

Top ten tips for supporting new students

1. **Support student diversity** - take time to pronounce students' names correctly, and to get to know students and their cultures. Make the learning environment familiar, e.g. use examples relevant to your students' cultures. Ask them for contributions that acknowledge the academic capital that they bring.
2. **Watch out for language** - take time to introduce students to language that is technical and academic, and that might be intimidating or confusing for them.
3. **Be explicit about the learning process** - students are not mind readers! They need to know what you want them to do in class, particularly about the demands of the course and your expectations of assessment.
4. **Early low-stakes assessment** - set a small assignment at the start of the course. Not more than 10% and focused on something introductory like a bit of simple writing, or about orientation (how to use the library catalogue or find student help). This allows you to quickly identify those students needing extra support.
5. **Be a pastoral support** - no-one is more important to students than their teachers! By showing students you care, you are sending a hugely important signal about how much our Unitec students matter to us.
6. **Students need friends** - as teachers, you are able to create a friendly environment where learners can form cohorts and support groups. Try to foster a sense of connectedness and belonging. In the first weeks take some time for shared lunch, for fun in group-work, for introductions.
7. **Moodle and logins** - make sure your students know how to navigate Moodle and why it is important, what to do if they can't login and other basic support.
8. **Help newbies to develop an identity as students** - tertiary can be a pretty unusual place! Help your new students to feel at home here and to succeed by familiarising them with standard academic practices and skills.
9. **Cohesion, scaffolding, alignment** - students need to be able to see where your course fits in their programme and where they are heading. Help them to understand the overall structure and logic of their programme of study.
10. **Learning how to learn** - teach students the skills of thinking critically, asking questions, enquiry and rigour. Don't assume they know this.

First class **ACTIVITIES** that create a climate for learning.
Study **STRATEGIES** for before, during and after class.
Developing a **GROWTH MINDSET**.