What is a USI?

The Unique Student Identifier (USI) is a reference number which is made up of a combination of ten numbers and letters, that is free and easy to create and stays with you for life. If you are a new or continuing student undertaking study at a Higher Education Provider (HEP), you will need a USI.

Why do I need a USI?

On 4 December 2019, the Australian Government introduced the Student Identifiers Amendment (Higher Education) Bill 2019 into Parliament, which also seeks to amend the Student Identifiers Act 2014.

The Bill will facilitate the extension of the Unique Student Identifier (USI) to higher education students, and enable the assignment, collection, use, disclosure and verification of student identifiers for those students.

From 1 January 2021, new domestic and onshore overseas students studying at a higher education provider may apply for a USI. From 1 January 2023, higher education providers must not confer an award on an individual unless the individual has been assigned a USI, or an exemption applies.

The Student Identifiers Amendment (Higher Education) Bill 2019 received Royal Assent on Friday, 6 March 2020, giving effect to the above.

Why does UNSW need my USI?

The Australian Government has advised that all domestic and onshore overseas students require a USI to study and graduate from an Australian University. It is also required for students to be able to access Commonwealth Assistance in all forms.

The USI will replace the current Commonwealth Higher Education Student Support Number (CHESSN). If you do not provide UNSW with your USI, UNSW cannot offer you a Commonwealth supported place and/or Commonwealth Assistance with your tertiary studies.

How do I create or check if I have a USI?

If you have attended or completed any Nationally Recognised training in the last five years, you may already have a USI. If you are unsure whether you already have an existing USI you can check if you have a USI here.

If you do not already have a USI you can create your USI here. You will need to have a valid form of identification handy.

It is important that you only have one USI to ensure that you receive your correct HELP entitlements and that you keep your USI safe because if you forget it, UNSW cannot access it for you.

When do I need to provide my USI?

If you are a commencing student in 2021, you will be asked to provide your USI as part of your online acceptance, before you enrol.
If you are a continuing student and you change programs from 2021, you will be asked to provide your USI as part of your online acceptance process or on your Commonwealth assistance form (if accessing a Commonwealth supported place or a HELP loan) for your new program.

You will also be able to provide your USI through your myUNSW portal during 2021. UNSW will communicate further on this once this option is available.

Your USI must be provided prior to the census date of your enrolment.

What happens if I don’t provide my USI?

The Australian Government has advised that all domestic and onshore overseas students require a USI to study and graduate from an Australian University.

If you do not provide, or UNSW cannot verify your USI with the Australian Government, you may not be able to graduate or receive any form of Commonwealth Assistance. This means you will be charged the Fee Paying rate, with no access to HELP loans, or you may lose your place in your program.

If for any reason, you are unable to create a USI, you can contact us for help at: fees@unsw.edu.au

I have questions about the USI process and/or privacy policies, please see the USI help page and the USI privacy and use page.