



Top 20 of the Southern Cross Model

Updated September 2022

1. What is the Southern Cross Model?

The Southern Cross Model is a better way to learn. Units have a shorter and more focused structure and employ contemporary teaching methods that centre around interactive learning and real-world applications.

2. How does it work?

The academic year is broken up into six-week terms. There is a two-to-three week break between terms.

3. How many units do I study in each term?

You'll study a maximum of two units per term.

4. How many units will I study in a year as a full-time student?

Most full-time students will study two units a term for four terms – a total of eight units per year. An international student must study eight units a year.

5. Can I still get Austudy if I am studying in the Southern Cross Model?

Yes, but to get Youth Support or Austudy you must study at least six units a year and at least three in the first half of the year, completed by July.

6. I'm studying part-time. How many units will I take a year?

That depends on your individual circumstances. Most part-time students take four units per year, so you could take one unit per term for four terms and have two terms off.

7. How many hours of face-to-face teaching in each unit?

Each unit includes up to 6 hours of face-to-face teaching (such as pracs, tutorials, lab work) per week. Allow around 20-25 total study time per unit per week.

8. What is guided self-access learning?

Self-access learning is a contemporary approach to the acquisition of knowledge and expertise. Students actively seek information and experience in a supported environment. Activities are on-campus and online and include joint problem-solving, discussions and questioning.



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9. Why was the Southern Cross Model introduced?

To increase student success and give our students the best possible university experience. We want more people to finish their degrees and achieve more satisfying academic results while they're at uni.

10. Do any other unis use this approach?

No. While some other unis use similar models, sometimes called 'block models', the Southern Cross Model is unique.

11. Does it cram the same content into a shorter period of time?

No. Units are designed specifically for this model. They are not compressed or 'intensive' versions of a 12-week unit. Learning modules guide students through the curriculum so that the learning activities are meaningful and relevant. Assessment is carefully sequenced to support this guided approach.

12. What's an example of teaching in the Southern Cross Model?

Instead of attending a lecture and reading 200 pages to write an essay, you might be asked to investigate a case study, problem-solve in a group and develop a solution that has a real-world application.

13. How can I plan my casual work if my timetable is changing every six weeks?

Unit timetables will be released well in advance of the term so you can plan your other commitments.

14. Will it take me longer to finish my degree?

No. A full-time load will still be 8 units per year so you should finish your degree in the same time.

15. How will residential/practicum work?

Practicals, field trips and residentials will still be part of your course. The face-to-face component of practical units may be higher than other units.

16. How will I interact with my peers?

Each unit has at least three hours of class learning per week with your peers. Many of the other activities require you to work together so you have plenty of opportunity to get to know each other and to work together.



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17. Which courses are taught in the Southern Cross Model?

From 2023, all courses will be taught in the Southern Cross Model. In 2022, all courses with the exception of undergraduate health and law courses are taught in the Southern Cross Model.

18. Have these students had better results?

Yes. Students studying in the Southern Cross Model report have posted better results overall. The mean unit success rate (students passing their unit) increased from 69% (2019) to 85% (2022) and the GPA mean increased from 3.60 (2019) to 4.36 (2022).

19. Will I pay more in tuition fees?

No. The Southern Cross Model has no effect on fees.

20. Who can I talk to about my individual situation?

You can email southerncrossmodel@scu.edu.au or talk to our friendly student advisers on 1800 626 481.