School of Counselling

# DISABILITY STUDIES

- Graduate Certificate in Disability
- Graduate Diploma of Disability

EXCELSIA
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

# About
# EXCELSIA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

Established in 1983, Excelsia University College (Excelsia) is one of Australia's leading Christian higher education providers, and is an innovative and creative community of people who are passionate about excelling and growing academically, professionally, personally and spiritually. Our students and alumni embark on a journey of lifelong learning and leadership.

### WORLD-CLASS MENTORSHIP

Be mentored by and learn from engaged and committed staff who are approachable and passionate about counselling.

### PASTORAL CARE

Excelsia prioritises pastoral care which is fully integrated throughout the program. It is important to Excelsia that we meet the personal, social, wellbeing and academic needs of students.

### ALUMNI AND INDUSTRY NETWORK

Over 3,000 alumni and accomplished academics around the world attest to our whole-of-person education.

### COUNSELLING WITH A DIFFERENCE

With a strong emphasis placed on student growth and experiential learning, a postgraduate degree from Excelsia will impress employers and make students' resumes pop.

**OUR VISION:** Excelsia contributes to making a better world through active participation in a life-transforming global Christian learning community.

**OUR MISSION:** Excelsia is an academic community benefiting the world by producing research characterised by exemplary scholarship consistent with a Christian world view, and graduates prepared to lead in a range of professions.

### OUR VALUES

Our values reflect our vision and our mission:

1. **Christ-likeness:** striving to exemplify the life of Christ in our commitments, our actions and our relationships.
2. **Innovation and creativity:** working with passion and imagination in a range of influential professions, to further God's transformative work in the world.
3. **Scholarship:** creating a culture that values the search for truth, supports academic freedom and rewards rigorous thinking.
4. **Service to the community:** using our skills and abilities in and beyond the Institution in the service of others.
5. **Lifelong learning:** continually seeking knowledge, wisdom and capability to flourish and contribute in a changing world.

### GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES

1. **Deep Knowledge**
   A deep, coherent and extensive knowledge of studied disciplines characterised by intellectual openness, creativity and curiosity.
2. **Critical Analysis**
   Willingness and ability to analyse issues logically, consider different options and viewpoints fairly, and make informed decisions in relevant artistic, academic and/or professional contexts and settings.
3. **Lifelong Learning**
   A commitment to lifelong learning characterised by a willingness and ability to acquire, develop and apply knowledge and skills that facilitate positive adaptations to a changing world.
4. **Effective Communication**
   Aptitude to communicate information, arguments and ideas effectively and ethically through writing, speech and/or artistic expression as appropriate within each discipline.
5. **Christian Ethical Action**
   A sound knowledge and understanding of Christian values and beliefs, and of the relevance of Christian faith to personal life, professional ethics, and social concerns.
6. **Self-Direction**
   A capacity for self-directed learning and activity while working effectively with others in scholarly, vocational, civic and/or artistic pursuits and endeavours.
7. **Technical Competence**
   Competence and facility with materials, processes and technologies relevant to learned disciplines, generic information literacy and professional practice.
8. **Responsible Innovation**
   Oriented towards exhibiting intellectual and artistic enterprise, innovation and independence in constructive, creative and responsible ways.

## EXCELSIA RANKED HIGHLY

### TEACHING QUALITY*
**86.2%**
National average 80.5%

### POSITIVE STUDENT INTERACTIONS*
**84.6%**
National average 59.5%

### SKILLS DEVELOPMENT*
**90.7%**
National average 81.1%

### OVERALL GRADUATE SATISFACTION^
**85.4%**
National average 75.6%

^ 2023–24 Course Experience Questionnaire (undergraduate)
* 2023–24 Student Experience Survey (undergraduate)

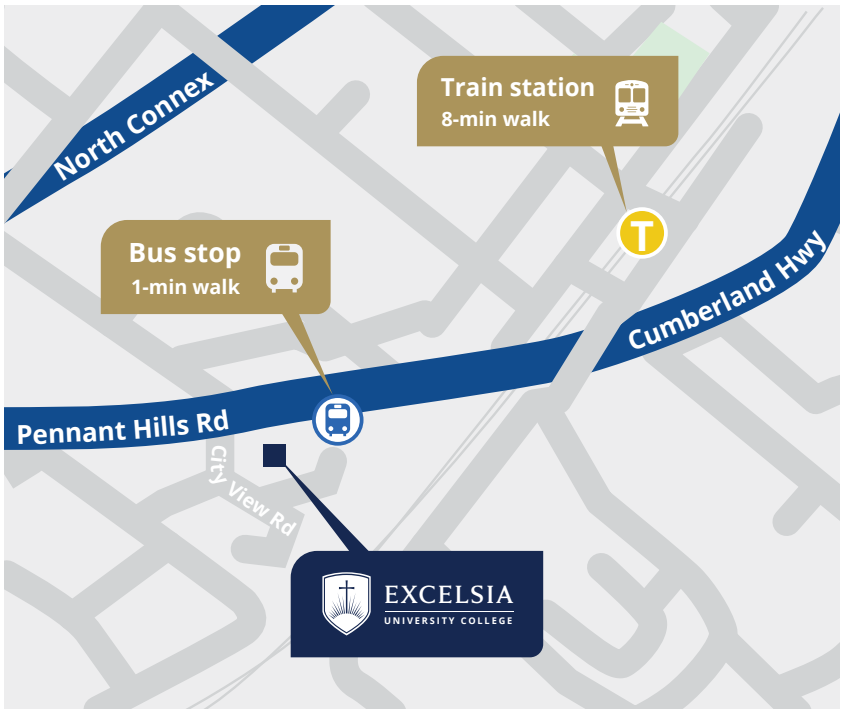
### CAMPUS FEATURES

- Library
- Black box creative space
- Production studio
- Innovation centre – Mac and PC lab
- Drama and music specialist rooms
- Wellness centre
- Fidèl Café
- Koorong Bookstore
- Student facilities
  - Free wifi
  - Study desks
  - Snacks bar
  - Free coffee
  - Microwaves
  - Games console

### TRANSPORT

- 8-min walk to Pennant Hills Station
- 1-min walk to bus stop
- Free parking

### CONVENIENT LOCATION



## Graduate Certificate in
# DISABILITY

| | |
|---|---|
| Course duration: | 6 months full-time<br>1 year part-time |
| Intake: | February and July |
| Credit points: | 24 |
| Delivery: | Online or on campus |
| Available to: | Domestic and international |
| IELTS: | 6.5 with no band less than 6.0 |
| CRICOS Code: | 116236E |
| AQF: | Level 8 |
| Financial information: | Domestic: $10,000 FEE-HELP available<br>International: $9,000 |
| For more information, refer to our course fees page. | |

The Graduate Certificate in Disability is developed in line with the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) practice standards and quality indicators and grounded in the international human rights framework of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and its expression in Australia's National Disability Strategy.

Students will gain an understanding of the diverse experiences, needs and perspectives of people with disabilities, and learn contemporary case-management and person-centered approaches to service delivery.

Graduates can use their knowledge to work in the disability or health and human service-related sectors.

Scaffolded within these units is a Christian world view that is also inclusive and respectful of other faiths, which emphasises and recognises the distinctively caring and pastoral nature of disability care and support. This course has been designed to provide a comprehensive learning experience and flexibility to study online whilst continuing to work.

## Graduate Diploma of
# DISABILITY

| | |
|---|---|
| Course duration: | 1 year full-time<br>2 years part-time |
| Intake: | February and July |
| Credit points: | 48 |
| Delivery: | Online or on campus |
| Available to: | Domestic and international |
| IELTS: | 6.5 with no band less than 6.0 |
| CRICOS Code: | 116237D |
| AQF: | Level 8 |
| Financial information: | Domestic: $18,000 FEE-HELP available<br>International: $20,000 |
| For more information, refer to our course fees page. | |

The Graduate Diploma of Disability builds on the Graduate Certificate in Disability. It is developed in line with the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) practice standards and quality indicators and is grounded in the international human rights framework of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and its expression in Australia's National Disability Strategy.

The course will equip students with the academic knowledge needed to work in the disability or health and human service-related sectors. The course is particularly relevant to those wanting to upskill in a health and wellbeing theoretically and socially engaged related course within the disability arena. The course will emphasise and recognise the distinctively caring and pastoral nature of disability and care by utilising a Christian framework that is also inclusive and respectful of other faiths.

This course offers a unique integration of inclusive practice approaches, ethics, person-centred support and case management, with a focus on deepening knowledge and applying inclusive methodologies to policy, program and practice. The course develops the capabilities and knowledge needed for leadership to deliver quality and innovation in the disability sector and beyond to the broader health and human services context in which specialised disability knowledge is mobilised for inclusive disability studies.

Scaffolded within these units is the Christian world view which emphasises and recognises the distinctively caring and pastoral nature of disability care and support. This course has been designed to provide a comprehensive learning experience and flexibility to study online whilst continuing to work.

# ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

## EDUCATIONAL PREREQUISITES

Applicants may be admitted to the Graduate Certificate in Disability or the Graduate Diploma of Disability, if they have previously successfully completed a relevant:

- bachelor degree or
- bachelor honours degree

'Relevant' means a degree that includes subjects such as psychology, social work and education and health sciences where you studied human services and behaviour. 'Non-relevant' means degrees that are not related to welfare, human services and behaviour. Applicants with non-relevant degrees will be considered on the basis of their work and life experience.

## APPLICANTS WITH WORK AND LIFE EXPERIENCE

Applicants without undergraduate qualifications can apply for admission via the work and life experience pathway which may consider other forms of study completed in the higher education and vocational sectors, volunteer activities, contribution to church life, professional development relevant to human welfare and disability.

For more information on admission requirements, refer to the admission policies in the Admissions Framework.

# Units

## CERTIFICATE AND DIPLOMA UNITS

### Understanding Disability: People, Policy and Practice

This foundational unit establishes the theoretical underpinnings for an understanding of the contemporary position of people with disability in society and how these frame approaches to policy, service delivery and professional practice. In considering the influence of human rights and the driving framework of inclusion we examine the ways that lived experience of disability maps to contemporary systems of classification of disability and impairment. Building on this understanding, the unit develops knowledge of the current disability policy framework in Australia and explores the nature of specialist disability and mainstream service systems designed to support the inclusion of people with a disability in all aspects of life. The roles and responsibilities of the contemporary disability workforce are explored in order to develop comprehensive foundations for best practice person-centred approaches. This unit will deliver a sound appreciation of the critical challenges and opportunities in creating an inclusive contemporary Australian disability landscape.

### Person-Centred Support in Disability

This unit introduces the contemporary landscape of person-centred support and develops understanding of systems, services and practices of contemporary disability support. It explores the genesis and development of person-centredness as an approach to policy and practice in disability and examines how this maps to the nature and structure of the Australian disability service system. Knowledge will be developed about the range of service types, the disability workforce and the diversity of service users and their support needs and applied to real world settings. Characteristics of the range of models of support, assistive technologies and support relationships (both formal and informal), are explored in order to develop a deep understanding of the issues that people with disability and those who support them experience in the support encounter. Key frameworks underpinning disability support in the context of the National Disability Insurance Scheme and beyond, including safeguarding, service quality and practice standards will be explored to promote understanding of best practice in person-centred support to enable people with disability to exercise choice and control in their lives and promote their independence.

### Working Ethically in Disability

This unit introduces students to the key ethical challenges in promoting and supporting the rights and choices of people with disability. Spanning issues of social justice, human and legal rights, risks and safeguards, the ethical responsibilities of professionals working with people with disability to support their rights and choices is explored as an integral part of disability practice. In engaging with ethical issues of practice and in and about the lives of people with disability, students will develop knowledge and skills to recognise and articulate their own lifelong learning needs in relation to disability and develop capabilities and strategies to

maintain professional, technical and research-based knowledge to ensure their professional practice aligns with contemporary developments and innovation in the field of disability.

### Planning for a Good Life

Person-centred planning is central to the achievement of choice and control by people with disability in the services and supports they require to live a good life. This unit explores the theory and practice of inclusive and participatory individualised planning. Beginning with the theoretical orientations that inform quality of life and the underpinning principles of individualised planning, students will acquire knowledge and skills crucial to working with people with disability in the development, preparation and implementation of effective individualised support plans. Consideration will be given to contemporary funding models and the variety of contexts and types of plans, including person-centred and family-centred planning approaches. The unit explores key knowledge, skills and elements of the planning process including identifying and working with key stakeholders in the planning process. Particular focus is given to accessible modes and methods of engagement with people with disability and their informal supports, including effective communication, both verbal and non-verbal, for those with complex communication needs, strategies for advocacy and self-advocacy, and support for decision-making in relation to designing supports that are responsive to need and to a person's goals and aspirations.

**DIPLOMA UNITS ONLY**

### Evidence-based Disability Programs: Design, Implementation and Evaluation

In this unit students will develop skills in applying the theory and principles of program design, implementation and evaluation to the range of disability programs and services. Integrating the values of inclusion and participation with theoretically and evidence-informed program content and processes is central to best practice in the provision of quality disability programs and services. Drawing on knowledge from a range of disciplines, this unit will prepare students for leadership roles in policy and service development in disability and in the inclusion of considerations for people with disability in other fields such as health, education and social services. The unit will explore the principles and benefits of co-design and co-production in disability program design and evaluation that are central to contemporary inclusive service provision. Skills and techniques necessary for rigorous program evaluation are explored, with specific attention to question formulation, identification of key measures, data collection, and analysis and interpretation. Benefits, responsibilities and innovative approaches to program evaluation knowledge exchange across the disability sector more generally are highlighted.

### Social and Community Inclusion

This unit explores the ways disability and inclusion are understood and responded to beyond the specialist disability service system, examining the impact of barriers to social and economic participation in the broader service and community context. Foundational concepts of inclusion, participation, citizenship, and access and accessibility are examined in the context of meeting human rights obligations and societal expectations that people with disability are able to make choices and have opportunities to take part in the political and policy process, education, employment, recreation and culture on the same basis as others. Similarly, mainstream human, social and other services have obligations to make their services accessible and responsive to the needs of people with disability. Students will explore the multiple interpretations of community participation and consider different models for working to support inclusion through universal design, disability adjustments and accommodations and systems change.

### Case Work (in Disability): Management, Coordination and Collaboration

This unit develops knowledge and skills required of practitioners to select, implement and evaluate approaches to case management across human services with a focus on disability and aged care. Students will develop advanced knowledge of the definitions, theories, characteristics and processes of case management in human services focusing on the NDIS and the aged care sector. Approaches to critiquing the influences on services and practice models and critical issues and ethical dilemmas in case management will be canvassed. Collaborative skills and key research literacies will be explored to enable students to develop their expertise to implement knowledge into their professional practice.

### Working with Diversity and Complexity (in Disability)

This unit explores issues in theory, policy and practice in working with diversity and complexity in client populations. Utilising the theoretical orientation of intersectionality, students will develop a critical appreciation of the multiple and intersecting domains of difference and the ways that these can compound to heighten risks for marginalisation and social disadvantage. Understandings of key principles in working with the variety of diverse and complex issues associated with gender, race, ethnicity, and disability/impairment are developed and best practice approaches explored.

Information about applications is available at: excelsia.edu.au/application-guide

**Step 1** Select the course
at: excelsia.edu.au/study/

**Step 2** Check entry requirements

**Step 3** Gather the required documents

**Step 4** Complete application form

**Step 5** Apply
Once you submit your application, Excelsia staff will contact you shortly to confirm receipt and talk through the next steps in the process.

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excelsia.edu.au
info@excelsia.edu.au
+61 2 9819 8888

1 City View Road
Pennant Hills NSW 2120

ABN 50 360 319 774
TEQSA PRV12064
CRICOS CODE 02664K

The information contained in this course guide was accurate at the time of publication. Excelsia reserves the right to amend the material contained in this guide without notice in response to changing circumstances or for any other reason.
For most up-to-date course information please visit our website.

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