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Change of Preference Guide

For students & their families



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Change of Preference Guide

For students & their families

A guide to changing preferences for students looking to study at university in Australia in 2027. Created by Study Work Grow Pty Ltd in 2026.

EDITION 8 I VERSION 1

Dates and application procedures can change unexpectedly, so we recommend you double check all information directly with the university or Tertiary Admissions Centre before changing your preferences. We have verified the information in this guide, but in some cases the information may differ from that provided on third party websites or printed material.

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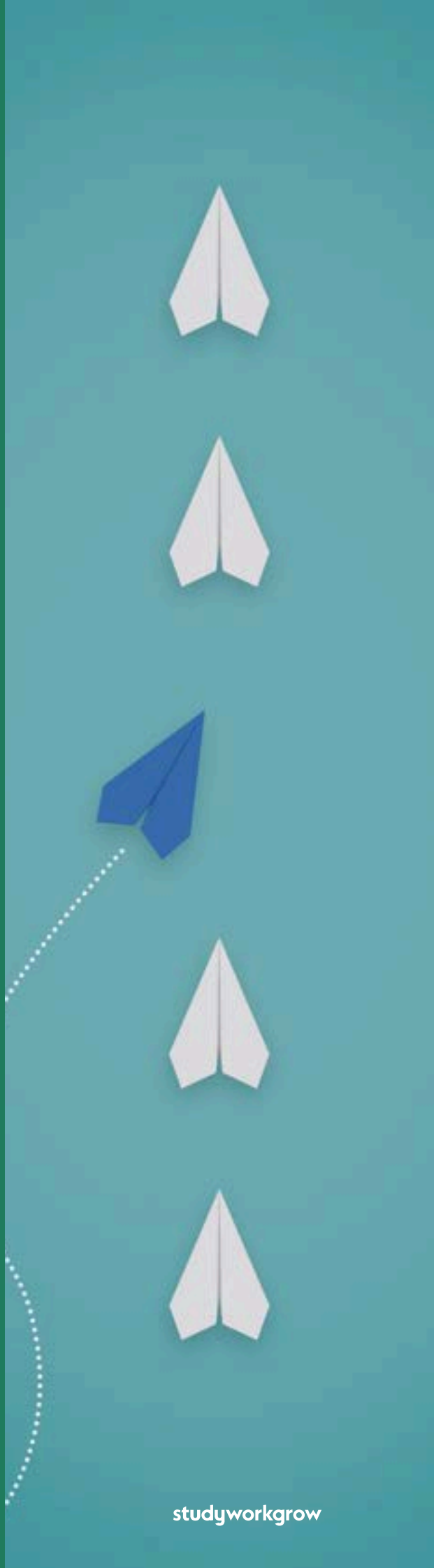


What are preferences?

When you apply to university, you can often pick several courses to apply for at once. 'Preferences' are simply the courses you're applying for listed in the order you'd like to study them.

You'll typically add your dream course as your first preference, some similar options next, and one or more backup options at the end.

Listing the maximum number of possible preferences on your applications is usually a good idea. This will give you the best opportunity to receive at least one offer or maybe more.

But did you know that your preferences aren't set in stone, even after your've submitted your application?

You can change your preferences

Once you submit your application, universities and Tertiary Admissions Centres (TACs) will often allow you to change your preferences, meaning you can re-order the courses already on your list or even add and remove courses.

In this guide, we're going to explore:

- Some of the reasons why you might change your preferences
- When you need to do it by
- Where you can find more information

Let's get started.



Why change your preferences?

There are many reasons you might want or need to change your preferences, here are just a few:

Your ATAR was better than you expected

Your ATAR wasn't as good as you had hoped for

You have a change of heart about the best course or university for you

A new course has become available and you want to apply

You discover a course you didn't know about when you applied

The prerequisites for a course on your list have changed

The course you applied for has been dropped or changed

You didn't put your preferences in the right order the first time

Our top tips if you're unsure about changing your preferences

1. If you get higher results than you expected, you don't need to rush off and change your preferences just because you can. If you're happy with your preferences, the best thing to do is stick with them, there's no such thing as 'wasting' good grades.

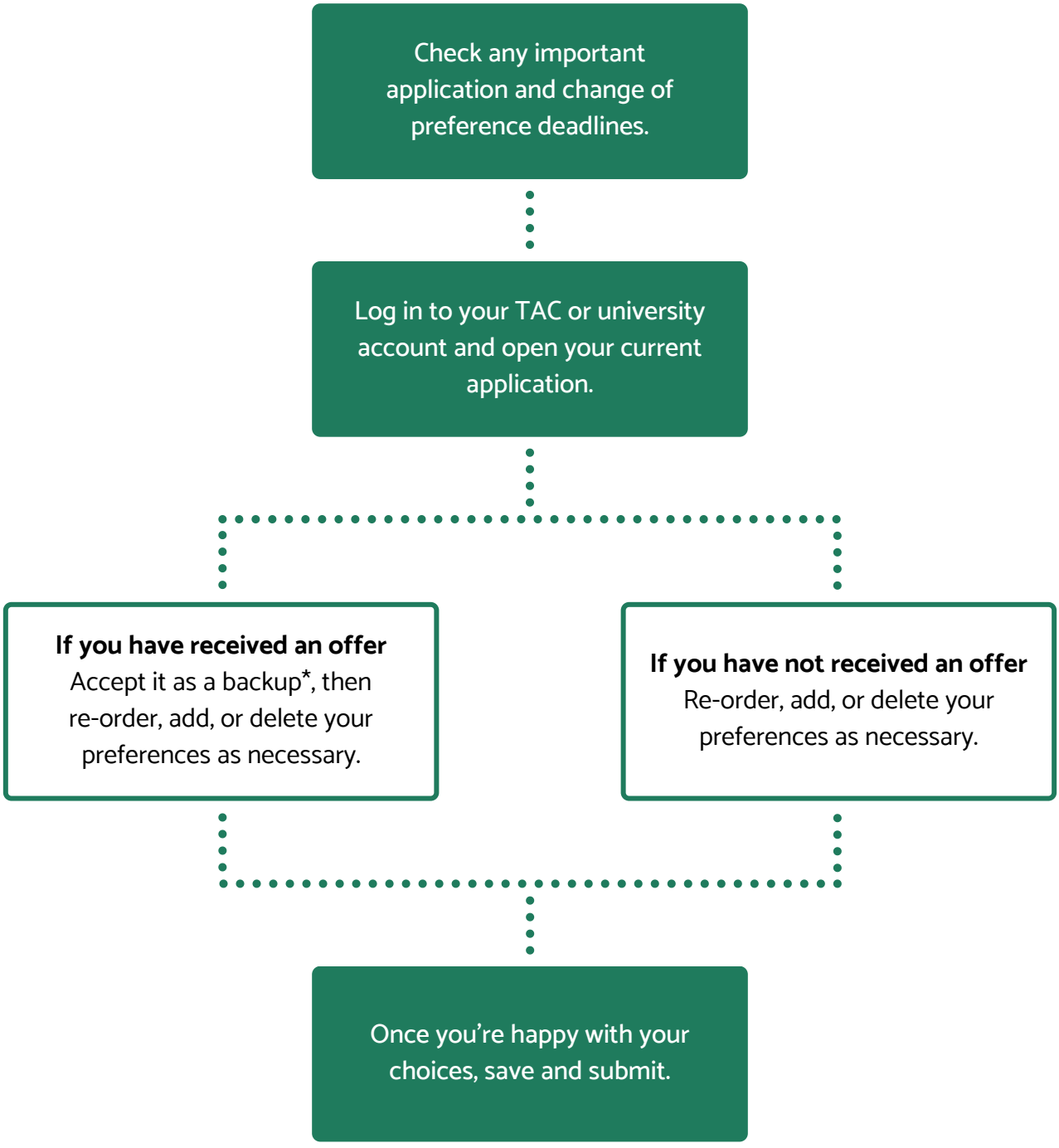
2. You might feel pressured into thinking you should change your list, particularly if your friends are talking about changing theirs and cut-off dates are coming up. Take a breath, spend some time researching any changes, and make sure you're doing it for all the right reasons.

3. Finally, double check any prerequisites and eligibility requirements before you add or move a course. It would be a shame to miss out on an offer because you didn't take a few minutes to read the criteria.



The change of preference flowchart

The process of changing your preferences is relatively simple. Here's an overview of the steps you'll need to follow:



* If you're applying through TISC, **do not** accept or defer your offer and use the 'automatic safety net' instead.

Important dates

Most universities and TACs provide plenty of opportunities for you to change your preferences. After submitting your application and before you receive your first offer, you can usually log into your application and adjust your preferences.

Note that change of preference might only be available during certain periods, and that each offer round may have separate cut-off dates.



This information is correct at the time of publication (October 2026), but sometimes dates change for various reasons. We always recommend double-checking the cut-off dates directly with the TAC or institution.

TAC	Main Offer Round	CoP Main Round Deadline	CoP Next Round Deadline
UAC	23 December 2026	18 December 2026	29 December 2026
VTAC	23 December 2026	12 December 2026	24 December 2026
QTAC	23 December 2026	21 December 2026	7 January 2027
SATAC*	14 January 2027	6 January 2027	--
TISC	24 December 2026	20 December 2026	13 January 2027
UTAS**	Mid-December 2026	--	--

* SATAC has only one change of preference cut-off for all future offer rounds.

** UTAS send out their main round of offers to Tasmanian students in mid-December and to students in all other states/territories in January. You can log in to your application at any time before the final deadline in mid-February to change your course preferences.

Limits and fees

Each TAC and university has different application processes, and this includes change of preference. Here are the preference limits and fees you might need to keep in mind:

TAC	Preference Limit	CoP Limit	CoP Fee
UAC	5	Unlimited	Free
VTAC	8	Unlimited	Free
QTAC	6	Unlimited	First 3 free, then $75 per change
SATAC	6	Unlimited	Free
TISC	6	Unlimited	Free
UTAS	5	Unlimited	Free

Other important things to know

Some courses can't be added after certain dates: If a course has an early closing date, you might find it can't be added to your preferences once this date has passed.

Course places might fill after the first offer round: If enough offers are accepted to a course in the first offer round, it won't be available in subsequent rounds.

Not all courses are available for offers in each round: Each university decides when they want to make offers for their courses, and they may not make offers in every round.

Receiving an offer can limit your options: If you receive an offer to a course, you may not be able to remove it from your preferences in subsequent rounds. However, you might still be able to move it below other courses on your list.

Change of preference FAQs

Still have questions about change of preference? We have the answers.

Does the order of my preferences really matter?

Yes! You can only receive one offer in each round, and it will be to the highest course in your preferences that you're eligible for - so make sure you put your most wanted course right at the top.

What if I miss the change of preference deadline?

If you miss the change of preference deadline for an offer round, you might have the chance to change them again before the next offer round.

But keep in mind that some institutions (like SATAC) only have **one** change of preference deadline for all offer rounds for courses starting in Semester 1.

Can I accept an offer, then change my preferences and see if I get an offer to a different course in the next round?

In most cases, this is totally fine, **unless** you're applying through TISC: **do not** accept or defer your offer and use the 'automatic safety net' instead.

If you do end up accepting a different offer, just make sure you withdraw from the first one before any important deadlines.

What if I don't receive an offer?

If you don't have an offer by the last round, it doesn't mean you have to give up, there are lots of alternative pathways to study. We recommend speaking with the university to discuss your options and ask for advice.



Information sessions

Still confused about change of preference?

Lots of universities hold special events around the results release and offers period to guide you through the process and answer any questions you might have.

Find upcoming events ..... studyworkgrow.com/change-of-preference

If your chosen university isn't holding a dedicated change of preference event, don't panic.

You can always contact the future students team to ask any questions you might have. They'll be more than happy to help in any way they can.

You can also browse the information available on the university or TAC's website to find out more.

Or you might like to use the handy checklist at the end of this guide to help you make a decision.

Wherever you end up, good luck and best wishes from the entire team at Study Work Grow.



Useful links

UAC

Important dates ..... uac.edu.au/key-dates

Preferences ..... uac.edu.au/current-applicants/managing-your-application

Offers ..... uac.edu.au/current-applicants/undergraduate-applications-and-offers

Pathways ..... uac.edu.au/future-applicants/admission-criteria/pathways-to-university

Financial support ..... uac.edu.au/future-applicants/fees/financial-assistance-for-university

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VTAC

Important dates ..... vtac.edu.au/dates

Preferences ..... vtac.edu.au/courses/cop

Offers ..... vtac.edu.au/offers

Pathways ..... vtac.edu.au/institutions/pathways

Financial support ..... vtac.edu.au/institutions/financial-assistance

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QTAC

Important dates ..... qtac.edu.au/key-info

Preferences ..... qtac.edu.au/application-services/#goto-pref

Offers ..... qtac.edu.au/application-services/#goto-offers

Pathways ..... qtac.edu.au/ways-to-get-in

Financial support ..... qtac.edu.au/assistance-schemes

Useful links

SATAC

Important dates ..... satac.edu.au/key-dates

Preferences ..... satac.edu.au/preferences

Offers ..... satac.edu.au/understanding-offers

Pathways ..... satac.edu.au/undergraduate-applications/admission-pathways

Financial support ..... satac.edu.au/financial-assistance-for-students

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TISC

Important dates ..... tisc.edu.au/static/guide/tisc-calendar-current.tisc

Preferences ..... tisc.edu.au/static/guide/university-admissions-preferences.tisc

Offers ..... tisc.edu.au/static/guide/admission-offers.tisc

Pathways ..... tisc.edu.au/static/guide/alternative-entry-unis.tisc

Financial support ..... tisc.edu.au/static/guide/other-info.tisc

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UTAS

Important dates ..... utas.edu.au/study/apply/application-dates

Preferences ..... askus.utas.edu.au/app/answers/detail/a_id/1041

Offers ..... askus.utas.edu.au/app/answers/detail/a_id/1026

Pathways ..... utas.edu.au/study/pathways-to-university

Financial support ..... utas.edu.au/study/scholarships-fees-and-costs

Change of preference

Do you need to change your preferences?

Use this checklist to help you decide whether or not to change your preferences and keep track of your applications.

- [ ] Check if there are fees for making changes
- [ ] Make a note of the results release date
- [ ] Note any change of preference cut-off dates
- [ ] Attend information sessions to find out more
- [ ] Research courses & eligibility carefully
- [ ] Seek advice from teachers, family & friends
- [ ] Consider whether a change is really necessary
- [ ] Wait to see if you receive an offer
- [ ] Find alternative pathways into your course

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