

Frequently asked questions



- **What is distance education - is it the same as correspondence?**

While the term distance education represents home study like correspondence also can, it is the preferred terminology for educational institutions who offer Nationally Recognised Training for tertiary level education to university standards. It represents well structured, professionally administered tuition. Most universities throughout Australia have thousands of students completing degrees by distance education every year.

- **How do I choose a College - there are just too many?**

It can be very difficult to choose the right College for you but here are a few suggestions of what to consider.

- Contact as many colleges as you can. If you are finding it difficult to decide in could be that you do not have enough information before you. Look further until one college stands out above the rest.

- Ensure the college and its Awards are Nationally Recognised. This is not to say that non Nationally Recognised Training colleges are not worthy of your support, however, it does mean that they have not opened themselves up to government and independent scrutiny.

- Confirm that graduates can join professional associations as full practicing members.

- Confirm that they can offer you articulation through to university should you ever wish to obtain a degree in the future. You may also wish to confirm that is a mainstream degree like a BHSc which will provide more opportunities for you to undertake a Masters or PHD in the future.

- Peruse their choice of subjects. Do they offer adequate hours in university standard Basic Sciences.

Do they offer a choice of elective practitioner subjects - e.g. herbs, nutrition, homeopathy etc.

- Ask them for some students names near you if possible, so you can obtain unbiased feedback.

- **Do I have to pay a large amount up front?**

No. And you should be suspicious of any college who encourages you do so. Paying large sums of money can cause some students financial hardship placing great strain on their study ability. At COSS you pay only one, once only \$50 enrolment fee up front and each subject is paid for a term at a time as you advance through your chosen award.

- **Can I start at any time - do I have to wait for set terms?**

Yes, this is one of the many strengths of distance education, there are no set terms. Unlike a set classroom agenda you are not held up by slower students nor do you ever feel uncomfortable by sometimes falling behind the others. You start when you want and study at your own pace.*

*Some subjects do have time limits, but they are quite generous.

- **Will my award be recognised by the professional associations?**

Yes. As a Naturopathic College COSS Awards are accepted by major national associations. One example is The Complementary Medicine Association Inc., call them on their toll free number to verify this and any other information relating to the profession.. 1 800 117 766.

- **Will my patients be able to get health fund rebates when I practise with these awards?**

Yes, it is the professional associations that currently represent practitioners to health funds in the absence of professional registration. As full association members you will be listed for patient health fund benefits.

- **Can I stop or postpone my studies at anytime?**

Yes, you can stop and leave the college for whatever reason or you can apply for a deferment for a set period of time. The college will maintain your accumulated study units until your return.

- **How soon can I start to practise - do I have to wait until I'm finished every subject?**

Some individual subjects like massage can allow you to practise as a masseur upon completion without having to complete your entire Naturopathic Award. In addition, the Complementary Medicine Association [CMA] has a 'Provisional Membership' category which affords a restricted practice status to students who are over half way through their chosen Award. Contact the CMA for details. TOLL FREE 1 800 117 766

- **Do I need to travel or visit the College campus?**

No, COSS conducts workshops for the subjects that require them, on weekends throughout the year in every capital city of Australia*. Students should plan the order of the subjects they study to coincide if possible with these workshops.

* Workshops are only held in each state every two years and their locations can depend on student numbers at the time. With students starting subjects at various times of the year they are never ready for a workshop at the same time. Therefore, workshops are timed to advantage the majority of students in each subject.

- **What if I live overseas?**

There is a 15% surcharge on all subjects for the additional freight and handling expenses. Overseas students can also apply for Government Study Visa's to visit Australia to study.

- **Can I get AUSTUDY and HECS?**

Yes, the government provides AUSTUDY benefits for all COSS subjects and HECS funding for all our articulated university subjects.

- **What about the subjects that require workshops - will I have to travel far?**

No, COSS offers workshops in each capital city of Australia bi-annually. Tasmanian students may need to travel to Melbourne.

- **What is the examination procedure - can I complete them at home?**

Yes. However, under our National Recognised Training criteria there are strict supervisory procedures. You have a list of suitable professionals to choose from in selecting your own supervisor, JP, Police Officer, School Principal etc and the examination papers are sent direct to them under COSS seal when you request them. You then have 14 days to meet with your chosen supervisor and complete the exam which generally takes 2 hours. Most exams are a combination of multiple choice and short answer questions.

- **How do I have my questions answered?**

We have access to subject co-ordinators and academics at all times at the head campus. Students are asked to write, fax or e-mail their questions. They are replied to normally the same day. E-mail communication is by far the quickest and most effective because we can send students attachments if required, that may assist them.

- **How do I obtain a BHSc Degree?**

Once you have a COSS Advanced Naturopathic Diploma, you gain automatic articulated entry into the Charles Sturt University BHSc. To complete the degree you will only have to do 4 one semester subjects over 1 year, part time and yes this can also be completed by distance education.

- **Can I get recognition for prior learning ?**

Yes! Providing your previous studies are from a recognised College ie University, TAFE College etc containing similar subjects. If your previous study is not Nationally Recognised Training, we may be able to offer you entry into of Professional Award.