

# Lifelong learning: general courses

This Fact Sheet describes educational opportunities for older people through local community colleges and a range of other places. Your choices are virtually unlimited and include learning a new recreational skill or a foreign language, music classes or improving your fitness. Also see **Fact Sheet 1A Lifelong learning: using computers** for information on helpful computer and internet courses.

## Workers Education Association (WEA)

WEA is an independent, voluntary organisation which provides educational facilities for adults. It runs four programs a year with courses offered during the day, in the evening and at weekends.

There are three WEA branches: Sydney, Hunter and Illawarra. Courses vary between branches and include topics such as languages, computer skills, arts and crafts, business, sport, travel, psychology and many more.

There are discounts for pensioners, people in receipt of a Centrelink benefit and Seniors Card holders.

Contact your nearest branch for a course program and further information.

Sydney	<b>9264 2781</b>
Hunter	<b>4925 4200</b>
Illawarra	<b>4226 1622</b>

## Schools for Seniors

These “schools” are run by various groups across NSW for people aged 50 years and older. Most schools meet several times a week for three or four terms a year, and charge a small fee each term. Subjects such as languages, computers, literature, art, philosophy, dancing and music may be offered, depending on the particular school.

The largest school meets at the **Wesley School for Seniors**, 220 Pitt Street, Sydney and can be contacted by phoning **9263 5416** or **9263 5555**. For details of your local School for Seniors contact Seniors Information Service on **13 12 44**.

Seniors Information Service is an initiative of the NSW Government and is funded by the NSW Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care.



**Seniors Information Service** PO Box 1332, Crows Nest NSW 1585



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**13 12 44**

## University of the Third Age (U3A)

U3A is a worldwide educational movement for older people. U3A provides a range of courses, some at an academic standard and others at a general interest level, through local voluntary groups. For further information on your nearest U3A, contact **Seniors Information Service** on **13 12 44** or the **Sydney U3A branch** on **9252 2033**.

## Evening and community colleges

These colleges operate in about 200 public schools throughout NSW. A wide range of evening and day-time courses are offered. You can find information about courses and programs at your nearest college through your local public library or Community Information Centre. Call Seniors Information Service on **13 12 44** for contact details.

## Adult Leisure Learning

These educational and recreational courses are held at Community Centres. For further information contact your nearest Neighbourhood or Community Centre. Call Seniors Information Service (**13 12 44**) for the number of the one nearest you or call the Board of Adult and Community Education **9266 8004**.

## Community Adult Education Centre

These are the rural equivalent of the evening and community colleges to be found in the Sydney Metropolitan area. To find your nearest centre, contact your local library or ring Seniors Information Service on **13 12 44**.

## University of Sydney – Continuing Education Centre

These courses are for people who want to fit part-time study into an already busy life. They are open to everyone – you don't need to be a university graduate to enrol. Subjects include business, creative writing, music, philosophy and the Internet. Four programs are offered annually. Courses are held during the day, in the evening and at weekends.

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Discounts are offered to pensioners for formal university preparation courses.  
Write to:

Continuing Education Centre:  
C/o Locked Bag 20, Glebe NSW 2037  
or phone **9351 2907**

## Open Learning

Open Learning offers the opportunity to study university and TAFE course units from home, without having to attend regular classes. The course can be studied on a “one-off” basis, or can lead to a Diploma, Degree or other qualification.

Students can enrol regardless of their age or where they live. Lectures are televised on the ABC. Fees apply. For more information phone **1300 363 652**.

## Odyssey Ed-Ventures

### A Division of the Australian and NZ College for Seniors

Odyssey Ed-Ventures is a university-based, not-for-profit travel organisation for active, mature adults. It organises unique educational adventures to destinations both within Australia and overseas. Program prices are all-inclusive, so there are no hidden costs and courses are led by study-leaders who are experts in their field.

Email: **odyssey@odysseytravel.com.au**  
Website: **www.odysseytravel.com.au**  
Phone: **1300 888 225**

## Deaf Education Network

This network provides programs for deaf, hearing-impaired and hearing people, as well as an Auslan (Australian Sign Language) Interpreter Service. Programs are also available for the wider community and workplaces including Auslan classes and deafness awareness. The network is a registered Training Organisation, specialising in Adult Deaf Education.

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### Contact details:

Ph: (02) 8845 9444  
TTY: (02) 8845 9411  
Fax: (02) 8845 9455  
Website: [www.deaf.nsw.edu.au](http://www.deaf.nsw.edu.au)  
Email: [den@deaf.nsw.edu.au](mailto:den@deaf.nsw.edu.au)

### Community Colleges NSW

This is the peak body for adult learning classes throughout NSW, comprising the Evening and Community Colleges Association, the Workers Educational Association (NSW) and the Community Adult Education Centres Association of NSW. It's a good place to start searching for a course that suits your interests and availability. There are currently 65 Community Colleges across NSW who provide adult education and who are members of Community Colleges NSW. To inquire about classes in your area, call **9565 1312** or visit their website at [www.communitycolleges.nsw.edu.au](http://www.communitycolleges.nsw.edu.au).

### Technical and Further Education Commission of NSW – TAFE (NSW)

TAFE mainly provides courses to equip people for a job or an ongoing volunteering role. The usual administration fee can be waived for most courses if you are on a pension or other form of benefit. For further information, ring your local TAFE College or the TAFE Information Centre on **13 16 01**, or see their website at [www.tafensw.edu.au](http://www.tafensw.edu.au).

### TAFE Outreach

Outreach is a program conducted by TAFE (NSW). It provides short introductory courses for older people who have experienced barriers to education. You can contact the Outreach Coordinator of your nearest TAFE (NSW) college for further information, or phone the TAFE Information Centre on **13 16 01**.

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## TAFE Disability Educational Services

There are special services available for people wishing to study at TAFE who have a disability, including a vision impairment. If you think you may qualify for this assistance, call the TAFE Information Centre on **13 16 01**.

## Storytelling

Many people become interested in recording their life story for family and friends. While it's possible to do this yourself without support or assistance, there are a number of "life writing" courses available which can be helpful in choosing a style, structuring your story, or simply "getting started". Find out about options for writing or telling stories through your local library or Council. Or contact the NSW Writers' Centre on **9555 9757** for details of local courses. Some universities or evening colleges also offer these courses – anyone is welcome and you don't need to have formal qualifications to enrol.

## Computer courses

A range of computer courses are available throughout NSW, suitable for older adults who are new to using computers. Many courses are run by people who are older themselves. These courses will help you to "get started", and can teach skills for using a computer to follow-up on personal interests or to stay in touch with family and friends. Call the Seniors Information Service on **13 12 44** for a separate Fact Sheet – **Fact Sheet 1A Lifelong learning: using computers**.

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Every care has been taken in the preparation of this document and the information it contains is believed to be accurate. Seniors Information Service does not endorse, recommend or guarantee the services listed in its Fact Sheets, in any other publication or on its website. Before seeking advice or services you should make your own enquiries about the accuracy and reliability of the information provided, and decide whether the product or service is of good quality and is suitable for your needs.

The Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care suggests that professional advice be sought wherever necessary.

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