We have a fantastic track record delivering quality programs and our students agree – 9 in 10 students are happy with their School of Health Sciences experience.*

It’s my pleasure to welcome you to the School of Health Sciences at the University of South Australia. We are the only institution in the State to offer a diverse range of fully accredited allied health and human movement programs from one school. Beyond setting us apart, this greatly facilitates interprofessional learning and research opportunities for our students.

We are proud of our innovative industry partnerships and distinguished research profile which bring together multidisciplinary teams of staff, students and health professionals to support our community and inform student learning.

Indeed, in the Australian Government’s most recent audit of research quality (2015 Excellence in Research for Australia, ERA), our research profile ranked exceptionally well. We received an ERA 5 – the highest rating possible – and well above world class in the categories of Clinical Sciences, Human Movement and Sports Science, and Nutrition and Dietetics, and world class (rated ERA 3) in Public Health and Health Services. These achievements placed the University as the only institution in South Australia to be recognised as top-rated in these areas of research.

With on-campus rehabilitation clinics and excellent teaching and research facilities, we are committed to the creation and application of knowledge. Our high quality education combines evidence-based teaching, an advanced digital approach and experiential learning with clinical placements conducted in collaboration with public and private health, disability, ageing and education agencies.

With excellent facilities, world-class research and enterprising partnerships, our journey ahead is an exciting one and we look forward to connecting with you.

Professor Roger Eston
Head of School
School of Health Sciences

*2014 Australian Graduate Destination Survey

Acknowledgement of Country

UniSA respects the Kaurna, Boandik and Barngala peoples’ spiritual relationship with their country. We also acknowledge the diversity of Aboriginal peoples, past and present.

Find out more about the University’s commitment to reconciliation at: unisa.edu.au/RAP

01
As South Australia’s largest provider of health industry graduates, we offer a diverse range of industry-recognised programs.
Breaking ground

Our students continue to share their knowledge, forge rewarding careers and inspire a new generation of allied health professionals to lead the way in South Australia and beyond.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA’S FIRST ABORIGINAL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST

In 2014, scholarship recipient and national award winner, Trevor Ritchie, made history when he graduated from UniSA with a degree in occupational therapy – a milestone he views as an important step forward in closing the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians.

Trevor’s first-hand experiences facing health inequalities growing up on an Aboriginal mission have been a constant motivation throughout his studies and now afterwards. Trevor hopes to push for generational change through his interactions with Aboriginal clients, ensuring they receive the best evidence-based care.

“I have a passion to educate and support other Aboriginal allied health students to follow in my footsteps. It’s easy to feel overwhelmed by the enormity of the challenge in Aboriginal health but I am committed to playing my part.”

PHD candidate and physiotherapy graduate, Joel Fuller, recently travelled to the US to connect with leading scholars as part of the prestigious Fulbright scholarships program.

Investigating the relationship between running strides and sports injury, Joel is working with athletes and researchers from the University of Massachusetts to explore a new biomechanical assessment technique he developed at UniSA.

“International collaborations are a great way to develop innovative health strategies. My research degree has provided me with opportunities to travel and learn from world leaders in my field. I hope to translate my findings to practice and provide athletes with improved injury prevention strategies.”

Through the combined expertise of Australian and US sports scientists, Joel aims to apply these strategies to the management of athletes and sporting initiatives back home through his ongoing partnership with the Australian Institute of Sport.

MARZIA HAS MADE IT

Marzia Sharifi’s university experience has been life changing. The first person in her family to go to university, the human movement student views her studies as more than gaining a qualification.

“To me, having a university education means having independence and making my own destiny. My parents never had the opportunity in Afghanistan, so I felt like I owed it to them and myself!”

A student ambassador, Marzia has embraced opportunities to increase her skill set and her confidence, learning about herself along the way.

“My time at UniSA has opened my eyes to new possibilities and how to achieve my dreams through my studies. It means so much to my family, especially my Dad – he has invested so much to make sure I can take my own path in life. I can’t wait for him to see me graduate.”
Excellence in teaching

We are home to outstanding, purpose-built laboratory, research and teaching facilities. UniSA is one of six Australian universities to secure collaborative government funding to implement Virtual Environment Radiotherapy Training (VERT). This means our radiation therapy students treat virtual patients using the very latest in simulation technology.

As Stream Coordinator and Senior Lecturer in Radiation Therapy, Eileen applies her extensive industry-informed knowledge and experience to educate some of our most important future health professionals who will be involved in cancer treatment.

“UniSA encourages innovation and the development of a curriculum that engages students with active learning experiences. This is a good fit with my approach as I’ve been able to embed simulation and innovation into my teaching.”

And, Eileen’s work is supported on a national scale with the implementation of the VERT suite – a project she collaborated on with five other Australian universities, and with whom she continues to work to improve clinical teaching.

“It’s important to establish meaningful tasks into the student experience so that they mirror what they will be doing clinically. Seeing our students graduate as competent, patient-focused and work-ready radiation therapists is my biggest inspiration.”

Eileen Giles is recipient of a national Citation For Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning and is leading the creation of authentic learning resources and use of simulation for her students.
Dr Nicola Massy-Westropp’s passion for anatomy and sharing this in the classroom is infectious.

Leading a dedicated team in anatomy, the Senior Lecturer instils curiosity to learn about body structures in her students – and they recognise her for it.

As a two-time recipient of an Excellence in Education Award and UniSA Citation for Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning, Nicola is proud to be part of a community that develops professionals to help people.

“All students can succeed if they’re offered the right opportunities. I’m interested in assisting students find ways to learn that work best for them.”

Nicola includes the anatomy of common injuries and treatments in the curriculum. “We’re research active in areas including carpal tunnel syndrome, blood supply of the brain and rheumatoid arthritis. Students comment that this interest really shows through in our teaching.”

Professor Jon Buckley serves as one of UniSA’s first ever graduates and continues to pursue his life-long interest in exercise and sports science.

Spanning teaching and research, Jon has been working at the School of Health Sciences for more than 20 years, and continues to make his mark.

A commendation from the University’s Curriculum Innovation Review Panel for outstanding performance in teaching and a Supervisor of the Year award are testament to Jon’s unyielding dedication and commitment.

As Director of the Alliance for Research in Exercise, Nutrition and Activity (ARENA), Jon is also at the helm of research into exercise, nutrition and health, introducing the very latest findings into the classroom.

“I’m lucky that my teaching and research interests overlap. Embedding ARENA research into relevant topics means our students benefit from leading-edge research in the field.”

Jon’s work tracking fatigue in athletes has seen a patent granted in the US for the technology. “I’ve been involved with work that has resulted in changes in policy and professional practice – it’s nice to know I’m helping to make a difference in the way people live their lives.”
Our partnership with Marathon Health New South Wales ensures communities in rural and remote areas of far west New South Wales have access to a full range of podiatry services. An extension of clinic initiatives on campus, the partnership provides our podiatry students with unique clinical experiences and second-to-none quality podiatric care to the region.

Further collaboration with the Royal Flying Doctor Service, Maari Ma Health, and local General Practices means we’re also meeting individual community needs in rural areas like Ivanhoe and Tibooburra.

This long-term commitment will inspire our future podiatrists and broaden their platform to build rewarding careers.

Engaging our community

We are committed to delivering equitable and high quality services to our community, and clinical opportunities to our students.
We offer a wide range of professional health assessment and treatment services through on-campus clinics and facilities.

10,000 occasions of service at our on-campus clinics in 2015

$2 million invested in on-campus clinics over the last six years

$450,000 in clinic service fees saved by the community in 2015

1+ million clinical placement hours provided by our students to the South Australian community each year.
Our clinics and fitness centres provide invaluable care to our community and real-world learning environments for our students.

Our physiotherapy and sports injury, podiatry, exercise physiology and dietetic clinics provide students with unique clinical placement opportunities while providing local communities with specialist care.

Under the guidance of practising clinicians, our students apply their knowledge and skills in a supportive environment, gaining vital real-world experience before they graduate.

The Mobile Allied Health Clinic provides our students with practical experience on the run. Visiting schools, shopping centres, aged care facilities, homeless shelters and community events, our students support a wide range of health assessments, screenings and treatments.

We’re also home to the UniSA Health Medical Clinic and one of eight BreastScreen SA clinics which innovatively enable diagnostic radiographers to undertake postgraduate studies in mammography.

Open to staff, students and the general public, we partner with health bodies to enhance offerings and accessibility of care on campus.

With new specialist clinics including a Paediatric Podiatry Clinic on the horizon, we’re committed to ongoing investment in our community clinics.

Our on-campus health and fitness centres double as integrated teaching and research spaces for students and researchers.

Linked with our allied health clinics, they provide laboratory monitoring for people with chronic conditions, exercise therapies, and testing facilities for high-performance athletes. Our Magill campus facility also hosts our ‘Motor to the Max’ program supporting student-delivered physiotherapy services to pre-school children.
Enterprising research

The Sansom Institute for Health Research is the University's premier health and biomedical research concentration. Bringing together a diverse group of leading scientists, the institute sees more than 250 members and 200 PhD students collaborate across cutting-edge projects. With an annual research income of $15 million, we’re helping to make an impact on health outcomes.
We have a strong commitment to collaborative and industry-focused research. Under the University’s Sansom Institute for Health Research, the School of Health Sciences has a distinctive research profile. Comprising of four leading concentrations and multidisciplinary teams, we’re dedicated to providing health care solutions on a global scale.

ALLIANCE FOR RESEARCH IN EXERCISE, NUTRITION AND ACTIVITY (ARENA)
ARENA brings together leading research expertise to investigate the effects of exercise, nutrition, physical activity and psychological function on health and performance. Historically, we have contributed to the University’s ranking as one of only five institutions performing above world class in Nutrition and Dietetics, and Human Movement and Sports Science nationally. Our researchers also lead the team behind Active Healthy Kids Australia – the nation’s official report card into the physical activity of Australian children.

INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR ALLIED HEALTH EVIDENCE (ICAHE)
ICAHE works to create new knowledge and translate evidence into safe, quality health care for all. Collaborating with networks in countries such as South Africa, Malaysia, Hong Kong and Japan, we partner with researchers, clinicians, educators, policy makers and industry to achieve transformative change. We also seek to educate through our innovative online learning hub and connect with organisations such as SA Health to offer end users training, services and resources.

CENTRE FOR POPULATION HEALTH RESEARCH (CPHR)
We are positioned at the cutting edge of research discovery and method development in epidemiology and population health. Created as a UniSA flagship concentration, CPHR brings together leading scientists from around the world to deliver outcomes which will directly impact health among populations. Firmly guided by community priorities, we not only focus on making scientific discoveries, but also in influencing public health policies and health care practices. From Aboriginal health to medicines, policy and the impact of environment on health, we’re listening and taking action.

BODY IN MIND
Affecting around one in five adults, chronic pain is estimated to cost Australia approximately $35 billion a year – a financial burden that is greater than cardiovascular disease and diabetes combined. Represented by more than 20 researchers from varying backgrounds and nationalities, our Body in Mind research concentration sheds light on why some people experience chronic ongoing pain and others don’t; how we can prevent chronic pain; and what we can do to treat it. New research undertaken by the team has shown that pain is not only a response to what’s happening in the body, but a wider response to information received from the brain’s receptors including sight, sound and more.

*Proportion of total ERA 5 rankings at the 2-digit and 4-digit levels in 2015

Our research is well above world class (rated ERA 5) in Clinical Sciences, Human Movement and Sports Science, and Nutrition and Dietetics, world class (rated ERA 3) in Public Health and Health Services, and part of a university-wide research profile that is ranked eighth* nationally for excellence.
Dr Ashleigh Smith is an Alzheimer’s Australia Dementia Research Fellow and international award-winning neurophysiologist with a clear research vision.

Seeking to reduce age-related disability in older adults through enjoyable exercise interventions and investigating the nexus between mental and physical activity, the early career researcher has already proven a link between exercise and the brain.

“I provided the first evidence that a single session of moderate intensity aerobic exercise can positively influence the global brain networks.” And it doesn’t stop there.

As recipient of three nationally competitive fellowship grants, Ashleigh has recently accepted a prominent dementia training fellowship from the National Health and Medical Research Council and Australia Research Council – the highlight of her career to date.

“Inspired by adults living independent, healthy and meaningful lives, I will use my expertise to demonstrate an association between current activity, aerobic fitness and brain health in older adults at risk of dementia. My findings will provide the evidence base for engaging this cohort in long-term, sustainable exercise interventions to improve brain health.”

Professor Elina Hyppönen has an enduring passion for population health research.

As Director of our Centre for Population Health Research, Elina’s exactly where she’s supposed to be. “For me, helping to make new discoveries while at the same time contributing to improving health at the population level as a profession is hard to beat.”

Using genetic epidemiological approaches to promote healthy ageing, Elina’s research interest lies in preventing age-related cognitive decline and cardiovascular disease by modifying diets and lifestyles.

And while she collaborates with large-scale international organisations such as leading universities across the UK, Europe and the US, her inspiration stems from an individual level.

“My work is driven by the aim to make a difference and by a goal to empower individuals to make positive choices in order to improve their own health.”
Currently investigating factors that explain chronic disease and mental health issues in Australian farming regions, Jim works closely with organisations such as Country Health SA to deliver beneficial outcomes for rural communities. “These partnerships maximise the likelihood that the research outcomes will translate into relevant and effective policies and practices for health and physical activity promotion.”

Associate Professor Jim Dollman has witnessed rising levels of farming-related stress and its impact on health and wellbeing first hand.

He has also assembled a team of world-class researchers covering a range of disciplines from exercise physiology to economics to holistically address challenges faced by rural and low socioeconomic groups. “We are now very well placed to lead ground-breaking research into the complex aetiologies of chronic disease prevalence in rural Australia.”

Professor Karen Grimmer is Australia’s first physiotherapist with a PhD in epidemiology and biostatistics, and is working to improve the quality of allied health research and practice.

As Director of our International Centre for Allied Health Evidence (iCAHE), Karen leads more than 60 active researchers, is committed to delivering best practice and continues to receive recognition for excellence in teaching and research. Specialising in health systems, Karen’s current research interest is in clinical guideline writing. “I’m working with a network of teams in South Africa and the Philippines to make guidelines useful for end users.”

Karen has also made it her mission to ensure her research team takes every opportunity to integrate their findings with teaching. “Quality itself is underpinned by continuous quality improvement and as a centre which embraces this ethos, we do everything we can to evaluate, benchmark, compare and improve.”

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Connecting with industry

Our partnerships underpin health care solutions and link our students and graduates to industry. From elite sporting teams to community-based organisations, we’re driving advancements for a healthier future.

POWER PLAY

Our long-standing relationship with the iconic Port Adelaide Football Club (PAFC) is built on joint expertise in the field of sports science. This high performance collaboration centres on research and education in elite sport, a commitment to engage remote Aboriginal communities and strategies to connect with Asia.

We provide our students with the rare opportunity to be immersed in the elite sporting environment and work with PAFC experts such as Head of High Performance, Dr Darren Burgess, to make it happen.

Dr Burgess has an international reputation for guiding and building elite athletic performance. With a doctorate in movement analysis in Australian football and soccer, he is an internationally regarded high performance manager.

After working in a number of senior roles with high-profile sporting teams the world over, Dr Burgess’ expertise has honed the PAFC playing group’s fitness ability (twofold). And he brings this same experience to our students.

“They will get unprecedented access to the sports science, coaching, and player development of an elite, successful sporting club.”

SCORING GOALS

Building on our alliances in elite sport is our partnership with Basketball SA. The connection gives the State an edge in developing elite athlete performance and research knowledge. Providing staff and students with the opportunity to become an integral part of the basketball program, this collaboration allows us to share knowledge about best practice in training and athlete development with Basketball SA members.

Human movement graduate and PhD candidate with PAFC, Daniel Rogers works with elite athletes and experienced coaches to uncover the science behind sport.

As recipient of a UniSA-PAFC high performance PhD scholarship, he hopes to provide meaningful findings that will help guide the training practices of elite sportspeople. “In addition to my research, I spend time assisting strength coaches and physiotherapists in their daily tasks – it’s very applied. I gain invaluable experience working in a high performance sport environment. It’s great to work with people who I’ve admired from afar for some time.”
STAYING ON TRACK

On the back of a long-running research collaboration with shoe giant, ASICS, we have collaborated on a jointly funded project which will drive cutting-edge advancements in shoe design.

Lead by Research Fellow, Chris Bishop, we’re pioneering capabilities to describe in-shoe foot motion through novel approaches and state-of-the-art computational modelling. We’re pushing the boundaries of what’s possible in design and developing a product which will improve athletic performance while reducing injury rates – the next generation of footwear.

LENDING A HELPING HAND

We work with a number of aged care providers and connect with our elderly community in more ways than one.

UniSA’s established partnership with Helping Hand Aged Care has challenged conventional thinking and practice within the aged care industry, explored new ways of supporting older people, and facilitated rewarding student placement opportunities for more than 20 years. We collaborate on large funded teaching and research projects as well as innovative clinical education and student programs to improve health outcomes for older people locally and internationally.

15,600 clinical placement hours provided by UniSA students to the Helping Hand Aged Care community each year.

FIGHTING FIRE

Lead by Professor Alan Crockett, we’ve partnered with the South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service to observe the impact of smoke inhalation on our frontline fire fighters. Through testing and monitoring long-term respiratory health and lung function, our results have defied the odds. While most longitudinal studies have shown that lung function declines after the age of 25 years, we have found some fire fighters actually improve their lung capacity over time.

Our partnership also extends to the development of a simple and specialised step test to assess fitness levels of local fire crew.

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School of Health Sciences
by the numbers

#25
UniSA is number 25 in the world for universities less than 50 years old

$6.9 million
more than $6.9 million in research income in 2015

#1
we are the highest ranked Australian university for international diversity of its academic staff*

3,200+
more than 3,200 students (130 international) and 64 research students in 2015

7+9
7 undergraduate and 9 postgraduate specialisations

900+
more than 900 collaborations including 273 international research and 24 clinical partners

4
four research strengths in Clinical Sciences, Human Movement and Sports Science, and Nutrition and Exercise (rated well above world class), and Public Health and Health Services (rated world class)^

600+
a team of more than 200 staff, 400 casual staff and 64 adjuncts

7 undergraduate and 9 postgraduate specialisations

School of Health Sciences by the numbers

*2015/2016 QS top 50 Under 50 *2015 QS World University Rankings *2015 Excellence in Research for Australia
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