



**MERVIC
COLLEGE**

International Student Guide



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Emergencies *(During travel or after arrival in Australia)*

POLICE AND MEDICAL ASSISTANCE: DIAL – 000

**MERVIC/COLLEGE: 24-HOUR EMERGENCY
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Welcome



**MERVIC
COLLEGE**

Thank you for considering Mervic College as your education and training destination in Australia. This handbook provides useful information about student life in Melbourne and Mervic College courses to help you decide on your qualification and career choices.

In the last decade, we have witnessed a rapid and progressive advancement in technology, telecommunication and global trade, creating a major shift in market and consumer behaviour, business processes and business thinking. Moreover, changes in business and industry dynamics also require an equal transformation in education and training. It becomes pertinent that new graduates and skill workers are equipped with appropriate skill sets, competencies and knowledge in their respective fields to be able to face new challenges of modern workplaces. With these concepts in mind, Mervic College has developed courses that are industry-specific, competency based and relevant to students who are looking to start a new career in their chose field.

In Australia, the Vocational Education and Training (VET) structure is guided by the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), offering Nationally Recognised Qualifications in a wide range of industry sectors. The institutions delivering these qualifications to International students operate under a quality assured regime of ESOS (Essential Services to Overseas Students) and VQF (VET Quality Framework). Students acquiring nationally recognised qualifications can obtain credits for all the successfully completed competencies between different educational institutes and courses, creating flexible education and career pathways.

Mervic College is committed to providing a positive and resourceful learning environment to all its students to enhance their learning experience at. Mervic College is further committed to student welfare with students as the prime focus of the operations. At Mervic College, students have access to all levels of management to express their concerns, views, and suggestions. Mervic College believes in continuously improving its services in both academic and administrative areas that add value to student experience at Mervic College.

This guide has been prepared to help you prepare for your journey to Australia and contains essential information from pre-departure preparation to settling down in student life in Australia.

Mervic College would like to welcome you as a new student.

All the best wishes,

David Storer
CEO

Campus Location and Information

Campus Locations:

Mervic has its head office in Hobart, Tasmania and a new CRICOS campus in Melbourne (Victoria).



In Melbourne, Mervic is located in the suburb of Reservoir, a short train or tram from major city attractions, public transport, a wide array of shopping, entertainment, and major university campuses.

12 km north of Melbourne's Central Business District (CBD), Reservoir is an established suburb with standard brick homes, weatherboard homes, and an increasing number of new developments. The region contains popular recreation areas and facilities, including Edwardes Lake and the Reservoir Leisure Centre, and is home to the Edwardes Street and Broadway shopping strips. Reservoir is close to the Northland Shopping Centre, Preston Market, High Street food quarter, Sydney Road shops and restaurants and one of three remaining drive-in cinemas in Melbourne, the Village in Coburg.

The area is serviced by four railway stations on the Mernda railway line: Reservoir, Regent, Keon Park, and Ruthven. The Victorian Government has announced that it will build a suburban rail loop, which will include a station at Reservoir.

Reservoir station acts a bus hub for many of the Reservoir bus routes.

Two tram lines service the area with the Tram route 11: West Preston - Victoria Harbour Docklands terminating at the south end of Reservoir and the Tram route 86: Bundoora RMIT - Waterfront City Docklands passing through Reservoir along Plenty Road. The Merri Creek Trail and Darebin Creek Trail are shared-use recreational paths used by cyclists and walkers that pass-through Reservoir.

Student Welcome

Australia has the third highest number of international students in the world behind only the United Kingdom and the United States. Australia has seven of the top 100 universities in the world. With over 22,000 courses across 1,100 institutions, Australia sits above the likes of Germany, the Netherlands and Japan, ranking eighth in the Universitas U21 Ranking of National Higher Education Systems.

Students from all over the world come to Melbourne to study. Melbourne provides a range of services, advice and support for international students. Visit the following link;

Study Melbourne: <https://www.studymelbourne.vic.gov.au/>

<https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/community/health-support-services/for-young-people/international-students/Pages/international-students.aspx>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/studymelbourne/>

Plan your Journey

Study Australia Guide: Departure, Arrival, Accommodation, Support, Living Costs, Life in Australia and much more;

<https://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au/english/live-in-australia/plan-your-departure>

There are important things you should arrange before you travel to Canberra.

The following guide includes information, a packing guide and pre-travel checklists to help you get away smoothly;

http://www.det.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0013/44311/InternationalStudentsPreDepartureGuide.pdf

See, Getting Ready to Travel and What to Pack checklists drawn from the above guide.

Useful Links

Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP)

<https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/>

Australian Customs and Quarantine

<https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/Trav/Ente/Goin/Arrival>

<http://www.agriculture.gov.au/travelling/arriving-in-australia>

Australian Police

<https://www.afp.gov.au/>

<http://www.police.vic.gov.au/>

Insider Guides

<http://insiderguides.com.au/>

A Guide to Studying & Living in Australia

Source: Study in Australia: <http://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au/>



As more and more people look to give themselves the skills required in a competitive global environment, an Australian education has become one of the most sought after in the world. Here you will find teaching of internationally renowned quality, matched with one of the world's finest student support systems, and a superb living environment.

Little wonder then that more than 600,000 international students, from over 200 countries, come to study in Australia every year. And why when they have finished their education, they leave with globally recognised skills – and a future that is truly limitless.

Australia excels in creating independently minded graduates who are able to think critically. We don't just teach students the answers; we teach them how to ask the right questions. We have been teaching international students for more than 60 years, many of whom have become Ministers, leading businesspeople, researchers,

scientists, medical practitioners and community leaders all around the world.

Australia is home to some of the world's leading educational institutions, academics and researchers who are conducting universally acknowledged research that attains the highest standard when measured against international benchmarks.

Australia's areas of academic excellence include medical and health sciences, physics, chemistry, information technology, Asia-Pacific studies, biotechnology, and astronomy. Australia is also well regarded internationally for its graduates in engineering and business studies, the arts and social sciences.

The success of our alumni underlines the global relevance of an Australian education. Our best-known achievers have won countless international awards, including eight Nobel Prizes.

We also boast a diverse range of education credentials and courses along with an enviable quality of life, cultural and sporting activities. These add to an all-round learning environment, with plenty of opportunities for students' aspirations and ambitions.

The Australian education sector is the natural choice for students seeking an education that provides global reach, ongoing growth and development, and ultimately the very best return-on-investment.

About Australia

Fast Facts



Population over 23 million

The only country that is also a continent, Australia is situated in the Southern Hemisphere in the southwest Pacific Ocean. Nearest neighbours to the north are Papua New Guinea and Indonesia (about an eight-hour flight from Sydney). New Zealand lies to the east, about a three-hour flight away.

Almost one in four Australians was born overseas. You will meet people from all corners of the globe who have settled in Australia – from Europe and Asia, to Africa, the Middle East and the Americas

Australia is a country of innovation. Australian scientists have invented many world-changing technologies including: the black box flight recorder, the heart pacemaker, ultrasound, the influenza vaccine, the bionic ear, wireless internet, Google Maps and spray-on skin for burn victims.

States and Territories

Before outlining the opportunities that await you when studying in Australia, a quick geography lesson will help you understand the layout and makeup of this diverse and beautiful country. It will also help you understand the state or territory where you will be living as well as other areas that you may wish to visit during your time in the 'land down under'.

Australia has six states and two territories, each with its own distinctive history, personality and attractions. The six states are New South Wales (NSW), Victoria (VIC), South Australia (SA), Queensland (QLD), Western Australia (WA), South Australia (SA), and Tasmania (TAS). The two territories – the Northern Territory (NT) and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) – are partly self-governing, and partly controlled by the federal government.

New South Wales

www.visitnsw.com.au

Capital Sydney

State population About 7.2 million

Climate Jan: 66–80 °F, 19–27 °C

July: 46–60 °F, 8–16 °C

Victoria

www.visitvictoria.com

Capital Sydney

State population About 5.5 million

Climate Jan: 58–80 °F, 14–27 °C

July: 46–60 °F, 8–16 °C

Queensland

www.queenslandholidays.com.au

Capital Brisbane

State population About 4.5 million

Climate Jan: 70–87 °F, 21–31 °C

July: 50–70 °F, 10–21 °C

Western Australia

www.westernaustralia.com

Capital Perth

State population About 2.2 million

Climate Jan: 64–88 °F, 18–31 °C

July: 48–64 °F, 9–18 °C

South Australia

www.southaustralia.com

Capital Adelaide

State population About 1.6 million

Climate Jan: 62–89 °F, 17–32 °C

July: 47–60 °F, 8–16 °C

Tasmania

www.discovertasmania.com.au

Capital Hobart

State population About 507,600
Climate Jan: 52–72 °F, 11–22 °C
July: 38–52 °F, 3–11 °C

Australian Capital Territory

www.visitcanberra.com.au

Capital Sydney

Territory population About 358,900

Climate Jan: 56–84 °F, 13–52 °C

July: 31–52 °F, -1–11 °C

Northern Territory

www.travelnt.com

Capital Darwin

Territory population About 229,700

Climate Jan: 78–93 °F, 26–34 °C

July: 70–90 °F, 21–32 °C

Academic Year, Qualifications and Duration of Study

Universities



The Australian university academic year begins in late February to early March. Orientation for new students usually takes place in mid- to late February. The second semester typically begins in late July. Most universities have two semesters, with exams in June for semester one and in November for semester two. There is a four- to six-week break between semesters, with the long summer holiday being held from December to February.

With many academic programs you have the choice of commencing your study during either the February or July intake. However, for programs such as medicine or dentistry there is only one intake a year, which is in February. The start dates for Australian universities can be found by visiting www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au and navigating to the “Australian Universities” page.

The most common qualification offered in Australia is the bachelor’s degree, which requires three to four years of full-time study, depending on the discipline, consisting primarily of course work. Some universities offer a “Bachelor’s Degree with honours” to the best performing students, while others offer an additional year of study, which is then known as an Honours Degree.

Specialised research training and professional development are offered through master’s and Doctoral degrees, usually of one to two years’

duration in the case of master's degrees, and three years in the case of PhDs.

Vocational Education and Training (VET) colleges

The academic year for most Technical and Further Education (TAFE) and Vocational and Education Training (VET) colleges is based on two semesters. The first usually commences in February and ends in June, while the second runs from July to November. Entry for most courses is available in both February and July.

TAFE and VET colleges specialise in courses that provide you with skills for a particular industry or trade or prepare you for further education. These range from Certificate courses across four levels (Certificate I, II, III and IV that take from 6 month to one year), Diploma courses (one to two years) and Advanced Diploma courses (two to three years).

Diplomas and Advanced Diplomas are qualifications that can be accredited toward other higher education.

ELICOS colleges

English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) are offered by a large number of government-regulated private schools, as well as VET colleges, TAFEs and university-affiliated schools. ELICOS has been developed to allow you to develop your skills in English as a second language as well as provide a foundation for further academic study.

ELICOS courses are held throughout the year and range from four to 48 weeks of full-time study, depending on which program you choose. Entry to courses is available at frequent intervals (usually every five weeks) though may vary from one school to the next.

Orientation

Orientation plays an important role in helping you quickly become familiar with your institution and its teaching style. Many international

students find the Australian way of teaching to be quite different from what they are used to. In Australia, the focus is on practical learning that encourages creative, independent thought and debate. Teachers aim to provide a thorough understanding of a topic rather than just teaching the right words, phrases or formulas to remember for exams.

Once you have successfully enrolled for study in Australia, you will receive pre-departure, arrival, and/or orientation manuals that provide additional valuable information to prepare you for studying and living in Australia.

Classes

Universities

Classes at Australian universities are a mixture of lectures and tutorials. A lecture might be attended by up to 200 students from different courses within a discipline, whereas a tutorial is much smaller, with only about 30 students in attendance. During tutorials you get the chance to discuss the information provided in your lecture with other students and your teacher. Attending all your lectures is very important as it enables you to understand and contribute to tutorial discussions.

Preparing for tutorials is essential and usually contributes to final grades in university courses. Professors and senior teaching staff expect students to actively participate in tutorials because they provide a valuable way to become comfortable with talking about the issues behind a subject.

Although there are variations from course to course and university to university, the Australian education system sets minimum standards of learning which are expected to be achieved by the end of a semester, and there are a variety of methods by which the student can undertake this learning. The philosophy behind this approach is the recognition that students learn in different ways.

VET colleges

At TAFEs and VET colleges, lectures and tutorials are generally not separated. That is, the presentation of information and its discussion occurs at the same time. Tutorial support is provided for some subjects where it is recognised that some students may need additional guidance or more intensive tuition in particular topics. In such cases the tutorials act more as a remedial class, and attendance may not be compulsory.

As VET courses are designed to increase professional and practical skills, they combine classes with practical hands-on learning sessions. Class sizes are generally smaller than classes at university or TAFE.

ELICOS colleges

English language classes are largely held in a classroom environment, with time allocated for supervised self-access study.

Assessment

Universities

At Australian universities the final grade for a unit is based on your performance in assignments (written or practical, depending on the course), exams, class participation (that is, how much you speak up and contribute to discussions in classes), attendance and group exercises. Depending on the course, you may be continually assessed throughout the semester, rather than just in the last few weeks or on the final exam. The advantage of this method is that the entire grade does not rely on one single piece of assessment. If you do not perform too well in an exam, you still have the opportunity to lift your grade through other pieces of assessment.

The system of assessment varies, but generally the following applies:

High Distinction: 100 to 80 per cent

Distinction: 79 to 70 per cent

Credit: 69 to 60 per cent

Pass: 59 to 50 per cent

Fail: Below 50 per cent

VET colleges

Your TAFE or VET college will provide you with details of the assessment criteria for your chosen course.

Depending on what you are studying, assessment may include: assignments and practical assessments that require you to show you can carry out tasks to a required standard; and oral or written tests to determine your knowledge and understanding of the learning area.

Most TAFE and VET colleges use the following grading system: Competent (C) or Not Competent (NC). Mervic College uses the same system.

ELICOS colleges

Before commencing ELICOS study, you will need to sit a placement test to assess your current level of English competency. This will determine which class level is appropriate for you.

Each level of study runs for approximately 10 weeks and in addition to a final test, your final grade will take into account your performance in ongoing assessment tasks, which may include in-class as well as out-of-class work.

At the end of your course you should receive a certificate showing the name of your last course, the course duration, your level of achievement and your attendance rate.

A brief note on plagiarism

Plagiarism – taking someone else’s work (including that of published authors) and submitting it for assessment as your own, without referencing the source of the information – is regarded very seriously in the Australian education system. Tough penalties for plagiarism can include the automatic fail of a subject, or even that a student’s visa may be put in jeopardy.

It is important that all students understand precisely what constitutes plagiarism (for example, how to reference). Your educational

institution and International Office can advise you here.

More in the Int'l Student Handbook.

Course information

By law, all institutions receiving international students must ensure that their marketing materials (such as brochures and handbooks) are accurate and not misleading. Before offering a Confirmation of Enrolment, the institution must provide course-related information, such as:

- The course content and duration
- The qualification it leads to
- Teaching and assessment methods
- English language requirements
- Previous work experience or educational qualifications required for admittance
- Requirements for course completion
- Course-related fees
- The facilities and learning resources related to the delivery of the course
- Student support services.

Student support services

Training and educational institutions in Australia are required to support international students in adjusting to study and life in Australia, as well as achieving their learning goals and attaining the learning outcomes of their course. In addition to providing ongoing access to dedicated international student support staff, Mervic College also provide you with information on:

- Orientation
- Academic progress
- Language, literacy and numeracy support
- Further study/pathways
- Accommodation
- Student welfare and safety

Mervic College will provide you with information about which academic or administrative personnel you should contact if you require any assistance with your course and enrolment or any personal difficulties you may be encountering.

Quality education assurance

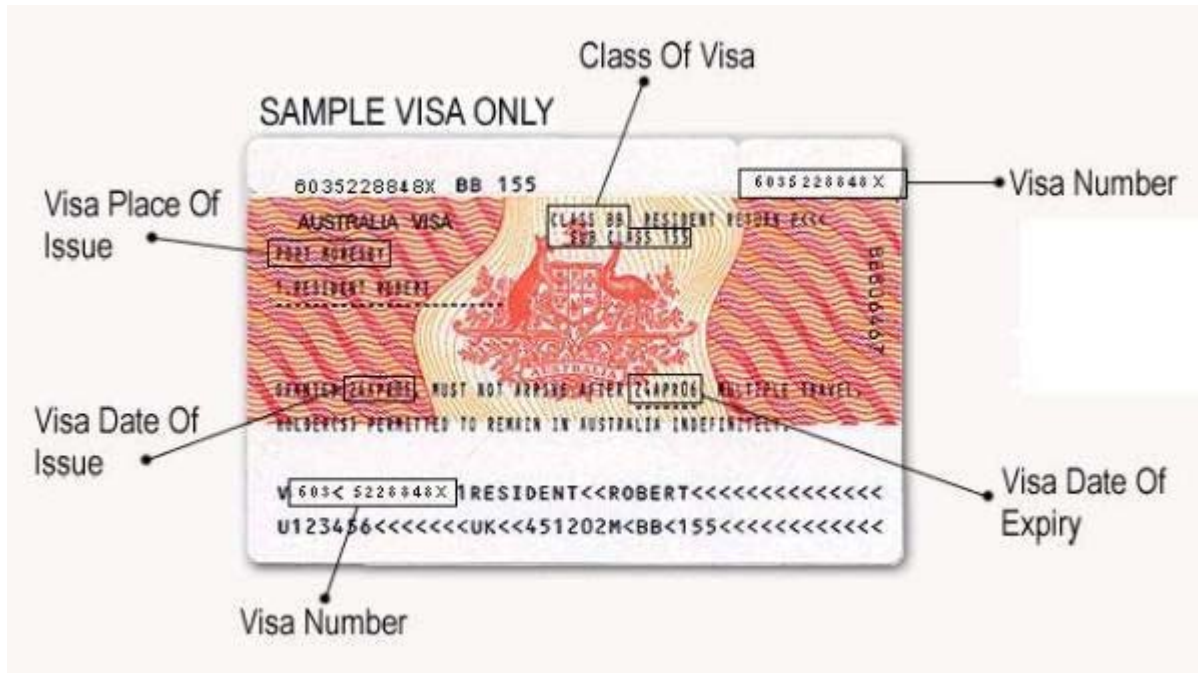
Australia is committed to providing quality education and training to international students.

For this reason, the Australian Government has enacted a number of laws to ensure that students are protected. These laws are grouped together under Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) legislation. Under this legislative framework, all Australian institutions accepting international students on a student visa are legally required to provide quality courses, as well as to meet the national standards for student services and institutional facilities.

For example, the ESOS legislation provides consumer protection if an institution defaults on a course in which a student with a student visa is enrolled. This protection includes either a refund of course money to the student or, if a refund is not possible, placement into an alternative course through a Tuition Assurance Scheme.

For more detailed information about the protection and assurance provided by ESOS legislation, visit www.aei.gov.au and click on the "ESOS" link in the shortcuts bar.

Arranging Visas



Most international students wanting to study in Australia require a student visa. Some other visa holders are also eligible to study as international students in Australia. Many students apply for a visa themselves on-line or via the Australian Diplomatic Mission in their country. The visa application process can be complicated and for students from some countries it may be better to submit an application with the assistance of an accredited agent due to their familiarity and experience in the field. You should check with the education provider in Australia for their accredited agents in your country. In order to apply for a visa, you will need a valid passport, an electronic Confirmation of Enrolment (eCoE) and any other documentation required by the Australian diplomatic post with which you lodge your application. For example, if you are under 18 you must have a completed CAAW form to ensure your accommodation and welfare is approved by your education provider.

You must ensure to allow enough time for processing between lodging your application and the start of your academic program, as it can be a

lengthy process depending on your country of origin.

Department of Immigration and Border Patrol (DIBP)

The Australian Government's Department of Immigration and Border Patrol provides comprehensive information about student visa requirements and the application process, as well as application document checklists to assist you with your application. Visit www.immi.gov.au/students/index.htm for the latest information.

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)

As well as links from the DIBP website the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade website www.dfat.gov.au/embassies has a comprehensive list of Australian embassies, high commissions, consulates and representative offices around the world.

Migration Agents

A migration agent can assist you in submitting your visa application and communicate with DIBP on your behalf, but please note that you do not need to use a migration agent to lodge any kind of visa application.

Education Agents

Education agents promote various Australian education programs and institutions internationally and are a good way for students to apply to study in Australia. Agents are experienced in making international student applications and applying for visas. Most speak both English and the local language so this makes the application process a lot simpler and generally hassle free for students and parents. Most do not charge for their service as they collect a commission from the institution you choose to attend. However, some agents do charge small amounts or offer additional services for which they charge. You can check with your Australian education provider for contact details of agents they recommend.

Please Note: Although able to assist in completing education and visa applications, not all education agents are licensed to provide migration advice.

Visa Conditions:

If you are granted a visa, you must abide by its conditions. Failure to comply with these conditions could result in the cancellation of your visa. These conditions include (but are not limited to):

- Complete the course within the duration specific in the CoE
- Maintain satisfactory academic progress
- Maintain approved Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) while in Australia
- Remain with the principal education provider for 6 calendar months, unless issued a letter of release from the provider to attend another institution

- Notify your training provider of your Australian address and any subsequent changes of address within 7 days.

For a full list of **mandatory** and **discretionary** student visa conditions please visit www.immi.gov.au/students/visa-conditions-students

Preparing for your Australian study journey

Arranging Travel

You will need to make your own travel arrangements to Australia. Please try to arrive at least 1-2 weeks before the start of International Student Orientation to allow enough time for settling-in, adjusting to the climate and overcoming jetlag.



Checklist of things to do before leaving home

- Apply for a passport, and make sure the passport is valid for all of the time you plan to be abroad.
- Arrange for a student visa.
- Make contact with the Australian educational institution where you plan to study to confirm your enrolment and start date and check if your institution or college has an airport greeting service.
- Arrange for immunisations and medications from your doctor.
- Apply for a credit card and/or arrange for sufficient funds to be available for you to access in Australia.
- Confirm overseas access to your funds with your bank.
- Make travel arrangements, including travel insurance.
- Advise your educational institution of your travel details.
- Arrange accommodation for at least your first week in Australia, if not longer.

- Arrange transport from the airport to your accommodation and change enough currency into Australian dollars before you leave so that you can catch a taxi or make a phone call in the event of an emergency.
- When packing your bags, make sure you include the name and contact details of your institution's international representative.

Important documents

Prepare a folder of official documents to bring with you to Australia, including:

- Valid passport
- Printout of your student visa confirmation letter
- Your institution's offer of a place/admission letter
- Electronic Confirmation of Enrolment (eCoE)
- Receipts of payments (e.g. tuition fees, OSHC, bank statements)
- Insurance policies
- Original or certified copies of your academic transcripts and qualifications
- Other personal identification documents (e.g. birth certificate, ID card, driver's licence)
- Medical records and prescriptions
- Photocopy of credit/debit card(s)
- Prescriptions and generic names of medications
- Reference letters for potential employers/landlord.

Before you leave, make copies of all your documents and leave them with someone at home who can send them on to you if the originals get lost. When flying, keep all your documents in your carry-on luggage. If you are travelling with your family, you will need to include their documents as well. Keep all documents in your carry-on luggage.

Insurance

Travel insurance: It makes good sense to take out travel insurance. Although most travel is incident free, cancelled flights and lost luggage, when they happen, can end up costing you a lot of time and money.

Health insurance: All student visa holders entering Australia must have Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) for the duration of their stay. OSHC will help you pay for any visits to the doctor during the time you are in Australia. Go to the Overseas Student Health Cover page for information on what your OSHC will cover.

How much money do you need?

Bring enough Australian currency in cash for your first few days in Australia, however, do not carry large amounts of cash on you. Instead, make sure you have about AUD\$1500–\$3,000 in travellers' cheques (in your name) so that you can start establishing yourself and setting up your new home quickly. Please note that if you are carrying more than AUD\$10,000, or equivalent currency, you must declare this to Customs officials when you enter Australia. [See *Financial Matters* for more information.]

Accommodation upon arrival

If you are a school-aged student, you will need to arrange a homestay, boarding or similar accommodation in advance of your arrival. If you are a university, TAFE/ VET or ELICOS college student, you will need to arrange temporary accommodation for your first few days in Australia while you look for something more permanent. Your educational institution might be able to help you, or you can look up hostels and book online at www.yha.com.au

There are a number of internet booking services for last-minute bookings at hotels and short-stay apartments. These include www.getaroom.com.au and www.wotif.com, however hotels can be expensive, and in major

cities commence at upwards of AUD\$150 per night.

Baggage allowances

When deciding what to pack for arrival in Australia, keep in mind that baggage allowances for your flight to Australia, as well as for travel within Australia, may be less than what you are used to.

To avoid excess baggage fees on international flights into Australia, your checked bag should weigh no more than 50 lb/23 kg. For domestic flights within Australia, your checked bag must weigh no more than 44 lb/20 kg. Check with your airline for exact baggage restrictions.

Clothing and seasonal considerations

Australian students dress informally. In general, comfort is the paramount consideration and you will find most of your peers at university and college wearing jeans and T-shirts or jumpers on campus. However, many school students wear uniforms.

Summer in Australia runs from December to February; autumn from March to May; winter from June to August; and spring from September to November. For most of the country the hottest months are January and February. If you arrive in June or July, the coldest months of the Australian year, you may need to bring winter clothes.

Prescription medications

If you plan to bring prescription drugs into Australia, it is essential you refer to the Therapeutics Goods Administration (TGA) website for full information about what is allowed. For more information visit www.tga.gov.au and select "For travellers & visitors" from the "Consumers" menu.

A huge range of medications is available in Australia, so another option is to have your prescriptions filled at a pharmacy when you arrive. To do this, you will first need to get valid prescriptions from a doctor in Australia.

Adaptors and converters

The standard voltage for electrical items in Australia is 240 volts. Most laptop computers and chargers for cell phones, MP3 players and digital cameras automatically adjust to 110 or 240 volts, but some electronic products may require a transformer as well as a converter.

Electrical plugs in Australia have three flat pins, one of which is a ground pin. You may need to buy an adaptor or have plugs changed when you arrive in Australia.

Bringing your computer

To most of us these days, our computer is our lifeline. To ensure that you can bring your computer with you to Australia, you need to be aware of Australian customs regulations.

If you are undertaking a short course, and not intending to stay in Australia for more than 12 months, the Australian Customs Service will allow you to temporarily import your computer without paying duty or the Goods and Services Tax (GST). In some cases, this may also apply if your stay is less than 24 months, however, this depends on a number of conditions, including the value of your computer.

If you are staying in Australia for more than 24 months, and you have owned and used your computer for more than 12 months prior to arriving in Australia, you will also be allowed to bring it in, tax free. However, as you may be required to provide proof of the date of purchase and the purchase price, you should bring a receipt. If the computer cost more than A\$400 and is less than 12 months old, or if you do not have a receipt, you may be required to pay a 10 per cent GST.

To make sure you are fully aware of what you can and cannot bring into Australia, visit www.customs.gov.au and follow the “travellers” link from the main menu.

Bringing your Family

Most student visas allow you to bring your family members to Australia as your dependants (check your individual circumstances with the Department of Immigration and Border Patrol See: **Arranging Visas**). Family members include your spouse, and you and your spouse's dependent children. Before bringing your spouse or children to Australia, you will have to prove that you can support them financially. The cost of supporting a family in Australia is very high. You may have to consider and discuss many issues with your family.

Issues to Consider

Rather than bringing your family together with you to Australia, some students may find it useful to arrive first, settle into studies, find appropriate accommodation, adjust to living in Australia and then arrange for their family to join them.

Before making a decision to bring your family to Australia it is important to consider the following issues:

- The cost of airfares for your family to and from Australia;
- Possible higher rent for a larger home;
- Limited employment opportunities for your spouse;
- Extra costs for food, clothing and other necessities;
- The effect on you and your studies if your family is not happy in Australia;
- Whether your children will adjust to school in Australia;
- Waiting lists for childcare centres; and
- Whether to come alone to Australia first and arrange things for your family, or to all come at the same time.

For more information, visit: www.immi.gov.au

Child Care

Finding suitable childcare in Australia requires patience and planning. Waiting lists for places in most childcare centres are long.

Many schools offer before- and after-school care programs (usually 7:30am-8:45am and 3:30pm-6:00pm). Children who need these programs must be registered with the school.

Schools & School-age Dependents

If you would like to bring your children to Australia with you, you must be aware of the following schooling issues:

1. It is an immigration policy that school-age dependants of international students undertake formal schooling while they are in Australia.
2. Children who have their fifth birthday before 1st April of that calendar year are eligible to start school.
3. You will need to provisionally enrol your child in a school before you leave your home country and you will normally have to pay the school fees one semester in advance. The school will issue an electronic Confirmation of Enrolment Form (eCoE) stating the program and its duration, so that you can obtain the appropriate visa for your child.
4. The Diplomatic Mission in your country can tell you which State schools are registered to take international students. Fees are payable by international students at all State schools unless you:
 - o Are in receipt of sponsorship or scholarships from the Australian Government (e.g. the Australian Development Scholarship, IPRS);
 - o Hold a higher institution or approved non-government scholarship. These scholarships must be approved by the State government for the dependants to be exempt from school fees.
5. You will be responsible for school fees and other costs including school

uniforms, books, excursions and stationery.

6. When choosing the most appropriate school for your child, it is best to ask questions about the school's curriculum, size, extra-curricular activities and the size of individual classes.
7. You should also take into consideration the distance from the school to **your education institution**, the suburb in which you intend to live and the method of transport you plan to use.

There are two types of schools in Australia – State schools and independent schools.

For further information, please visit:

Temporary Residents and Dependents
https://www.education.act.gov.au/school_education/international_students/temporary_residents_and_dependants

International Students and Parents
https://www.education.act.gov.au/school_education/international_students/international_students_and_parents

Please note;

Only the legal spouse and dependent children (0-18 years) are eligible to apply to enter Australia on student dependent visas. Dependant visas are applied for in your home country. Details of the application process should be obtained at the time of applying for student visas.

The cost of supporting a family in Australia is very high and it is important to ensure that you have sufficient funds to support them financially.

You also need to consider how your family will adjust to life in Australia:

- How would the presence of your family impact on your studies?
- How would your family cope with life in Australia?

- Can your spouse communicate confidently In English?
- Possibly limited employment Opportunities for your spouse
- Are you the primary carer for your Children?
- School or childcare arrangements for your Children

You may find it is easier to arrive in Australia first, and to bring your family later, however it is your choice. Some students choose to bring their family with them to avoid visa delays. It is also very important that you declare all family members on your application, even if they do not plan to travel with you to Australia. If you do not do this, your family members will not be eligible for the grant of student visas as your dependants to join you in Australia.

Important visa information for bringing your family to Australia can be found on the DIBP website – <http://www.immi.gov.au>

By law you must enrol your school age children into school once they reach school starting age. When choosing a school, many parents ask about:

- The school’s curriculum
- Extracurricular activities
- The size of individual classes
- The overall size of the school
- Whether there is an English as a second Language (ESL) program offered
- School fees and any additional costs
- You should also consider:
 - The distance from the school to the campus
 - The distance of the school from where you plan to live
 - How your children will travel to and from the school.
 - For further information visit the appropriate State website below:

VIC: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/>

[parents/primary/Pages/choosing.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/parents/primary/Pages/choosing.aspx)

NSW:

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/publicschools>

ACT: www.det.act.gov.au/information_for_parents_and_school_community

QLD: <https://eqi.com.au/study-options/temporary-residents>

CHILDCARE

Childcare is expensive and can be difficult to secure. You should start researching childcare options before you arrive. It is more difficult to find places for children under 24 months of age. Places for older children (3 – 5 years old) are easier to obtain. To learn about the availability and suitability of different childcare options, you need to approach childcare centres directly. Most childcare centres have long waiting lists, so you might want to register on several waiting lists. Some centres charge an application fee. My Child is the Australian Government portal to Childcare. This website will allow you to search for childcare centres in your local area and obtain information regarding services, vacancy and fees.

LOCAL COUNCILS

In Australia there are three tiers of government – federal (or national), state, and local. The local government comprises a series of councils or municipalities that provide services and facilities to local residents. It is a good idea to check which council or shire you are living in. You can contact the council for a new resident’s information pack, visit a customer service centre, or check online as to what services and resources are available to you as a parent.

To find out what council area you live in, visit the appropriate website below:

VIC: <https://knowyourcouncil.vic.gov.au/Councils>

NSW: www.olg.nsw.gov.au/public/my-localcouncil/find-my-council

ACT:
www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/app/answers/detail/a_id/246

QLD: www.dilgp.qld.gov.au/localgovernment-directory

Councils offer a wide range of information for families, such as:

- Community childcare and family day care
- Book and toy libraries
- School holiday programs
- Parks, gardens, playgrounds, festivals and
- Events
- Community-based mothers' groups/
- Supported play groups

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

Children in the ACT can start primary school at the beginning of the school year if they are five or turn five on or before 30 April in that year. It is compulsory for children to be enrolled in school from age six. For more information about schooling, refer to the ACT Government Schools websites:

www.det.act.gov.au/school_education
www.det.act.gov.au/school_education/enrolling_in_an_act_public_school
www.det.act.gov.au/school_education/international_students

School Fees

You are responsible for school fees and other costs including school uniforms, books, stationery and excursions. You will need to pay the fee when you accept the position in the school.

The ACT Government tuition and administration fees for the dependants of international students, vary depending on their visa.

The tuition fees for those on a student visa are (based on one academic year):

RATES FOR 2019-2020

Preschool	K–6	\$3,900
Primary School Years	K–6	\$10,400
High School Year College/	7–10	\$13,600
Senior School Year	11–12	\$15,200

There is also a non-refundable

Administration Fee of \$250 which is payable upon application.

Tuition fees at non-government schools vary from school to school.

Your dependants may be exempt from school fees at an ACT Government School if you:

- Are a postgraduate research student enrolled in a doctoral (PhD) or masters by research degree, and you have a Subclass 574 visa; or
- Receive a fully funded award; or
- Scholarship from the Australian Government.

Contact the ACT Government's International Education Unit to determine if you are eligible for fee exemptions.

https://www.education.act.gov.au/school_education/international_students

<https://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au/english/australian-education/bringing-your-children>

Entry into Australia

Australian Immigration

You have just arrived in Australia and cannot wait to get outside and get started on the next leg of your journey. But when you first arrive, you will be required to make your way through Australian immigration. An immigration officer will ask to see your completed incoming passenger card (given to you on the plane) and your passport. The immigration officer will check your documents and may ask you a few questions about your planned stay in Australia. You may also have to show your Confirmation of Enrolment.



Clearing Customs in Australia

Once you have cleared the immigration checkpoint you will enter the baggage hall where you can claim your luggage and proceed to Customs and baggage examination.

People arriving in Australia clear Customs through one of two channels: the green channel is for those with 'nothing to declare'; the red channel for those with 'something to declare'. You must declare any food, plant materials and animal products. For more information about what you can and cannot bring into Australia, visit

<https://www.border.gov.au/Trav/Ente/GoIn/Arrival/Information-for-travellers>

Regardless of the channel you follow, your luggage, including your hand luggage, may be x-rayed inspected or checked by a detector dog team.

If you do not have anything to declare, follow the green channel

If you do have something to declare, follow the red channel

As you go through the red channel of Customs, an official will ask you to open your luggage so that it can be inspected. If the Customs official decides that an item is not quarantined, you will be allowed to keep it and move through the Customs checkpoint. If the item is quarantined, it will either be confiscated and destroyed, or held for decontamination and returned to you at a later date.

If you go through the green channel, you may be subjected to a random check and asked by a Customs' official to open your luggage for inspection.

Australia has strict quarantine laws, so it is important to declare all the items you are carrying on the incoming passenger card. Those who do not declare honestly risk fines and prosecution.

Student visa conditions

The Department of Immigration and Border Patrol (DIBP) is the Australian Government department that manages everything relating to student visas.

It is very important that you are fully aware of, and meet, all the conditions of your visa. Visa conditions are set out in the letter of approval sent with a visa or on a visa label. There may be special conditions for students on scholarships, so if you are on a scholarship, it is important to read and understand all these conditions.

For a full list of mandatory and discretionary student visa conditions, visit

www.immi.gov.au/students/visa-conditions.htm

Unfortunately, a number of students abuse the law each year. For example, they may work longer hours than permitted by their visa or they may overstay their visa. Breaking these conditions can cause a visa to be cancelled and this has serious consequences: under the law, a student may be required to leave Australia and not allowed to return for three years after the visa is cancelled.

Changing or extending a student visa

If your circumstances change and you want to change your course or provider, or you wish to stay in Australia longer, contact the nearest Department of Immigration and Border Patrol (DIBP) office for advice on how to make these arrangements.

It is also important to ensure your visa does not expire while you are in Australia. If you remain in Australia for more than 28 days after your student visa expires without obtaining a new one, you may not be allowed to return for three years.

If your student visa expires before you have finished your course of study, or if you wish to undertake further study, you should contact your nearest Australian visa office. You can only extend your stay in Australia if you do not have a “No Further Stay” condition on your current student visa.

If you need help in understanding any of these conditions, contact the Department of Immigration and Border Patrol (DIBP), or visit www.immi.gov.au/students/visa-conditions.htm

For further information, go to www.immi.gov.au and select “Students” from the “Visa, Immigration and Refugees” menu.

Financial matters

Australian currency

Australian currency is denominated as follows:

Notes: \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50, \$100

Coins: 5c, 10c, 20c, 50c, \$1, \$2

There are no 1c or 2c coins; these have been taken out of circulation some years ago. Items in Australia are priced down to single cents (for example \$2.99) but when you pay, the total will be rounded up or down to the nearest five cents. Thus \$2.99 becomes \$3.00, and \$12.42 becomes \$12.40.

As with all currencies, the Australian dollar exchange rate can vary over short periods of time. You can find the current exchange rate at www.xe.com



Setting up a bank account

To open a bank account in Australia must show several pieces of personal identification, each of which is allotted certain number of “points”. You will need 100 points of identification to establish your identity as the person who will be named on the account.

Your passport and proof of your arrival date in Australia will be acceptable as 100 points if you open an account within six weeks of arrival in Australia. After this time, you will need additional documentation. To open an account, you will also

need a minimum deposit (this can be as little as A\$10).

As a student, you may be able to open an account with special student benefits. Many banks have 'student accounts' that offer a regular savings account with zero, or minimal, fees for transactions. To qualify for such an account, you will need your student ID card from your institution to prove you are a student. For a comparison of accounts in banks throughout Australia, visit www.banks.com.au

Most bank branches are open from Monday through Thursday 9.00 am to 4.00 pm, and on Fridays from 9.00 am to 5.00 pm (except public holidays). Some branches have extended trading hours during the week and may be open Saturdays – check with your individual bank. Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs) are open 24 hours a day.

Credit cards

The most widely accepted credit cards in Australia are MasterCard and Visa. Some retailers may impose a surcharge on purchases made with a credit card, with many charging more for the use of cards such as American Express.

Most businesses accept credit cards as payment but may set a minimum credit card purchase of A\$10 or \$15. It's best to check with your credit card company about any fees they may charge for foreign transactions.

Cost of Living

According to the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP), the average cost of living per year in Australia is approximately AUD\$18,000-\$20,000 for a single student, not including the tuition fees. This figure includes accommodation, food, transport, clothing, power, telephone, with a little extra spending money for entertainment activities, such as visiting local tourist attractions, or seeing a movie. This figure does not include tuition and study fees, buying expensive items such as a

television, video or computer; or owning and maintaining a car. Living costs vary according to your circumstances, including the type of accommodation you choose, its location, the number of people you live with and your lifestyle.

Student life can be expensive, and most students live on a limited income while they are studying.

Living expenses include food, clothing, entertainment, and transportation for you and your dependents (if any) and textbooks. Your actual expenses will vary according to your lifestyle.

The following estimated costs are based on a single student living in shared accommodation;

Item	Approx. Cost Per Week
Rent (shared)	City: A\$200-300 Inner suburbs (5-10 km from city): A\$125-A\$150 Outer suburbs (10-20 km from city): A\$100-A\$125
Electricity, gas and water	A\$40 - 100
Food	A\$80 - 150
Phone and Internet	A\$20 - 50
Public Transport	up to A\$50
Entertainment	AU\$30 - 100

Home Set-up cost

When renting on your own (or with your family), you will need to allow AU\$3,000 - 5,000 to cover establishment expenses such as bond payment, advance rent, furniture and other household items. Some student apartments come fully furnished but private rental accommodation often does not.

Cost for Students with Families

If you intend to bring your family, you should also account for their living expenses.

The Department of Immigration and Border Protection recommends that you budget at least the following annual living costs (estimated for the year July 2018 - July 2019):

You – AU\$19,830

Your partner – AU\$6,940

Child – AU\$2,970

Current Costs of Living Calculator:

<https://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au/english/live-in-australia/living-costs>

DIBP: Financial Information for Students

<http://www.border.gov.au/Trav/Stud/More/Student-Visa-Living-Costs-and-Evidence-of-Funds>

If your children are between the ages of 5 and 18 years old, and they will be in Australia for 3 months or more, they are required to be enrolled in school. If you are a postgraduate research student, you are exempt from paying primary school and secondary school fees at public schools.

For more information see the [Sydney Public Schools website](#) and Education Directorate: <https://www.sydneymovingguide.com/schools-in-sydney/>

Further information on public schools at: <http://www.australianschoolsdirectory.com.au/canberra-schools.php>

The Australian Government provides information and guidance on managing your finances. You can read more at www.moneysmart.gov.au

The 'Insider Guides Cost of Living Calculator' is also a useful tool to help estimate your living costs in Australia; www.insiderguides.com.au/cost-of-living-calculator/

If you experience financial trouble while in Australia, talk to Mervic College's student support staff for assistance.

More information and resources: Study Sydney - Study in Sydney

<http://www.study.sydney/english/learn/education-system/>

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/going-to-a-public-school/our-schools-at-a-glance>

Settling into life in Australia

Accommodation

Finding the right accommodation is one of the biggest challenges facing any new international student and finding a place in your price range can be even harder. It is extremely important that you factor the high cost of housing into your budget before you come to Australia, and that you are able to access sufficient funds to cover possible rent increases.

If your educational institution has an International Office, contact the staff well in advance of your arrival for information on housing options on and off campus. They might be able to provide you with links to accommodation boards on your institution's website, or within the community. Also, regularly check websites such as www.domain.com.au and www.realestate.com.au that list rental accommodation as well as share accommodation, as does www.gumtree.com.au. On arrival, your college or university notice boards are also good places to find opportunities for shared and independent rental accommodation.

If you have rented accommodation in your home country, consider getting references from your former landlord(s). Providing copies of these to an Australian real estate agent when you apply for a property can show that you have a proven record as a good tenant. You should also be prepared to provide the real estate agent with a bank account statement showing that you have enough money to pay for your accommodation.

Types of accommodation

There are many different types of accommodation available in Australia, so you should be able to find something that suits your needs. Most accommodation, except homestay, does not include electrical items, furniture, bedding or kitchen utensils. Cheap household goods are often advertised for private sale in newspapers and on campus notice boards

and can also be purchased from charity or opportunity shops and second-hand stores.

Here's a guide to what to expect from various accommodation options. Figures quoted are for accommodation only. Other living costs are additional (except homestay, which usually includes some meals).

Homestay (about A\$180 to \$290 a week)

Homestay is when you live with an Australian family in their home. It is popular with younger students and for those studying short-term English courses. Single or shared rooms are available, and the costs vary. Meals are usually included, but cheaper self-catering homestay is available.

You should pay for your homestay rent and deposit (usually the equivalent of four weeks' rent) on arrival (if you have not paid before arriving in Australia). Make sure you get a receipt each time you pay the rent.

Hostels, backpackers and guest houses (about A\$90 to \$160 a week)

Hostels are usually run by organisations such as Youth Hostels Australia and the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) but may also be operated by private or commercial organisations. Students share kitchen and bathroom facilities. This accommodation is usually a short stay option.

Boarding schools (about A\$10,000 to \$15,000 a year)

Many private secondary schools provide accommodation, meals and laundry services for international school students. Tuition fees are in addition to the boarding fees. You will live in a dormitory with other students of the same sex and be supervised by adults.

Campus accommodation (about A\$150 to \$280 a week)

Most universities and some VET and English language colleges offer a variety of accommodation on or near campus such as apartments, residential colleges or halls of

residence. The cost varies depending on the type of accommodation.

Residential colleges are slightly more expensive and provide accommodation with meals. They may also have sporting and social facilities, tutoring, libraries and computer facilities.

Halls of residence are located on or near institution campuses and are generally cheaper than residential colleges. Students usually have meals and some cleaning services provided.

If you are interested in this type of accommodation, contact your institution and apply early. Places are in high demand, and in Australia you are not guaranteed a room by simply being accepted for study.

Rental accommodation and tenancy agreements

Shared accommodation (about A\$100 to \$250 a week) and rental accommodation (about A\$250 to \$500 a week).

Renting a house or flat, either on your own or with others, is a popular choice for many international students. However, the shortage of rental properties across Australia means that the cost of accommodation is rising, and competition for places is getting tougher.

The Residential Tenancy Act in each state protects the rights of both the tenant and landlord, and a Tribunal determines unresolved disputes. You should make sure you are aware of your rights and can find more information about tenancy laws from your state's Residential Tenancy Tribunal (see the list below).

Before looking for a place to rent, gather information on the types of properties available, the costs, and good locations. Ask your educational institution, other students or real estate agents and check campus notice boards, student and local newspapers or visit websites such as those mentioned above.

Tenancy Agreements

If you are successful in applying to rent a property, you will need to sign a Tenancy Agreement. The terms of this agreement vary from state to state, but you can generally expect to find clauses regarding the payment of rent and your bond, the condition of the property, maintenance and access, inspections, changes to the cost of renting the property, and ending a tenancy. In general, it is held that Australia's renting laws provide good and fair protection to both the tenant and the landlord.

Bond: Bond is the money that you pay as a security deposit. It is usually equal to between four- and six-weeks' rent, and you have to pay it to the real estate agent in cleared funds (i.e. not by credit card or cheque) when you sign the Tenancy Agreement. You should get this money back at the end of your tenancy provided that the property is in the same condition as when you moved in (general wear and tear excepted).

Rent: The rental price of a property is usually stated as a weekly amount, however depending on your Tenancy Agreement, rent needs to be paid either fortnightly or monthly in advance. (In some share accommodation situations, you may only be asked to pay rent on a weekly basis.)

If you fall behind in your payments, you may be evicted, and your bond might be given to the owner of the property to cover the money you owe.

Period of tenancy and rent increases:

Tenancy Agreements are either fixed-term or periodic. A fixed-term tenancy is for a definite period, usually six or 12 months. During this time, the amount of rent you pay cannot increase. A periodic tenancy has no definite end date, with tenants usually being on a month-to-month agreement, during which the rent may be increased. Your real estate agent may provide you with notice of their intention to increase your rent. Each state has different laws surrounding this issue; if you have a problem, contact your state's Residential Tenancy Tribunal for more information (see the list below).

Condition Report: When your real estate agent hands you your copy of the Tenancy Agreement and the keys to the property, they should also give you a Condition Report. This should list any visible defects in the property such as cracks, carpet stains and so forth, as well as the condition of every light, heater, kitchen appliance and bathroom fixture in the property.

The Condition Report is an extremely important part of your tenancy. If you notice anything about the property that is not listed in the report, you must add it to the report. This will protect you when you move out. For example, if you notice a scratch on some floorboards that is not listed in the Condition Report, and you do not add it to the report yourself, you may be liable to fix the scratch when you move out as there would be no proof that you were not responsible.

Inspections: It will be a condition of your tenancy that with prior notice, your real estate agent may inspect the property during your stay to ensure it is being kept in good condition.

Maintenance: Property owners are required to maintain their properties in a condition that is appropriate to live in, and in a state of good repair. This includes fixing things such as burst water pipes, roof leaks, electrical faults, and the breakdown of essential services. Your Tenancy Agreement will outline what the property owner is responsible for, and the procedures for repairs.

Utilities: In most cases, you will be responsible for gas, water, electricity and telephone charges you incur while renting the property. With the exception of water (which is usually billed by the property owner) you usually pay these charges directly to the relevant utility.

End of tenancy: Either you or your landlord can end the tenancy agreement. If you are on a fixed-term tenancy, you can decide to leave the premises at the end of the contract period without any penalty by providing written notice of your intention to vacate. Your tenancy agreement will specify how long before the end of the tenancy you need to give notice.

If the owner chooses not to extend a fixed term tenancy or decides to end a periodic tenancy for any reason, they will also need to give you adequate notice. The length of notice varies from state to state, so check your tenancy agreement carefully.

Disputes: If a problem between you and your landlord or real estate agent is not resolved, or you would like another opinion on the information you have been given, you can contact the Residential Tenancy Tribunal in your state (see over page).

Residential Tenancy Assistance – State by State

New South Wales
www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au
Office of Fair Trading 13 32 20

Victoria
www.consumer.vic.gov.au
Consumer Affairs 1300 558 181

Queensland
www.rta.qld.gov.au
Residential Tenancy Authority 1300 366 311

Western Australia
www.docep.wa.gov.au
Department of Consumer and Employment Protection 1300 304 054

South Australia
www.ocba.sa.gov.au
Office of Consumer and Business Affairs 08 8204 9544

Tasmania
www.consumer.tas.gov.au
Consumer Affairs and Fair Trading 1300 65 44 99

ACT
www.ors.act.gov.au
Office of Regulatory Service
(02) 6207 3000
Northern Territory
www.consumeraffairs.nt.gov.au
Consumer Affairs 1800 019 319

Social and cultural support

Having friends to support you and share your time in Australia will make a big impact on your happiness during the time you spend studying.

The best place to find people who have similar interests is probably on campus. There is also a representative body for all international students in Australia called the Council of International Students.

Sporting clubs are very popular with Australians and there are likely to be several in the area in which you live, if not on the campus where you study. Together with community groups and volunteer organisations, these represent great opportunities to meet likeminded people and gain insight into life in Australia. Your local church, mosque, temple or other place of worship also can help you to feel like part of the Australian community.

Joining groups associated with your home community can also be a good way of finding support in Australia. You also might find it to be a good way of introducing your new friends to your culture and heritage. Here are some handy website links to find groups in your area.

New South Wales

www.crc.nsw.gov.au

Victoria

www.multicultural.vic.gov.au

Queensland

www.multicultural.qld.gov.au

Western Australia

www.multicultural.online.wa.gov.au

South Australia

www.multicultural.sa.gov.au

Tasmania

www.mcot.org.au

Australian Capital Territory

www.communitiesonline.org.au

Northern Territory

www.mcnt.org.au

Newspapers

The Australian – www.theaustralian.news.com.au – is the country's national newspaper. Each state has its own major newspaper, as well as several regional newspapers and tabloids. You can do a search for your local paper on www.newspapers.com.au
Here are the main newspapers in each state:

New South Wales

The Sydney Morning Herald
www.smh.com.au

Victoria

The Age
www.theage.com.au

Queensland

The Brisbane Courier Mail
www.news.com.au/couriermail

Western Australia

The West Australian
www.thewest.com.au

South Australia

The Adelaide Advertiser
www.news.com.au/adelaidenow

Tasmania

The Hobart Mercury
www.news.com.au/mercury

Australian Capital Territory

The Sydney Times
www.canberratimes.com.au

Northern Territory

The Northern Territory News
www.ntnews.com.au

There are also many locally produced foreign-language newspapers available in Australia, and you can find newspapers from a wide variety of international locales (mostly in Asia) in some districts.

Libraries

Aside from your educational institution's libraries, you will also find public libraries in each city and town. Most libraries are open six or seven days a week. They stock books, CDs, DVDs, newspapers, magazines, journals and e-books, and in many cases, provide free internet services. If your library does not have what you are looking for, you can usually ask them to order it for you from another library.

There is no charge for borrowing items, but you will need to join the library and obtain a membership card. Late return of items will usually incur a small fee.

Culture and society

In Australia, you may notice some differences in etiquette, lifestyles and values to what you are used to back home. Australians are informal, which can take some adjustment, especially if you are more accustomed to a culture where ritual is important and where levels of status and authority are clearly distinguished and carefully respected. These are not obvious characteristics of Australian culture and you will be expected to be able to accept a wide range of people on an equal basis in informal situations.

Adjustment to a new culture and way of life takes time. Allow yourself time to observe those around you and patterns of both verbal and non-verbal communication. Don't be afraid to ask questions if there are things you don't understand. This will reduce the chance of confusion or misunderstandings.

Here are some tips on Australian culture:

Addressing people – Australians usually have a first or given name and a family name or surname. People of your own age or younger are usually addressed by their first names. When speaking to people older than you, call them Mr, Mrs or Ms followed by their surname until you know them well, or they ask you to address them by their first name.

Greetings – good morning, good afternoon and good evening are formal greetings. Informal greetings are hello or hi.

Please and thank you – say please when requesting something and thank you when anything is provided to you.

Personal space – Australia is a big country with a small population, so we're used to having plenty of personal space. It's unusual to be in a situation where you must stand shoulder-to-shoulder with others. Try to leave at least an arm's length of space.

Dress – Australians tend to dress casually. If more formal dress is required, you will usually be told. You should feel free to dress in the way you feel is culturally appropriate for you.

Queuing – people queue when they are waiting in turn for something (such as a taxi, bus, at a ticket counter, or for a cashier). Never push ahead of others or 'jump the queue' – it won't be tolerated.

Punctuality – if you can't keep an appointment or invitation, or are running late, always call to explain before the event.

Smoking – smoking is banned in government buildings, on public transport including domestic and many international flights, theatres, shopping centres and many indoor and outdoor public meeting places. Many restaurants may not allow smoking by law. Always ask for permission to smoke.

Equality – all individuals have equal social, legal and political rights in Australia and should be treated equally.

Spitting – spitting in public is illegal and can cause offence.

Littering – Australia is environmentally conscious, and littering is illegal. If you litter, you may be fined.

Getting around

Public transport

There are many transport options in Australia that will get you around town or across the country. Australia's public transport system is comparably safe and affordable – and, in some cases, it's even free. Depending on where you live it can include trains, buses, trams and ferries.

Sydney: For information on buses, ferries and trains, go to www.131500.com.au

Victoria: For bus, train and tram timetables, maps and fares, go to Public Transport Victoria at: <http://ptv.vic.gov.au/>

Brisbane: Information on Brisbane's bus, train and ferry routes and connections, go to www.translink.com.au

Perth: TransPerth operates the city's public buses, trains and ferries. www.transperth.wa.gov.au

Adelaide: The Adelaide Metro Information Centre has timetables and sells tickets for the integrated metropolitan buses, trains and the Glenelg tram. www.adelaidemetro.com.au

Hobart: For information, go to www.metrotas.com.au

Sydney: For information, go to www.action.act.gov.au

Darwin: For information, go to www.nt.gov.au/transport/public

Many public transport services in Australia are 'pre-paid' – so you need a ticket before you board the bus, train, tram or ferry. You can buy tickets at train stations and ferry wharves, as well as newsagencies and many convenience outlets.

Travelling interstate

Australia is a big country. International visitors often think that they can get on a bus to get from Sydney to Sydney. While that's true, the trip will take about 13 hours. Most people prefer to fly.

On domestic routes, Australia has two major airlines, several low-cost airlines, and a number of regional carriers. You can book tickets through a travel agent, over the phone or over the Internet.

The two major airlines, Qantas – www.qantas.com.au – and Virgin Australia – www.virginaustralia.com – link all the capital cities and many regional centres. Jetstar – www.jetstar.com.au – is the low-cost airline affiliated with Qantas. Another low-cost airline, Tiger Airways – www.tigerairways.com.au – flies to most Australian capitals and some regional cities, while REX – www.rex.com.au – carries passengers mostly to regional areas in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia.

Train and bus services are good options for intercity or regional travel. For a comprehensive list of train services, fares and timetables, go to www.railaustralia.com.au and for bus operations, go to www.buslines.com.au

Your own transport

If you are staying in Australia for any length of time you may decide to purchase your own transport. A reasonable second-hand bicycle can be bought for about A\$200 and a good second-hand car can be purchased for less than A\$10,000.

If you buy a car, you are responsible for registration, repairs, fuel, insurance and service costs. All motor vehicles must be registered before being driven on the road. You must register it in your name and provide the state or territory car registration board with your driver's licence details and your residential address in Australia. Registration information is available at www.australia.gov.au – follow the link to

registration and licences from the “transport” menu.

Note: It is compulsory to buy third party insurance which will cover the damage to other cars or property if you have an accident.

If you plan to be in Australia for a period of no more than three months, you can drive with an international driver's licence or a valid overseas driver's licence. You must carry a translation if the document is not in English. If you plan to stay longer than three months, you will need to obtain an Australian driver's licence by taking a test on highway codes and regulations. Contact the Roads and Traffic Authority in your state or territory for more information on Australian driver's licences and road rules.

Important things to keep in mind while driving:

- Australians drive on the left side of the road.
- Wearing seat belts is mandatory in Australia. This applies to the back seat, too. If a seat belt is fitted you must wear it.
- The driving age in Australia is 18, though in some states you can drive unaccompanied at 17. Check with the Roads and Traffic Authority in your state to learn more.
- All states have strict blood alcohol limit laws of 0.05 per cent and there are serious penalties including gaol time. If you drink, don't drive!
- The maximum speed limit in residential areas is 50 kilometres per hour and 110 kilometres per hour on highways, unless signs indicate otherwise. Police use radar speed cameras and fines are steep.
- You must have a licence to ride a motorcycle and you must be over 18. Helmets are mandatory.
- The use of mobile (cell) phones while driving is against the law in Australia, unless you use hands-free technology. Fines are considerable.

Taxis

Metered taxis operate in all major cities and towns. You can call a taxi and book your journey by phone, over the Internet or by waiting at taxi ranks that are located at transport terminals, main hotels and shopping centres. You can often hail a taxi on the street. A taxi is vacant if the light on the roof sign is on. There is a minimum charge on hiring and then a charge per kilometre travelled.

Health matters

Overseas student health cover

Australia has a special system of health cover for international students called Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC). You will need to buy OSHC before you come to Australia to cover you from when you arrive.

The Department of Human Affairs requires you to maintain OSHC for the duration of your time on a student visa in Australia.

You might find that your institution has an agreement with a specific OSHC provider. You can choose to take out OSHC with this provider, or with the Australian OSHC provider of your choice. The websites listed below provide detailed information on what they cover:

- Australian Health Management
www.ahm.com.au
- BUPA Australia
www.overseasstudenthealth.com
- Medibank Private
www.medibank.com.au
- OSHC Worldcare
www.oshcworldcare.com.au
- Westfund
www.westfund.com.au

Your OSHC will help you pay for any medical or hospital care you may need while you're studying in Australia, and it will contribute towards the cost of most prescription medicines, and an ambulance in an emergency.

OSHC does not cover dental, optical or physiotherapy. If you want to be covered for these treatments you will need to buy additional private health insurance, such as:

extra OSHC provided by some OSHC providers
international travel insurance, or
general treatment cover with any Australian private health insurer.

You can find a list of these providers and search for the one that suits you best at www.privatehealth.gov.au or www.iselect.com.au

Going to the doctor

Australian doctors are highly skilled and well educated, and you'll receive excellent care in a clean and sanitary environment.

Unless you are in a life-threatening situation, you should always first consult a medical practitioner at either a medical centre or private surgery. Hospital emergency rooms are solely for life-threatening and emergency situations.

You can visit most medical centres without an appointment, however, private medical general practitioners (GPs) usually require an appointment. A search for Medical Practitioners or Medical Centres in the Yellow Pages – www.yellowpages.com.au – will help you locate those in your local area.

The cost of visiting a doctor will usually be partly covered by OSHC. However, you may have to pay the fee at the time of your doctor's appointment and later seek reimbursement from your OSHC provider.

The following table shows the differences between services at a private surgery and at a medical centre:

Private surgery

You must book an appointment in advance. You will rarely get to see a doctor on the same day you call. In some areas of the country you may have to wait up to two weeks. No appointment is necessary. You can walk into a medical centre at any time, put your name on the list and you will be called when a doctor is ready for you. This may be a few hours. You must pay to see the GP, about A\$50–\$100 for a 20-minute consultation. You will be able to see the same doctor each time you visit, so the GP will become familiar with your medical history. Usually only open weekdays during normal working hours.

Medical centre

No appointment is necessary. You can walk into a medical centre at any time, put your name on the list and you will be called when a doctor is ready for you. This may be a few hours. Some medical centres offer "Bulk Billing", which means that you will only need to pay the difference between the fee and the OSHC refund. You will probably see a different GP each time you visit, meaning that you may have to explain your medical history each time you visit. Open extended hours and often every day.

Going to the dentist

Dentists are listed in the Yellow Pages. OSHC may cover part of the costs of dentists' fees. It is important to read the OSHC policy and know what kinds of dental procedures are covered.

Further information about prescription medications

The Australian Government has put strict rules and regulations in place on medical treatment in order to protect health and make it difficult for people to abuse prescription medication.

In Australia, doctors write prescriptions, chemists dispense prescription medicines, and the patient has to sign for the medication when it is bought from the chemist.

Additional Information and Contacts

Aids line	TEL: 1800 133 392
Abortion & Grief Counselling	TEL: 1300 363 550
Australian Search and Rescue	TEL: 1800 815 257
Centre Against Sexual Assault	TEL: 1800 806 292
Children's Help Line	TEL: 1800 55 1800
Child abuse Services	TEL: 1800 688 009
Crisis Care	TEL: 1800 177 135
Crisis Pregnancy	TEL: 1800 650 840
Domestic Violence 24x7	TEL: 1800 811

Emergency Animal Disease Watch	TEL: 1800 675 888
Family Drug Support	TEL: 1300 368 186
Gamblers Anonymous	TEL: 1800 002 210
Interpreting Services	TEL: 131 450
Lifeline	TEL: 131 114
Parent Line	TEL: 132 289
Maternal and Child Health Line	TEL: 132 229
Poisons Information Centre	TEL: 131 126
Quit line	TEL: 131 848

Working in Australia

Permission to work

If you have a student visa, you will be eligible to work while in Australia. Please remember your right to work is tied to several conditions. Some of these include:

- Not starting to work until you have commenced your course of study.
- Working a maximum of 20 hours per week during the term and unlimited hours when your course is not in session.

You may only work if the Australian Government Department of Immigration and Border Patrol (DIBP) considers your course to be 'in session' – that means, for the duration of the advertised semesters (including periods when exams are being held).

Your Confirmation of Enrolment is still in effect if you have completed your studies.

If you are undertaking another course during a break from your main course, the points will be credited to your main course.

For a full list of mandatory and discretionary student visa conditions, go to www.immi.gov.au/students/index.htm

Types of work

International students often find work in retail, business and administration. The wage you receive will depend on the kind of work you do and your age. You may be paid more for working on Sundays or public holidays. Tutoring younger students in the field you are studying or in your native language is also a good way to earn money. Student tutors can earn about A\$40 an hour.

Finding work

There are many different ways to find a job in Australia:

Online: The majority of jobs vacant in Australia are advertised online. Try www.seek.com.au, www.mycareer.com.au, www.careerone.com.au or www.studyandwork.com.au The International Office of your institution may have more suggestions.

Newspapers: Visit www.newspapers.com.au to see a listing of the major Australian newspapers. You can select your state or territory to browse a database of Australian regional newspapers. Local newspapers have a 'help wanted' or jobs section.

University job boards: Most Australian universities have a careers service office with a job board listing local employment opportunities.

The Australian Government also has a listing of job boards in Australia at www.jobsearch.gov.au/KeyLinks/Pages/JobBoards.aspx

Taxes

Anyone who works in Australia has to pay taxes and the amount of tax you pay depends on how much you earn. The Australian tax system is administered through the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

You are obliged to obtain a Tax File Number (TFN) to be able to work in Australia. A TFN is your unique reference number to the Australian tax system. When you start work, your employer will ask you to complete a TFN declaration form. If you do not provide a TFN, your employment will be taxed at the highest personal income tax rate, which means less money in your wages each week. For more information, go to www.ato.gov.au

Taxation returns

If you pay too much in taxes you are entitled to a refund. To get a refund you'll need to lodge a tax return. You can lodge online using e-tax (free); by mailing a paper tax return; or by paying a

registered tax agent to complete and lodge the return for you. If you lodge by e-tax, your refund will normally be issued within 14 days. Tax returns are lodged at the end of the Australian tax year, which runs from 1 July to 30 June. Lodge online using e-tax at www.ato.gov.au

Superannuation

Superannuation is the pension/ retirement scheme in Australia. If your monthly wage is more than A\$450, your employer must contribute an additional sum equal to nine per cent of your wage into a superannuation account for you. In most cases, you can access your contributions when you leave Australia permanently, although the contributions will be taxed. To check your eligibility to claim superannuation, and to apply for your payment, visit www.ato.gov.au

You will need to provide the details of your superannuation fund.

Your rights and responsibilities in the workplace

Before you step into the workplace, make sure you're aware of your legal rights as an employee and your responsibilities to your employer. Don't assume that because you're an international student that you don't have rights – you do.

You can find more information from the Fair Work Ombudsman at www.fairwork.gov.au or on the telephone information line 13 13 94.

Pay

You are entitled to receive at least the basic rate of pay that applies to your age and job classification. Many employers will pay you at a rate above the basic rate. You should also note the following:

Your employer must pay you the correct rate of pay for all the hours you attend work. They must pay you on a regular basis – casual and part-time workers are often paid either weekly or

every two weeks for work they have already undertaken. That is, you are paid in arrears, not in advance.

Your pay slip must include your employer's information (including their Australian Business Number, or ABN), the number of hours you are being paid for, the amount you have paid in income tax, your superannuation payment and, of course, how much you have been paid.

You should not have money taken out of your pay to cover things such as a customer leaving without paying.

You should be paid for 'trial work'.

If you work on a public holiday, you may be entitled to be paid more for that day. You might also get a higher rate of pay if you work on the weekends.

If you need help with an employment query or dispute, you can contact the Fair Work Ombudsman at www.fairwork.gov.au or on 13 13 94.

Safety matters and the law

Obeying the law

It's important to remember that when you're living in Australia you need to be aware of and follow local laws and rules.

Being granted a student visa includes signing a document called the Australian Values Statement; the student agrees to respect the values and to obey the laws of Australia during their stay. Failure to comply with Australian laws (including state and territory laws) can result in a fine or the cancellation of the visa and possible deportation. And conviction of a serious crime it can result in imprisonment. There is a comprehensive outline of Australian law and the legal system at www.nla.gov.au/oz/law.html

Personal safety

Australia is a safe and secure study destination with a very low crime rate. However, as with anywhere in the world, it is important to always be alert and aware of your surroundings and to avoid dangerous areas and activities, particularly at night.

The activities surrounding a public place can vary through the course of the day. It may be busy at certain times and isolated at others. It may be different during the day than it is at night. These differences can have a very different impact on the way you feel when you are in them. Being in a place when it is busy is very different from when the place is isolated. There is often no reason to be afraid, but – be alert, be aware, and be careful.

Public transport in Australia is comparatively safe. However, you should still exercise the same caution as you would at home.

- Keep your belongings close to you and know where they are at all times.
- Keep valuables, like your wallet, in a safe place.

- If you're travelling at night, travel with friends if possible and sit close to the driver.
- Where possible, stay in well-lit, busy areas when walking between train or bus stations and your home.
- Always be aware of your surroundings, including where your fellow passengers are sitting.
- If someone is making you uncomfortable or goes so far as to threaten you, tell the driver, use the emergency button or lever to stop the vehicle or call for help.
- Always be alert at train stations, tram and bus stops.
- Never hang around train stations or bus stations at night. If you must use public transport at night, check the timetable and try to arrive right before the train or bus to minimise the amount of time you spend waiting.
- Train carriages nearest the drivers are left open and lit.

In most cases, taxis are a safe way of getting home at night. However, as with all forms of public transport, passengers need to be alert.

Australia's emergency phone number is 000 (zero zero zero), which is a free call from every phone in Australia, including mobile phones. (Please note that many newer digital phones require the user to dial 112, the international standard emergency number. Consult your mobile phone carrier if you are not sure how to access the 000-emergency phone number.)

You should call 000 if you are in a life-threatening situation and need the help of the police, fire brigade or ambulance service. This includes if you are witnessing a crime in progress. However, do not call 000 if it is not an emergency, for example if you have a cold and need to see a doctor, if you are lost and need directions, or if you are locked out of your house.

When you call 000, if you cannot speak English well, you must first tell the operator what kind of help you need (police, fire or ambulance) and then say your language. You will be connected to

the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) directly, so do not hang up. The TIS National interpreter will then help the police, fire or ambulance service to obtain your address and other details.

While you are waiting for help to arrive, try to stay calm and don't do anything that will put yourself or others in danger. Generally, help will arrive very quickly, and it is best to leave these situations to the people who are trained to deal with them.

Returning home

The time you spend studying in Australia will change you, and you should expect that your friends and family will have changed in your absence as well.

Many Australian education institutions run "Returning Home" seminars that cover topics such as resettling, how to get your exam results, making travel arrangements, preparing for your future career, and joining alumni associations.

Whether you return home, remain in Australia or take up an opportunity in a third country, you have the chance to apply the skills, knowledge and experience you have gained while studying in Australia to the next chapter in your life.

Career planning

Your Australian qualifications will have you prepared for wherever life takes you – and whatever challenges it brings with it.

As your studies draw to a close, you will want to start preparing yourself for the transition to work by researching the job market in your home country, or looking at the opportunities that your new qualifications could lead to in other countries.

If you are studying at an Australian university, the International Office will be able to provide you referrals and assistance with career planning, both here in Australia and overseas.

Most International Offices organise presentations by the Department of Immigration and Border Patrol (DIBP), where you can find out information about immigration, permanent residency and Australian citizenship. Similarly, many institutions organise international student “employer fairs” that include presentations from both Australian and international organisations who are interested in recruiting international students. These events will help provide you with a broader perspective of the many career opportunities available to you, as well as inform you about important considerations such as visa eligibility.

The Career and Employment services at your institution will also provide you with access to resources to assist you with writing an effective resumé as well as in developing interview skills. They will also be able to advise you of volunteer and internship opportunities that may arise during your course, which will further assist you develop skills that improve your future career prospects.

If you are contemplating working in Australia once you graduate, it’s worthwhile noting that extracurricular activities such as community and volunteer work or involvement in team sports are often highly regarded by Australian employers. These pursuits are considered as good examples of teamwork, initiative and leadership.

You should also make sure that you obtain written referrals from work that you have undertaken during your studies, as well as from academics.

Further information about career planning can be found by following the International Student Resources link at www.graduatecareers.com.au

Alumni associations

International students who study with an Australian institution are Australian alumni. You will find alumni associations established by your university and there may be Australian alumni networks in your own country.

Australian alumni networks can:

- Assist you in maintaining the personal, business, institutional and educational links and friendships you have made while studying in Australia.
- Help you with business and job opportunities back home and around the world.
- Provide a matrix of understanding and support within a community of graduates who have shared your experience of leaving home to study in Australia and returned home as alumni.

You can find a list of alumni associations at: www.studyinaustralia.gov.au/Sia/en/AfterYourStudies/Alumni.htm

Useful links and information

On living and studying in Australia

The Australian Government
www.australia.gov.au

Study in Australia www.studyinaustralia.gov.au

Education in Australia www.edu.au.gov.au

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (for contact details of your country's embassy)
www.dfat.gov.au

The Department of Immigration and Border Patrol (for immigration and visa information)
www.immi.gov.au

The Australian Customs Service (for information about what you can bring into Australia)
www.customs.gov.au

The Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service
www.aqis.gov.au

The Australian Taxation Office www.ato.gov.au

Tourism Australia www.australia.com

Wages and working conditions
www.fairwork.gov.au

Important numbers

Emergency services: 000 (police, fire, ambulance)

Visa issues: 131 881

Dialling out of Australia: 0011 (country code) + (city/region code) + (phone number)

Australia's country code: 61

In an emergency

Australia's emergency phone number is 000. This is a free call from every phone in Australia, including mobile phones.

Call 000 if you are in a life-threatening situation and need the help of the police, fire brigade or ambulance service. This includes if you are witnessing a crime in progress. If you are deaf or have a speech or hearing impairment, you can call 106 using a text phone (TTY) or a computer with modem access, to request police, fire or ambulance assistance.

Do not use these numbers if it is not an emergency.



Getting ready to travel

- ✓ Student visa issued, and any conditions noted
- ✓ Passport current until your student visa expires
- ✓ A copy of your passport and visa stored safely and left with family
- ✓ Flight is booked to arrive within one week of term start
- ✓ New school notified of arrival details, so someone can meet you at the airport
- ✓ Travel and medical insurance is arranged
- ✓ Obtain medical history and doctor's letter if needed
- ✓ Bank alerted you will be making transactions in Australia
- ✓ Mobile phone service availability in Australia and charges checked
- ✓ Visited school website for uniform information

What to pack

- ✓ Luggage complies with your airline's size and weight limits
- ✓ Travel documents and 'Arrival Information Support Sheet' in hand luggage
- ✓ Any standard school uniform items (e.g. black shoes)
- ✓ Suitable clothing for Canberra's seasonal climate
- ✓ Medical history, doctor's letter and any regular medicine
- ✓ Copies of travel and medical insurance documents
- ✓ Around AUD\$400-\$500 in cash (*or more if you need – large amounts of cash may need to be declared on arrival. Check the customs link above*)
- ✓ A reminder of home, photos and favourite music
- ✓ No banned items

Local Information

About Victoria & Melbourne

Source:

<http://www.visitmelbourne.com/Information/About-Victoria.aspx>



Hugging the tip of the Australian east coast, Victoria is Australia's second-smallest state, covering 227,600 square kilometres – roughly the size of the British Isles.

Packed into such a compact area is a wealth of diverse regional areas and attractions, from sweeping coastline and pristine beaches to national parks and forests teeming with wildlife to wineries, lakes and mountains offering skiing, climbing and hiking. Best of all, many of Victoria's unique and varied landscapes are easily accessible as day trips from Melbourne.

Seasons and climate

Despite its small size, the Victorian climate varies across the state. The north is much drier and warmer weather than the south. Australia's seasons are the reverse of those in the northern hemisphere. The climate can be characterised as warm to hot in summer (December to February), mild in autumn (March to May), cold and damp in winter (June to August), and cool in spring (September to November).

Melbourne

Victoria's capital, Melbourne, sits on the Yarra River and around the shores of Port Phillip Bay. Lauded for its sense of style and elegance, Melbourne boasts glamorous festivals and events, Australia's best shopping, a lively passion for eating and drinking, and a flourishing interest in the arts. Restored and preserved nineteenth-century architecture, built following the discovery of gold, provides a heady reminder of a prosperous age, while beautifully tended parks and gardens present a therapeutic respite from the pace of city life.

Events

Melbourne and Victoria host some of Australia's most prestigious events throughout the year, including the Spring Racing Carnival culminating in the Melbourne Cup in November, the Australian Open Tennis Championships in January, the Formula 1™ Australian Grand Prix in March, the Melbourne International Arts Festival in October, the Melbourne International Comedy Festival and the Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show in March and April. Your tastebuds will be rewarded with a number of food and wine events around the state.

About Preston

Preston is a suburb of Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, 9 km north from the Melbourne central business district. Its local government area is the City of Darebin. At the 2016 Census, Preston had a population of 32,851



The suburb is bordered to the east by the Darebin Creek, a small tributary to the Yarra River and

consisting largely of flat terrain, ideal initially for farming, but later for industrial and residential development.

As part of the City of Darebin, Preston has an active and eclectic artists and DIY community which is contemporary, experimental, and culturally diverse. Writers, musicians, and visual artists flock to the locality for performance, collaboration, and acceptance. Notable contributors to the Darebin arts community are locals Saint Jude, Downhills Home, The Contrast, The Melbourne Ukulele Kollektive, Performing Older Women's Circus (POW Circus), Darebin City Brass, and members of Little John, to name a few. Darebin celebrates the artistry and diversity of the community with regular festivals and events such as the Darebin Music Feast and the now-defunct High Vibes Festival. The major community Indigenous Radio Station 3KND is located in Mary Street in Preston and is completely Aboriginal managed.

A Preston house viewing inspired the song "Depreston" by musician Courtney Barnett on her album Sometimes I Sit and Think, and Sometimes I Just Sit, which was recorded at Head Gap Studio in Preston.

Preston has a wide variety of restaurants, including fine dining and fast food. High Street has been transformed lately[when?], with many new cafes and restaurants opening and becoming popular with the youth in the area.

Niche cafés and restaurants have opened in the suburb inviting patrons to dine.

Experience amazing food

Your eyes will appreciate the colourful fresh produce on display, your taste buds will be asking for more as you take a stroll around the area and purchase some international delicacies of food on offer.

Discover art and culture

Preston has a number of unique and exciting public art works located within its retail precinct that represent local themes, stories and

experiences. There are a range of cultural art presentation, festivals, activities, and a vibrant multicultural diversity.

Schools

Preston is home to many schools. The primary schools include Preston West Primary, Preston Primary, Preston South Primary, Preston North East Primary, Sacred Heart Primary, Bell Primary and St. Raphael's Primary. The high schools are Parade College Preston Campus and the newly opened Preston High as well as there being a St. John's Greek Orthodox College and East Preston Islamic College which both offer primary and secondary education, and the Melbourne Polytechnic Preston Campus offering TAFE courses and training. There is also The Northern College of the Arts and Technology which caters for Year 10, VCE, VCAL and post-secondary students seeking a specialised education.

Preston Market Development

The Victorian Planning Authority (VPA) is working alongside the City of Darebin to prepare new planning controls for the Preston Market precinct and create a structure plan and we are seeking community input.

The precinct takes in 5.1 hectares of privately-owned land generally bounded by Murray Road in the north, Cramer Street to the south, the rear of the High Street buildings to the east and St Georges Road to the west. The precinct includes Preston Market and is next door to Preston train station.

The Preston Market Precinct is a unique, strategically located site close to public transport, services, jobs and educational facilities. Its centrepiece is the Preston Market, a much-loved community asset with strong migrant and working-class roots. Proximity to Preston Station, as well as the upcoming removal of nearby level crossings and the resulting creation of new open space means the site is ideally placed to welcome new residents to the area as part of a well-designed, diverse and connected community. Accommodating new growth at this strategic site also takes development pressure off

surrounding lower-density neighbourhood streets.

GETTING THERE

Preston is well connected by public transport, you can catch a train, bus or tram to get around to Preston Market or Northland Shopping Centre quite easily.



Train:

Bell & Preston Station [South Morang line] [Parkiteer](#) bike cage at Preston Station

Tram: [Route 86](#) & [Route 11](#)

Bus: [Route 552](#), [Route 553](#), [Route 527](#), [Route 526](#), [Route 903](#), [Route 555](#)

Walking and Cycling: St Georges Road shared path, Oakover Road shared path, Cramer/Gower Streets, Raglan Street, Darebin Creek Trail, Victoria Street bike lanes

Parking Maps:

For parking restrictions and conditions see: gis.darebin.vic.gov.au

For More Information:

Collect a Darebin TravelSmart map from any of council Libraries or Customer Service Centres.

Links and more information:

<https://www.racv.com.au/membership/member-benefits/royalauto/archive/10-things-to-love-about-preston.html>

<http://www.darebin.vic.gov.au/Discover-Darebin/Suburb-spotlight/Preston>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/City_of_Preston_\(Victoria\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/City_of_Preston_(Victoria))

<https://www.homely.com.au/preston-darebin-melbourne-greater-victoria>

https://www.tripadvisor.com.au/Attractions-g850584-Activities-Preston_Darebin_Greater_Melbourne_Victoria.html

<https://www.victorianplaces.com.au/preston>

About Melbourne

Source: <http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au>,
<http://www.australia.com/explore/cities/melbourne.aspx>

Melbourne is a maze of hidden laneways, opulent bars, exclusive restaurants and off-the-beaten-track boutiques. Here you can soak up culture, hit the sporting grounds, taste the dynamic food and wine scene, dance til dawn or wander the parks and leafy boulevards. Visit Federation Square, the city's landmark cultural space, and enjoy a sunset beer on the St Kilda promenade. Shop till you drop on funky Brunswick Street or upmarket Chapel Street. Wander Southbank's cafes, bistros and bars and get a world tour of cuisines in Carlton, Richmond and Fitzroy. Take an Aboriginal Heritage Walk through the Royal Botanic Gardens and cheer with a capacity crowd at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

Melbourne's Hidden Laneways

You never quite know what's in store when you wander off Melbourne's grid of city streets into the maze of gothic laneways behind them. Even the locals find surprises here, where the venues for food, fashion and art are small, quirky and sometimes hidden. Discover a late-night jazz bar or watch the world go by from a tiny trattoria, browse the boutiques and check out urban art. You can unlock the city's real secrets in these distinctively Melbourne streets.

Melbourne's precincts and suburbs

Melbourne, one of the world's most liveable cities, is the capital city of Victoria, Australia. It is a city of energy, sophistication and innovation. It is also a city of history and cultural diversity.

Melbourne's economic and political centre is located within the Central Business District (CBD). This 37.6sqkm area includes most of Melbourne's famous sporting venues and major parks and gardens.

Almost 90,000 people from a wide range of cultures and backgrounds live in the municipality, which takes in the suburbs of Carlton, Docklands, East Melbourne, Kensington/Flemington,

Melbourne and the CBD, North Melbourne, Parkville, Port Melbourne, Southbank, South Yarra and West Melbourne.

The City of Melbourne's Boundary map shows the boundaries of the municipality, while Suburb maps show the streets and boundaries of individual suburbs.

Melbourne CBD

Melbourne is the largest business, as well as residential area, in the municipality.

The central city is Melbourne's business and financial centre. It encompasses the central city grid, plus the area between Victoria and Latrobe streets. The central city is home to retail, financial, legal, administrative, recreational, tourist and entertainment facilities and operates 24 hours a day, serving a wide variety of residents, workers and visitors.

The over-supply of office space in the central city during the 1990s coupled with the City of Melbourne's Postcode 3000 initiative has led to a resurgence in inner-city living. The central city's population has more than doubled since 2001.

Leafy St Kilda Road, one of Melbourne's famous boulevards and corporate addresses, is lined by a mix of office, residential and mixed-use towers.

Melbourne includes many major parks and gardens including the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kings Domain (which contains Government House), Queen Victoria Gardens, and Alexandra Gardens. The area also includes important sports facilities such as Olympic Park and Melbourne Park, home to a variety of sporting and entertainment events such as the Australian Open Tennis Championships.

Further information

[Map of the central city \(PDF. 632kb\)](#)

[Economic and Demographic Profile – Melbourne Socio-Economic Index for Areas \(SEIFA\) 2006 – Melbourne](#)

[Cultural precincts](#) (Greek precinct and Chinatown)
[That's Melbourne – Laneways and arcades](#)

Links

Visit Melbourne:
<http://www.visitmelbourne.com/>

Melbourne City:
<http://www.australia.com/explore/cities/melbourne.aspx>

City of Melbourne:
<http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au>

Online:

<http://www.australia.com/en/places/melbourne-and-surrounds/guide-to-melbourne.html>

<http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/Pages/home.aspx> (Multi-lingual)

<https://www.lonelyplanet.com/australia/melbourne>

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