



### Distance Learners

OPSA welcomes you to study at Otago Polytechnic/Te Pūkenga. We wish you success in your studies and hope that you find your experience to be productive and satisfying.

Please use this handbook as a resource, but also remember that there are many dedicated staff at Otago Polytechnic / Te Pūkenga. and OPSA that are willing to assist you. Don't hesitate to use the contact information in this handbook and your course information materials to find assistance with other questions you may have.

## USEFUL CONTACTS

**OPSA** – Otago Polytechnic Students' Assn is an independent organisation within the Polytechnic and is run by students for students. We provide student services on behalf of the Polytechnic including facilities, advocacy and representation

*Feel free to contact OPSA anytime with any queries, concerns or issues you may have*

**OPSA Advisory Board President/Chair:**

➤ Ezra Tamati [opsaprez@op.ac.nz](mailto:opsaprez@op.ac.nz) 027 252 5539

**Student Support Advisor**

➤ Lesley Scoullar [Lesley.scoullar@op.ac.nz](mailto:Lesley.scoullar@op.ac.nz) 027 611 7795

**Telephone:** OPSA Office (03) 4776-974 0800-762-786

[www.OPSA.org.nz](http://www.OPSA.org.nz)

[www.opsa.org.nz/facebook](http://www.opsa.org.nz/facebook)



**STUDENT SUCCESS TEAM** 0800 762 786 [studentsuccess@op.ac.nz](mailto:studentsuccess@op.ac.nz)

Life on campus can be exciting and challenging, so our Student Success Team are here to support and help you through any issues that might arise. Contact them to seek help for any issues impacting on your opportunities to study or to engage fully in your learning.

Advisors are available to discuss opportunities and support with Careers, Pasifika, Wellbeing and Accessibility

Our Services include:

- Academic support
- Access to counselling
- Pasifika support and scholarships
- Advocacy
- Career guidance
- Pastoral care
- Adjustment to student life
- Balancing workload and family commitments
- Isolation and relocation issues
- Removing barriers for students with disabilities
- Health concerns and referrals
- Referral to community and government agencies
- Wellbeing



## CHAPLAIN

Steve Downey [steve.downey@op.ac.nz](mailto:steve.downey@op.ac.nz) 021 338 800

## COUNSELLING

if you require counselling, please contact:

0800 762 786 [studentsuccess@op.ac.nz](mailto:studentsuccess@op.ac.nz) or contact

- Student Health <https://www.op.ac.nz/students/support/tile?id=179> 0800 762 786

## IT SUPPORT SERVICE DESK



0800 765 948 email [servicedesk@op.ac.nz](mailto:servicedesk@op.ac.nz) to contact our IT Service Desk Staff.

**8am to 5pm** - Monday to Friday, fully staffed

**5pm to 9pm** - Monday to Friday, one person on duty

**1pm to 5pm** – Sundays, one person on duty

Closed Public Holidays

We can provide support and advice for most IT difficulties you may encounter on Windows or Apple computers, including the computers you might be using from home.

Distance Students: Remember we are here to help should you need it.

Extended support hours begin at the start of the academic year in February.

Extended support hours close at the end of the academic year at the end of November.

## LEARNING ADVISORS

0800 762 786 [studentsuccess@op.ac.nz](mailto:studentsuccess@op.ac.nz)

The team of Learning Advisors offer support in the skills you need for success in your course. Contact by phone or email to let us know the support you need.

Internet sessions using your computer for adobe connect or skype, or email feedback on written work, are all available.

## LIBRARY SERVICES

0800 346 827 (*answerphone*) (03) 479 8940

[www.moodle.op.ac.nz](http://www.moodle.op.ac.nz)

[distance.library@otago.ac.nz](mailto:distance.library@otago.ac.nz) or [lending.robertson@otago.ac.nz](mailto:lending.robertson@otago.ac.nz)

[https://otago.libguides.com/distance?\\_ga=2.185612201.1872353738.1541020281-1672913178.1539814630](https://otago.libguides.com/distance?_ga=2.185612201.1872353738.1541020281-1672913178.1539814630)

The distance library services is for students living outside Dunedin and can use the service to request library material or ask for research assistance.

- There is an online 'distance form' to make requests for library material and free postage is provided for the return of books supplied by this service.
  - Allow 5-7 days for your requests to arrive – sorry, no urgent/priority service is available
- Go to distance learners on the library website for more information



## HAVING PERSONAL OR COURSE RELATED PROBLEMS ?

Learners who are experiencing personal or course related problems are welcome to approach OPSA for confidential assistance or advice – email [Lesley.scoullar@op.ac.nz](mailto:Lesley.scoullar@op.ac.nz) , or see the contacts page for telephone details.

## TE PUNAKA OWHEO

Services for Maori Students, including: scholarship information, counselling, study/financial support etc.

Contact: 0800 762 786 [www.op.ac.nz/students/Maori-students/](http://www.op.ac.nz/students/Maori-students/)

## PASIFIKA SUPPORT

Contact: Litea Ikahihifo Student Advisor - Pasifika [pasifika@op.ac.nz](mailto:pasifika@op.ac.nz)

## OTHER HANDY CONTACTS

Otago Polytechnic 0800 762 786 *all departments & services*

[www.op.ac.nz](http://www.op.ac.nz)

StudyLink 0800 88 99 00

[www.studylink.govt.nz](http://www.studylink.govt.nz)

# USEFUL SERVICES & RESOURCES

Don't forget your Learner ID Card — order today if you haven't already [idcards@op.ac.nz](mailto:idcards@op.ac.nz)

- Remember, we are not given a list of distance learners, so you need to contact us to receive your id card



## OPSA/ Te Pūkenga. Learner ID Card

As a distance student, you are usually charged for a student ID card and a student services fee. Students studying off the Dunedin campus are NOT charged for services they cannot access. Some courses may not charge a Student Services Fee, so an alternative "Student Access" card is available to obtain ID/ library services.

ID Cards are processed at the OPSA Office and returned by post – replacement cards cost \$15.00

- email your details (including ID number, name & return address) and attach a photo in jpg. format (plain background, no sunnies or hats) to [idcards@op.ac.nz](mailto:idcards@op.ac.nz)
- This card will also be your access to:
  - Robertson library services, discounts throughout the country, Student Job Search



## FINANCIAL SUPPORT

OPSA also manages financial support for hardship or special projects and can provide information on assistance that may be appropriate and available, including emergencies. We administer a student hardship fund, which may offer a grant or advice to Learners experiencing difficult "one-off" unforeseen financial hardship.

Contact to request a form: [Lesley.scoullar@op.ac.nz](mailto:Lesley.scoullar@op.ac.nz)

## Studylink – Special Needs Grant

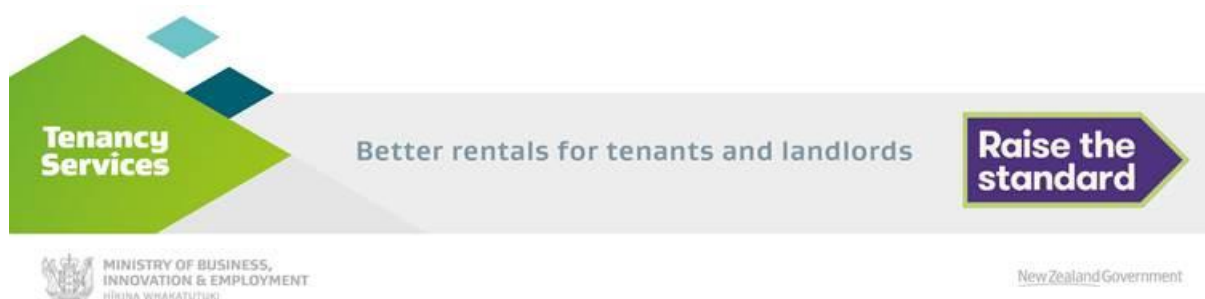
[www.studylink.govt.nz](http://www.studylink.govt.nz) check out what is available – a one-off payment may help out with urgent things like food, bedding and emergency dental or medical treatment. You may be eligible if you have urgent and necessary needs and have no other way to meet these costs.

## COMMUNICATIONS

Check your student email for updates and DAILY updates on our facebook page  
Important notices/events will be posted on your student hub and [www.opsa.org.nz/facebook](http://www.opsa.org.nz/facebook)

## HARASSMENT & BULLYING

You have the right to enjoy your time at OP without being made uncomfortable about your age, gender, race, religion, or sexuality. If you think you are experiencing harassment from another student or a staff member, contact OPSA to speak with a contact person.



## LANDLORD ISSUES

You have specific legal rights under the Residential Tenancies Act, check them out at Flattening 101: [www.dbh.govt.nz/flatting-101](http://www.dbh.govt.nz/flatting-101)

The best approach is to first talk to your landlord about what's wrong and say what a good solution might be. If that doesn't work send the landlord a letter. If that doesn't work contact Tenancy Services [www.dbh.govt.nz/tenancy-index](http://www.dbh.govt.nz/tenancy-index) they may be able to help, or you can take the issue to mediation [www.dbh.govt.nz/tenancy-mediation](http://www.dbh.govt.nz/tenancy-mediation)

If the mediator or Tribunal make an order that the other party does not meet, there are steps to take to enforce an order [www.dbh.govt.nz/tenancy-orders](http://www.dbh.govt.nz/tenancy-orders)

## OP POLICIES

Otago Polytechnic has policies governing how it operates, eg. withdrawals and refunds, personal information, complaints procedures, harassment and bullying etc. If you'd like a copy of any of these please contact OPSA

## OPSA ON FACEBOOK

Become a friend of OPSA and keep up with the latest news etc.



[opsa.org.nz/facebook](http://opsa.org.nz/facebook)



## PARKING

If you are coming to Dunedin to attend a block course – limited street parking is available around campus – BUT CHECK to ensure you are parking in the right spot!

- Do not park in any staff (numbered) parks on campus sites / student village or you will be towed.

## REPRESENTATION

- OPSA has representatives on various Polytechnic boards and committees and regularly meets with management. If you have any concerns or views you wish conveyed as a distance earner please do not hesitate to let OPSA know.



## STUDENT JOB SEARCH

**SJS** is a nationwide agency set-up by students' associations to help find students work while studying. They have a high success rate, and a huge range of jobs in lots of different areas.

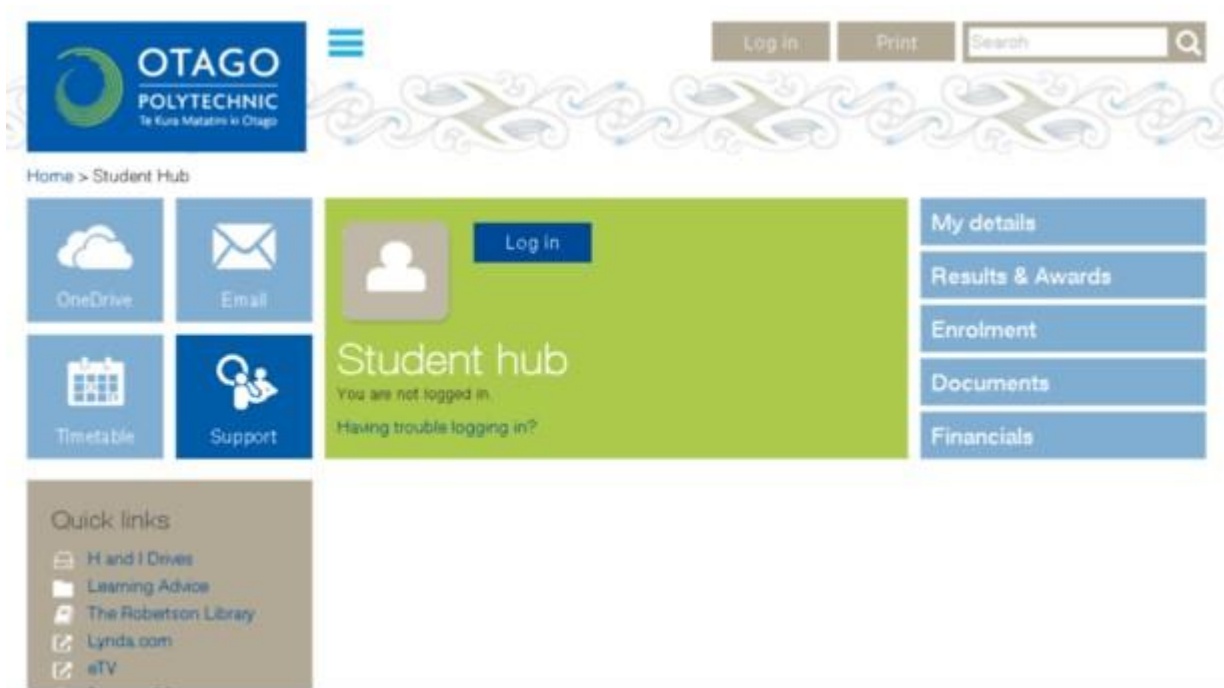
- It is free to use
- You can register online at [www.sjs.co.nz](http://www.sjs.co.nz) or contact the team by calling 0800-757-562.

## SUPPORT & COMPLAINTS (external)

OPSA is also here to assist with support and advocacy for your external complaints if it affects your study or to link you up with someone who can

Free Legal Advice	<a href="http://www.communitylaw.org.nz">www.communitylaw.org.nz</a>
Citizens Advice Bureau	<a href="http://www.cab.org.nz">www.cab.org.nz</a>
Ministry of Education	<a href="http://www.minedu.govt.nz">www.minedu.govt.nz</a>
Dept of Building & Housing	<a href="http://www.dbh.govt.nz">www.dbh.govt.nz</a>
Employment Relations	<a href="http://www.dol.govt.nz/er">www.dol.govt.nz/er</a>
Immigration Service	<a href="http://www.immigration.govt.nz">www.immigration.govt.nz</a>
Insurance Ombudsman	<a href="http://www.iombudsman.org.nz">www.iombudsman.org.nz</a>
Human Rights Commission	<a href="http://www.hrc.co.nz">www.hrc.co.nz</a>
Consumer Information	<a href="http://www.consumeraffairs.govt.nz/for-consumers">www.consumeraffairs.govt.nz/for-consumers</a>
Police Complaints	<a href="http://www.police.govt.nz/contact/complaints.html">www.police.govt.nz/contact/complaints.html</a>
Debt Collectors & your rights	<a href="http://www.consumer.org.nz/reports/debt-collectors">www.consumer.org.nz/reports/debt-collectors</a>





## STUDENT HUB

[www.op.ac.nz/student-hub](http://www.op.ac.nz/student-hub)

Access to your student information including results, important dates, etc.

You can also make a comment, complaint or suggestion

## Why have a Students' Association?

### Complaints & Advocacy:

As well as offering services and facilities, OPSA is here to help stand up for your rights when you need specific advocacy or have a complaint. A students' association is an insurance policy that there will always be someone to help you when you need it.

### Representation:

OPSA is also here to make sure these rights exist in the first place, and that complaints are seldom necessary, by representing your opinion and needs so they have an influence over local and national decision-making.

It is about having someone representing you, keeping an eye on policies and decision-making to protect your rights, so you can spend time focusing on your studies.

***NO MEMBERSHIP REQUIRED – all enrolled Learners automatically belong to  
your Students' Assn - OPSA***