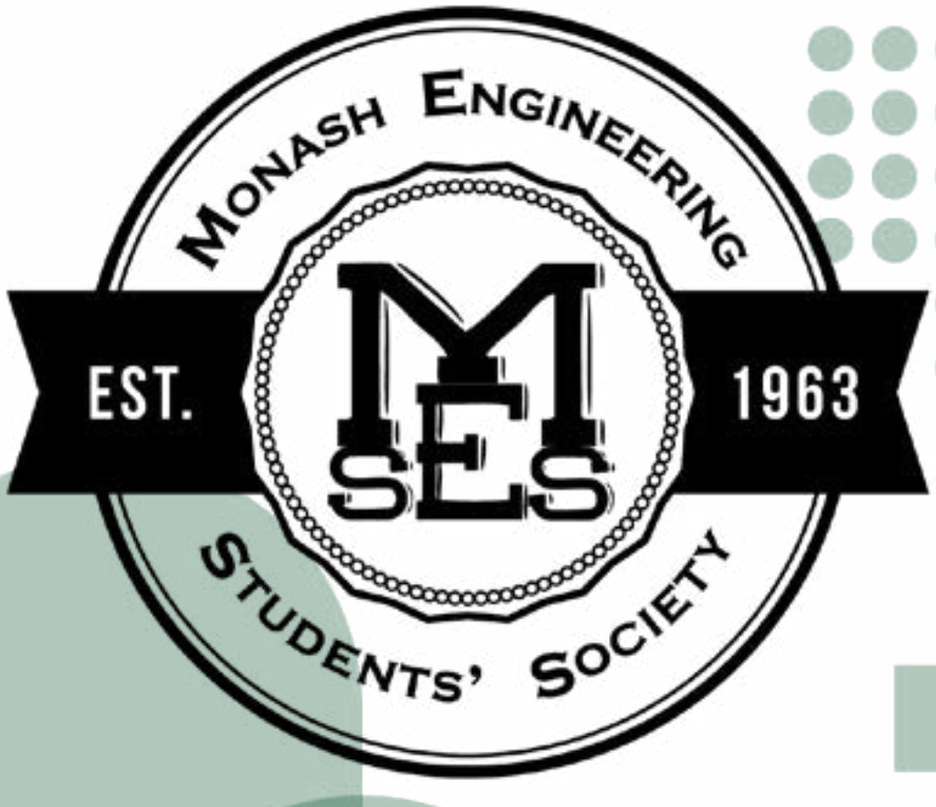
Education Guide – Booklet 1

INTRODUCTION TO UNIVERSITY

General tips from previous first years, understanding uni language, and a guide to on campus locations



INTRODUCTION

This is the Education Guide, an annual project undertaken by MESS's academic portfolio to support first year engineering students by providing information that we wish we had easier access to as first years.

My name is Caleb Gering, and I'm MESS's Education Officer. I coordinated this year's Education Guide, and currently run the Engineering First Years Facebook page. I am a second year engineering and commerce student, so I completely understand what it's like to be in your first year at uni.

The jump to university can feel quite daunting, especially for engineering students. But don't worry. University is a shock to the system for everyone, but everyone gets used to it. Your workload for the first couple of weeks won't be high for this reason, so use this time to take it all in. Don't be afraid to make mistakes, we all did.

I found university life more stressful and complicated than in high school, but the freedoms and opportunities I was granted made my first year of uni the best year of my life so far. I loved the more expansive social environment, and the ability to decide how I wanted to structure my days.

My two biggest pieces of advice are:

- Get involved as much as possible. There are so many social, academic, and extracurricular opportunities that will broaden your horizons. Take an eye off your studies every so often and see what's out there.
- Ask for help when you need it. While you've

probably heard that tutors won't be checking in on you, they are more than happy to help if you reach out to them. There are sessions where you can find help, but you need to make the effort to attend first.

If you have any queries or would like to talk to someone about your engineering studies, feel free to visit the MESS office (next to the Kenneth Hunt Lawn) or email me directly at caleb.gering@mess.org.au.

Hopefully I'll see you around!

Caleb Gering (he/him)
Education Officer

UNI GLOSSARY

Allocate+: Located within WES, Allocate+ is used to create your own personal timetable each semester. You can also access Allocate+ by simply Googling "Allocate plus Monash".

CATME: For most engineering units' group assessments, an online peer assessment system called CATME is used to rate your teammates. Your mark for that group assessment is adjusted accordingly based upon your CATME result.

CPD: Continuous Professional Development (CPD) is a compulsory professional practice requirement for all engineering students at Monash. A written record of all your CPD activities and skill reflections are found on Student Futures under the 'Engineering CPD' tab. More detailed information on CPD can be found here.

FaME: Friends and Mentors in Engineering is a program designed to help ease the transition from high school to university by providing every first year with peer mentors. See the section on FaME for more information.

Jaffy: A term used often to describe first years. We will leave it to you to figure out what it stands for!

Live stream: Classes you are expected to attend online at the time of the class – delivered via Zoom or Echo360.

Moff: Short for MESS Office. Located next to the Kenneth Hunt, opposite E3 and the Mechanical

Engineering office, this is the place where you can ask us any questions. There will always be a MESS representative in the Moff from 10am - 3pm, Monday to Thursday. We also have a microwave, kettle and sandwich toaster, so feel free to drop by anytime!

Moodle: Monash's online learning platform. Moodle keeps you up to date with what is due and when. It is essential to learn how to navigate Moodle and check on each of your units regularly to see if there are any important announcements. You can also find pre-workshop content, discussions, online learning capture, online quizzes and assignment uploading on Moodle.

On demand: Classes which can be watched at a later viewing time than timetabled, allowing for a clash of classes if necessary.

Okta Verify: The multi-factor authentication system that Monash uses to keep your information private and secure.

SEFS: Student Experience Feedback Survey. This is a survey run mid-way through the semester, to allow you to give anonymous feedback and suggestions to unit staff. This feedback can help improve your experience within your units.

SETU: A Student Evaluation of Teaching and Units is a survey that allows you to give honest and detailed feedback on your units. These are really important for improving your educational experience in engineering.

WES: WES is Monash's web enrolment system. WES is the place to view information based on your enrolment, fees/scholarships, student services and course progression. This is where your unofficial academic record as well as the exam timetable can be viewed.

WAM: The Weighted Average Mark is the method Monash uses to measure academic performance. Results are weighted based on the credit points of the unit, and the year level of the unit. You may also see academic performance measured using GPA, although WAM is the primary measurement.

FIRST YEAR TIPS

Transitioning from High School to University

- Lecturers are not high school teachers. They don't come up to you if you've missed class and ask what's going on, or if you've not submitted work. It is up to you to keep on top of things and put in the required work to get the mark you want.
- It's a culture shock with team assignments. VCE hates them. Engineering loves them. Get to know your teammates early, and set up a google drive, a messaging group and organise meetings.
- Age is blurred at uni. In high school you tend to make friends with your year level and that's it but my friends range from 19 to 26 and honestly we have a good time!
- University life (both academic and personal) is very different from high school. However, you won't find out what works for you and how to tackle this change immediately. So, in the meantime, have fun and try your best and then soon you will find your rhythm and be able to smash uni!
- Do your best to get involved with FaME! It's an amazing way to meet new people and learn the ropes of uni. The more you engage with your mentor and mentees the more you will get out of the program.

General Uni Advice

- Just because uni is hard doesn't mean you're bad or inadequate. It just means your expectations are high enough that they're pushing you to achieve more and you're going to look back at the challenges with a smile.
- Get to know as many people as you can, both in your course and outside of it. It makes the University

experience that much better and you never know when you could use some company on campus!

- Take the time to look through your unit guides and Moodle before you start the semester, noting down important dates in your calendar and acquainting yourself with the content of each unit.
- Don't push yourself too hard, if you need more time, you can drop a subject/commitment. More engineering students underload than those that don't, so don't feel like you're falling behind if you do this.
- The start of the semester will begin slowly, but work will build up quickly. Complete tasks ahead of time if you can! Form study groups for efficient studying.
- Any opportunities that come up, such as hackathons, career expos, industry nights... go to them!
- Join clubs/societies early and start researching student teams early in the year. I didn't find out about student teams until far later in the year, and by then it was too late to apply to any of them.
- Engineering units tend to put all of the info you need on the lecture slides and tutorial sheets so don't waste your money buying textbooks.
- Make friends with your demonstrators in each subject. They can give you handy advice about the subject and how to tackle engineering. They are also super helpful to talk to if they are doing a specialisation you are interested in.

A GUIDE TO CAMPUS

Monash has numerous places to get work done, and the best place to study depends on what type of work you would like to do. It might also be worth checking out the opening hours for each location if you're planning to study early or late, as the times are different for all locations and can change throughout the year (e.g. opening times may differ during SWOTVAC and semester breaks).

Learning and Teaching Building:

Located near the main bus terminal of Clayton campus, LTB has lots of rooms that can be booked for smaller groups. This is also where some of your classes are, so you'll be spending a decent amount of time here anyway. The building is also open until midnight on weekdays, so if you find yourself needing somewhere to study late at night the LTB is for you!

Woodside Building for Technology and Design:

A new building located at 20 Exhibition Walk, the Woodside building has more than 30 learning spaces and many rooms set up for collaboration and interaction. You'll also have some classes here, and it is a great place to take advantage of all the new study spaces and resources!

Hargrave-Andrew Library:

Located at 13 College Walk, the Hargrave-Andrew library (HAL) is the science and engineering library. With many engineering resources, prime location near engineering buildings, and the Secret Garden café below, this library is a favourite among many engineering students.

Sir Louis Matheson Library:

Located near the LTB, it is the art, education, and business library. It's normally deemed to be the nicest library at Monash and is generally very quiet. It has a great combination of quiet study spaces, computer labs and bookable small rooms.

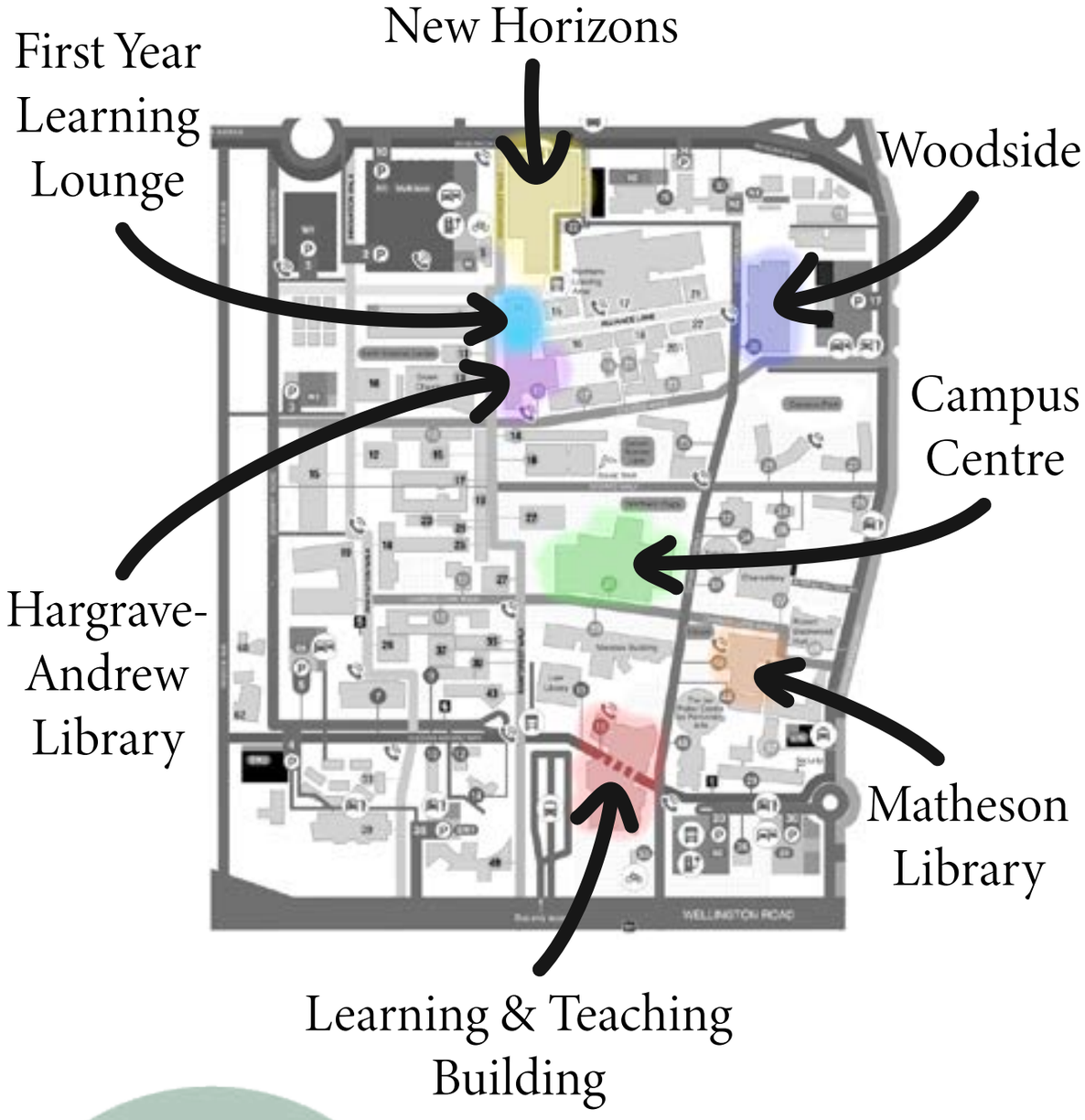
First Year Learning Lounge/Centre:

Located within the main Engineering building (14 Alliance Lane) on the second floor, this space is dedicated to first year engineering students. It's a great place to work on group projects, and help desks are often held here. Due to its collaborative nature, the first year learning centre can get pretty crowded and loud during peak times.

Campus Centre:

The ground floor is home to most of the restaurants and food options on campus, as well as useful resources, such as Careers Connect. The first floor has open, social spaces where you can study with friends

without having to worry too much about staying very quiet.

New Horizons Research Centre:
This building is the research hub of Monash. With mostly post-graduates and researchers in the building, many nice and quiet study spots can be found away from the buzz of the rest of the campus.

CAMPUS MAP