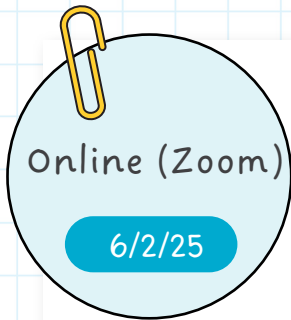
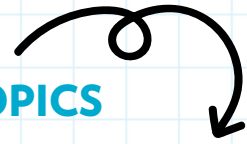
The Weekly Psych Session is a weekly workshop that helps participants develop new skills and tools to address common challenges encountered by students. Each session, you are guided in tackling issues such as goal setting, building connections, managing stress, and overcoming procrastination.

The Weekly Psych Session is presented both on-campus and online, alternating weekly.

To find out more, please check out the next page



THE WEEKLY PSYCH SESSION UPCOMING TOPICS



Setting Yourself Up for Success at Uni: explore how to be ready for the challenges of the semester, build positive routines that will protect you from stress, and learn how to recover if there is a wobble so that you can get back on track.



Social Connections - Creating your Network: discover ways to find sources of friends and expand your sense of connection to prevent loneliness and improve wellbeing. This session will be a great chance to meet other students at the start of semester.



Purpose: today's session will explore your sense of purpose. We will take a quiz and discuss ways to revisit this aspect of our lives which is linked to physical and mental health.



Social Connections - Joining In and Initiating: explore how to overcome shyness, and create and maintain your social connections by initiating conversations and get together.

Register via [Humanitix](#)



Social Connections at UC

uclife^x

UCLife are dedicated to providing a positive and fun experience for our UC students. From clubs and societies to free events and food, UCLife offers a space for students to connect. To find out more, please visit this [page](#) or follow @uclifex on socials.

CONNECTUP 2617
MEET SHARE BELONG

CONNECTING 18 - 30 YEAR OLDS

IN BELCONNEN AND BRUCE *

ConnectUp 2617 is a project designed to build lasting connections for 18 to 30-year-olds living in Belconnen and Bruce. Whether you're into social sport, gardening, trivia, or bushwalking, ConnectUp 2617 will have an event that matches your interests and helps you meet new people. Find out more [here](#).

STUDENT HEALTH AT THE UC MEDICAL AND COUNSELLING CENTRE

The UC Medical and Counselling Centre is committed to ensuring student's physical and mental health remains a priority area throughout the year.

With a professional team of psychologists available from 9am–5pm Monday-Friday, Medical and Counselling is well equipped to assist any students requiring mental health support. Whether you are struggling with relationship breakups, workload, traumatic incidents or depression, our psychologists are here to help. Psychology services are confidential, FREE and available exclusively to all currently enrolled UC students with no referral required.

As well as psychologists, the Medical and Counselling team is made up of:

- Medical Practitioners
- Visiting Psychiatrist
- Registered Nurses

Most medical services for Australian UC students are bulk-billed through Medicare, provided they are enrolled and provide a current Medicare card. UC international students must have valid overseas student health insurance cover.

Appointments can be made by calling **02 6201 2351**, by booking through **HotDoc**, or visiting the centre and speaking to our reception staff.

Emergency Contacts for mental health include:

- Lifeline Phone: **131 114**
- Mental Health Crisis Service Phone: **1800 629 354**
- University of Canberra 24-hour Crisis Line
Phone: **1300 271 790** or Text: **0488 884 227**

24-hour contacts to keep in mind:

- **6201 2222**
UC Security
- **131 444** Police
assistance
- **1800 737 732** National Sexual Assault Family
and Domestic
Violence Counselling Service
- **02 6280 0900** Domestic
Violence Crisis Service
- **02 5124 2185** Forensic and Medical
Sexual Assault Care
- **1300 224 636**
Beyond Blue
- **1300 78 99 78**
MensLine Australia
- **1800 184 527**
QLife
- **1800 629 354** Access
Mental Health



OTHER SUPPORTS

Citizen Centred Justice Clinic

Provides free legal advice on a variety of issues including:

- Housing
- Financial matters
- Addressing scams
- Dealing with domestic violence
- Handling divorce cases
- Addressing citizenship issues
- Managing employment situations within the community, such as addressing pay parity for international students.

Appointments are available every Wednesday and can be booked through the UC Medical and Counselling Centre: Building 1, Level B. Phone: 02 6201 2351.

Student Wellbeing and Support

Can assist with:

- Transition and first year support
- Accommodation and safe housing
- Financial Support
- Navigating Study

Contact: wellbeing@canberra.edu.au

International Student Support

Can assist with:

- Settling into life at UC and Canberra
- Programs that aim to enhance your study experience
- Understanding your student visa requirements and what is expected of you
- Tailored support for Australia Awards students
- Under-18 student welfare and accommodation needs
- Connections to other key services at UC and within the community
- Additional support for students

Contact: InternationalStudent@canberra.edu.au

UC Thrive and Student Mentor Program

Provides targeted and individualised peer-led support for commencing students through a scaffolded 8-week transition program.

Contact: ucthrive@canberra.edu.au

Multi-faith support

- Multi-faith and Chaplaincy

Contact: Chaplaincy@canberra.edu.au

Study Skills

Provides a range of face-to-face and online study help programs for UC students to assist with academic goals.

These include:

- Drop in Study Help session
- Peer-Assisted Learning Sessions (PALS)
- The Maths and Stats Help Centre
- The ASK Advisors
- Study Skills English Language Support
- EndNote and Mahara support
- Referrals for Study Skills individual consultations etc.

Contact: studyskills@canberra.edu.au or by phone on 02 6201 2205.

For self-paced online resources and further information about Study Skills programs and services, visit the Study Help UCLearn (Canvas) site (log-in required).



Keep an eye out for our next issue.

On behalf of the UC Medical & Counselling Centre, **stay safe everyone!**