

MEGA Students' Pre-Arrival Guide





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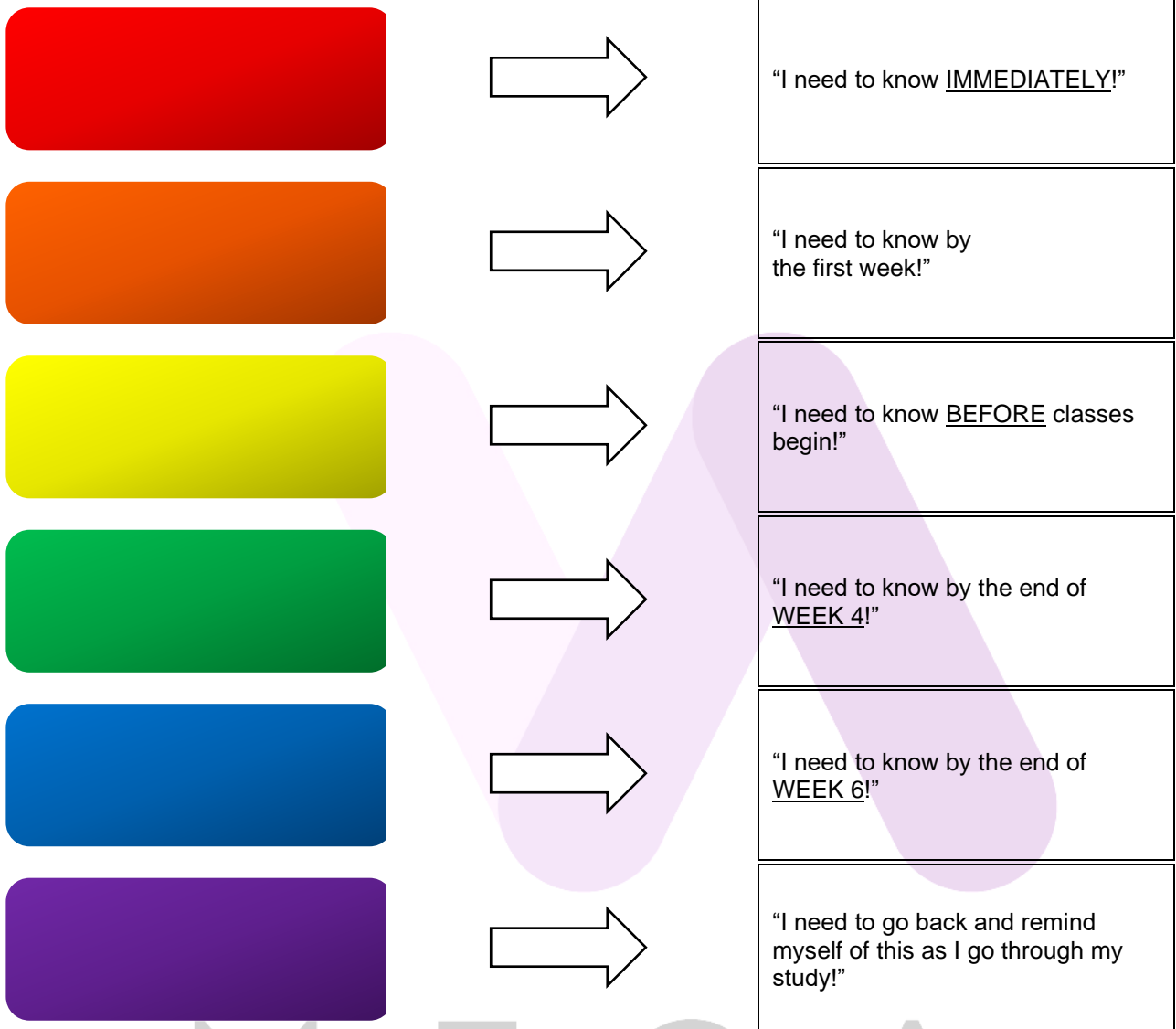


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M E G A

How to use this Guide

The information contained within this guide has been colour-coded for your convenience in order of priority. Each page is colour-tagged according to its urgency or importance.





SECTION 1

Welcome to Macquarie Education Group Australia (MEGA)

Compulsory Student Orientation

A Compulsory Orientation programme is held prior to the course commencement for all new students. The schedules are:

1. Vocational students: 2 weeks prior to commencement of term
2. English students: Every Monday. If Monday is a public holiday, it will be on Tuesday.

The induction/orientation programme is designed to help you adjust to life (both domestic and academic) in Australia.

Its purpose is to fully inform new students of most aspects of life at Macquarie Education Group Australia (MEGA) and provide an introduction to studying, Sydney's costs of living, transportation, facilities and accommodation. In addition, MEGA staff will be introduced, a tour of MEGA will take place and an opportunity to ask questions will be given.

The following resource has been created to provide students with valuable information about their rights and responsibilities. This guide covers both the things you will need to know before you arrive and the things we will cover in our Orientation programme (The National Code 2018 Standard 6 and 8).

It also serves as a reference to MEGA policies and procedures, as well as supplying information about the facilities and services available. Keep it safe and accessible so you can refer to it as needed throughout your course.

Students are responsible for understanding and complying with the policies, procedures and other information outlined at Orientation and in the Student Handbook.

MEGA



Message from Chief Executive Officer

Thank you for your interest in Macquarie Education Group Australia (MEGA). We are committed to providing quality education and learning to students from all over the world.

Students at MEGA benefit from our qualified team of teaching professionals with real-world, best-practice experience in industry and the global business arena, offering world-class standards in English and vocational education.

A MEGA education equips students with the vocational skills, knowledge and exposure to current business practices and work experience needed to succeed in our competitive world.

Programmes at MEGA are compliant and meet the Department of Education and Training requirements. They are comprehensive and demanding, preparing young adults to shape the future of their chosen discipline.

Whatever age and ambitions, I am confident and convinced that MEGA can help you to advance.

Your personal development and welfare are important to us. We look forward to meeting with each student, to discuss how we can complement your background and help you achieve your goals.

Henry Liu

Chief Executive Officer

MEGA

B Com, LLB (UNSW)

Legal Practitioner (Law Society Number: 45133)

Registered Migration Agent (Migration Agent Registration Number: 0532627)

M E G A

Important Information and Emergency Contacts

Education Provider Main Contact Details

Address: L9, 225 Clarence St Sydney NSW 2000

Phone: +61 2 9299 6788

Website: www.mega.edu.au

Reception Open Hours

8:30 am – 5:30 pm - Monday to Friday

Note: During the term, our support services may be extended to 6:00pm.

International Student 24 Hour Emergency Contact

Telephone: 0426 255 458 (Henry Liu – Chief Executive Officer)

Email: info@mega.edu.au

Department of Home Affairs (DHA)

131 881

Emergency Telephone Numbers

Police, Fire, Ambulance – 000

1. Dial 000 and request the service you need
2. Remember to remain as calm as you can
3. Speak clearly and give the details as requested

Poisons Information Centre: 13 1126

For Property damage or theft ring: 13 1444

Serious Medical Issues

Sydney Children's Hospital: **(02) 9382 1111**

Children's Hospital at Westmead: **(02) 9845 0000**

Royal Hospital for Women: **(02) 9382 6111**

Sydney Eye Hospital: **(02) 9382 7111**

St Vincent's Hospital: **(02) 8382 7111**

Sydney Adventist Hospital **(02) 9487 9111**

Royal North Shore Hospital **(02) 9926 7111**

Hornsby Hospital **(02) 9477 9123**

Westmead Hospital **(02) 9845 5555**

Blacktown Hospital **(02) 9881 8000**

Nepean Hospital **(02) 4734 2000**

Medical Centres

Kent Street Medical Centre

Level 3, 362 Kent Street

Sydney NSW 2000

Phone: 9290 3477

CBD Medical Centre

36 York Street

Sydney NSW 2000

Phone: 9262 2866



Women's Medical Centre

Benchmark Medical
No 2 Martin Place
Sydney NSW 2000
Phone: 8222 5900

Chatswood Medical Centre

No 270 Victoria Avenue
Chatswood NSW 2067
Phone: 9413 2222

Rowe Street Medical Centre

No 177, Rowe Street
Eastwood NSW 2122
Phone: 0415 098 976

Eastwood Village Medical Practice

No 1 Lakeside Road
Eastwood NSW 2122
Phone: 9858 2277

Argyle Street Medical Centre

Westfield Parramatta
Westfield Shopping Town Shop 1
Parramatta NSW 2150
Phone: 9893 8733

Regency Medical Centre

470 Church Street
Parramatta NSW 2150
Phone: 9630 4555

First Aid Emergency

First Aid, is on the spot provision of emergency treatment and life support for a person suffering an injury or illness. There are several qualified first aid staff at MEGA. If you hurt yourself, or if you see someone else getting injured, immediately contact reception or the nearest staff member.

Emergency Evacuation

An emergency evacuation from your campus may be required in any case of a fire, a fire threat, a bomb threat or a terrorist threat. When the building is required to be evacuated, an evacuation siren will sound (as a continuous **whoop-whoop-whoop**). An alert siren may sound first (as a **beep, beep, beep**).

DO NOT use lifts if a fire alarm has gone off.

During normal business hours, if you are in class, wait for instructions from your Trainers and Teachers. If there are no staff members around move towards the stairs in an orderly manner and wait for instructions from **Emergency Evacuation Staff**. These staff will be wearing one of the following hats:

White Hat: Chief/Deputy Chief Warden;

Yellow Hat: Floor Warden;

Red Hat: Floor Wardens;

Once you are outside the building, proceed to the meeting areas. At all times listen and obey the instructions given to you by the Emergency Evacuation Staff. Please do not just wonder off on your own, but make sure you get to the meeting area as quickly as you can.

Outside these business hours, if the sirens sound, immediately proceed walking out of the building in an orderly manner using the stairs. Avoid using the lifts.

MEGA has ensured that emergency evacuation procedures are in place, with maps posted in the lift lobbies. Please familiarise yourself with these as well as the quickest exit route from your class or recreation area.



SAFETY

It is important to keep yourself safe. This means being mindful of a few things and more importantly, trusting your intuition. If a situation does not feel right, then trust this feeling. Although most people consider Australia to be a fairly safe country, it is important to be careful.

Your Belongings

Do not leave your bag or any other belongings unattended at any time either at MEGA or in public places. It is better to carry your purse in your bag or on your body than in your hand when walking along the street. Keep your bag closed so its contents are not visible to others.

At Home

Always ask who it is at the door, before opening it. If it is a stranger, only talk to them via a locked security door.

Always request formal identification from trades people. If you are in doubt, do not let them in. Phone their company to check they are genuine.

If a stranger asks to use your phone, direct them to a nearest public phone box or make the call for them. Do not let them into your house.

Do not give personal information over the phone to strangers, for example your marital status, working hours, numbers of house occupants etc.

If you suspect that an intruder is in your house, ***DO NOT ENTER***. Use your mobile phone or go to a neighbour and phone the police. Keep out of sight and a safe distance from the house.

If you see the intruder leave take notice of their personal description, car registration/model/colour.

When going out tell your friends or housemates where you are going and when you expect to return. Try traveling with a friend or in a group.

On the Street

- Be aware of your surroundings
- Walking alone at night in quiet streets with little lighting is not advisable. When possible travel at night with a friend
- If you are walking at night, keep to major well-lit streets
- If you think you are being followed, walk close to the road or cross to the other side and get to a well-lit area as quickly as you can. If you are feeling worried about your wellbeing, call the police on 000
- When using an ATM (Automatic Teller Machine) look around first, to make sure nobody is watching you. Try to use your body as a shield to prevent anyone from seeing you enter your PIN (Personal Identification Number). Immediately place all the money in your wallet/pocket- never count it in front of the ATM
- Where possible, use the ATM during the day
- When crossing roads, look left, right and left again for cars, trams, cyclists and other pedestrians
- Beware of strangers on foot or in cars asking you for directions.

If you are Driving a Car

- Check inside your car by looking through the windows before getting in
- Drive with the doors of your car locked and the driver window wound up
- At service stations, keep your car locked when you are not in it



- If you are being followed, find a place where you can get help/attract attention, such as a police station, convenience store or open service stations.

Public Transport

- Get into train carriages with other people
- If travelling at night, travel in the 1st train carriage
- If you are being harassed or assaulted complain loudly and draw attention to yourself
- Check timetables in advance- avoid long waits at platforms, especially at night. Be vigilant if you have a long wait for your train, tram or bus. Stay in well-lit areas or wait near local shops
- Park your car as close to the station as possible. Have your keys ready when you leave the station.

GETTING AROUND SYDNEY

A Sydney street directory can help you find your way around Sydney quite easily as it provides detailed maps of the City of Sydney and suburbs. It not only provides extensive indexes of suburbs, localities and streets but also offers indexes of beaches, churches and other places of worship, hospitals, hotels, motels, parks, reserves, swimming pools, sporting venues, tertiary institutions, theatres and other places of interest. The Sydway is the most commonly used street directory, and is available from petrol stations and newsagents.

The following websites are a very useful for finding locations and planning trips:

www.street-directory.com.au/sd_new/home.cgi

[www.mappoint.ninemsn.com.au/\(mrwl2l55yr0mbc55wgfgzdyt\)/Home.aspx](http://www.mappoint.ninemsn.com.au/(mrwl2l55yr0mbc55wgfgzdyt)/Home.aspx)

You may use your mobile phone by accessing google map/GPS to move around. However, this may incur extra charges.

Public Transport – 131 500

Public transport in Sydney is relatively cheap and very accessible. Timetables, maps and service information for all modes of transport are available at the following websites:

<http://www.131500.info/realtime/default.asp> <http://www.sydneybuses.info/>

<http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/AboutSydney/ParkingAndTransport/PublicTransport.asp>

Alternatively, students can call Transport Infoline on **131 500** to speak to an operator.

The metropolitan public transport system incorporates trains, light rail, monorail, buses and ferries. The variety of ticketing options available allows students to choose the type of ticket they require and enables them to change services as often as you like on the one ticket. Students can see the various ticketing option at:

<http://www.131500.com.au/ticketandfares/fare/>

Students should note that it is their responsibility to always travel with the correct and valid ticket. People who fail to produce a valid ticket or to provide their correct address upon request from Authorised Ticketing Inspectors can face fines of up to \$500.

Sydney Light Rail (SLR) is a new light rail network that currently operates between Randwick in the Eastern suburbs to Circular Quay in Sydney CBD. The track will be expanded to include other suburbs link to Sydney CBD.

Airport Link (02) 8337 8412

This rail service runs from approximately 5am until Midnight seven days a week, to and from the Domestic and International Terminals and all City Circle railway stations. For more information, call 02 8337 8412 or visit www.airportlink.com.au.



Sydney Explorer

Sydney's only guided bus tour, the Sydney Explorer bus makes a 35km circuit of all the major attractions in the City, The Rocks, Sydney Opera House, Kings Cross, Chinatown, Queen Victoria Building and Darling Harbour. One day tickets, available from the driver, enable passengers to board and leave the bus at any one of its 22 stops. Buses operate at 20 minute intervals from 9am daily or visit www.sydneypass.info/sydneyexplorer/

Taxis

This is the most expensive method of travel, but is a relatively affordable way to cover short to medium distances in Sydney. Taxis must charge the standard fares which must be visible to the passenger. Extra charges may be added for phone bookings and late-night pickups.

You can get a taxi either by telephoning one the major taxi companies, by hailing (waiving to the driver) from the street when the top white light is lit up or by entering the front car at a taxi rank in the city, or at shopping centres, train stations, hotels.

St George Cabs:	13-2166
Sonic Express Couriers:	9150 9400
Dolphin Water Taxis:	1300 130 742
Premier Cabs:	13-1017
RSL Taxis:	9581 1111
Taxis Combined:	8332-8888

UBER is the cheaper alternative to taxis and it is available in most suburbs. To use UBER service, you will require to open up an account with them if you do not already have one.

Private Transport: car, motorcycle, bicycle

Heavy fines are levied for breaking speed limits, dangerous driving, and for driving under the influence of alcohol. There are three basic safety measures for both drivers and pedestrians:

- Drivers must always keep to the left-hand side of the road
- Pedestrians should always look right first before crossing the road
- Seat belts and child restraints must be worn by all vehicle occupants.

Bicycle

Bicycle riders are expected to comply with normal traffic rules and the wearing of helmets is compulsory for both bicycle and motorcycle riders. Cycling is popular among students as a cheap and healthy form of transportation.

Car

If you intend to drive a car or ride a motorcycle you must have a valid licence. It is against the law to drive without a license. Your licence must be carried with you at all times and has to be produced when requested by the police. You may drive on your home country licence for the first three months or on an international licence for the period of its validity. If your home licence is not in English, it must be accompanied by an official English translation from the NSW Community Relations Commission, to be valid.

An Australian licence has your photo on it and can also serve as a useful form of identification. To obtain an Australian licence you must pass a driving/riding test. Before you start driving, check with Road and Maritime Services, NSW (RMS) to make sure you have a valid licence.

Road laws in Australia are very strict, and can differ from state to state. Therefore, before you start driving in Australia, you should take some lessons to familiarise yourself with local driving conditions and road laws. We drive on the left-hand side of the road in all states of Australia. It is a legal requirement that seatbelts must be worn by the driver as well as all passengers. Driving when over the blood alcohol limit (0.05%) can result in heavy fines or even loss of license (including overseas license).



The following link has all the required information and contact details of your nearest office and road rules:
<http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/>

Buying a car

If you are considering buying a new or second-hand car or motorcycle please note that this can be expensive - you need to consider the costs of buying the vehicle, maintenance, running costs, insurance and warranty periods. The law requires all vehicles to have Compulsory Third Party insurance (known as CTP or Green Slip) as part of the vehicle registration process. Every vehicle must be registered - it is against the law to drive an unregistered vehicle. Most second-hand cars are already registered, but the registration needs to be renewed each year. All vehicles in the state of New South Wales do not require any registration sticker since July 2016. However, you will still require to renew vehicle registration and you must keep the expiry date in mind. You need to be aware of how to avoid buying a stolen vehicle and the various inspections, checks and other processes you'll have to go through to register the vehicle. Road and Maritime Services, NSW (RMS) website offers comprehensive information on this.

Whilst bartering over price is generally not done in Australia, you should do it when buying a car (either new or second-hand). Before you start looking, familiarise yourself with the approximate market value of your car, its maintenance costs, etc. When buying second-hand cars you will generally get a low price if you go through private sale rather than a car yard, but you need to be very careful about what you're getting and have a mechanic inspect the vehicle before handing over the money.

The links below are some of the major car sales websites:

www.carsales.com.au
www.carpoint.com.au
www.automarket.com.au

Insurance

Compulsory Third Party Insurance (CTP) is mandatory. A 'Greenslip' must be produced before registration of the vehicle is approved. CTP Insurance can be obtained from all major insurance companies. Third Party Property Damage Insurance is advisable as a minimum insurance protection. This insures you, in case of an accident, against the cost of damages to another vehicle. Comprehensive Insurance protects you against damage to both other people's property and your own, but is more expensive. Home Contents Insurance provides cover for your personal belongings against damage or theft.

Shopping

Shopping in the heart of Sydney is a pleasure compared to the haggling in south east Asia and the hustle and bustle of other cosmopolitan cities. Most of the large department stores and shopping centres are within a few blocks of each other and if it's raining you can make your way around under cover using the intricate system of malls, arcades, interconnected department stores, tunnels and overhead walkways that link four blocks of local and international outlets.

Shops are generally open from 9-5pm Monday through Friday (except for Thursday when most stores will open until 9pm), 9-4pm on Saturday and some stores in the city will open on a Sunday but hours vary so it's best to call up and check. Almost all outlets accept the major credit cards like AMEX, Diners, MC, Visa and some city stores will accept JCB cards. You can also use Maestro or Cirrus electronic network debit cards in most stores.

The Queen Victoria Building (QVB) was a purpose-built shopping centre opened in 1898 celebrating Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee. Today QVB is one of the most stunning examples of Victorian architecture in Sydney. The Centre now houses a superb collection of 190 designer label and specialty stores and excellent eateries. QVB occupies a full block along George Street between Town Hall and Market Street.

The Strand Arcade is a more hip and groovy version of QVB. The Strand was opened in 1892 and was almost destroyed by fire in 1976. The resident shopkeepers restored the building which now houses some of Australia's top designer labels, jewellers, boutiques and beauty salons. The Strand extends from the middle of Pitt Street mall through to George Street, a block towards Circular Quay from QVB.



Most shops and department stores open at 9:00 am and close at 5:30 pm (some at 7:00 pm) Mondays to Wednesdays and on Saturdays. Late night shopping is available on Thursdays and Fridays (until 9:00 pm). Sunday opening hours are usually from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm.

For a list of Sydney shopping centres go to: <http://www.sydney.com.au/shopping.htm>

Large Supermarkets such as Coles and Woolworths are generally open until midnight. Some of the convenience stores such as 7Eleven are open 24 hours.

For students wanting to try and save some money, Sydney's Paddy's Markets sell products as varied as fruit, vegetables, meats, clothing, CDs, flowers, homewares, sunglasses, jewellery and souvenirs, at prices lower than larger department stores. The markets are found in two locations: Haymarket and Flemington. Haymarket is open Thursday to Sunday from 9:00 to 17:00; and Flemington on Friday to Sunday from 10:00 or 9:00 respectively to 16:30.

How to get to Paddy's Markets Flemington

By train: Catch the train to Flemington Rail Station and Paddy's is a 3 minute walk from the station! By bus: Click logo to view timetables. Catch the STA #408 bus from Burwood to Flemington rail station and 3 minute walk to Paddy's! By car: Follow the Sydney Markets signs along the M4 Motorway or Centenary Drive. Free undercover parking for over 2000 cars is available opposite the Sydney Olympic Park.

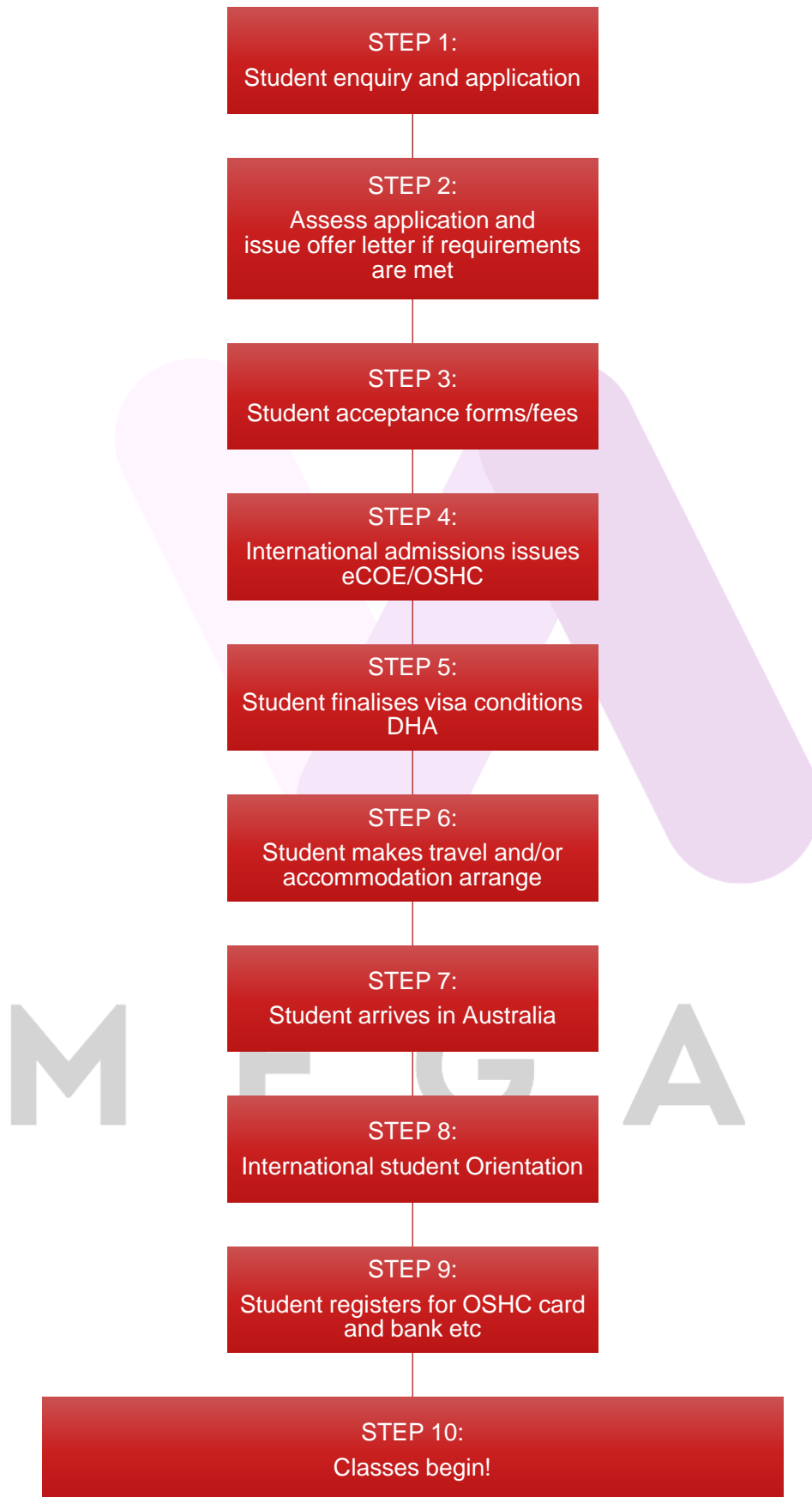
How to get to Paddy's Markets Haymarket

By train: Catch the train to Town Hall or Central Stations. It's only a five-minute walk to Paddy's!

By bus: The Sydney Explorer stops right outside the door. Click logo to view Sydney Explorer site!

MEGA

Application Step-by-Step Process Model





Things to Do

Before Leaving Home

- Apply for passport..... ☐
- Arrange student visa..... ☐
- Make contact with MEGA ☐
- Arrange for immunisations and medications from my doctor ☐
- Apply for a credit card and/or arrange sufficient funds..... ☐
- Confirm overseas access to your funds with your bank ☐
- Make travel arrangements..... ☐
- Arrange travel insurance..... ☐
- Advise MEGA of travel details ☐
- Arrange accommodation or have MEGA take care of ☐
- Arrange transport from airport to accommodation or have MEGA take care of ☐

Pack bags being sure to include the following:

- Name and contact details of MEGA representative ☐
- Enough currency for taxis, buses, phone calls etc. in the event of an emergency ☐

Important documents:

- THIS PRE-ARRIVAL GUIDE ☐
- Passport..... ☐
- Letter of offer ☐
- eCoE..... ☐
- Certified copies of qualifications & certificates ☐
- Travel insurance policy..... ☐
- ID cards, driver's licence, birth certificate (or copy)..... ☐

○ *NOTE: Make sure you leave any originals or copies of these documents safely with family in your home country in case of loss.*

Upon Arrival in Australia

- Call home..... ☐
- Settle into accommodation ☐
- Contact institution ☐
- Purchase household items and food ☐
- Enrol children in School (if applicable) ☐
- Attend international student orientation ☐
- Get student ID card ☐
- Advise health insurance company of address & get card ☐
- Open a bank account ☐
- Attend Orientation sessions..... ☐
- Get textbooks..... ☐
- Start classes ☐
- Apply for tax file number if seeking work..... ☐
- Get involved in student life and associations (e.g. music, sporting and cultural clubs)..... ☐

SECTION 2

Pre-Arrival

Introduction to Australia

Australia is a land of contrasts: sweeping golden beaches, coral reefs rich with marine life, tropical rainforests, mountain ranges, vast grazing lands and sparse deserts.

One of the oldest continents, Australia is the only country to occupy an entire continent, as well, the only island continent, surrounded by the Indian and Pacific Oceans. Australia has many animals and plants, which are unique. The surface geology is typically old and flat with a major mountain range stretching down the eastern coast and another mountain range in the north west of the continent.

History

For more than 50,000 years, Australia's Aboriginal people have lived and thrived in Australia's unique and challenging natural environment. Australia's rich vegetation and native wildlife helped them establish their presence on the land. Today it is believed the Aboriginals are the world's oldest civilisation.

'Terra Australis' was the last landmass to be discovered by European explorers. Talk of this mystical land and the riches it held inspired explorers to sail into the unknown. It wasn't until Captain James Cook arrived in Botany Bay in 1770 that the great southern land was officially discovered by Europeans.

Overcrowded prisons in England and disruption caused by the American Revolution were two key reasons for the first shipment of convicts to the great southern land. It was the explorer and botanist Joseph Banks who, in 1779, suggested that New South Wales would be a fine site for a penal colony!

Australia at a Glance

Australia is the sixth largest country in the world. It's about the same size as the 48 mainland states of the USA and 50 per cent larger than Europe, but has the lowest population density in the world - only two people per square kilometre. The total population of Australia is 24.6 million (2017). Australia's biggest attraction is its natural beauty. The landscape varies from endless sun-baked horizons to dense tropical rainforest to chilly southern beaches. Australia boasts over 7,000 beaches, more than any other nation.

States and Territories

Australia is made up of six states (Victoria, New South Wales, Western Australia, Queensland, South Australia and Tasmania) and two territories (Northern Territory and Australian Capital Territory). Each state and territory has its own parliament, flag and floral emblem. Australia became a federated nation after the union of the six colonies on 1 January 1901. Bound by one parliament, one constitution and one flag, Australia celebrated its Centenary of Federation in 2001. The capital city of Australia is Canberra.

Art

Australian contemporary arts reflect the world's oldest continuous cultural traditions and also a diverse, multicultural society. Our visual and performing arts communities receive international acclaim for their vibrancy, originality and cutting-edge work in the arts, literature, stage and cinema, dance, classical music and contemporary Australian rock music.

Multiculturalism

More than 100 ethnic groups are represented in Australia, making Australia one of the most culturally diverse countries in the world. Australia's dynamic multiculturalism can be attributed to its unique combination of Indigenous cultures, early European settlement and immigration from all parts of the world.

Australians value the wealth of cultural diversity and social sophistication that international students bring to our campuses and our communities.

We take great care in looking after international students and helping them to adjust to the Australian way of life. International students also gain great benefits from their education in Australia and make lifelong friendships.

Language

Although English is the official language, a host of other languages are spoken in Australia. As one of the most culturally diverse countries in the world, many Australians are naturally fluent in other languages. More than 2.4 million Australians speak a language other than English at home. Within the education and training system about 15 per cent of those of working age studying for an educational qualification have English as a second language. More than 800,000 Australians speak a European Union language, apart from English, in the home. Another 800,000 Australians speak an Asian language in the home.

In Australia not only is there the opportunity to improve your English through specialist study in an English-speaking environment but all sectors of Australian education and training provide tuition in many other languages as well.

English as it is spoken in Australia is very easily understood by nearly all people from other English-speaking nations. While there are some minor differences in accent between the cities and country areas the difference is much less than you will find in America, Britain and Canada where French is also spoken. As you improve your English in Australia you will learn some of our slang, and have much fun explaining the meanings to your friends and relatives at home.

Cost of Living

In addition to paying the full cost of their courses, full-fee students must meet all their own travel and living expenses, plus any student association fees or administrative charges made by the institution. A single person studying in Australia will need a minimum of AU\$21,041 each year in addition to the tuition fees. This amount also depends on the kind of accommodation a student chooses. For a married person with a dependent, he/she will need another AU\$7,362 each year. If there are children, the living expenses needed will be approximately AU\$3,152 for each child.

Accommodation

The following types of accommodation are available for international students:

1. Full Board (Homestay) A\$350.00 per week.
2. Leasing a House/Flat AU\$170.00 - A\$250.00 per week (unfurnished)

This accommodation can be booked prior to arrival. A minimum of 2 months advance notice is required before you depart for Australia. Further details can be obtained from the Admissions Officer.

Transport

Australia has an efficient public transport system of buses and trains in all cities, trams and light rail. Many students ride bicycles to campus and some even have their own car for longer travel. There are also train, bus and air services between cities and towns.

A Good Choice for Study

There are more than 50,000 overseas students studying in Australia and each year approximately 15,000 students from the Asia Pacific region arrive in Australia to continue their education. They have chosen Australia for several reasons:

- Australia has a high-quality education system, the equal of any country in the world
- Australia offers traditional education in reputable Schools, Colleges, Higher Education Institutions and Universities
- Awards from Australian institutions of higher education are recognised internationally
- Australian Universities, Higher Education Institutions, Colleges and Schools have established networks of support to help overseas students



- The Australian education system includes informality and accessibility of academic staff, the availability of computers, small group tutorials and close supervision
- Living costs and tuition costs compare well with other countries and most overseas students are permitted to work part-time
- Australia is a safe, stable country with a pleasant climate.

Useful web links:

- [Choose Australia](#)
- [About Australia](#)
- [Tourism Australia.](#)

Introducing Sydney

New South Wales

In 1770 Captain James Cook sailed into what is now called Botany Bay. Cook later claimed a section of Australia's East Coast for Great Britain under the name of New South Wales. The colony became a state in 1901 after Australia was officially declared a nation.

The original inhabitants of NSW, the Aborigines, have lived in the area for more than 50,000 years and many reminders of this period still exist today. In Sydney and the surrounding regions alone there are more than 2,000 aboriginal rock engraving sites and many of Sydney's suburbs have aboriginal names such as Woolloomooloo, Parramatta and Yagoona.

NSW is the home of Australia's tallest mountain peak, Mount Kosciusko, which towers 2,228 metres above the snow-capped ski fields in the Southern Alps of the state while Australia's longest river, the Darling River, flows 2,740km from northern NSW to join with the Murray River near the Victorian border in the state's south-west.

NSW, is the most populated state in Australia and has a population of 7.3 million people (2019), with over 60% population based in Sydney.

For more information on Australia's population data, please visit: <https://abs.gov.au>

Sydney

Sydney is the largest and oldest city in Australia with a population of approximately 5.2 million people. Sydney is the capital city of New South Wales, and is one of the most multicultural cities in the world. Located in the heart of the city, MEGA is just a short walk from train stations or bus stops.

With pristine sandy beaches to the east, National Parks to the north and south, and mountain ranges to the west, there is always something to do and see.

Sydney is a vibrant, multi-faceted, cosmopolitan city that offers entertainment, shopping, sightseeing and relaxation to visitors all year round. Situated on the glorious Sydney Harbour, spanned by the landmark Harbour Bridge, Sydney's sparkling waters are constantly criss-crossed by busy ferries and colourful sailing yachts and cruisers. Overlooking the Harbour are the beautiful Botanic Gardens leading down to the world-famous Sydney Opera House.

In September 2000 Sydney gained world attention as the host of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games.

Climate

Sydney has a temperate climate with few extremes in the weather patterns. It never snows. Summers can be very humid and wet. Sydney is in the southern hemisphere and the seasons are reversed to those in Europe, the USA, and most of Asia. Sydney is a comfortable place to stay. During the summer months from December



through to February, outdoor activities are popular, as scores of students head off to the beach for Schools holidays (December to January).

A chart below presents the average weather patterns throughout the year.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Rainfall (mm)	46	50	34	52	54	35	28	55	46	61	63	42
Rainfall (inches)	1.8	2.0	1.3	2.1	2.1	1.4	1.1	2.2	1.8	2.4	2.5	1.6
Min Temp (°C)	13	14	13	10	8	6	5	6	7	8	10	12
Max Temp (°C)	26	26	24	20	20	16	13	13	16	19	21	24
Min Temp (°F)	56	57	55	50	47	43	41	42	44	47	50	53
Max Temp (°F)	78	79	75	68	62	56	55	57	61	66	71	76

Seasons

It is important to remember that Australian seasons are the reverse of those in the Northern Hemisphere. There are 4 defined seasons, although they are not as clearly defined as those of the Northern Hemisphere. The descriptions for these have been provided in the table on the next page.

Spring:	September to November	Spring offers a pleasant mild temperature, with occasionally unpredictable cold, wet and windy days.
Summer:	December to February	Australia enjoys a long summer with warm weather. The temperature ranges from 18°C to 32°C in summer, with occasional hot spells of over 38°C. Humidity in summer ranges from 60% to 70%.
Autumn:	March to May	Balmy weather with warm to mild temperatures
Winter:	June to August	Australia has a short and mild winter. Winter temperature ranges from 8°C to 18°C, with the overnight temperature sometimes dropping below 6°C.

Rainfall in Sydney is greater than many other Australian cities with nearly 50 inches in an average year. The peak rainfall is in the November to May period (summer and autumn). The average frequency of measurable rainfall ranges from one rainfall event every 3 days in August to 1 event every 2 days in the summer and fall.

Surviving Summer

You may find the Australian summer a totally new experience. However, with sensible protection, there need not be a problem.

Even if you are from a hot tropical climate, you may not be prepared for the type of heat you will face on many summer days. During summer, the hottest time of the day is normally between 11am and 3pm. Temperatures can occasionally exceed 40 degrees centigrade. However, only rarely are there more than one or two hot days in a row, and the evenings usually bring relief from the heat.

Australia has one of the highest incidences of melanomas (malignant skin cancer) in the world. This is partly due to the intensity of the sun, and partly due to the Australian lifestyle.



To avoid skin damage caused by staying out in the sun for extended periods, you need to take precautions:

- Drink plenty of cool water. Dehydration can be dangerous and may lead to heat stroke
- Avoid lengthy periods of exposure to the sun
- If you must be out in the sun for long periods, wear a hat and use a good quality (at least 30+) sun screen to cover all parts of your body that are exposed to the sun.

Keeping cool

- If you are not used to the severe heat, it is important to keep cool.
- Eat cold foods such as salads, sandwiches and fruit
- Avoid sugar drinks and drink lots of water
- If you do not have air conditioning at home, try to find an air-conditioned place to stay during the day. Perhaps the campus library or a major shopping centre
- To keep your house cool during the day, close all windows and curtains/blinds. In the evening, open the windows to allow cool air to circulate through the house
- If you open windows, make sure they are protected by insect screens
- Be careful of security. Don't leave doors and windows open if you are not home.

Surviving Winter

Although Australian winters are generally not as cold as those seen in other parts of the world, temperatures do occasionally get down close to zero and icy.

Keeping warm

- Wear layers of clothing. This is the healthiest and most economical way to stay warm
- Spending too much time in heated buildings can cause eye irritation as well as dryness of the skin etc
- If heating is on, close all doors, windows and curtains to prevent drafts of cold air and loss of heat
- Eating properly is a way of maintaining your body's natural balance during winter. Eating nutritious food, drinking soups and warm drinks are all ways of keeping warm
- Wrap yourself up in a scarf, wear gloves and even ear muffs and beanies (woollen hats). It is usually your extremities (ear, nose, fingers etc.) that will be exposed to the cold.

Clothing

A sports coat or suit and tie for men and appropriate dress for women is necessary for some functions such as formal dinners, a graduation ceremony, student dances or balls. For festive occasions, you may want to bring traditional dress and accessories.

High School students will be required to wear a School uniform to classes and other School activities. The uniform for boys:

- Pants
- Shirt
- Jacket
- Jumper.

The uniform for girls:

- Skirt
- Shirt
- Jacket
- Jumper.

Weather can change several times in a single day, so it is wise to carry an umbrella, a top and to put on sunscreen. Below is a season-by-season guide of things you might consider bringing with you to wear during the year.

Autumn (March, April, May)

- Light jumpers (sweaters)
- T-shirts
- Jeans
- Waterproof shoes and jackets.

Winter (June, July, August)

- A thick jumper (sweater)
- Tracksuit pants (warmer than jeans)
- Gloves and Scarf
- A thick jacket (waterproof is best)
- Thick socks
- Woollen hat
- Waterproof shoes/boots.

Spring (September, October, November)

- Light jumpers
- T-shirts
- Light casual pants and jeans
- Water proof shoes and jacket.

Summer (December, January, February)

- Light summer shirts and jumpers
- T-shirts, singlets
- Shorts/Skirts
- Bathers
- Light casual pants
- Sandals
- Beach Towel.

You may need to bring some more formal clothes with you in case you need to attend a job interview or you may wish to attend a special function. There are many markets and discount variety stores who sell cheap clothing and footwear.



Introducing MEGA

L9, 225 Clarence Street
Sydney NSW 2000
Australia
Tel: +61 2 9299 6788

Full details are found further in this guide at section 4.

Welcome to MEGA. This is some information for you prior to your arrival in Australia. We will speak to you again about this information at our Orientation day. We hope that you will enjoy your time here with us.

MEGA Orientation Programme Timetable

Time	What	Who	Location
8:30am – 9:30am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registration Please provide passport, visa copy & entry requirement documents Complete necessary forms 	Student Services Team	Room 2.05 (Level 2)
9:30am – 10:45am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome and Academic Presentation 	Academic Manager	Room 2.05 (Level 2)
10:45am – 11:00am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Break 		Room 2.05 (Level 2)
11:00am – 11:30am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IT Helpdesk Presentation 	IT System Administrator	Room 2.05 (Level 2)
11:30am – 12:45pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student Support Services Presentation 	Student Services and Support Officer	Room 2.05 (Level 2)
12:45pm – 1:30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issuance of student ID cards Class timetables Campus Tour 	Student Services and Support Team	Room 2.05 (Level 2)

LATENESS

- You should be on time to all lessons.

YOUR ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBER

- You must let MEGA know your new address within 7 days
- All students must tell MEGA within 7 days if their phone number changes
- If you don't do this, you are breaking the rules of your visa.

SOME IMPORTANT MEGA RULES

- No eating or drinking in the classrooms. Only water allowed. You may only eat in the Common Areas
- There is No Smoking anywhere on MEGA's property. This is a strict rule
- Please clean up after yourself and use the bins around MEGA
- You must turn your mobile phone off during lessons. Your Trainer and Assessor may confiscate it if you use it in class!



HEALTHCARE CARDS

- You will usually receive your healthcare card 2 - 3 weeks after you start your studies
- If you need to see a Doctor before this, you will have to pay for it first. Keep your receipt and you can claim for it after you receive your card.

CONCESSION TRAVEL

- International Students are not allowed to buy the cheaper student concession tickets on Public Transport
- You must always have a valid ticket: you may be fined \$200 if you travel without a ticket.

COMPUTER ACCESS

- Outside lessons, students have access to computers at lunchtime for personal use and study. **You may not download anything or play games**
- You must 'log on' and 'log off' each time you use a computer. Ask any MEGA Staff if you have trouble logging on.

CERTIFICATES

- On successful completion of your course you will receive a certificate award and a Statement of Results which states your course progress achieved during your time at MEGA
- This is an important document and must be kept safe because you will need it to extend your visa. If you lose it, a replacement copy must be ordered and a fee will be charged.

PEOPLE YOU CAN TALK TO

- Talk to your Trainer and Assessor about any problems in class
- You can see the Academic Manager with any big problems
- If you have personal problems that are affecting your studies or any issues that affect your welfare, please see the Student Services and Support Officer or any MEGA staff.

ENJOY YOUR STUDIES HERE AT MEGA.

You can find more information at www.mega.edu.au.

Please contact us if you have any enquiries.

Students Enquiries: sso@mega.edu.au

Administration and Marketing Enquiries: info@mega.edu.au

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 their familiarity and experience in the field. If you require assistance, please check with MEGA in Australia for their accredited agents in your country.

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.



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.

Looking After Your Student Visa

For many international students, obtaining a student visa is a long and difficult process. MEGA wants to help you keep your student visa and have provided details of some of the mandatory visa conditions to assist you.

The staff at MEGA are not immigration officers. We are here to assist students in successfully completing their studies. The Student Services and Support Officer is available for assistance and support during the course of your study. However, MEGA also has legal obligations to provide information to DHA in some circumstances, especially if you withdraw from your course of study, and/ or seek to transfer to another education provider or fail to comply with any of the conditions on your student visa.

So, help us by making sure you meet your student visa conditions and by contacting the Student Services and Support Officer whenever you have questions or need help.

Visa Renewal and Extension

When the visa is about to expire, it is **your** responsibility to renew it. In order to renew your visa you will need to:

- Obtain a Confirmation of Enrolment from MEGA, at least two weeks before you wish to lodge your request for a visa renewal with DHA
- Have a medical examination as required by DHA
- Application for on-shore student visa extension is done online. Please access the DHA website – www.homeaffairs.gov.au to do your student visa extension
- You will require a credit card or a debit card to pay your visa fees.

Providing your passport is valid, the re-entry visa will cover you until the end of your course. If you need to extend your visa to complete your studies or move into higher studies, you must apply for a visa extension at least two weeks before your visa expires, otherwise your visit becomes illegal.

Your visa is normally issued for the duration of your course only. Any student who wishes to stay in Australia for the graduation ceremony, which takes place early in the year after completion of a course, may apply in Australia for a visitor class visa. Please check with DHA on eligibility and conditions.

Passport Renewal

Make sure that your passport remains current. If you need to extend or obtain a new passport, contact your embassy or consulate in Australia. Check with them to find out the documents they require for the application to be submitted. Refer to the section titled Consulates and Diplomatic Representatives, which contains a list of embassies and consulates and their contact details.

Department of Home Affairs (DHA)

The Australian Government's Department of Home Affairs 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.homeaffairs.gov.au for the latest information.

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)

As well as links from the DHA 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 DHA on your behalf, but please note that you do not need to use a migration agent to lodge any kind of visa application.

If you decide to use a migration agent, you will need to pay a fee for their service.

Education Agents

Education agents promote various Australian education programmes 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 services 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 education agents may be able to assist you in your future education study pathway and student visa applications, not all agents are licensed registered Migration Agent and may NOT be licensed to provide immigration 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 specified 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 granted a 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.

Student Visa conditions

Visa conditions are the rules of your visa. They are set by Australian law and cannot be changed or disregarded to suit your circumstances. It is important that you understand these conditions, as the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) may cancel your visa if you break them. If your visa is cancelled, you will be sent a letter asking you to go to the DHA office in person within 28 days. Your visa may then be cancelled and you will become an illegal resident. You can be detained and deported if this happens. The main conditions are set out below:

Notify the MEGA of Your Address (Condition 8533)

Within 7 days of arriving in Australia, you must notify MEGA of your new address. If you move to a new house during your stay, you must again, notify MEGA of your new address within 7 days of the move. If you do not do this, and there is a problem with your visa, you will not receive communication from DHA and your visa may be cancelled without your knowledge. If this happens, you may be deported from Australia and prevented from completing your studies. Please see our Student Services and Support Officer at our Reception to obtain the form as soon as you know your new address. Alternatively, you may access eBECAS student portal and update your new address by yourself.

Work Limitations (Condition 8105)

These have already been discussed in an earlier section. Please note that student visa holders have to make their studies and not work the top priority. Make sure that your work hours are organised around your study timetable, because working too much will not be accepted by DHA as an excuse for non-attendance and/or academic failure.

Your visa allows you to work no more than 40 hours per fortnight when your course is in sessions and fulltime during term break. You are advised to ensure you are able to cope with your study and work at the same time before you embark to seek casual work.

Academic Requirements (Condition 8202)

MEGA monitors students. It is the student's responsibility to contact MEGA regarding absences or issues that affect their studies.

Maintain acceptable overseas student health cover during your entire stay in Australia. (Condition 8501)

This was discussed earlier on in the booklet.

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

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 jet-lag.

You should fly into Sydney International Airport which is the closest international airport to Sydney. For more information, please visit <http://www.sydneyairport.com.au/SACL/default.htm> which is the Sydney airport website.

Sydney is located 8.2 kms from Sydney International Airport.

Documents

You should prepare a folder of official documents to bring with you to Australia, including:

- Valid passport with Student Visa
- Offer of a place / admission letter from MEGA
- Confirmation of Enrolment (eCoE) issued by MEGA
- Receipts of payments e.g. tuition fees, OSHC, bank statements etc
- Insurance policies – if you purchase your own OSHC
- 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/or prescriptions.

If you are travelling with your family, you will need to include their documents as well. Keep all documents in your carry-on luggage. In case you lose the originals, make copies that can be left behind with family and sent to you.

NOTE:

Please ensure you make the necessary arrangement of schooling if your children are of school age – 6 years of age and above and childcare, if below 6 years of age – if required. It is an offence to leave your children at home without any proper adult supervision.

What to Bring

Students are often surprised by how strict Australian Customs Services and quarantine can be. If you're in doubt about whether your goods are prohibited or not, **declare it anyway** on the Incoming Passenger Card which you will receive on the plane. Students have received on the spot fines for not declaring items.

Visit the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) homepage <http://www.aqis.gov.au>:

Read “What can't I take into Australia?”

And also, let your family and friends know **“What can't be mailed to Australia?”**

Baggage allowances flying into Australia will vary according to your carrier, flight class and country of origin. Please check with your carrier prior to departure. Economy passengers are generally permitted 1 x checked luggage (35kg) and 1 x carry-on (7kg) for international flights, but only 20kg of checked luggage on domestic flights within Australia.

This will significantly limit the amount of things you can bring, especially if you will fly within Australia to get to your final destination. Therefore, it is essential to think the packing process through very carefully. You will be able to purchase most things upon arrival in Australia but the price may be higher than in your own country.

Other Items You Might Need to Include (most can also be purchased in Australia)

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| ▪ alarm clock | ▪ scientific or graphics calculator |
| ▪ bath towels, bed sheets, pillow cases | ▪ camera |
| ▪ dictionary (bilingual) | ▪ micro recorder for lectures |
| ▪ small sewing kit | ▪ spare spectacles or contact lenses |
| ▪ music CDs or iPod | ▪ your optical prescription |
| ▪ sporting equipment | ▪ photos of friends and family |
| ▪ toiletries | ▪ swimming costume |
| ▪ umbrella | ▪ small gifts from home |



The standard voltage for electrical items in Australia is 240V. Electric plugs have three flat pins one of which is an earth pin. You may need to buy an adaptor or have the plugs changed when you arrive.

Note: In the picture, the red dot indicates that the switch is on and power is flowing through that socket.

Bringing Your Computer

Bringing a PC or laptop into Australia may be a little more complicated.

Items owned and used for more than 12 months prior to arrival are allowed in tax-free. Proof of the date of purchase and purchase price may be required. Computers which are less than 12 months old and over AUD\$400 may attract Goods and Services tax (GST) at a rate of 10%. Consideration is given as to whether or not you intend to export the computer at the conclusion of your studies.



To satisfy the Customs Officer that you will be taking the computer out of Australia you should bring along a statutory declaration (a written declaration witnessed by the certifying authority in your country) stating that the computer is for use during your studies in Australia, and that you intend to take it back with you when you complete your studies. You may be required to give an undertaking under Section 162 to this effect and provide a cash security to Australia Customs upon arrival.

Mobile Phones & Laptops

If you are considering bringing a mobile phone, laptop, or any communication devices we suggest that you visit the Australian Communications and Media Authority www.acma.gov.au before making any purchases. Some students have brought in their own laptops with internal modems only to discover that they were unable to use their modem in Australia. Any external or built-in modems must be **Austel Approved** in order to function in Australia.

On Your Flight

Wear comfortable, layered clothing so that you are able to make adjustments according to the local weather. Remember – if you are flying from a northern hemisphere winter into the Australian summer it will be **very HOT** so wear light weight clothing underneath, and have a pair of sandals or lighter shoes in your hand luggage if you need cooler footwear. Alternatively extra clothing may be required on-hand if flying into the Australian winter season.

Before landing in Australia passengers are given an Incoming Passenger Card to fill in. This is a legal document. You must tick ✓ YES if you are carrying any food, plant material including wooden souvenirs, or animal products. This includes fruit given to you during your flight. If you have items you don't wish to declare, you can dispose of them in quarantine bins in the airport terminal. Don't be afraid to ask airline staff if you have any questions.

If you are carrying more than **AU\$10,000** in cash, you must also declare this on your Incoming Passenger Card. It is **strongly recommended** however, that you do not carry large sums of cash but arrange for an electronic transfer of funds into your Australian bank account once it has been opened.

Entry into Australia

Australian Immigration

When you first arrive in Australia you will be required to make your way through Australian Immigration. Please follow the sign for Arriving Passengers as you leave the plane. An Immigration Officer will ask to see your completed Incoming Passenger Card given to you on the plane along with your passport and student visa evidence. The Immigration Officer will check your documents and may ask you a few questions about your plans for your stay in Australia.

Baggage Claim

Once you have passed through the immigration checks, follow the sign and move to baggage claim to collect your luggage. Check that nothing is missing or damaged. If something is missing or damaged go to the **Baggage Counter** and advise them of your problem. Staff at the Baggage Counter will help you to find your belongings or lodge a claim for damage.

Detector Dogs

You may see a **Quarantine Detector Dog** at the baggage carousel or while waiting in line to pass through immigration, screening luggage for food, plant material or animal products. If you see a detector dog working close to you, please place your bags on the floor for inspection. These dogs are not dangerous to humans and are trained to detect odours. Sometimes a dog will sit next to your bag if it sniffs a target odour. Sometimes dogs will detect odours left from food you have had in the bag previously. A quarantine officer may ask about the contents of your bag and check you are not carrying items that present a quarantine risk to Australia.



NOTE:

NEVER assist or offer to assist any strangers with their baggage or luggage no matter how old the person is. You may be implicated for any illegal activities if caught.

Smuggling is a serious offence in Australia.

Australian Customs and Quarantine

Once you have your luggage you will go through Customs. Be careful about what you bring into Australia. Some items you might bring from overseas can carry pests and diseases that Australia doesn't have. You must **declare ALL** food, meat, fruit, plants, seeds, wooden souvenirs, animal or plant materials or their derivatives.

Australia has **strict quarantine laws** and tough on-the-spot fines. Every piece of luggage is now screened or x-rayed by quarantine officers, detector dog teams and x-ray machines. If you fail to declare or dispose of any quarantine items, or make a false declaration, you will get caught. In addition to on-the-spot fines, you could be prosecuted and fined more than AU\$60,000 and risk 10 years in prison. All international mail is also screened.

Some products may require **treatment** to make them safe. Items that are **restricted** because of the risk of pests and disease will be seized and destroyed by the **Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS)**.

For more detailed information about bringing in food, animals, plants, animal or plant materials or their derivatives visit. www.agriculture.gov.au.

Arrivals Hall

You will be able to leave the restricted area and enter the Arrivals Hall once you have cleared Customs. Here you will find a number of retail and food outlets along with public telephones, an information booth and money exchange facilities. If you arrive on a weekend, you may like to exchange money here as most banks are not open on Saturdays and Sundays.

If you have asked for an airport pickup our Student Services and Support Officer or a MEGA Representative will meet you here at the Airport and take you to your accommodation. **The Student Services and Support Officer or a MEGA appointed person is going to hold a paper with your name and MEGA Logo on it. If there is an emergency you can contact us on +61 2 9299 6788 during office hours from Monday to Friday or 0426 255 458 (Henry Liu) anytime.**

Getting from the Airport

Arriving in Australia

MEGA ensures student support services are available for all MEGA students. Your main contact at MEGA is the Student Services and Support Officer.

Airport Pick-up

If you notify us early of your arrival time at the airport, we can arrange for someone to pick you up from the airport, should you need this service. Please note, we must have clear details of your flight number, airline, and arrival time.

Accommodation

If you do not have accommodation arranged, MEGA can organise homestay accommodation (and guardianship if required for younger students). Please advise the Student Services and Support Officer well in advance of your arrival in Australia.



Public Transport

Public transport in Sydney is relatively cheap and very accessible. Timetables, maps and service information for all modes of transport are available at the following websites <http://www.131500.info/realtime/default.asp>, <http://www.sydneybuses.info/> and <http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/AboutSydney/ParkingAndTransport/PublicTransport.asp>.

Alternatively, students can call Transport Infoline on **131 500** to speak to an operator.

The metropolitan public transport system incorporates trains, light rail, monorail, buses and ferries. The variety of ticketing options available allows students to choose the type of ticket they require and enables them to change services as often as you like on the one ticket. Students can see the various ticketing option at <http://www.131500.com.au/ticketandfares/fares/>.

Students should note that it is their responsibility to always travel with the correct and valid ticket. People who fail to produce a valid ticket or to provide their correct address upon request from Authorised Ticketing Inspectors can face fines of up to \$500.

Taxis

This is the most expensive method of travel, but is a relatively affordable way to cover short to medium distances in Sydney. Taxis must charge the standard fares which must be visible to the passenger. Extra charges may be added for phone bookings and late-night pickups.

You can get a taxi either by telephoning one of the major taxi companies, by hailing (waiving to the driver) from the street when the top white light is lit up or by entering the front car at a taxi rank in the city, or at shopping centres, train stations, hotels.

St George Cabs:	13-2166
Sonic Express Couriers:	9150 9400
Dolphin Water Taxis:	1300 130 742
Premier Cabs:	13-1017
RSL Taxis:	9581 1111
Taxis Combined:	8332-8888

Airport Reception Service

Airport Link

This rail service runs from approximately 5am until Midnight seven days a week, to and from the Domestic and International Terminals and all City Circle railway stations. For more information, call 02 8337 8412 or visit www.airportlink.com.au.

Keeping in Contact

Before you leave home, you should provide your family and friends, and your education provider in Australia, with details of your flights to Australia and where you will be staying when you arrive. Do not change these details without informing them.

Once you have arrived in Australia, you should then let your family and friends know that you have **arrived safely**. It is important to **ALWAYS** let someone know where you are and how to contact you by phone or by post.

MEGA Main Contact Details

Address:	L9, 225 Clarence Street Sydney NSW 2000
Phone:	+ 61 2 9299 6788
Email:	info@mega.edu.au
Website:	www.mega.edu.au



Reception Open Hours

9:00 am – 5:30 pm
Monday – Friday

Note: During the term, our support services may be extended to 7:00pm.

International Student 24 Hour Emergency Contact

Office Number:(Office hours – Monday to Friday from 9.00am to 5.30pm).....+ 61 9299 6788

Chief Executive Officer:(24 hours)..... +61 426 255 458 (Henry Liu)

Accessing Money

You should read this section carefully, and discuss the issues raised in this section with the bank or financial institution in your home country before you leave. All banks operate differently and you should be aware of all fees, charges, ease of access to your funds, and safety of the way in which you will access those funds.

How Much to Bring

You will need to make sure you have enough funds to support you when you first arrive. It is recommended that you have approximately **AU\$1,500 to AU\$2,000** available for the first two to three weeks to pay for temporary accommodation and transport. You should bring most of this money as either Traveller's Cheques or on an international credit card. **Traveller's cheques** can be cashed at any bank or currency exchange in Australia.

Please note that it is **not safe to bring large sums of money with you!** Lost credit cards or traveller's cheques can be replaced, but very few travel insurance companies will replace lost or stolen cash. Do not ask someone you have just met to handle your cash for you or to take your cash to make payments for you. Not even someone who may indicate they are studying at the same education institution.

Currency Exchange

Only Australian currency can be used in Australia. If you have not brought some with you, you will need to do so as soon as possible after arrival. You can do this at the airport. Once you have arrived in Sydney you can also change money at any bank or at currency exchanges. Several Exchanges are located on George Street or you can go to the Commonwealth Bank located on George and Market Street or the Westpac Bank located opposite the MEGA Campus.

Electronic Transfer

You can transfer money into Australia by **electronic telegraph or telegraphic transfer** at any time. This is a fast option and will take approximately **48 hours**, but the bank will charge a fee on every transaction.

ATMs

Automatic Teller Machines are located everywhere (including at the airport) and you can immediately withdraw cash from your overseas bank account at **ATMs displaying the Cirrus Logo** (if your ATM card has international access). Check this with your financial institution before leaving home.



Credit Cards

All major international credit cards are accepted in Australia but you must remember that **repayments** to many of these cards can only be made in the country where they were issued. Do not rely on being able to get a credit card once you arrive in Australia because this is very difficult due to credit and identification laws.

Accommodation

There are many different accommodation options available whilst you are living in Australia.

Homestay

Homestay is where an international student lives with an Australian family. This is a really good way to learn and practice English, meet new people and make friends. Homestay students are expected to participate in the host family's daily routines ranging from helping with household duties such as washing up, to joining their social activities. Your homestay may have some special family rules, which need to be followed. If there is something you do not understand, or don't like, please talk with your homestay family. Australia is a multicultural country and as such Australians may originate in other parts of the world but have settled here. Our homestay families may be of Chinese, Italian, Vietnamese, or any of 140 different nationalities.

Can MEGA organise homestay?

Yes, MEGA employs professional homestay companies to organise homestay for our students. Please see the student services to collect an application form. The one-off placement fee has to be paid before a homestay can be organised.

What if I don't like my homestay?

The MEGA' homestay staff will do everything possible to ensure that the homestay experience is successful and happy. Obviously, some time may need to pass in order for the student to adjust to their new home. However, if there are irresolvable problems and issues, the student needs to contact Student Services and Support Officer to discuss these.

Bringing My Family

Most student visas allow you to bring your family members to Australia as your dependants (check your individual circumstances with the Department of Home Affairs 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 MEGA in Australia. All school age (6 years and over) student must be enrolled into mainstream education
- International full tuition fees are payable. For more details, please visit: www.deinternational.nsw.edu.au/study/schools/fees
- Waiting lists for child care centres and can be very expensive; 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: <http://www.homeaffairs.gov.au>

NOTE:

It is an offence to leave children at home alone without any proper adult supervision.

Child Care

Finding suitable childcare in Australia requires patience and planning. Waiting lists for places in most childcare centres are long. Please see suggested list below:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Phone</i>
<i>Active Kids at World Square</i>	Level 1, World Square 650 George St Sydney NSW 2000	(02) 9267 4799
<i>CFK CBD Childcare Centre</i>	Lower Ground Floor 35 Clarence St Sydney NSW 2000	(02) 9279 0531
<i>Hyde Park Child Care Centre</i>	55 Park St Sydney NSW 2000	(02) 9261 315

Schools

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

- It is an immigration policy that School-age dependants of international students undertake formal education while they are in Australia
- Children who have their fifth birthday before 1st April of that calendar year are eligible to start formal school education
- You will need to provisionally enrol your child in a formal education school before you leave your home country and you will normally have to pay the School fees one semester in advance
- The formal education 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
- 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:
 - a. Are in receipt of sponsorship or scholarships from the Australian Government e.g. the Australian Development Scholarship, IPRS
 - b. 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
 - c. You will be responsible for School fees and other costs including School uniforms, books, excursions and stationery.
- 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



- 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.

For further information, please contact the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) or visit the following website:

www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/

There are two types of Schools in Australia – government Schools and independent private Schools.

SECTION 3 – Settling-in

Living in Sydney



Lifestyle

For more information please visit www.sydneycity.com.au.

Weather and Seasons

Refer to section 2 of this guide for extensive information.

Time Zones

Australia is divided into three time zones:

- Eastern is GMT +10
- Central is GMT +9.5
- Western is GMT +8.

Other than the Northern Territory and Queensland, all states observe daylight saving time in summer.

Types of Accommodation



Homestay

Refer to section 2 of this guide for full details.

Alternatives to homestay

Aside from homestay, there are a number of accommodation options available, including renting houses/apartments, hostels, hotels and student share accommodation. You can get information from real estate agents and newspapers. The Student Services and Support Officer may also be able to help you with finding appropriate accommodation if you need help.

Student Housing

There are several permanent accommodation options available to international students.

Self-contained Student Apartment Complexes allow students to live independently, but also provide student facilities and services resulting in a secure and supportive residential environment. Most complexes have a management team and 24-hour on-site security.



Another independent living option is Private Hostels/Residential Halls. This type of accommodation is popular with international students. A furnished bedroom is provided, with access to shared bathrooms, living and recreational areas. Some hostels provide meals while others provide share kitchen facilities for self-catering.

A full accommodation guide of listings and addresses is available on request from the Student Services and Support Officer.

Share Accommodation

This accommodation is usually a single or shared room (often unfurnished) in a rented flat or house with other students, groups or individuals such as a family or elderly person. The rent and expenses such as bond, electricity, gas, telephone, etc., are shared equally among the people living in the household. Buying food and cooking is done either individually or on a group basis. Each person is expected to help clean and tidy the shared living space e.g. kitchen, bathroom, living room. They are also responsible for cleaning their own room and washing their own clothes.

For more information see:

<http://www.share-accommodation.net/Sydney-flatmate.htm>

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

Rentals

Houses and Apartments:

Range from 1 to 4 bedrooms and include a kitchen, bathroom and living area. Houses have laundry facilities and apartments usually have private or shared laundries. Most students rent a house or flat on a shared basis, which makes it more affordable. Rental accommodation rarely includes furniture, gas, electricity, water, or telephone.

The property owner usually requires one month's rent in advance as security when signing any rental contract or lease. The cost of any repairs for damage caused by the tenant will be deducted from the bond BEFORE the money is returned at the end of the lease. You will be advised of your rights and responsibilities by the real estate agent. For more information about your rental rights please see www.tenants.org.au or www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au.

Temporary Accommodation

New international students often prefer to stay in temporary accommodation when they first arrive in Australia. This allows time to become familiar with the city and to find suitable and convenient permanent accommodation. Below is list of various accommodation options located relatively close to MEGA. Please contact the businesses directly or visit their websites for further information.

Staying with Friends or Family

If you know someone in Australia, this is a great way to settle-in to life here. Your friends or family can provide advice, support and encouragement in your first days in Australia.

Refer to section 2 of this guide for further details.




Where to Look for Accommodation



The following is a list of places where you can go to find advertisements for accommodation:

- **Student noticeboards around campus:** Level 10, 225 Clarence Street SYDNEY NSW 2000
- **Newspaper classifieds:** Wentworth Courier, Inner West Courier, Central, Cumberland Courier
- **Visit the local Real Estate Agents in the suburb that you intend to live for rental properties**

Real Estate Agent windows & websites

Name	Address	Phone
	Level 15, 37 York Street Sydney NSW 2000	02 8295 0620
	Suite 607 Manning Building 451 Pitt Street Sydney NSW 2000	02 9211 1128
	11/447, Kent Street Sydney NSW 2000	02 9258 5400
	Level 17/135, King Street Sydney NSW 2000	02 9249 3738

- Local shopping centre noticeboards
- Online accommodation service
 - www.visitorcentre.com.au

Things to Keep in Mind When Renting



Security Deposits/Bond

The owner or agent of an owner who has the right to rent you a property is called the landlord. A landlord will ask you for money before you move into an apartment. This is called a security deposit or bond, and may amount to more than AU \$1,000 dollars. The bond is usually set at four weeks' rent. A bond/"security deposit" is an amount of money that is supposed to guarantee that the tenant will care for the dwelling. If the tenant does not care for the property or clean it before leaving, the landlord has a legal right to keep the security deposit. Otherwise, the landlord must return the security deposit within a month after the tenant leaves.

Refer to the NSW Tenants Union for details: <http://www.tenants.org.au/>

Signing a Lease

In most cases, the landlord will require the tenant to sign a lease. A lease is a written agreement between a tenant and a landlord that describes the responsibilities of each party. This is a binding legal document that commits the student to a specific period of residency in the unit.

Inspection of Property

Most landlords will inspect the property with you on commencement of your tenancy. This is done with a list of furniture and fittings in each room of the property so that the two of you can agree on the condition of the property at the commencement of the tenancy.



You should note on this document anything you notice during the inspection that is not already listed, including any damages and keep a copy that has been signed by both of you.

Once you are the tenant, the condition of these things will be your responsibility. This will be done again at the end of your tenancy and the final condition of the property may determine the return of your full security deposit.

If this inspection is not suggested, you might suggest it yourself as a means of ensuring fair treatment for all parties involved.

Utilities

Unless someone is already living in the dwelling, the new tenant must start utility services, such as telephone, electricity, and gas. This requires contacting each individual company and arranging for the services to be connected from a specified date. The companies providing these utilities also require a small security deposit. In some cities, instead of making numerous calls to different companies, there may be a utility provider company. If someone has vacated the property before you, contacting these utility companies for connection of services will ensure all previous accounts have been finalised and paid for by the previous tenant.

Energy Australia is an example of a Utilities company who will help you to arrange your Electricity, Gas. For more information visit: <http://www.energy.com.au/energy/ea.nsf/Content/NSW+Home>

Restrictions

The lease may contain restrictions, such as not permitting animals or children in the dwelling. Ask the landlord about his/her particular requirements. Make sure that you know and understand these restrictions before signing the lease. If you do not obey the restrictions on the lease, the landlord can ask you to leave.

Inspecting a Potential Property

It's a good idea to take notes of each property you inspect. As well as the address, rent, and agent take notes of the details:

- ☒ Are there laundry facilities?
- ☒ Is there a telephone line already connected?
- ☒ Do the light fittings work?
- ☒ Is the oven/ stove, gas or electrical?
- ☒ Do the toilet and shower all work?
- ☒ Is there damp or mould on the walls?
- ☒ Is there painting required?
- ☒ Is the place furnished? What kind of furniture?
- ☒ What kind of heating/cooling is there?
- ☒ Is there an insect/ pest problem?
- ☒ Is it close to transport, shops, and campus?
- ☒ Will the area be noisy? Is it on a busy road?
- ☒ Is there good security?
- ☒ Will the landlord carry out any repairs before you move in?
- ☒ How are repairs made once you live there, and who pays for which repairs?

Choosing a Roommate

The task of choosing a roommate needs to be taken **very seriously**. The person or persons with whom you decide to live can affect the quality and productiveness of your international student experience in Australia. When the moment comes for you to make your decision concerning roommates, remember these tips: don't panic, take your time, and don't compromise on important principles.

Bills & Expenses

Do you and your roommates expect to share the costs of buying toilet paper, washing powder for clothes and dishes, cleaning supplies etc. which is used by everyone?

If you are answering an advertisement for a roommate; what does the rental price cover? Does it include utilities, or are they split equally when the accounts are due? Who will pay them and how will you all know they have been paid?

A small notebook which is signed by everyone who hands over their share of the costs and signed by the person the money is given to, is a good idea.

Food

- Do you and your roommates expect to share the costs of buying food and share in the preparation?
- Do you have specific food needs (allergies, preparation needs)?
- If your needs are for halal food and your roommates are not, can you agree on respecting and upholding each other's needs?

Cleaning

- Who will clean what? How often?
- Decide exactly what "clean and tidy" means to you.
- Will you hire a cleaning company to keep things under control?

Personal Habits & Individual Needs

- How much privacy do you need?
- What hours do you usually sleep? Study? Relax? Socialise? Shower? Wash clothing?

Smoking & Drugs

- Do you prefer to have a smoker or non-smoker as a roommate?
- Is a smoker alright as long as they smoke outside the residence?

(Many rental agreements will forbid smoking inside the premises)

Clarify your stance on the use of alcohol and/or illicit substances.

Music & Television

- What are your musical likes and dislikes?
- Do you watch TV every day or just once in a while?



- Do you like to study with or without music/TV?

Personality Traits & Communication

- How do you perceive yourself?
- How do others perceive you?
- Do you enjoy being around a lot of people - or just a few friends?
- Are you more comfortable by yourself?
- What about overnight visitors?
- When conflicts arise, how do you go about resolving them?
- How do you behave when you're happy - angry? What are the things that bother you most?

Please keep in mind that not everyone can be trusted! Follow your instincts and do not room with someone you do not trust.

Housekeeping

Some international students who come to Australia have never had the need to do their own shopping, cooking, and housecleaning. If these activities are new to you, you will need to understand that in Australia unless you choose to hire someone from a home services company to do some of these things for you; these are the responsibility of each individual and are a sign of personal independence and becoming an adult.

Most Australians, especially landlords and rental agencies, believe it is very important for one's living environment to be kept clean. Our concern for cleanliness is evident when you visit the supermarket, where many varieties of cleaning products are sold.

Kitchen Stoves & Ovens

Kitchen stoves may be either electric or gas. It is important to keep the burners and oven of an electric range clean so that they may operate safely and efficiently. Tenants should clean electric stove burners after each use to prevent food from hardening on them. The electric oven should also be cleaned periodically with an oven-cleaning product unless it is a "self-cleaning" oven, for which you should follow directions carefully.

Refrigerators

Refrigerators should be defrosted periodically, when ice or frost in or around the freezing unit becomes evident. To defrost a refrigerator, one should turn it off, empty it, and allow the water from the melting frost to drip into a pan or the tray beneath the freezer. This may take overnight, but can be done more rapidly if one puts a pan of hot water in the freezer. When the ice has melted, one should empty the tray of water into the sink. It is not a good idea to use sharp instruments to chip off the ice as they may damage the freezer and your eyes. A solution of baking soda and water can be used to clean the inside of the refrigerator. Some refrigerators automatically defrost themselves. The cooling grills on the back of a refrigerator should be vacuumed periodically to remove dust build-up, to enable the unit to refrigerate more efficiently. A refrigerator that does not work efficiently will cost you more on your electric utility bill.

Disposal of Rubbish

Because insects such as ants and flies can be a problem, it is important for tenants to empty their rubbish daily or once in two days into the wheelie bins provided outside your accommodation. You will then put the wheelie bin/s out on the footpath once a week to be collected by council rubbish trucks. The landlord will inform the tenant about the way to dispose of garbage particularly with regards to recycling and the days your rubbish is collected.

Your local council will provide all residents an annual rubbish collection schedule dates so that the residents are kept informed what are the collection days.

Cleaning Kitchens

Grease and oil from cooking collects on cabinet and refrigerator tops and walls, especially if occupants fry foods often. These areas should be cleaned often in order to avoid unpleasant odours and fire hazards.

Cleaning the Bathroom

Sinks, showers, and tubs may be cleaned with bathroom cleaning products from the supermarket. If a sink does not drain properly, ask the landlord or manager to look at it. Toilet bowls should be cleaned with a special toilet cleaning solution. A plunger may also be used for toilets that do not flush properly. Do not put any items or paper other than toilet paper in the toilet as this may block the pipes. If it is obvious that misuse of the unit has caused the need for repair, the landlord will charge you for the cost of repair or cleaning.

Cleaning Floors

Different types of floors will require different kinds of care. A landlord can recommend the way he/she prefers to have the floors cleaned. In apartments, the managers often maintain vacuum cleaners for tenant use. You can also buy vacuum cleaners at department stores. Upon leaving a dwelling, the occupant is usually expected to have the carpet professionally cleaned. The landlord can inform the tenant about proper cleaning procedures.

Cleaning Products

Grocery stores and supermarkets stock many different products for cleaning. It is important to read labels carefully in order to understand proper uses and dangers of the products.

Warning: Keep all cleaning products out of reach of children and do not mix products!

Maintenance & Fixtures & Fittings

You will be expected to replace light globes and keep fittings in your accommodation clean. If repairs or maintenance are required for example; a blocked toilet, the landlord should be consulted at the time. Generally, repairs will be the responsibility of the owner/landlord, unless caused by misuse of the item by the tenant or their visitors.

Smoke Alarms

Smoke alarms are devices that detect smoke and sound an alarm. Smoke alarms alert and wake people allowing valuable time to get out of a house in the event of a fire. When you go to sleep, your sense of smell also goes to sleep. If there is a fire, toxic fumes may overcome you before you wake up. For your protection, a smoke alarm must be installed in your home.

ONLY WORKING SMOKE ALARMS SAVE LIVES!

- ☒ Once a month you should check the battery by pressing the test button on the smoke alarm. If you cannot reach the button easily, use a broom handle to press the test button
- ☒ Keep them clean. Dust and debris can interfere with their operation, so vacuum over and around your smoke alarm regularly



- ☑ Replace the batteries yearly. Pick a public holiday or your birthday and replace the batteries each year on that day. Suggest that you use daylight saving as the time to change your batteries if you are not comfortable with other dates
- ☑ When the battery is low the smoke alarm will sound a short 'BEEP' every minute or so. This is to alert you the battery is low and needs replacing
- ☑ Smoke alarms must never be painted
- ☑ If cooking and smoke sets off the alarm, do not disable it. Turn on the range hood fan, open a window or wave a towel near the alarm
- ☑ Do not remove the batteries from your smoke alarm or cover your smoke alarm to prevent it from operating.

NOTE: Newer residential properties may be installed with electricity powered fire detectors/smoke alarms which may not require any change of batteries. However, you are still advised to test those fire detectors/smoke alarms on a regular basis to make sure that they are working properly.

Where Can I Get Help?

The Tenants Union of NSW

<http://www.tenants.org.au/resources/>

Services

Telephones

Calling Emergency Services:..... DIAL 000

In Australia dial **000** from any phone for **fire, police or ambulance services**. **112** may also be dialled from mobile phones. Dialling **112** will override key locks on mobile phones and therefore save time. Emergency Services operators answer this number quickly and to save time will say, "Police, Fire, or Ambulance".

If you are unsure of what emergency service you need tell the operator what the emergency is. You will then be connected to the appropriate service to assist. It is wise to think ahead with the most important information which will help them to respond. Where you are; (note street names and the closest intersection), what has happened and to whom; what their condition is. The operator may then ask you to stay on the phone until the emergency services arrive.

In life threatening situations the operator may also give you some instructions to assist until the emergency unit arrives. If you are concerned about your English, remain calm and work with the operators who are very experienced with all cultures. (See also: Health – Emergencies)

Public Telephones

Australia has an extensive network of Public Phones throughout the country. They are easily recognized by the orange and blue Telstra emblem. The cost of local calls is 50 cents (AUD) with most phones accepting coins and prepaid telephone cards. Long distance call charges vary depending on time of day and distance.

Sundays are an excellent day to make interstate or international calls due to all day discount rates.

Pre-Paid telephone cards offer competitive calling rates to all countries 24 hours per day.

Pre-Paid Telephone Cards cost \$5, \$10, \$20 and \$50 and may be purchased at most newsagencies, post offices and convenience stores.



Making Phone Calls within Australia

- To make international phone calls:

 Dial – international access code (0011) + the country code + the area code (if required) + phone number (when adding a country code to a number, any leading 0 (zero) on the area code following it is NOT dialled).

- To make domestic phone calls:**  Dial – the area code + phone number

Area Code	States
(02)	ACT, NSW
(03)	VIC, TAS
(07)	QLD
(08)	SA, WA, NT



Visit www.whitepages.com.au and www.yellowpages.com.au for directories of residential, commercial and government phone numbers in Australia; and for a list of country codes and area codes for international calls.





Calling Australia from Overseas




To contact Australia, first dial the international access code from that country (this will vary in each country), then Australia's country code prefix (**61**) followed by the area code without the first zero (for instance Sydney would be 2 instead of 02), and then dial the required number.

Example: International access number **+61 2 9299 6788**

Mobile/Cell/Hand Phones

Before bringing your mobile phone to Australia check with the Australian Communications and Media Authority www.acma.gov.au to make sure it can operate here. Some countries, such as Japan and the USA, use mobile phone networks that are not available in Australia. If not, you can buy your mobile phone in Australia. Australian telecommunications providers offer a wide range of services which provide a mobile phone within the cost of using that service. There are many differences to the services provided. You should understand what deal you are accepting before signing a contract with a provider. For a comparison of mobile phone plans in Australia see: <http://www.mobiles.com.au/mobile-phone-plans/>

Provider	Website
	www.telstra.com
	www.optus.com.au
	www.vodafone.com.au
	www.tpg.com.au

Provider	Website
	www.dodo.com.au
	www.virginmobile.com.au
	www.boost.com.au

Other mobile phone providers are:

- iPrimus
- Amaysim.

Computer & Internet Access

Many of the above companies will also provide you with internet access. In fact, you may be able to make arrangements with a company where you can get cheaper rates if you have internet and mobile phone through the one service provider. In addition, with providers Telstra and Optus, you could get a packaged deal for your home phone, internet and mobile phone.

Australia Post



Australia Post is one of our nation's largest communications, logistics and distribution businesses; and is committed to providing high quality mail and parcel services to all people within Australia.

Small Letters

The cost of regular posting a small letter for distribution in Australia is an **AU\$1.10 postage stamp** which you affix to the envelope. It will take 2-6 Business days. For Priority post, it will be **AU\$1.60**.

A small letter has the following characteristics:

- No larger than 130mm x 240mm or no thicker than 5mm
- Maximum weight 250g.

For more details of postal services in Australia, please visit:

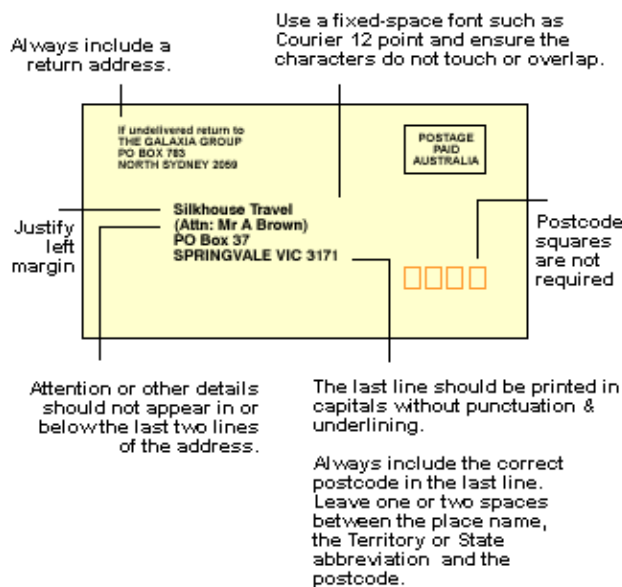
www.auspost.com.au

Envelope Layout

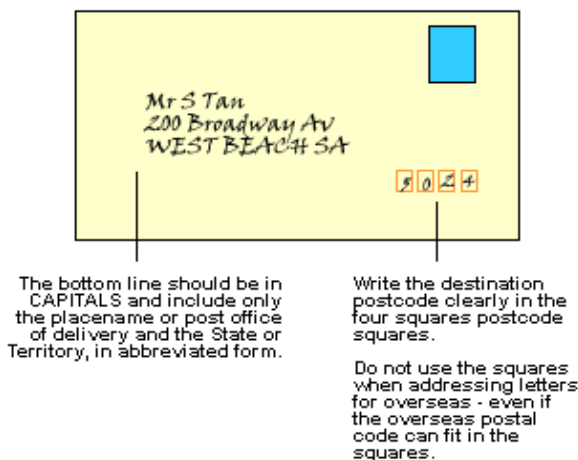
Australia Post uses advanced letter sorting technology to read the address on each envelope electronically. These machines work best when address formats are structured in a consistent manner. That is why it is necessary to address your mail clearly and correctly. The information below demonstrates how.



Typical Machine Addressed Envelope



Typical Hand Addressed Envelope



Support Groups

These support services are free and ensure that help can always be accessed:

Service	Phone	Details
Lifeline	13 11 14	24 hour counselling service
Mensline Australia	1300 78 99 78	
Kids Help Line	1800 55 1800	24 hour counselling service
Mental Health Info Service	9816 5688 (Sydney) 1800 674 2000 (Toll free outside Sydney)	
NSW Grief Support Line (Sydney)	9489 6644	
Emergency Dental Service (Sydney)	9369 7050	
Rape Crisis Centre (Sydney)	9819 6565	
HIV/AIDS Info (Sydney)	9332 4000	

For more details of support services, please visit: www.youthsolutions.com.au.

Places of Worship

The following are websites where you will find the place of worship either in the central business district or nearest to your home:

Churches

<http://www.australianchurches.net>

Mosques

<http://www.muslimaustralia.com.au>

Temples – Australia

http://www.hindunet.com.au/australian_temples.html

Other places of worship

There are places of worship in all major cities and suburbs. To get more information, please search the internet to check the nearest worship place near you.

Consulates and Diplomatic Representatives

The contact details of consulates and diplomatic representatives can be found from <http://www.dfat.gov.au/homs/index.html> or the telephone directory.

Getting Around Shopping

Refer to the Welcome Section of this guide for additional details.

Bargaining/Haggling

When shopping in Australia, you generally don't bargain or barter (also called haggling) for the price of an item. The displayed price for items is fixed and if Australian GST (Goods & Services Tax) is applicable it will already be included in the displayed price.

However, there are exceptions to this rule. There are places and circumstances in which it is perfectly acceptable to barter for the best price possible. These may include: at garage sales, community markets, second hand dealerships, or at electrical goods' stores, furniture shops, or when purchasing a motor vehicle if you are offering to pay in cash, or have seen the item at a competitor store for a better price.

If you are paying by CASH and, if you are buying more than one item, you may have more bargaining power. Begin the bargaining process by asking:

- "What's the best price you can give me?"

Or at a garage sale, you might pick up several items whose combined total is \$50 and say:

- "I'll offer you \$30 for all of these."

Purchasing an Item

The most common methods of purchasing items are by cash or EFTPOS. EFTPOS (Electronic Funds Transfer at Point of Sale) allows you to use the card attached to your Australian bank account to make purchases and withdraw cash at the same time (at the retailer's discretion) from more than 103,000 merchants across Australia. Just swipe your keycard through the EFTPOS card reader, select your account type and enter your PIN number. EFTPOS is available at most supermarkets, petrol stations and retail outlets. Just look for the EFTPOS sign. You can choose to make the EFTPOS transaction from your savings account, cheque account or credit card. You receive a printed receipt after each purchase and the transaction appears on your statement.

Yellow Pages

The Yellow Pages are a telephone directory or section of a directory (usually printed on yellow paper) where business products and services are listed alphabetically. They are a **GREAT time-saver** and very useful when you are looking for specific products or services. **"Let your fingers do the walking!"** These books may be provided in rental properties, and are available at Post Offices around Australia.

The website is: www.yellowpages.com.au.

Health

Emergencies – Dial 000



The Triple Zero (**000**) service is the quickest way to get the right emergency service to help you. It should be used to contact Police, Fire or Ambulance services in **life threatening or emergency situations only**. Emergency 000 lines should not be used for general medical assistance.



Police – Sydney City area

In Australia police protect people and properties, detect and prevent crime, and preserve peace for everyone. They are not connected to the military or politics. The police can help you feel safe. In a non-emergency situation, you can contact the local police station directly. The nearest Police Station near MEGA campus is:

Town Hall Police Station

570 George Street Sydney

NSW 2000

Tel: +61 2 9265 6595

Fax: +62 2 9265 6488

NOTE:

You may want to update your emergency contact to include your local Police Station for quick and immediate assistance and response. The number is listed in your local paper.

Fire

The fire brigade extinguishes fires, rescues people from fires in cars and buildings, and helps in situations where gas or chemicals become a danger. As soon as a fire starts call **000** no matter how small or large the fire may be.

Ambulance

Ambulances provide immediate medical attention and emergency transportation to hospital. Dial **000**

State Emergency Service

The State Emergency Service (**SES**) is an emergency and rescue service dedicated to providing assistance in natural disasters, rescues, road crashes and extreme weather conditions. It is made up almost entirely of volunteers and operates in all States and Territories in Australia. For emergency assistance in a **FLOOD** or **STORM** dial **132 500**.

Lifeline

Lifeline's **13 11 14** service is staffed by trained volunteer telephone counsellors who are ready to take calls 24-hour a day, any day of the week from anywhere in Australia. These volunteers operate from Lifeline Centres in every State and Territory around Australia.

Anyone can call Lifeline. The service offers a counselling service that respects everyone's right to be heard, understood and cared for. They also provide information about other support services that are available in communities around Australia. Lifeline telephone counsellors are ready to talk and listen no matter how big or how small the problem might seem. They are trained to offer emotional support in times of crisis or when callers may be feeling low or in need of advice.

Poisons Information Line

The poisons information line provides the public and health professionals with prompt, up-to-date and appropriate information, and advice to assist in the management of poisonings and suspected poisonings. The seriousness of a poisoning situation is assessed after a detailed history is obtained from the caller.

Members of the public may be then given first aid instructions, information on possible symptoms, and advised on the need for assessment by a doctor or referral to hospital. The Australia-wide **Poisons Information Centres** have a common telephone number: **131 126**.



Emergency Translation

For translation service in an emergency situation dial **1300 655 010**.

Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)

Overseas student health cover (OSHC) is insurance that provides cover for the costs of medical and hospital care which international students may need while in Australia and is mandatory for international student visa holders. OSHC will also cover the cost of emergency ambulance transport and most prescription drugs.

It is a student visa condition that all international students be covered by Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC). This is the minimum level of health insurance, which you and your dependents are required to purchase as **condition 8501** of your student visa. It is also a condition of your student visa that you maintain current OSHC for the duration of your study. Be aware that while OSHC represents excellent value in health insurance, it does not cover every medical circumstance or cost. You should note the exclusions given in the policy document.

How do I get OSHC?

You may be or have been asked for an OSHC payment in the education offer package you receive from MEGA. MEGA have a preferred provider agreement and don't need student to complete a formal application form. If not, you may need to complete an Application for OSHC which is available from registered OSHC providers and most educational institutions. MEGA can lodge your OSHC form and payment at time of processing your enrolment to study in Australia.

Only Australian health funds that have signed an agreement with the Australian Government can provide OSHC. Most Australian education institutions have a preferred OSHC provider. Depending on the institution you will be attending you will be required to join one of these four registered health funds. You may choose to change your health fund at anytime, but will need to abide by the conditions of change of the health fund provider you are leaving.

Provider	Website
Medibank Private	www.medibank.com.au
OSHC Worldcare	www.oshcworldcare.com.au
BUPA OSHC	www.oshc.bupa.com.au
Australian Health Management	www.ahm.com.au
NIB	www.nib.com.au
Allianz Global Assistance	www.oshcallianzassistance.com.au

Students may also take out additional cover in the form of Extra OSHC and students who could not previously access OSHC may now be able to access Optional OSHC. Some students may be exempt from enrolling in the OSHC such as students from countries whose Governments may have Reciprocal Health Agreements for students in Australia.

Note: Only some reciprocal health agreements cover students in Australia, some will only cover visitors. You should determine if you are eligible before you apply for your visa to come to Australia.

If you come to Australia on a visa other than a student visa and undertake **a short course of study of three months duration or less** you will not be eligible for OSHC. It is wise to purchase travel or private medical insurance in this case.



What am I covered for?

- The standard ('scheduled') fee for a consultation with a general practitioner. You will have to pay the difference if the doctor charges more than the standard fee
- 100% of the standard costs for a stay in a shared ward of a public hospital
- Emergency ambulance cover. Routine ambulance transportation is very expensive.

Most prescription drugs (except oral contraceptives). You pay a contribution and your provider pays the remainder.

What is not covered

- Dental, optical and physiotherapy
- Medical examinations (x-rays and pathology) required for student visa conditions
- Treatment for conditions in existence before you arrived in Australia.

For more information please visit the following websites:

www.health.gov.au/privatehealth/consumers/oshc.htm

www.oshcallianzassistance.com.au.

Further information on OSHC can be found at:

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/privatehealth-consumers-overseascover.htm>

How do I use my OSHC card?

If you need to visit a doctor or medical centre, show your card at the end of the visit. You will be charged the doctor's fee and the government fee component of that may be processed by the medical centre.

How do I make a claim?

If the medical centre is not able to process the government fee, pay the total amount, keep the receipt and you can claim the government fee back from your OSHC provider.

Please contact your OSHC provider for more information on how to make a claim.

Renewal information

It is your responsibility to keep your OSHC up to date. As a condition of your student visa you must have private health insurance for the length of your visa. If you have not purchased your cover for the length of your visa, and your stay is longer than the period of your original cover, you will need to renew it.

Please remember that the Australian Government requires that the minimum period of OSHC is 12 months or the length of your student visa, whichever is shorter. The maximum period is the length of your student visa.

Types of Health Care in Australia

The Australian healthcare system is mixed. Responsibilities for healthcare are divided between the Federal and State governments, and both the public and the private sectors play a role. Government programs underpin the key aspects of healthcare. Medicare, which is funded out of general tax revenue, pays for hospital and medical services. Medicare covers all Australian citizens, pays the entire cost of treatment in a public hospital, and reimburses for visits to doctors.

Public System

The major provider of healthcare services in Australia is the Public Health System (Medicare). The Public Health System provides a comprehensive free-of-charge healthcare service for all Australian citizens covering both hospital-based and community-based medical services. Public hospitals are owned by the State. One of the problems with such a system is that **waiting times in public hospitals can be extensive** due to a shortage of healthcare professionals and facilities.



Private System

Private hospitals provide about a quarter of all hospital beds in Australia. Private medical practitioners provide most non-bed medical services and perform a large proportion of hospital services alongside salaried doctors. Most dental services are provided by private practitioners. For Australians who take out private health insurance a range of services can be covered, such as access to your own Doctor in a private hospital, and extra services such as dental, optical and physiotherapy.

Attending an Australian Hospital

Few private hospitals have emergency departments, so, in an emergency, most Australians rely on the public hospital system. If you attend an Emergency Department in a hospital you will be attended to immediately by a triage nurse for information about you, your cover, and your current health condition. The triage nurse will determine the urgency of your condition in comparison to others in need in the emergency room and it is likely that you will remain at the emergency room for several hours. Whether you are seen immediately by a Doctor, or have to wait, it is customary to keep you in the emergency room for several hours to monitor your condition before releasing you to go home or admitting you to hospital in more severe cases.



There are extensive waiting times for elective surgeries at public hospitals, e.g. for orthopaedic surgery. One of the attractions of health insurance is the ability to bypass public hospital waiting lists and go through the private system.

Private hospitals are very expensive for treatment and hospitalisation. Your OSHC will cover some of the cost of some private hospitals but you will have to pay the difference.

Your health insurance (OSHC) covers the total cost of accommodation in a shared ward of a public hospital. It also pays for the 'schedule fee' for the doctor but you will have to pay the difference if the doctor's fee is higher than the 'schedule fee'.

General Practitioners (GPs)

In Australia you do not have to go to a hospital to see a doctor. You can see a doctor (also known as a **GP – General Practitioner**) in their private practice or medical centre, with part or the entire doctor's fee being covered by Medicare or OSHC. **You must make an appointment to see a GP.** It is important to note that some GP surgeries will request full payment from you at the time of consultation and you will need to present the receipt to claim the rebate back from your health cover provider.



Medical Services

What do I do if I'm sick?

Choose a doctor from the list of medical facilities in this guide or use the Yellow Pages and phone the GP's surgery or medical centre to make an appointment. If you have woken in the morning feeling unwell and would like to see a doctor that day, you will need to phone the doctor's surgery early in the morning (8:00am – 8:30am) for an appointment. Please note however, that it may not be possible to get an appointment on the same day - you may have to wait one or two days before you can see a doctor (in some regional areas of Australia it may be a week or two before you can get an appointment).

If you need help, please contact our Student Services and Support Officer:

Tel: +61 2 9299 6788

L9, 225 Clarence Street SYDNEY NSW 2000

Seeing a Doctor

When you attend your appointment, the doctor will ask you questions about your health and may give you a brief physical examination, such as checking your breathing, your throat, ears etc. The doctor will then give you some advice regarding management of your illness, and may give you a prescription for some medication. If you have had, or need to take time off studies you will need to get a medical certificate from the doctor to provide to MEGA. If your illness is more serious or the doctor is unsure of a diagnosis she or he may refer you for further tests e.g. blood tests or x-rays, or to see a specialist Doctor. It is important to note that if you are dissatisfied with the diagnosis or service of the Doctor you see, you have the right to obtain an opinion from another Doctor.

Public Hospital Waiting Times



If you cannot get an appointment with a GP and want to go to a public hospital to see a doctor, you may find a public hospital which has a general practice clinic attached. If not, and you attend an emergency room to see a Doctor, be prepared to **wait a VERY long time**. It is not uncommon to wait **more than 3 hours**, and at some hospitals you could wait as long as **5-6 hours** to see a doctor. It is common practice for a doctor or a nurse to make an initial assessment of your condition when you first arrive to prioritise the emergencies in the hospital.

You will be seen as soon as the most urgent patients have been attended to. It is also common to remain in the emergency room for some time after a doctor has attended to you before you are instructed you can leave. Emergency department rules may include keeping you a little longer to observe you and ensure that your condition does not change and it is safe to send you home with the recommended treatment. It is the same for all patients – international students and Australian citizens alike.

Pharmacies

GP surgeries do not have medications to dispense to you. You must take the prescription given to you by the doctor to a Pharmacy or Chemist to obtain the medication. You will need to provide the pharmacy with your OSHC card, your full name and address. You are able to walk in off the street to any pharmacy/chemist in Australia and will only have to wait a short while for your prescription medicine to be prepared.

Prescription Medication

Medication prescribed by your doctor is not free. You must pay the pharmacy. Some costs can be claimed back from your OSHC provider. Many pharmacists will offer you the option of having a "generic" brand of medicine. If the prescription medicine the Doctor has prescribed is also made available by a company which produces generic brands at cheaper prices, this option will be offered to you. This is **ONLY** offered if the content of the medicine is exactly the same as that prescribed by your Doctor. It will, however, assist you to pay less for your medicine.

Over-the-Counter Medication

Pharmacies/chemists also provide a variety of over-the-counter medications useful for treating colds, headaches, allergies and the like which do not require a prescription. Ask the pharmacist on duty for advice regarding the best medication for your symptoms. Ensure that you advise the pharmacist of any other medications you may be taking.

Dental and Optical

Dental and optical health services are **not covered by your OSHC** unless you take out extra cover. If you need to see a dentist or optometrist you will need to make an appointment (see the Yellow Pages) and pay the full fee of this service.

Interpreter Services

We are lucky in Australia to have a variety of healthcare professionals from many different cultural backgrounds, so you may be able to see a doctor who speaks your first language. However, if you are having difficulties communicating with your doctor, the **Translation and Interpreter Service (TIS)** can be used. For more information visit www.homeaffairs.gov.au or phone **131 881**.

Payment of medical consultations

Following your consultation, you need to pay for your visit at the reception and you will receive a receipt. Take this receipt to your nearest Medical Insurance office and complete the required form. Present this form and receipt to receive a refund. If you are unable to make payment following your consultation, you will receive an account, which should be taken to your health insurer's office. You will receive a cheque by mail, which you must then forward to the doctor.

Non-emergencies

In Australia, people do not go to a hospital for non-emergency health concerns; their first point of call is a local doctor- General Practitioner (GP). It is usual to visit a doctor's clinic after first telephoning to make an appointment. People tend to visit the same doctor each time they are sick who keeps a record of their past visits. You can ask a friend to recommend a doctor they like or look in the Yellow Pages telephone directory under Medical Practitioners for a comprehensive list of doctors. The Student Services and Support Manager/Officer at the MEGA can give you some nearby doctor's clinic options and foreign language clinics if you would prefer.

Visiting a Dentist

You can ask a friend to recommend a dentist or alternatively Student Services and Support Manager/Officer can provide you with some nearby dentist clinics.

Medical Facilities in Sydney

Hospitals & Medical Services in Sydney

- [Blacktown Hospital](#)
- [Canterbury Hospital](#) - a metropolitan hospital with links to Concord Repatriation General and Royal Prince Alfred Hospitals and the University of Sydney
- [The Children's Hospital at Westmead](#) - provides community medical care and paediatric emergency as well as tertiary level paediatric services, with New South Wales' Liver Transplant Unit and Burns



Unit, the national Poisons Information Centre and other state and national services located at the hospital

- [Concord Hospital](#) - a teaching hospital of the University of Sydney offering a comprehensive range of specialty and sub-specialty services
- [Dalcross Private Hospital](#) - specialises in neurosurgery, spinal surgery, vascular surgery and ophthalmology
- [Greenwich Hospital](#)
- [Hirondelle Private Hospital](#) - an acute care hospital providing medical, post-operative and rehabilitation care
- [Hunters Hill Private Hospital](#) - a surgical, medical and rehabilitation hospital, owned and operated by Ramsay Health Care
- [Liverpool Hospital](#)
- [Lottie Stewart Hospital](#) - provides special care for special needs within a Christian environment and houses a ward which cares for patients with Huntington Disease
- [Macquarie University Hospital](#) - mental health facility offering acute admission, non-acute recovery and extended care programs for adults with a mental illness/disorder who reside within the Northern Sydney Central Coast Health catchment area
- [Manly Waters Private Hospital](#) - licensed with the NSW Health Department and fully accredited with the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards
- [Mount Druitt Hospital](#) - operates under the governance of Sydney West Area Health Service but retains strong linkages with the Catholic Church
- [Mt Wilga Private Hospital](#) - offers specialist rehabilitation services, incorporating a diverse range of programs for inpatients, day patients and outpatients
- [Nepean Hospital](#) - a major referral hospital with services including maternity, gynaecology, neonatal intensive care, emergency, diagnostics, paediatric, surgical, intensive care, coronary care, rehabilitation and mental health
- [Neringah Hospital](#)
- [The Prince Of Wales Hospital](#) - a major teaching hospital based in Sydney's eastern suburbs that serves all of New South Wales
- [Royal Hospital For Women](#) - a leading research and teaching hospital in the field of women's health
- [South East Sydney Illawarra Health - hospitals and facilities](#)
- [The Prince of Wales Hospital](#), Randwick, is a major teaching hospital based in Sydney's eastern suburbs that serves all of New South Wales
- [Royal Hospital for Women](#), Randwick
- [Royal North Shore Hospital](#), St Leonards - is a major hospital based in the Northshore
- [Ryde Hospital](#) - Eastwood
- [St George Hospital and Community Health Services](#), Kogarah
- [Sutherland Hospital and Community Health Service](#), Caringbah, is a general district hospital located approximately 30 minutes drive south from Sydney CBD
- [Sydney Sexual Health Centre](#)
- [War Memorial Hospital](#), Waverley
- [South Pacific Private Hospital](#) - offers a range of fully accredited treatment programs for depression, anxiety, addictions, relationship issues, disordered eating or other compulsive behaviours
- [St George Hospital](#) - part of South East Health, offering a comprehensive range of inpatient and community-based health services
- [St Joseph's Hospital](#) - a public hospital within Western Sydney Area Health Service and a facility of the Sisters of Charity Health Service



- [St Vincent's Hospital](#) one of Australia's leading teaching, research and acute care Hospitals
- [Sydney Adventist Hospital](#) - a modern acute care facility with on-site diagnostic and therapeutic services
- [Sydney Children's Hospital](#) - provides a complex and comprehensive range of services in paediatric and adolescent medicine and surgery as well as child protection
- [Sydney Hospital & Sydney Eye Hospital](#) - focusing on ophthalmology, hands, sexual health, drug and alcohol, HIV/Aids, ear, nose and throat, emergency and orthopaedic care
- [The Sydney Private Hospital](#)
- [War Memorial Hospital](#) - an affiliated hospital under the governance of the Uniting Church in Australia
- [Westmead Hospital](#) - includes a dental MEGA, a unit for emotionally disturbed children, and an extensive accident and emergency and outpatient's service.

Medical Centres

Name	Address	Phone
George Street Medical Centre	308 George Street, Sydney NSW 2000	9239 1677
CBD Medical Practice	Ground Floor, 70 Pitt Street, Sydney, NSW 2000	9231 1000
Centrepont Medical Centre	Level 1, 100 Market Street, Sydney, NSW 2000	9231 1955
Castlereagh Medical Practice	242 Castlereagh Street, Sydney, NSW 2000	9283 1234

Note:

There are medical centres in most suburbs. Please check your local community guide for details and location of the nearest medical centre in the area you intend to live.

X-ray

Name	Address	Phone
City X Ray	Lower Ground Floor 135 Macquarie Street, Sydney NSW 2000	9231 5133

Pathology

Name	Address	Phone
S D S Pathology	401-403 Sussex Street, Sydney, NSW 2000	(02) 9211 3365
Douglas Hanly Moir Pathology	304-308 George Street, Sydney, NSW 2000	(02) 9221 5560

Pharmacies

Name	Address	Phone
WU's Pharmacy	629 George Street, Sydney, NSW 2000	(02) 9211 1805
Redmond Fuss Pharmacy	730-742 George Street, Sydney, NSW 2000	(02) 9211 5805
PAVILLION PHARMACY	580 George Street, Sydney, NSW 2000	(02) 9264 7779



General Health

Maintaining good health is of vital importance when studying abroad. While living in another environment is a good way to change a daily routine, it is important for students who are experiencing difficulties in their own country (relationship, health, emotional, substance abuse, etc.) not to expect a vacation from their problems.

Going abroad **is not** a “geographic cure” for concerns and problems at home (that is, thinking that you can solve your personal dilemmas by moving from one place to another). Sometimes students feel that a change of venue will help them to move past their current problems. However, living and studying in a foreign environment frequently creates **unexpected physical and emotional stress, which can exacerbate otherwise mild disorders**.

It is important that all students are able to adjust to potentially dramatic changes in climate, diet, living, and study conditions that may seriously disrupt accustomed patterns of behavior. In particular, if students are concerned about their use of alcohol and other controlled drugs or if they have an emotional or physical health concern, they should address it honestly before making plans to travel and study abroad.

(Source: Education Abroad Program, UCLA)

Mental Health

Moving to a new country and culture different from your own can be very difficult. Although a change in culture is exciting, you may experience some “culture shock”. The people, customs and language are unfamiliar and not always easy to understand and it is very common to feel homesick. Remember- it is only temporary!

What is “culture shock”?

It is a feeling of nervousness, fear and general unhappiness that is experienced when a person is living in a culture different from their own. It happens to everyone, but in different ways. For some people it is mild and does not take long to pass. For others it is stronger and makes them want to go straight home and so miss the opportunity to learn lots of new things.

What to do

Remember, you are not alone, and help is at hand. Try to make new friends in Australia as they can become your support and share your experiences with you. A good way to do this is to be friendly to people at MEGA and also to get involved in as many activities as you can (for example sports clubs, church groups etc.). Hopefully this booklet can help you anticipate some of the challenges that lie ahead of you.

WHERE TO GO FOR HELP?

Student Services

The Student Services and Support Officer is available to assist you with any aspect of your life and study in Australia, such as adjusting to life in Australia or to a new education system, dealing with personal and emotional issues, managing with a disability, or other issues that may be impacting on your wellbeing. The Student Services and Support Officer is also able to provide you with referrals to other professional services that you may require. This is a free and confidential service.

Please contact the Student Services and Support Officer via telephone, email or you can visit MEGA Campus in person on L9, 225 Clarence Street, Sydney.

Physical Health

A big part of staying healthy involves eating healthy foods, and getting enough exercise for fitness and relaxation. Nutrition Australia provides some great information about healthy eating, exercise and lifestyle on its website www.nutritionaustralia.org.

- ☑ Exercise – do at least 30 mins of moderate exercise a day
- ☑ Sleep – get at least 8-9 hours of sleep a night
- ☑ Nutrition – keep a balanced diet remembering to eat lots of vegetables and fruit everyday
- ☑ Binge drinking – limit your consumption of alcohol and avoid binge drinking. Binge drinking describes the habit of drinking to excess when you do drink, with little or no understanding of your limits to accommodate the amount of alcohol in your blood.



Useful Links for Healthy Living:

www.health.nsw.gov.au

www.eatforhealth.gov.au

Sexual Health

Taking care of your sexual health means more than being free from sexually transmissible infections or diseases (STIs or STDs); it also means taking responsibility for your body, your health, your partner's health and your decisions about sex. Talk freely to your partner to ensure you are both ready for sex. **Always use condoms** as condoms are the only form of contraception that protects against STIs (Sexually Transmitted Infections) and unplanned pregnancy. But girls should also consider a form of contraception to ensure safety against an unplanned pregnancy. If you have any sexual health concerns consult your GP.

Sexual Health Information:

www.health.gov.au/health-topics/sexual-health

Sexual helpline: 0300 123 7123

Alternative Therapies

Examples of alternative therapies are: acupuncture, aromatherapy, traditional Chinese medicine, chiropractic, homeopathy, massage, meditation, naturopathy, yoga etc.

Name	General Information	Category
City Clinic Acupuncture	Address: 7/50, King Street Sydney NSW 2000 Email: admin@cityclinic.com.au Phone: 02-9304 5000	Acupuncture. Offers medical services such as acupuncture, chiropractic, osteopathy and physiotherapy.
Back On Your Feet	Address: Level 5, 1/187 Macquarie Street Sydney NSW 2000 Email: scott@backonyourfeet.com.au Website: http://www.backonyourfeet.com.au Phone: 02-8034 8584	Acupuncture. Specialising in stress related illness. Services include: acupuncture, massage, auricular therapy and feng shui consultation.
Chinese Medicine & Herbal Centre of Sydney	Address: 392- 394 Sussex Street Sydney NSW 2000 Phone: 02-9261 8863	Herbalists. Chinese herbalists in Sydney city.
Wholistic Medical Centre	Address: 1st Floor, 17 Randle Street, Surrey Hills NSW 2010 Email: info@wholisticmedicalcentre.com.au Website: http://www.wholisticmedicalcentre.com.au/ Phone: 02-9211 3811	Holistic Medicine. A large team of doctors and natural therapists.

Managing my Finances

Money

You should be aware of the cost of studying and living in Australia and organise adequate funds before departing. You will need to bring about \$1,500 - \$2,000 Australian Dollars in cash, to cover expenses in Australia for the first two to three weeks. You should also organise other funds to be drawn when required from an Australian bank. You can either bring a bank draft or have the money sent by electronic transfer to your bank account. This may take 3-4 days. It is better to transfer the funds electronically when depositing large sums of money into bank accounts.

Currency

The Australian Dollar (AUD\$) is the basic unit of exchange and is divided into unit values of 100 cents to each dollar. Both paper notes and coins are used.

Notes

Notes are different in colour and denominations are as followed:

- \$5 (purple/lilac)
- \$10 (blue)
- \$20 (red)
- \$50 (yellow)
- \$100 (green).

Coin

Coins are either silver or gold and denominations are as followed:

- \$2 (small gold)
- \$1 (larger gold)
- 50c (large 12 sided silver coin)
- 20c, 10c, 5c (all silver coins which increase in size as they increase in value)

Initial Expenses

Living Costs

Provided below is an approximate price guide for typical daily items. This is only a guide so priced may vary depending on the brand, type of store and its location.

Food	Personal Effects/Services
Milk, 1 Litre- \$2.80	Unleaded Petrol, per litre- \$1.60
Bread, 1 Loaf- \$2.90	Shoes, 1 pair- \$60
Apples, 1 Kilo- \$3.50	Jeans, 1 pair- \$60
Potatoes, Kilo- \$4.00	Toothpaste, 140g tube- \$2.50
Beefsteak, 1 Kilo- \$14.00	Shampoo, 500ml bottle- \$5
Eggs, 1 Dozen- \$3.50	Toilet Paper, 6 rolls- \$4.50
Cereal, 1 Box- \$4.00	T-Shirt- \$20
Instant Noodles, 1 packet- \$1.20	Haircut- \$25 (Male), \$45 (female)
Tea Bags, Box of 10- \$2.70	Local Newspaper- \$1.40
Fruit Juice, 2 Litres- \$4.50	International Newspaper- \$3-\$6
	Cinema Ticket- \$16.50 to \$17.00 (student concession)

When thinking about your budget, remember that you are responsible for paying

- Tuition fees
- Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)
- Accommodation costs
- Living expenses including food, power, telephone, transport and entertainment
- Stationary
- Clothes
- Emergency expenses.

As a guide, allow at least \$300 per week for these living expenses. For a single student you will need around \$15,000 per year excluding tuition fees. This amount depends on your living arrangements, the type of food you buy and the amount of money you spend on entertainment. Married students should budget for an additional 35%. Owning a car, a mobile phone and having a computer linked to the Internet will see your living costs increased considerably.

This is an example of some of the expenses you might encounter when you first come to Australia:

Expenses	Estimated Cost
Temporary accommodation	\$250
Rental bond (four weeks rent @ \$---/week)	\$1,000
Advance rent (two weeks @ \$---/week)	\$500
Electricity connection	\$200
Telephone connection	\$150
Gas connection	\$100
Internet connection	\$60
Mobile phone and/or network sim card	\$200
Household items, e.g. furniture, crockery, etc.	\$1,500
Transportation	\$300
Textbooks & Educational Expenses	\$800
Incidentals	\$1,000
Insurance – house, car, health	\$500
TOTAL:	\$6,560

Setting up a Bank Account

You can choose to open an account in any Bank, Credit Union or Building Society in Australia. Do your research to get the best deal.

To open a bank account, you will need:

- your passport (with arrival date stamped by Australian immigration)
- student ID card
- money to deposit into the account (this can be as little as \$10).

Anyone who wishes to open a bank account in Australia must show several pieces of personal identification which are allotted a points system. 100 points of identification is required to establish your identity as the person who will be named in 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 be required to produce additional documentation.

As a student you will be able to open an account with special student benefits. Many banks have 'Student Accounts' which contain no or minimal fees for transactions that might normally be attached to regular savings accounts. You will also require the student ID card from MEGA to prove you are a student and should have access to the benefits offered by a student bank account.

For a comparison of accounts in banks throughout Australia see: <http://www.banks.com.au/personal/accounts/>



Most people in Australia enjoy the convenience of **Internet banking** and/or **Telephone banking**, which enables them to manage their money, pay bills etc. from home. At the time you are setting up your account you can request these services from your bank.

Banks

BANK	WEBSITE
National Australia Bank	www.nab.com.au
ANZ	http://www.anz.com.au
Commonwealth Bank	http://www.commbank.com.au
Westpac Bank	http://www.westpac.com.au
St. George Bank	http://www.stgeorge.com.au
Credit Union Australia	http://www.cua.com.au
Bankwest	www.bankwest.com.au

(NB – this list is just a sample of some financial institutions in Australia)

Bank & ATM Locations near MEGA

NAB

- World Square
684-686 George Street, Sydney, NSW 2000
- 292 Pitt Street, Sydney, NSW 2000

ANZ

- Corner York & Market Streets, Sydney NSW 2000
- 365 George Street, Sydney 2000 NSW

Commonwealth Bank

- 546-548 George Street, Town Hall, Sydney NSW 2000
- Ground floor, 46 Market Street, Sydney NSW 2000

Westpac

- 341 George Street, Sydney NSW 2000
- Corner Market & Clarence Streets, Sydney NSW 2000

St George Bank

- 316 George Street, Sydney NSW 2000

Credit Union

- 83 York Street, Sydney NSW 2000

Banking Hours

Most bank branches are open from **Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 4:00pm** (except on public holidays). Some branches have extended trading hours during the week and may be open Saturdays (check with your individual bank). **ATMs remain open 24 hours a day.** However, you should be aware of your personal safety if accessing cash from an ATM at night in quiet areas where there are not a lot of people around.

Bank Fees

Bank fees are **the price you pay for the products and services that banks offer**. Different banks charge different fees for different products and services, and the best way to find out what fees apply is simply to ask your bank. Any fees that apply to your accounts are fully disclosed in information leaflets and terms and conditions that your bank can provide before you open your account. **Some banks waive some fees if you are a full-time student.** The way you do your banking may also affect the fees that apply for example: internet banking rather than walking into a branch.

If you don't understand any fee which has been charged, contact your bank.



Accessing Money from My Account

Bank accounts offer lots of options for accessing your money. Some of the most popular options are described below.

ATMs (Automatic Teller Machines)

ATMs can be used to withdraw cash from an account by using the ATM card which is available with most bank accounts. You can also use ATMs to get an account balance and transfer money into other accounts. Some ATMs also allow you to deposit cash and cheques into your account. Using the ATMs of your bank will generally cost less money than if you use another bank's ATMs. Fees for using ATMs can vary between banks and between accounts.

See also: Using an ATM.

EFTPOS

Short for 'Electronic Funds Transfer at Point Of Sale', EFTPOS terminals can be found where goods or services are sold, for example, supermarkets, service stations, restaurants, doctors' surgeries and gymnasiums.

You can pay for goods and make payments through EFTPOS using your ATM card, rather than paying with cash. At some stores, when you use EFTPOS you can also withdraw cash from your account at the same time. You should be aware that there are some retailers who put limits on how much cash can be withdrawn which may be dependent on the amount which is spent in the store.

When paying by EFTPOS, you also use your PIN to access your account. The same rules apply about keeping the PIN confidential and never handing it over to anyone. Be careful no-one is looking over your shoulder when you enter your PIN. See: Using an ATM.

Telephone Banking

You can use telephone banking to transfer payments to and from accounts, get your account balances, get recent transaction information and pay bills. You will need to register with the bank to use telephone banking and will then be given a password or an identification number that allows you to access your accounts over the phone. It's important never to give your password to anyone else.

Internet Banking

Internet banking allows you to view and check your accounts, review recent transactions, apply for loans and credit cards, or transfer money and pay bills – all on-line. Most banks offer Internet banking facilities, but you will need to register with your bank to gain access. You will then be given a password that allows you to use your accounts on-line. Never give this password to anyone else.

There are security issues that need to be considered when using Internet banking. It is recommended that you install and keep up-to-date anti-virus software and a firewall, update security patches and be suspicious of emails requesting you to hand over confidential information such as your Internet banking logon password.

Your bank will never ask you for this information, especially in an email. In addition, many banks publish security guides on their websites and this provides important information on precautions that you can take to protect your information on-line. If you are unsure about any approach that appears to be from your bank to provide personal information. Refuse to provide that information until you can attend your nearest branch to discuss the request over the counter with bank staff. There is no charge for discussing your banking options at a branch.

Over-the-Counter Service

You can also go into a branch of your bank and, with the assistance of bank staff, conduct transactions including withdrawals, deposits, transfers, and account balance checks. If you do not have a branch close by, you may be able to visit an agency of your branch, such as an Australia Post outlet, to conduct certain transactions. Bear in mind that over-the-counter transactions usually incur higher fees than electronic transactions.

Paying Bills

Most bank accounts offer lots of easy options for paying bills. Transaction accounts with cheque book facilities allow you to pay bills by cheque, and most transaction accounts and savings accounts allow you to pay bills electronically (e.g., using facilities such as telephone banking, Internet banking) and using direct debits.

A note of caution on direct debits – they are a convenient way to pay everyday bills, but always make sure you've got enough money in your account to cover the cost of the debit. If your pay or allowance goes into

your account on a certain date, make sure your direct debit payments are scheduled to come out of your account after your pay goes in, or you might end up with an overdrawn account or a dishonoured payment – both can cost you money.

Account/Bank Statements

Most banks will provide regular statements for your accounts (just how regular can depend on the type of account). On request, banks will provide statements on a deposit account at more frequent intervals, but this may attract a fee.

Soft copies of bank statements are readily available via internet. Bank statements are your record of everything that has happened in your account over a given period – the withdrawals, deposits and transfers that were made, and any bank fees and government taxes you were charged.

Telephone and Internet banking can make it easy to check your statements, and some banks even offer 'mini statements' through their own ATMs.

Check your statements regularly to make sure you've got enough money in your account to cover your expenses and keep track of your spending, as well as make sure that all transactions made in your account are legitimate. Refer to your statements to see what fees you are paying on your bank accounts and why, and to see whether a few simple changes to your banking habits could help you to reduce the fees you pay (for example, using your own bank's ATMs instead of other banks' ATMs).

(Source: Australian Bankers' Association Inc.)

Using an ATM

You will be given a PIN (Personal Identification Number) which you will enter into the ATM to access your account. It is the key to your account and it is important that you never tell anyone your PIN.

A bank or reputable business will never ask you for your PIN. If anyone does, be suspicious, don't hand it over and report the incident to the bank and the police. Be careful no-one is looking over your shoulder when you enter your PIN.

These general rules should be followed for **ATM safety**, especially at night:

- Minimise your time at the ATM by having your card ready when you approach the machine
- Take a look around as you approach the ATM and if there's anything suspicious, don't use the machine at that time (report any suspicions to the police)
- If you don't feel comfortable using a particular ATM, consider continuing on to another branch or using off-street ATMs
- Do remember that EFTPOS can be used to withdraw cash at many other places, like supermarkets and service stations
- If you simply want to check your account balance or transfer funds between accounts, telephone or Internet banking can be used instead of an ATM
- If your ATM or credit card is lost or stolen (or if your PIN has been revealed to another person), notify your bank immediately. This will enable your bank to put a stop on your card immediately so that no one else can use it and get access to your money. Most banks have a 24-hour telephone number for reporting lost cards – it's a good idea to keep a record of this number handy at all times, just in case. If you don't know the number, ask your bank.



(Source: Australian Bankers' Association Inc.)

Safety When Carrying Money

The first and fundamental rule of safety when carry money is:

"Don't carry large amounts of cash!"

The second is:

"Don't advertise the fact that you are carrying money!"

- Divide your cash into different locations on your person (front pocket, coat pocket, shoes, etc.)
- Keep your wallet in one of your front pockets at all times
- Do not carry cash in a backpack or back pocket
- Sew a small money pocket into the cuff of a trouser, sleeve of a shirt or even a bra
- Divide your bank/credit cards and keep them in separate locations
- Do not place money or valuables in lockers
- Be very careful how you carry your handbag, and never leave it open for someone to slip their hand inside.

Working in Australia

Permission to Work

Students granted student visas will automatically receive permission to work with their visa grant. Please note that you will NOT be able to work in Australian until the first official day of classes when the education provider will confirm your study commencement. Your education provider may do this automatically on the first official day of classes, or you may need to request that they do.

Working While Studying

1. You are not permitted to start work until you have commenced your course of study
2. You can work a maximum of 40 hours per fortnight (2 weeks) during the term and unlimited hours when your course is not in session
3. The Department of Home Affairs (DHA) considers your course to be 'in session':
 - a. for the duration of the advertised terms including periods when exams are being held
 - b. if you have completed your studies and your Confirmation of Enrolment is still in effect
 - c. if you are undertaking another course, during a break from your main course and the points will be credited to your main course.

(Source: Department of Home Affairs)

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



www.homeaffairs.gov.au/students/visa-conditions-students

Finding Work

You may find it difficult to find work in Australia as you will be joining the general Australian population in your search; therefore, you should not rely on income from employment when budgeting to pay for living expenses. There is no guarantee that employment companies will find work for you.

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

- Newspapers
- University Job Boards
- Online - try these online companies:

	www.seek.com.au
	www.careerone.com.au
	www.mycareer.com.au
	www.jobsinoz.com.au
	www.jobsearch.com.au

(Source: Online search)

Earning an Income

Taxes

Taxes are managed through the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). The tax you pay depends on how much you earn.

Getting a Tax File Number

You must obtain a Tax File Number to be able to work in Australia. A tax file number (TFN) is your unique reference number to our tax system. When you start work, your employer will ask you to complete a tax file number declaration form. If you do not provide a TFN your employment will be taxed at the highest personal income tax rate, which will mean less money in your wages each week.

You can apply for your TFN online at www.ato.gov.au, or phone **13 28 61**, 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday. For the ATO translating and interpreter service phone: **13 14 50**.

Taxation Returns

If you pay too much tax you are entitled to a refund. To get a refund you will 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.

- Lodge online using e-tax at www.ato.gov.au
- For a registered tax agent visit www.tpb.gov.au/taxagents
- Tax returns are lodged at the end of the Australian tax year – (1 July to 30 June).

Superannuation

Your employer must contribute an additional sum equal to 9.5% of your wage into a superannuation (pension) 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 your superannuation and to apply for your payment, visit:
www.ato.gov.au/departaustralia

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

(Source: Australian Taxation Office)

Laws and Safety in Australia



Obeying the Law

One of the reasons we have such a wonderful lifestyle in Australia is due to our representative democracy, the separation of powers, and our respect for the rule of law. We have a lot of laws in Australia and as a result, society runs smoothly.

In being granted a visa to study in Australia, you signed a document (Australian Values Statement Temporary) agreeing to **respect Australian values** and **obey the laws of Australia** for the duration of your stay. Failure to comply with the laws of this land (including State and Territory laws) could result in a fine or the cancellation of your visa and possible deportation back home. If you are convicted of a serious crime, it could result in imprisonment. Nobody wants this to happen!

You can find a comprehensive outline of Australian law and the legal system at: <http://www.australia.gov.au>;
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Outline_of_Australia#Law_and_order_in_Australia

Legal Services & Advice

If you do break the law are arrested and need to attend a court appearance you will need legal representation to negotiate Australia's complex legal system.

Contact person: Vincent Zhu

Law firm: Auyeung Hencent & Day Lawyers

Address: Level 30, 133 Castlereagh Street, Sydney, NSW, 2000

Phone: (02) 8006-5377

Fax: (02) 8006-5388

Email: legal@ahdlawyers.com.au

Child Protection Laws

Refer to section 2 of this guide for further details.

Jurisdiction	Legislation
Australian Capital Territory (Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services) http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/	Principal Acts: Children and Young People Act 1999 (ACT) Other relevant Acts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption Act 1993 (ACT) • Human Rights Act 2004 (ACT) • Human Rights Commission Act 2005 (ACT) • Public Advocate Act 2005 (ACT) • Family Law Act 1975 (Cth).

<p>New South Wales (Department of Community Services) http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/</p>	<p>Principal Acts: Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)</p> <p>Other relevant Acts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Amendment (Parental Responsibility Contracts) Act 2006 (NSW) • Child Protection (Offenders Registration) Act 2000 (NSW) • Crimes Act 1900 (NSW) • Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998 (NSW) • The Ombudsman Act 1974 (NSW) • Family Law Act 1975 (Cth).
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(Source: Australian Institute of Family Studies)

Home Security

House-breaking is one of the most common crimes. Most house break-ins appear to be crimes of opportunity with entry gained through an open or unlocked window or door. Most intruders are looking for (and often find) a house **left open or unlocked** where they can get what they want with ease and make a quick getaway.

Some General Security Tips:

- Your house number should be clearly visible from the street in case of an emergency
- Keep your front door locked when you are at the back of the house
- Do not leave messages on the front door. It lets people know you are not home
- Avoid having parcels left on the door step
- If you have to have something delivered while you are out, have the neighbours collect it
- When out, leave a radio or television on or a light in the evening to give the impression you are home
- Keep cash and valuables out of sight.



Home Security is an issue for you to consider when you are deciding on a place to live. Windows and doors should preferably have security screens or locks; doors should have dead-bolts, a security chain and a peep hole; and if the property has an alarm system – that would also make it an excellent choice.

Contents Insurance

It is recommended that if you are in a rental property that you obtain **Contents Insurance** for your belongings. This is a form of house insurance that insures the contents of the house. Landlords will usually have House Insurance but your belongings will not be covered. Contents insurance will replace your belongings if your house is robbed and your belongings are damaged or stolen, or you have a house fire and your belongings are destroyed or damaged. This may cost you up to \$200 per year depending on the value of your belongings.

Internet Safety & Security

Internet Access on Arrival

Internet cafes are located in most major cities or book a computer at a community library.

We offer internet access at our campus to help you in your studies and to communicate with your family. You will have internet access during weekdays from 8:30 am – 9:30 pm. If the MEGA is closed you can use internet cafes that are located in the Sydney CBD area.



Please see the Front Office/Reception area for assistance.

The internet has now become an essential business, social, entertainment and educational resource for most Australians. The increasing level of economic transactions on the internet is making it the focus of criminal activities. It is important that internet users protect themselves from falling prey to these activities. The following tips list some simple precautions you can take to minimise the chances of becoming a victim of online criminals:

- **Install anti-virus and other security software**, such as anti-spyware and anti-spam software. Use and update this software regularly
- **Regularly download and install the latest security patches for your computer software**, including your web-browser. Use automatic software security updates where possible
- **Use a firewall** and make sure it is turned on. Firewalls help prevent unauthorised access to, and communications from, your computer
- **Delete suspect emails immediately**. Don't open these emails
- **Don't click on links in suspect emails**. Visiting websites through clicking on links in suspect emails may result in malware (malicious software), such as a 'trojan', being downloaded to your computer. This is a commonly used and effective means of compromising your computer
- **Only open an attachment to an email where the sender and the contents of the attachment are known to you**
- **Don't download files or applications from suspect websites**. The file or application could be malware. Sometimes the malware may even be falsely represented as e-security software designed to protect you
- **Use long and random passwords** for any application that provides access to your personal identity information, including logging onto your computer. Don't use dictionary words as a password. Ideally, the password should be eight or more characters in length. Change passwords regularly
- **Use a limited permission account for browsing the web, creating documents, reading email, and playing games**. If your operating system allows you to create a limited permission account, this can prevent malicious code from being installed onto your computer. A 'limited permission' account is an account that does not have 'Administrator' status.

(Source: Australian Communications and Media Authority)

Personal Safety



When you are out and about it is important to be alert and aware of your personal safety.

*If you are **going out at night** remember:*

- Think ahead - consider how you are going to get home - what about pre-booking a taxi or arranging transport with a friend or family member?
- Never hitch-hike
- Make sure that you stay with your party and that someone knows where you are at all times
- Make sure you have enough money to get home or to phone
- Keep away from trouble - if you see any trouble or suspect that it might be about to start - move away from the scene if you can. The best thing you can do is to alert the police and keep away
- Walk purposely and try to appear confident. Be wary of casual requests from strangers, like someone asking for a cigarette or change - they could have ulterior motives
- Try not to carry your wallet in your back trouser pocket where it is vulnerable and in clear view
- Do not leave your drink unattended in a pub to avoid drink spiking.

*If you are **out and about**:*

- Be alert to your surroundings and the people around you, especially if you are alone or it is dark
- Whenever possible, travel with a friend or as part of a group
- Stay in well-lit areas as much as possible

- Walk confidently and at a steady pace
- Make eye contact with people when walking - let them know that you have noticed their presence
- Do not respond to conversation from strangers on the street or in a car - continue walking
- Be aware of your surroundings, and avoid using personal stereos or radios - you might not hear trouble approaching
- Always keep your briefcase or bag in view and close to your body
- Be discrete with your cash or mobile phones
- When going to your car or home, have your keys in your hand and easily accessible
- Consider carrying a personal attack alarm
- If you do not have a mobile phone, make sure that you have a phone card or change to make a phone call, but remember - Emergency 000 calls are free of charge.

(Source: Australian Federal Police)

Public Transport Safety

Travelling on public transport should be a safe and comfortable experience. Numerous security measures have been adopted to maximise the safety of travellers including: security officers, police, guards, help points, good lighting and security cameras. Most drivers also have two-way radios and can call for assistance.

Buses

Waiting for a bus:

- Avoid isolated bus stops
- Stand away from the curb until the bus arrives
- Don't open your purse or wallet while boarding the bus - have your money/pass already in hand
- At night, wait in well lit areas and near other people
- Check timetables to avoid long waits.



Riding on the bus:

- Sit as close to the bus driver as possible
- Stay alert and be aware of the people around you
- If someone bothers you, change seats and tell the driver
- Keep your purse/packages close by your side. Keep your wallet inside a front coat pocket
- Check your purse or wallet if someone is jostling, crowding or pushing you
- If you see any suspicious activity, inform the driver.



Trains

- Many of the same safety tips when travelling by bus apply for trains
- Most suburban trains have security cameras installed or emergency alarms that will activate the cameras
- Carriages nearest the drivers are always left open and lit
- Try not to become isolated. If you find yourself left in a carriage on your own or with only one other person you may feel more comfortable to move to another carriage with other people or closer to the driver.



Taxis

- Travelling by taxi is generally quite a safe method of public transport. To increase your confidence when travelling by taxi, consider the following suggestions:
 - Phone for a taxi in preference to hailing one on the street. A record is kept by taxi companies of all bookings made
 - You are entitled to choose the taxi/taxi driver of your preference. If a driver makes you feel uncomfortable you are within your rights to select another taxi
 - Sit wherever you feel most comfortable. This may mean travelling in the back seat of the taxi
 - Specify to the driver the route you wish to take to reach your destination. Speak up if the driver takes a different route to the one you have specified or are familiar with
 - Take note of the Taxi Company and fleet number. This will help in identifying the taxi if required. If you are walking a friend to catch a taxi, consider letting the driver know that you have noted these details e.g. "Look after my friend, Mr/Ms Yellow Cab No.436"
 - Stay alert to your surroundings and limit your conversation to general topics
 - If you don't want your home address known, stop a few houses away from your destination.



If the driver harasses you when travelling in a taxi your options include:

- Ask the driver to stop. You may choose to make up an excuse to do so
- Leave the taxi when it stops at a traffic sign or lights
- Call out to someone on the street to attract attention and seek assistance. This may also cause the driver to stop
- Read out the fleet number and advise the driver you will report him/her if they don't stop.

(Source: Queensland Police Service)

Road Rules

If you are going to drive in Australia, no matter whether you are an experienced driver and have an international drivers' licence or not, **YOU MUST KNOW THE ROAD RULES** before you attempt to drive (even 10 metres)! Many lives are lost on Australian roads every year and international visitors are at high risk!

If you come from a country where you drive on the opposite side of the road to Australia it is sometimes helpful to have a companion drive with you to ensure you both take note of traffic conditions and signs until you are more familiar with driving on the left side of the road. A handy tip is not to think of it as the other side of the road, but to think that the "white line" (or centre dividing line on the road) is on your side as the driver, just as it is in all countries. It is recommended that you take one or two driving lessons in Australia before you begin to drive here on your own.

Owning a Car

Registration:

Any motor vehicle you own must be registered before you drive it on the road. You must register it in your name and provide the State car registration board with your driver's licence details and your residential address in Australia.

Insurance:

It is recommended that you have car insurance if you own a car, this will protect you if you have an accident that is your fault as it will help pay for any damage you may have caused to your car or another car.

Speed

There are very obvious reasons for having speeding and traffic rules. The risk of being involved in an accident increases with the speed a vehicle is being driven because there is less time to react, less control of the vehicle and the distance needed to stop is longer. The higher the speed a vehicle is travelling when it hits a pedestrian, the greater the chance of a fatality occurring. Speed kills.

Mobile Phones and Driving

The use of mobile phones when driving is dangerous, against the law if it's not hands-free, and potentially fatal. This applies to sending or receiving text messages as well as calls. Operating a mobile phone while driving makes you nine times more likely to be killed in a collision. Police actively target the use of mobile phones by motorists. Fines are considerable and demerit points penalties do apply. You should be aware of how to legally use a mobile phone while driving.

NSW have installed mobile phone detection cameras targeting illegal mobile phone users across the state.

Demerit Points Scheme

The Demerit Points Scheme is a national program that allocates penalty points (demerits) for a range of driving offences. The scheme is designed to encourage safe and responsible driving. Along with financial penalties, demerit points provide a strong incentive to drive within the law.

Different offences have a different number of demerit points. A complete list of all offences, demerit points and fines can be downloaded from the related links section.

(Source: Roads and Maritime Services, NSW)

Licence Requirements

In most States/Territories of Australia if you hold a current driver licence from another country, you are allowed to drive on your overseas licence as long as:

- You remain a temporary overseas visitor
- Your overseas licence remains current
- You have not been disqualified from driving in that State or elsewhere and
- You have not had your licence suspended or cancelled or your visiting driver privileges withdrawn
- Most overseas visitors are not required to obtain an Australian license if you comply with these conditions and can continue to prove your genuine visitor status to State Police if required
- When driving in NSW you must carry your overseas driver licence. Your licence must be written in English or, if the licence is not in English, you must either carry an English translation or an International Driving Permit
- If you are a temporary overseas visitor and you wish to obtain an Australian licence seek advice from your local Police Station or the nearest Road and Maritime Services (RMS) Office. For locations of RMS Offices and other information, please visit: www.rms.nsw.gov.au

Note: If you are a licence holder from New Zealand, you must obtain an Australian driver licence within three months of residing in Australia or you must stop driving.

(Source: Roads and Maritime Services, NSW)

Drinking Alcohol and Driving

If you are going to drink alcohol, don't drive. If you are going to drive, don't drink alcohol. Anything else is a risk, not only to you, but also to other motorists and pedestrians. Alcohol is involved in about one-third of all serious motor vehicle accidents. As the level of alcohol increases in your body, you have more risk of being involved in an accident. **Driving with a blood-alcohol content above the legal limit is dangerous to others as well as yourself and severe legal penalties apply.** If you are above the prescribed blood alcohol content level, as the level of alcohol in your body increases, so does the severity of your fine and/or jail term.



Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) Levels

The blood alcohol concentration (BAC) is the amount of alcohol in the bloodstream. A BAC of 0.05 means you have 0.05 grams of alcohol in every 100ml of your blood. As the liver metabolises alcohol at around one standard drink per hour, the BAC level drops unless more alcohol is consumed. BAC is measured with a breathalyser, or by analysing a sample of blood.

Legal BAC Limits

There are legal limits as to the BAC level permissible if you are driving. Heavy fine, loss of license and jail term may apply.

Please visit the website for more detail. The website link is listed below:

<https://roadsafety.transport.nsw.gov.au>

Penalties for the offences of driving under the influence of a drug or alcohol and driving with the presence of a prescribed illicit drug in NSW.

Factors Affecting your BAC

The more you drink, the higher your BAC. But two people who drink the same amount might register quite different BACs. There are many factors that will affect this, including:

- **Body size:** A smaller person will have a higher BAC than a larger person because the alcohol is concentrated in a smaller body mass
- **Empty stomach:** Someone with an empty stomach will reach a higher BAC sooner than someone who has just eaten a meal. Food in the stomach slows down the rate at which alcohol passes into the bloodstream
- **Body fat:** People with a lot of body fat tend to have higher BACs because alcohol is not absorbed into fatty tissue, so alcohol is concentrated in a smaller body mass
- **Women:** After drinking the same amount of alcohol, a woman will almost always have a higher BAC than a male.

Because of all these variable factors, counting the number of standard drinks you consume can only give a rough guide to your BAC. For more detailed information about alcohol and how it affects you, please see the Australian Drug Foundation website: www.adf.org.au.

Drinking Limits Advice

To stay below 0.05 BAC, drivers are advised to limit their drinking to:

- **For men:** No more than two standard drinks in the first hour and no more than one standard drink every hour after that
- **For women:** No more than one standard drink in the first hour and no more than one every hour after that.

Random Breath Testing (RBT)

Random breath testing of drivers for blood alcohol levels and drug use is common at any time of the day or night. Police officers have the right to stop any vehicle at any time and require the driver to supply samples for screening. Any person driving a motor vehicle is required by law to have less than a specified amount of alcohol in their blood. If a driver exceeds the level which applies to them the driver has committed an offence.



Increased Risk of an Accident

It is safest not to drink alcohol at all if you are going to drive. The more alcohol you have in your body, the more risk you have of being involved in an accident.

- **At 0.05% Blood Alcohol Content (BAC),** your risk of being involved in a road accident is double that of a 0.00% reading
- **At 0.1% BAC** your risk is more than seven times as high of being involved in a road accident, than at 0.00%
- **At 0.15%** your risk increases to 25 times that of driving at 0.00%.



(Source: Australian Federal Police)

DON'T DRINK & DRIVE!



Alcohol, Smoking, & Drugs

Alcohol

Alcohol use is legal for those aged 18 years or over. There are laws governing how alcohol may be used in each State and Territory of Australia.

For further information please visit www.adf.org.au.

Standard Drinks

The use of standard drinks can help people to monitor their alcohol consumption and exercise control over the amount they drink.

Different types of alcoholic drinks contain different amounts of pure alcohol. A standard drink is defined as one that contains 10 grams of pure alcohol.

These are all equal to approximately one standard drink:

A middy of beer (285ml) = a nip (30ml) of spirits = a small glass (100ml) of wine = a small glass (60ml) of fortified wine such as sherry.



Please keep in mind:

- Some hotels don't serve standard drinks - they might be bigger. Large wine glasses can hold two standard drinks - or even more!
- Drinks served at home often contain more alcohol than a standard drink
- Cocktails can contain as many as five or six standard drinks, depending on the recipe
- Pre mixed bottled drinks often contain more alcohol than a standard drink.

Smoking

Australian law makes it an offence to sell or supply tobacco products to a person under the age of 18 years. It is illegal for anyone under 18 to purchase tobacco products.

There are also a number of laws regulating and restricting the advertising, promotion and packaging of tobacco products.

Regulations have been introduced to restrict smoking in public areas such as shopping centres, hotels, restaurants and dining areas, and in some workplaces.

Smoking is NOT allowed in toilets and in campus and common areas.

For more information please visit <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au>

Drugs

Each State and Territory has laws governing the manufacture, possession, distribution and use of drugs, both legal and illegal. Drug laws in Australia distinguish between those who use drugs and those who supply or traffic drugs. The Federal Customs Act covers the importing of drugs, while each State has laws governing the manufacture, possession, distribution and use of drugs, both legal and illegal.

DANGER: Drink Spiking!

Whether you are drinking alcohol or not, keep your drink close to you and watch it at all times. Drink spiking (putting extra alcohol or other drugs into a person's drink without their knowledge) is an unfortunate risk to people who are out trying to have a good time. Drink spiking can happen to anyone, male or female, young or old whether they are drinking alcohol or not. Never accept an open container of drink if you did not see it being poured and if you suspect you or your friends have had a drink spiked, **call 000 (zero zero zero)** immediately to report it and get help.

(Source: Australian Drug Foundation)

Hitchhiking

A person who waves at unknown drivers from the side of the road to request a ride with a driver further along the road is called a Hitch-hiker. Hitchhiking is illegal in Queensland and Victoria. Elsewhere in Australia it is illegal to hitchhike on motorways (where pedestrians are prohibited and where cars are not allowed to stop). Some travel companies promote hitchhiking as an inexpensive means of travelling around Australia.

HOWEVER: Many crimes have been committed against innocent hitchhikers including violent personal crimes and abductions. You do not know anything about the person whose car you get into.

Our advice to you is: **DON'T HITCHHIKE!** It simply is not worth the risk.

Avoiding Dangerous Areas and Activities

It is important to always be alert and aware of your surroundings and to avoid dangerous areas and activities, particularly at night.

A public place can vary through the course of the day. It may be used by different groups of people at different times. 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.

For example:

The street outside a hotel in the morning is likely to be used by people going to and from work or shopping. At night however, the people most likely to be on the street are hotel patrons. **Alcohol consumption** has now become a factor in these places, and for many (particularly for women), **some areas may become less safe.**

A shopping mall during the day has lots of different people using it. Once it closes, it is often isolated and usually dark.

A School, between the hours of 8 am and 5 pm is usually lively and active. After 5 pm or during School holidays however, it may be isolated or dominated by particular groups of people.

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.



Making New Friends

There is no magic trick to making friends. And if you are in a foreign culture it can seem more difficult than usual to find people who you really “get along” with. **Be kind to yourself - remember that making friends takes time.** If you make the most of social opportunities during your life in Australia, just as you would back home, it will be quicker and easier for you to fit in, make friends and feel at home.

However, you meet people, **remember to be careful.** When you meet someone new, be cautious until you get to know the person better and feel you can trust him or her. If a stranger starts talking to you, they are probably just being friendly. But be safe, and don't give them any of your personal details like your full name, your phone number or your address. With people, you don't know well; always arrange to meet them in a public place, like a café or a park, instead of inviting them to your home or going to theirs, until you feel you have built a relationship with them, know more about them and feel comfortable with them.

Many international students spend time hanging out with other students and people from their own country and culture while they're in Australia. These people can make you feel accepted and you may be able to communicate much more easily with them than you can with the locals, particularly when you have just arrived. When everything around you is new and different, it can feel like a big relief to find people from your own country and cultural background. But remember, you need to be careful at first, until you get to know them better, just as you should with anyone else. Even though you may feel like you have a lot in common, remain cautious until you feel you know them reasonably well and can trust them. Many crimes against international students are committed by people from their own culture.



If you have any concerns or questions about someone you have met, or want to talk to someone about Australian mannerisms and communication “norms” (widely acceptable behaviour), make an appointment to talk it over with your Student Services and Support Officer.

Sexual Assault

Sexual assault is a **criminal offence**. It includes sexual harassment, unwanted touching, indecent assault and penetration of any kind. It is important to remember that it can happen to anyone and at any time but certain **precautions** may make it more difficult for a possible perpetrator:

- When socialising, be smart. Drink in a way that leaves you in control. Leaving drinks unattended leave them open to being spiked quite easily
- Walk with confidence and purpose
- Avoid lonely or dark places
- Be wary of strangers, whether they are on foot, in cars or at parties
- Be aware of the people around you
- Respect your intuition
- If placed in a situation where you feel uncomfortable say **"No!"** loudly and with conviction.

What do I do if I am assaulted?

It is very difficult to tell someone that you have been sexually assaulted. It is important to remember that sexual assault is a serious crime and can happen to people regardless of their gender or sexuality. Your first point of contact, should be the Police or your closest Sexual Assault Service.

1. From a **public phone or mobile phone**, ring the police on **000**



2. Do not wash, shower, change clothes or clean up in any way until after talking to the police and going to the hospital. You could destroy vital evidence
3. Don't drink alcohol or take tranquillisers or other drugs as you will have to give a clear account of what has happened. Try to remember everything you can about your attacker
4. Remember, **you are the victim**. You have nothing to feel guilty or ashamed about. Police officers are aware that a person who has been assaulted, sexually or otherwise, is likely to be suffering from emotional shock. They will do all they can to make things as easy as possible for you. It is likely they will provide a female police officer for a female victim. If not, you have the right to request one. You can also ask the police to contact a friend, family member, interpreter or religious adviser to be in attendance with you when you are dealing with the circumstances surrounding the report of assault.

Interpreter Offices:

NAATI

Address: Suite 3, Level 5, 280-282 Pitt Street Sydney NSW 2000
Phone: +61 2 9267 1357
Office Hours: 9:00am to 5:00pm
Open days: Monday to Friday
Website: www.naati.com.au

OnCall Interpreters

Address: Level 5, 301 Castlereagh St, Sydney, NSW 2000
Phone: 02 9280 1044
Fax: 02 9280 1047
Email: sydney@oncallinterpreters.com
Website: www.oncallinterpreters.com

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION OF INTERPRETERS AND TRANSLATORS OF NEW SOUTH WALES INC

Website: www.interpretationandtranslation.com.au

Social Activities

What is Schoolies Week?

If you are an international student attending high School in Australia you will hear a lot of talk about “**Schoolies Week**” which refers to the Australian tradition of **high school graduates** (known as “Schoolies” or “Leavers”) having week-long holidays following the end of their final exams in late November and early December.

Official Schoolies events, which are drug and alcohol free, are held at many Schoolies destinations, they include concerts, dances and parties. For all official events, attendees are required to be a registered School and present School ID on entry. This Schoolies ID, which at some locations includes a photo, is given to Schoolies upon registering, which requires the presentation of current Schools’ ID and incurs a small fee. At many destinations, the official events are held in fenced-off areas or in nightclubs to prevent the infiltration of toolies (“too old for Schoolies”, which are associated with the targeting of drunk teenagers for sex) and to maintain crowd control. Some events are free while others (often those held at nightclubs) incur an entry fee.

If your children may be a School leaver at a later date and choose to be a part of Schoolies celebrations, here are some good safety tips for your children to keep in mind:

Celebrate but watch your friends:

- Stay with friends and don't take chances. Remember there is safety in numbers
- Plan ahead with your friends. Work out how you will share costs and how you will look out for each other
- Book your own accommodation - don't expect that you can just stay with friends
- Know where you are staying and how to get there
- Before you go out, have a plan for getting home and tell someone where you are going
- Negotiate a designated driver at the beginning of the evening and support them in their decision not to drink. During the week, take turns to be the designated driver
- Stay clear of a driver who has been drinking or using drugs
- Ask an official volunteer to walk you home if you are alone — don't walk home at night alone
- Always keep enough money for a phone call, taxi or public transport
- Stranger danger still exists for adults — don't accept lifts from anyone you don't know, and don't stay at a stranger's place
- Don't swim at night and don't swim at all if you are intoxicated or using drugs.



(Source: Queensland Government Schoolies Week)

SECTION 4 – Studying at MEGA

To Begin

Arrive early

Australian education providers require all International Students to attend a compulsory Orientation programme before the commencement of classes. It is a requirement of the ESOS (Education Services for Overseas Students) Act 2001.

At MEGA, the staff who run the orientation work hard to ensure that you as a student will be well equipped to achieve the best possible success in your studies. If you read through the pre-departure, arrival, and orientation manuals which MEGA provides for you, you will see that there is a lot of information for you to understand and consider as you move through your studies.

Although the manual will outline what you need to know, it is impossible to understand and recall everything. Once you are concentrating on your studies, you will feel less stressed if you are already comfortable with the institution, its staff and its services.

Arriving early to attend orientation gives you the chance to:

- See and talk to the most important people you will need to know at the institution:
 - MEGA staff and their duties
 - Academic Manager
 - Student Services and Support staff.



- Enrol early which will help you to get your student card early. You will need your student card to open bank accounts, borrow books from the library, and more
- Meet and get advice from your Academic Manager
- Find your way around the campus
 - Library
 - Computer rooms and facilities
 - Recreation and eating areas
 - Classrooms.
- Meet other International students who may share your classes, share your concerns or fears. Knowing another face on campus as you become more comfortable with the routines can really help you avoid any feelings of isolation
- Find your way around the public transport to and from your accommodation
- Feel as though you already know some of the things other students know before you attend orientation activities later.

What to Do First

Report to the Student Services and Support Officer or welcome area to get you registered and confirmed your arrival to commence course at MEGA.

International Student Orientation

L2, 225 Clarence Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Please bring with you the following items:

1. Your Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE)
2. Passport and
3. Pen to write.

Refer to the Plain English guide information found in Section 2 for further details.

Courses Offered at MEGA

MEGA offers a wide variety of vocational courses. For more information, please visit our website:
www.mega.edu.au.

International Student 'Code of Conduct'

Our Code of Conduct Policy is found on MEGA website and is to be read in conjunction with:

- Student Code of Conduct Policy
- National Code 2018 Standard 2, 8, 9
- Course Progress Policy.

Deferment, suspension or cancelation of a student's enrolment

As a provider of education services to overseas students, MEGA will only permit you to defer or temporarily suspend your studies, or grant leave of absence during your course, through a formal agreement which is arranged in limited circumstances.



MEGA has developed and implemented procedures for assessing, approving and recording a deferment of the commencement of study or suspension of study for a student, including keeping documentary evidence on the student's file of the assessment of the application.

Grounds for deferment or temporary suspension

MEGA will only defer or temporarily suspend your enrolment on the following grounds:

- compassionate or compelling circumstances; or
- your misbehaviour
- It is very important that you are aware of the grounds for which you may be suspended from MEGA or have your enrolment cancelled. These details are told to the student and declared on the Offer Letters and International Student Acceptance Agreement
- Please see student services for further details.

Academic Policies & Procedures

National Code 2018 - Standard 8. For more detail, please visit the website by clicking the link below.

<https://internationaleducation.gov.au/Regulatory-Information/Documents/National%20Code%202018%20Factsheets/Standard%208.pdf>

MEGA monitors course progress strictly as per The National Code 2018 Standard 8, Monitoring Course Progress requirements.

The Course Progress Policy is managed by Academic Manager and Student Services and Support Officer.

The National Code 2018 Standard 8 prescribes the minimum level of academic achievement that students must meet in each study period of their selected programme. Students who do not meet that standard will be required to attend a counselling session with the Academic Manager and the Student Services and Support Officer, to explain the reasons for their academic non-performance as per the National Code requirements outlined in MEGA Course Progress Policy.

As a requirement of the student visa an international student will only be able to repeat a Subject/Unit once. Student Services and Support staff will advise students of their need to attend a counselling session by mail and/or email.

Prior to the issue of a Course Progress Warning Letter, the relevant trainer should advise the Academic Manager as outlined in the policy document as soon as possible if any student experiencing academic difficulty in the course.

If it is deemed that the student is experiencing difficulty because of English language comprehension problems or writing problems, then this difficulty should be discussed with the relevant manager of MEGA who will, in turn, arrange for the student to be referred to academic support in MEGA's partner English Centre.

Complaints & Appeals (Grievances) Policy

ESOS National Code 2018 Standard 10 - Complaints and Appeals Policy is found on MEGA website and you may ask Student Services and Support Officer for a copy.

Transfer of International Students between Registered Providers

As part of MEGA's delivery of services to overseas students, MEGA is required to assess requests for a transfer from one provider to another within the first six months of a commencement date of the principal course of study. Should you request a transfer to another provider within the first six months of your study with us, we will assess your request in accordance with MEGA Transfer of International Students between Registered Providers policy and procedures.

ESOS National Code 2018 Standard 7 Transfer Between Registered Providers Policy is found on MEGA website and you may ask our Student Services and Support Officer for further assistance.



International Student Visa Conditions

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

www.border.gov.au/students/index.htm

Current Address Details

Students on an International Student Visa no longer need to keep DHA informed of their home address in Australia, as DHA will check these details with your education provider if required. Therefore, you **MUST** maintain a current residential address on your student file **AT ALL TIMES**.

Student Administration Information



Paying Fees

All applicants must pay an enrolment fee of AUD\$200.00, which is refundable in the case of a provider default, but not refundable in the case of student withdrawal from courses. The fee is payable with a completed application form.

Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Some goods and services provided by MEGA attract GST. Tax will be added, where applicable, to student accounts and all fee paying parent(s)/students will accept liability to pay these amounts by the due date. Tuition fees and Health Cover are GST-free.

Terms and Conditions of Business Regarding the Payment of Fees:

1. All fees and charges are payable in Australian Dollars (\$AU)
2. Late payments will be subject to an automatic debt administrative fee of \$200 per week, irrespective of the account balance
3. Failure to pay an account by the date when it is due may result in the student being denied access to services and may prejudice the student's visa status
4. Charges for additional services including textbooks and stationery ("incidental charges") are required to be paid as and when such fees are incurred
5. Fees may be paid by credit card (MasterCard or Visa). However, a 2% surcharge will be incurred. MEGA does not accept American Express and Dinners Cards
6. A Bank charges made by your bank on funds' transfers will be debited to your MEGA account
7. A full Block's notice in writing, and addressed to the CEO, is required of intention to withdraw a student from MEGA. A full Block's fee is charged for withdrawal without such notice. Please refer to MEGA website for details of refund policy
8. All fees are subject to change and MEGA reserves the right to review its fees. However, students who have accepted and signed the International Student Acceptance Agreement and paid the required fees will not be affected by any fee increase that are imposed thereafter.



MEGA SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION FEES

PHOTOCOPYING/PRINTING	\$0.20 per black and white page / \$0.40 per colour page
PHONE CALL	\$0.50 local call
SCAN	\$0.20 per page
LAMINATING	\$10.00
ATTENDANCE CERTIFICATE RE-ISSUE	\$20.00
CERTIFICATE RE-ISSUE	\$100.00 per Certificate
TRANSCRIPT RE-ISSUE	\$100.00 per Transcript
STATEMENT OF ATTAINMENT RE-ISSUE	\$100.00 per Statement of attainment
ADMINISTRATION FEE FOR URGENT ISSUANCE OF CERTIFICATE/TRANSCRIPT/STATEMENT OF ATTAINMENT	\$50.00 per Certificate/Transcript/Statement of Attainment
CONFIRMATION LETTER	\$20.00
AMENDMENT OF CONFIRMATION OF ENROLMENT (COE)	\$50.00
RPL APPLICATION FEE	\$100.00
RPL FOR CERTIFICATE II; III; IV	\$250.00 per unit
RPL FOR DIPLOMA/ADVANCED DIPLOMA	\$550.00 per unit
RPL LETTER	\$20.00
SUBJECT/EXAM REASSESSMENT	\$80.00 per unit
LATE ENROLMENT FEE	\$50.00
CHANGE OF CLASS REQUEST	\$30.00
CHANGE OF COURSE REQUEST	\$50.00
REPLACEMENT/RENEW STUDENT CARD	\$20.00
REPLACEMENT LANYARD	\$5.00
COURSE CANCELLATION ADMINISTRATION FEE	\$350.00
LATE FEE PAYMENT CHARGE	\$200.00/Instalment
INSTALMENT PAYMENT FEE (ME)	\$50.00

ID Cards Student Cards and Lanyards

For the safety and security of students and staff at MEGA, everyone is required to wear a lanyard, with their Student ID cards in the plastic pouch.

- Students should not borrow, lend or use other students' cards
- A student card must not be copied under any circumstances
- A student must not misuse a card.

Student may be asked by staff to present their student ID. If the student failed to proof his/her identity, the student will not be allowed on campus premises.

Refund & Cancellation Policy

Refund Policy

All refunds are subject to the guidelines outlined in MEGA Student Refund Policy. Students are strongly advised to consult the Refund Policy before:



- withdrawing from a subject
- withdrawing from a Programme.

Please note:

MEGA Refund Policy is found on MEGA website and you may ask Accounts or Student Services for a copy.

Student Services and Support



Student Services & Student Accommodation Office

Level 9, 225 Clarence Street, SYDNEY NSW 2000

Student Notice Boards

Levels 2, 9, & 10, 225 Clarence Street, SYDNEY NSW 2000

Counselling

Mary Hoang

By appointment only.

For booking, please see the receptionist.



Quick Guide to Key Personnel

WHO TO SEE	ISSUES
ACADEMIC	
Trainers and Assessors	Questions about content of units, teaching procedures, assessment.
Academic Manager	Questions about the program as a whole, academic regulations, difficulties with study, decisions to defer from study (inform Student Services), timetable, Trainers and Assessors, course progress
ADMINISTRATIVE	
Student Services and Support Officer	Health care/ insurance problems, academic progression, accommodation, understanding of how to utilise institution processes effectively, decisions to defer from study (inform Student Services), student welfare support, change of address
Student Academic Support Services	Timetable, registration in subject units, re-assessments
PERSONAL	
Student Counsellor	Problems with relationships, home-sickness, gambling, depression, relationship issues, personal problems, sexual harassment, discrimination issues.
Admissions Officer	Accommodation issues

Campus & Facilities



MEGA campus is located on Clarence Street near Queen Victoria Building.

Travel is convenient as we are located close to public transport. Experience the cafes, restaurants, entertainment venues, and shopping that Sydney living has to offer.



MEGA provides a modern study environment with facilities that include air-conditioned classrooms, computer labs with broadband internet connections and multi-media programs, student kitchenette, and resource centre. There is also a common room for students to socialise and relax in.

My Student Survival Page

EMERGENCY

Phone: 000 or 112 from my mobile (to override key locks)

Government Departments

DHA – Department of Home Affairs

Phone: 131 881

Website: www.homeaffairs.gov.au

ATO – Australian Taxation Office

Tax File Number: 132 861 www.ato.gov.au

Health Cover

NIB - OSHC

Website: www.nib.com.au/overseas-students

For Customer Care, Advice and Assistance

Call Toll Free (Landline only): 1800 775 204

(Mobile phone may incur a fee)

MEGA's 24 hours Emergency contact

Henry Liu (Chief Executive Officer): 0426 255 458

Section 5 - Social and Cultural

Adjusting to Life in Australia

While living and studying abroad may be an exciting adventure, it can also present a range of challenges. Having decided to study and live in Australia you will be undertaking adjustments in many areas of your life including cultural, social and academic.

It is also important to remember that while these changes are occurring you will be embarking upon a new semester of study (for many of you in a different language) and be away from your usual supports, networks and resources.

Adjustment to a new country and culture is a process that occurs gradually and takes time. The values, beliefs, traditions and customs of your home country may vary greatly from those in Australia and adapting to the Australian way of life may take some time. This advice may help:

- **Listen, observe and ask questions**
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 do not understand as this will reduce the chance of confusion or misunderstandings
- **Become involved**
Make an effort to meet people and become involved in groups both on campus and in the wider community. Maintain an attitude of openness to new situations and experiences. Establishing friendships and joining groups is the best way to experience and learn about Australian culture and will certainly mean you have a richer and more enjoyable time here
- **Try to maintain a sense of perspective**
When confronted with difficulties remind yourself that living and studying abroad is a challenge and it



is normal to feel stressed, overwhelmed and out of your depth at times. Try to recall or make a list of the reasons you initially wanted to study abroad in the first place. Also, listing positive events or changes within yourself that have occurred since you arrived may also assist with getting things in perspective

- **Maintain some of the routines and rituals you may have had in your home country**
This can include small things such as continuing to drink a certain type of coffee or tea or eating specific foods. It may also include maintaining involvement in bigger events such as celebrating a national day in your country of origin with a group of friends
- **Keep lines of communication open with those at home**
Communicating with those at home regularly about your experiences of study and life in Australia, through emails, telephones and letters, is vital. Not only does it help to keep you connected with important social supports, it also assists your friends and family to understand your experiences which will smooth the transition when you return home
- **Sense of humour**
Importantly, remember that living in a different culture means you will inevitably find yourself in a range of unusual and often confusing situations. Being able to laugh in these situations will remind you that it takes time to understand different cultures and that it is ok to make mistakes
- **Ask for help**
Don't be afraid to ask for assistance or support if you need it. In addition to the Counselling Service there are many organisations set up on campus to ensure you have a successful and enjoyable time in Australia
- Finally, relax and enjoy the journey!

Culture Shock



Culture shock is the feeling of being out of place in an unfamiliar environment. The initial excitement of moving to a new country often subsides when different cultural expectations challenge you to attend to daily responses and behaviours previously taken for granted. The potential stress of dealing with these persistent challenges can result in feelings of hostility and frustration with your host country as well as a profound longing for home.

M E G A



Overcoming Culture Shock

Once you realise you have culture shock, getting over it and moving on to better adjustment with the host culture will depend on you. It is you who must take some positive steps to feel better, and the sooner you take them, the better!

Recognition

First, you should remember that culture shock is a normal part of your adjustment and that you may have some of the symptoms. Some of your reactions may not be normal for you; you may be more emotional or more sensitive, or lose your sense of humour. Recognising your culture shock symptoms will help you learn about yourself as you work your way through it.

Be objective

Second, try to analyse objectively the differences you are finding between your home and your host country. Look for the reasons your host country does things differently. Remember that host customs and norms are (mostly) logical to them, just as your customs and norms at home are logical to you!

Set goals

Third, set some goals for yourself to redevelop your feeling of control in your life. These should be small tasks that you can accomplish each day. For example, if you do not feel like leaving your room, plan a short activity each day that will get you out. Go to a post office or store to buy something, ride a bus or go to a sports event. If you feel that language is your problem, set daily goals to learn more: study fifteen minutes a day; learn five

new words a day; learn one new expression each day; watch a TV program in your new language for 30 minutes. Each goal that you achieve will give you more and more self-confidence that you can cope.

Share your feelings

Fourth, find local friends who are sympathetic and understanding. Talk to them about your feelings and specific situations. They can help you understand ideas from their cultural point of view.

(Source: Rotary International Youth Exchange)

Australian Culture



Social Customs

Greeting People

When meeting someone for the first time, it is usual to shake the person's right hand with your right hand. People who do not know each other generally do not kiss or hug when meeting. When you first meet someone, it is polite not to talk about personal matters.

Many Australians look at the eyes of the people they are talking with. They consider this a sign of respect, and an indication that they are listening. Do not stare at the person for a long time.

You can address a new acquaintance using their title and family name. You may use their first name when they ask you to or use it in the introduction. In the workplace and among friends, most Australians tend to be informal and call each other by their first names.



Clothing Customs

The types of clothing that people wear reflect the diversity in our society just as much as the variation in climate. There are no laws or rules on clothing, but you must wear certain clothing for work situations. Most workplaces have dress standards.

Outside of the work situation, clothing is an individual choice; many people dress for comfort, for the social situation or the weather. Clubs, movie theatres and other places require patrons to be in neat, clean clothes and appropriate footwear.



Many Australians live close to the beach and the sea. On hot days, they may wear little clothing on the beach and surrounds. This does not mean that people who dress to go to the beach or swimming have low moral standards. It means that this is what we accept on and near our beaches.

People from other countries can choose to wear their national dress. They may be religious or customary items and include monks' robe, a burqa, a hijab or a turban. As a tolerant society with people from many different cultures, clothing is a part of cultural beliefs and practices that is encouraged.

Polite Behaviour

'Please' and **'thank you'** are words that are very helpful when dealing with other people, and buying goods or services. When asked if you would like something, like a cup of tea, it is polite to say, 'Yes please', or just 'please' if you would like it, or 'no, thank you' if you do not. When you receive something, it is polite to thank the person by saying 'thank you'. Australians tend to think that people who do not say 'please' or 'thank you' are being rude. Using these words will help in building a good relationship.

Sometimes a sensitive issue may come up in conversation. Not to talk may seem rude. It is more polite to say 'sorry, it is too hard to explain' than to ignore a question.

Australians often say, **'Excuse me'** to get a person's attention and **'sorry'** if we bump into them. We also say, **'Excuse me'** or **'pardon me'** if we burp or belch in public or a person's home.

You should always try to **be on time** for meetings and other visits. If you realise you are going to be late, try to contact the person to let them know.

This is very important for visits to professionals as you may be charged money for being late or if you miss the appointment without notifying them before the appointment time.

Most Australians blow their noses into a handkerchief or tissue, not onto the footpath. This is also true for spitting. Many people will also say, '**Bless you**' when you sneeze. This phrase has no religious intent.

Australian Slang

Much common word usage or 'slang' may seem strange to people new to Australia. Slang words start from many different sources. Some words are shortened versions of longer words. Many were expressions already used by migrants who came from the north of England. If you are unsure what an expression means, it is all right to ask the person who said it to explain. Some common expressions are:

- **Bring a plate**
when you are invited to a party and asked to 'bring a plate', this means to bring a dish of food to share with your host and other guests. Take the food to the party in any type of dish, not just a plate, and it is usually ready to serve. This is common for communal gatherings such as for MEGA, work or a club. If you are unsure what to bring, you can ask the host.
- **BYO**
when an invitation to a party says 'BYO', this means 'bring your own' drink. If you do not drink alcohol, it is acceptable to bring juice, soft drink or soda, or water. Some restaurants are BYO. You can bring your own wine to these, although there is usually a charge for providing and cleaning glasses called 'corkage'.
- **Arvo**
This is short for afternoon. 'Drop by this arvo,' means please come and visit this afternoon.
- **Fortnight**
This term describes a period of two weeks.
- **Barbeque, BBQ, barbie**
outdoor cooking, usually of meat or seafood over a grill or hotplate using gas or coals. The host serves the meat with salads and bread rolls. It is common for a guest, when invited to a BBQ, to ask if they should bring anything.
- **Snag**
The raw type sausages usually cooked at a BBQ. They can be made of pork, beef or chicken.
- **Chook**
The term chook means a chicken, usually a hen.
- **Cuppa**
a cup of tea or coffee 'Drop by this arvo for a cuppa' means please come and visit this afternoon for a cup of tea or coffee.
- **Loo or dunny**
These are slang terms for toilet. If you are a guest in someone's house for the first time, it is usually polite to ask permission to use his or her toilet. 'May I use your toilet please?' Some people ask, 'Where's the loo?'
- **Fair dinkum**
honest, the truth. 'Fair dinkum?' when used as a question means, 'is it really true?'
- **To be crook**
to be sick or ill.
- **Flat out**
busy.
- **Shout**
to buy someone a drink. At a bar or a pub when a group of friends meet, it is usual for each person to 'shout a round', meaning buy everybody a drink. Each person takes a turn at buying a 'round'. It is also acceptable to say that you do not drink (alcohol) by saying that you are a 'teetotaler'. This also means you are not obliged to shout.
- **Bloke**
a man. Sometimes if you ask for help, you may get an answer to 'see that bloke over there'.
- **How ya goin?**
'How are you going?' means how are you, or how do you do? It does not mean what form of transport you are taking. Sometimes it can sound like 'ow-ya-goin-mate'.



For more information on Australian slang visit: www.australia.gov.au

Responding to an Invitation

- **What could I be invited to?**
If you get an invitation to lunch, dinner, barbeque, party, wedding, birthday, or any type of event you will usually respond with a letter or phone call. The midday meal is called lunch, and the evening meal is called dinner or 'tea'. 'Tea' can also mean a cup of tea or 'cuppa'. If invited for tea, the time of the event is a good sign of whether your host means dinner or just a cup of tea. An invitation to tea, for anytime after 6pm (18:00 hours) usually means dinner.
- **How are invitations made?**
Invitations can be written or spoken. Written ones usually ask for RSVP, (which is *repondez s'il vous plait* in French) and means please reply. You should reply whether you intend to go or not. The invitation will tell you how to reply and when the reply is expected. Your host may be specific about how many people are invited. If your host invites the whole family, you should tell your host how many people would go. Usually a family is the parents and their children.
- **What if I do accept an invitation?**
When you accept an invitation to a meal, it is also usual to tell the host what you cannot eat. It is perfectly okay to say that you are a vegetarian and do not eat meat or that you are Muslim or Jewish and do not eat pork. It is not polite to arrive late and you should make a telephone call to your host to explain if you are going to be late.
- **What if I cannot accept an invitation?**
You may not always be able to accept an invitation. The best way to refuse is to say, 'thank you, unfortunately I/we have other plans at that time'. To say that you are too busy may seem extremely rude, even if it is true. Once you accept an invitation, you should only cancel if something arises where you cannot go. You should also explain the reason to your host. To cancel because you got a better invitation from somewhere else can seem very rude, and can affect new friendships. Sometimes it is best not to accept an invitation right away and to ask your host whether they would mind if you check your plans and reply to them later.

(Source: Department of Home Affairs)

Tipping

Tipping is not generally expected or practiced in Australia. This is because throughout Australia, service industry staff are covered by minimum wage laws and therefore do not rely on tips for their income. However, it is acceptable to leave a small amount (perhaps 10%) should you feel you have received exceptional service.

Public Holidays, Special Celebrations and Major Sporting Events

Australians hold certain days each year as special days of national meaning. We may recognise the day with a holiday for everyone or we can celebrate the day as a nation with special events. Most States and Territories observe some of the public holidays on the same date. They have others on different dates or have some days that only their State or Territory celebrates. In larger cities, most shops, restaurants and public transport continue to operate on public holidays. In smaller towns, most shops and restaurants close.

New Year

Australians love to celebrate New Year. There are festivals, celebrations and parties all over the country to welcome in the New Year. Sydney Harbour and Sydney Harbour Bridge have become synonymous with New Year celebrations in Australia the fireworks display is considered to be one of the best in the world. January 1 is a public holiday.

Australia Day

Australia Day, January 26, is the day we as a people and place celebrate our nationhood. The day is a public holiday. The day marks the founding of the first settlement in our nation by European people.



Easter

Easter commemorates the resurrection (return to life) of Jesus Christ following his death by crucifixion. It is the most significant event of the Christian calendar.

In addition to its religious significance, Easter in Australia is enjoyed as a four-day holiday weekend starting on Good Friday and ending on Easter Monday. This extra-long weekend is an opportunity for Australians to take a mini-holiday, or get together with family and friends. Easter often coincides with MEGA holidays, so many people with school-aged children incorporate Easter into a longer family holiday. Easter is the busiest time for domestic air travel in Australia, and a very popular time for gatherings such as weddings and christenings.

Easter Traditions

Shrove Tuesday or Pancake Day:

Shrove Tuesday is the last day before Lent.

In earlier days there were many foods that observant Christians would not eat during Lent such as meat and fish, eggs, and milky foods. So that no food was wasted, families would have a feast on the shroving Tuesday, and eat up all the foods that wouldn't last the forty days of Lent without going off.

Pancakes became associated with Shrove Tuesday because they were a dish that could use up perishable foodstuffs such as eggs, fats and milk, with just the addition of flour.

Many Australian groups and communities make and share pancakes on Shrove Tuesday. Selling pancakes to raise money for charity is also a popular activity.



Hot Cross Buns:

Hot cross buns are sweet, spiced buns made with dried fruit and leavened with yeast. A cross, the symbol of Christ, is placed on top of the buns, either with pastry or a simple mixture of flour and water. The buns are traditionally eaten on Good Friday, however in Australia they are available in bakeries and stores many weeks before Easter.

A recent variation on the traditional fruit bun has become popular in Australia. A chocolate version is made with the same spiced mixture, but cocoa is added to the dough and chocolate chips replace the dried fruit.

Easter Eggs:

Eggs, symbolising new life, have long been associated with the Easter festival. Chocolate Easter eggs are a favourite part of Easter in Australia. Some families and community groups organise Easter egg hunts for children in parks and recreational areas. Easter eggs are traditionally eaten on Easter Sunday, however stores start stocking Easter treats well before the Easter holiday period.

The Easter Bunny:

Early on Easter Sunday morning, the Easter Bunny 'delivers' chocolate Easter eggs to children in Australia, as he does in many parts of the world.

The rabbit and the hare have long been associated with fertility, and have therefore been associated with spring and spring festivals. The rabbit as a symbol of Easter seems to have originated in Germany where it was first recorded in writings in the 16th century. The first edible Easter bunnies, made from sugared pastry, were made in Germany in the 19th century.

Anzac Day

Anzac Day is on April 25 the day the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) landed at Gallipoli in Turkey in 1915 during World War 1. This day is set apart to hold dear the memory of those who fought for our nation and those who lost their life to war. The day is a public holiday. We remember with ceremonies, wreath laying and military parades. You will find that many towns have an ANZAC Day parade and ceremony culminating in the laying of memorial wreaths at a monument



or war memorial. These services can be very moving and a wonderful way of experiencing some Australian National pride, as the memories of our fallen soldiers are commemorated. Many Australians attend the National War Memorial in Canberra, or a War Memorial in one of the Capital Cities around Australia for either the traditional “Dawn Service”, which commemorates the landing of the ANZACS at Gallipoli in the dark and dawning of that day, or another service usually commencing around mid-morning with a parade of returned armed forces representing all Australians who have fought in war. As Australia is such a multi-cultural country, these days it is common to see many other countries also represented in these parades.

ANZAC Day is the only day of the year where it may also be possible to attend an RSL (Returned Servicemen’s League) Club to experience a traditional game of “TWO-UP”. A game of chance played by the ANZACS where money is waged on the toss of three coins for a resulting combination of 2 out of 3 being either heads or tails. RSL clubs are crammed with returned soldiers and their families and friends on this day, the atmosphere is one of “mate-ship” and friendliness to all and the experience of a game of two-up is a memorable one.

Labour Day

Labour Day is celebrated on different dates throughout Australia. As elsewhere in the world, Labour Day originated in Australia as a means of giving ‘working people’ a day off and recognising the roots of trade unionist movements and workers’ rights.

Queen’s Birthday

The Queen's Birthday holiday celebrates the birthday of Queen Elizabeth II who is not only Queen of the United Kingdom but also Queen of Australia, where the Queen's Birthday is a public holiday celebrated on a Monday but on different dates. Having the Queen's Birthday on a Monday, results in a three-day long weekend.

Major Sporting Events:

Melbourne Cup Day

The Melbourne Cup is a 2 mile international horse race run on the first Tuesday of November each year attracting the finest racehorses from around the world. Known as the “race that stops a Nation” due to a Public Holiday being declared in metropolitan



Melbourne in its home State of Victoria, and most of the nation whether at work, school or home, will stop to watch the race broadcast on television. In other places, and mainly in the workplace, many people have a celebratory “Cup Day Breakfast”, lunch, party or barbeque to celebrate Melbourne Cup. It is traditional to run a “Cup Sweep” where everyone wages an amount per horse to create a total prize pool. The names of the horses entering the race are drawn and matched one by one to the list of people wagering money. After the race is won, the prize pool is divided into amounts for 1st, 2nd, & 3rd, and usually a small amount for last place, or horses scratched due to injury just before the race. The Melbourne Cup forms part of the “Spring Racing Carnival” which attracts

celebrities from around the world. Women dress in their best outfits; hats are definitely the order of the day, gentlemen in suits of all sorts, and assorted other costumes. It’s a very colourful time to be in Melbourne.



International Test Cricket

1. Melbourne Boxing Day – 26 December Test where the Australian Cricket Team will play a test match against an international team

2. Sydney New Year Test match also known as the “Pink” Test where day three (3) of the Test match is used to raise funds for breast cancer. All attendees as well as players will wear pink to symbolise support for the fund raiser.

Australian Tennis Open

This is a tennis tournament held over the last fortnight of January each year. This is the first of the 4 major grand slam tennis.

Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race

This is the annual Boxing Day yacht race that starts from Watson Bay in Sydney to Constitution Dock in Hobart covering a total of 630 nautical mile (1,170 km).

Christmas

Christmas is celebrated in Australia on 25 December. Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. Christians believe that Jesus is 'the son of God', the Messiah sent from Heaven to save the world.

The heat of early summer in Australia has an impact on the way that Australians celebrate Christmas and our English heritage also has an impact on some northern hemisphere Christmas traditions which are followed.

In the weeks leading up to Christmas houses are decorated; greetings cards sent out; carols sung; Christmas trees installed in homes, MEGA and public places; and children delight in anticipating a visit from Santa Claus. On Christmas Day family and friends gather to exchange gifts and enjoy special Christmas food. Australians are as likely to eat freshly caught seafood outdoors at a barbeque, as to have a traditional roast dinner around a dining table.



Many Australians spend Christmas out of doors, going to the beach for the day, or heading to camping grounds for a longer break over the Christmas holiday period. There are often places which have developed an international reputation for overseas visitors to spend Christmas Day in Australia. One such example is for visitors who are in Sydney at Christmas time to go to Bondi Beach where up to 40,000 people visit on Christmas Day.

Carols by Candlelight have become a huge Christmas tradition in Australia. Carols by Candlelight events today range from huge gatherings, which are televised live throughout the country, to smaller local community and church events.

Christmas in Australia is also associated with two major sporting events:

- **The Boxing Day Test:** December 26 is the opening day of the traditional 'Boxing Day Test' at the MCG (Melbourne Cricket Ground) between the Australian Cricket Team and an international touring side. It is the most anticipated cricket match each year in world cricket, and tickets are usually sold out months in advance.
- **The Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race:** the “Sydney-to-Hobart” is Australia’s most prestigious yachting race and on the calendar of international yacht racing, and begins 26 December in beautiful Sydney Harbour.

(Source: Australian Government – Culture and Recreation Portal)

For more details of Sydney events and tourists information, please visit: www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au

Home Fire Safety

International students are increasingly appearing in statistics related to fire incidents and deaths in Australia. Sadly, most of these fires are preventable. You can take some simple steps to reduce the risk of fire in your accommodation.

Follow the fire safety tips below to help you reduce the chance of fire in your accommodation:

Smoke Alarms

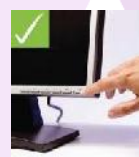
When you are sleeping you cannot smell smoke. Smoke alarms save lives. They wake you and alert you to the danger from smoke and fire. You **MUST** have a smoke alarm where you live, it is the law. All homes must have a smoke alarm on each level. Landlords are legally responsible for installation of alarms in rental properties. Tenants are responsible for testing and maintaining alarms. If you live on campus there will be a smoke alarm in your room. If you live off campus in a house or flat there must be a smoke alarm outside your bedroom.

Look after your smoke alarm, it can save your life.

- Test your smoke alarm monthly by pressing the test button
- **DON'T** remove the battery
- **DON'T** take the smoke alarm down
- **DON'T** cover the smoke alarm
- Replace the battery in your smoke alarm yearly
- Regularly vacuum over and around your smoke alarm to remove dust and debris to keep it clean
- If there is no smoke alarm or it does not work report it to your landlord.



Electricity



The safe use of electricity assists in preventing house fires.

- **Improper use of power boards and double adaptors can lead to fires**
A double adaptor or a power board plugged into another double adaptor or power board creates a danger of overloading the system. For safety, use a single extension cord rather than joining shorter cords. Leaving an extension cord coiled while in use or placing a cord under floor coverings can cause overheating.
- **Be careful to keep electrical appliances away from water**
A hair dryer takes time to cool down. For safety, allow this to happen on an inflammable surface before storing it.
- **Computers, monitors and TVs can overheat and cause fires even when not in use**
They should be turned off after each session. Good air circulation is necessary around TVs and videos. TVs should be turned off at the set, not only with the remote control.
- **Light globes can become very hot**
It is dangerous to cover a lamp with any type of fabric. To dim a lamp it is recommended that a lower wattage globe is used.

Heaters

It's nice to keep yourself warm in the cooler weather, but remember heaters are a major cause of house fires.

- Read and follow the operating instructions for your heater
- All clothes and curtains should be at least one metre from the heater
- Turn off all heaters before you leave your room or go to bed



- Before you go to bed at night or leave your home, ensure heaters are turned off at their power source and fires are extinguished.

Candles, Oil Burners and Cigarettes

Candles, oil burners and cigarettes can all be dangerous fire hazards.

- Do not smoke in bed
- Dampen cigarette butts before putting them in the rubbish
- Make sure your candles are on properly designed candle holders
- Don't leave your room when a candle or oil burner is alight
- Don't go to sleep when a candle or oil burner is alight
- Do not put candles or oil burners near windows; be careful, curtains can catch fire easily.



Cooking

Most house fires start in the kitchen.

- Prepare food only in the kitchen
- Always stay in the kitchen while food is cooking
- Hot oils and fats catch fire easily
- DO NOT use water to put out an oil fire
- Use a dry powder extinguisher, fire blanket or saucepan lid to extinguish, "If Safe To Do So"
- Turn off the cooking appliance before you leave the room or go to bed.



Plan Your Escape

In a Fire

1. Get down on the floor. Crawl to the door
2. Get out of your room
3. Close the door. This prevents smoke and fire from spreading
4. Alert others
5. When outside stay out
6. Call 000.



For more details on Fire and Safety, please visit: www.fire.nsw.gov.au.

Sun Safety

Australia has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world. In fact, one in every two Australians will be diagnosed with skin cancer at some point during their lifetime. The good news is, it can be prevented. By minimising your exposure to the sun's damaging ultraviolet radiation (UVR), you can protect your skin and prevent the development of skin cancer.

Sun Protection

Skin cancer and skin damage are caused by being exposed to the sun's harmful ultraviolet radiation (UVR). The key to preventing skin cancer is to protect your skin from the sun by practising sun safe behaviours.

There are **six simple steps** you can follow to reduce your risk of skin cancer and protect your skin:

1. Minimise your time in the sun between 10am and 3pm
2. Seek shade
3. Wear suitable clothing that provides good sun protection
4. Choose a broad brim, legionnaire-style or bucket-style hat that will protect your face, neck and ears
5. Wear UV protective sunglasses
6. Apply SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before you go out into the sun.



Beach Safety



Understanding the ocean is very important - the more you know about how waves, wind and tides affect conditions in the water, the better able you are to keep yourself safe, or even rescue others, from danger. Recognising danger signs and awareness of surf conditions is an essential part of lifesaving.



Remember the F-L-A-G-S and Stay Safe

- **F** - Find the flags and swim between them - the red and yellow flags mark the safest place to swim at the beach
- **L** - Look at the safety signs - they help you identify potential dangers and daily conditions at the beach
- **A** - Ask a surf lifesaver for some good advice - surf conditions can change quickly so talk to a surf lifesaver or lifeguard before entering the water
- **G** - Get a friend to swim with you - so you can look out for each other's safety and get help if needed. Children should always be supervised by an adult
- **S** - Stick your hand up for help - if you get into trouble in the water, stay calm, and raise your arm to signal for help. Float with a current or rip - don't try and swim against it.



And remember – **NEVER**

- **Never** swim at unpatrolled beaches
- **Never** swim at night
- **Never** swim under the influence of alcohol
- **Never** run and dive into the water
- **Never** swim directly after a meal.



The Surf Environment

Rips

A rip is a strong current running out to sea. Rips are the cause of most rescues performed at beaches. A rip usually occurs when a channel forms between the shore and a sandbar, and large waves have built up water which then returns to sea, causing a drag effect. **The larger the surf the stronger the rip.** Rips are dangerous as they can carry a weak or tired swimmer out into deep water.

Identifying a Rip

The following features will alert you to the presence of a rip:

- darker colour, indicating deeper water
- murky brown water caused by sand stirred up off the bottom
- smoother surface with much smaller waves, alongside white water (broken waves)
- waves breaking further out to sea on both sides of the rip
- debris floating out to sea
- a rippled look, when the water around is generally calm.



Surf Skills

Escaping from a Rip

If you are caught in a rip:

- Don't Panic - stay calm
- If you are a strong swimmer, swim at a 45 degree angle across the rip and in the same direction as the current until you reach the breaking wave zone, then return to shore
- If you are a weak or tired swimmer, float with the current, don't fight it. Swim parallel to the shore for about 30 - 40m until you reach the breaking wave zone, then swim back to shore or signal for help
- Remember to stay calm and conserve your energy.



Negotiating the Surf

Before entering the surf, always make note of a landmark such as a building or headland that can be seen from the water and used as a guide for maintaining a fixed position. Also check the depth of any gutter and the height of any sandbank before diving under waves – this will help prevent spinal injury.

When going out through the surf, negotiate the shallows by a high hurdle type of stride until the breakers reach your waist or until your progress is slowed.

Waves of any size and force should not be fought against and should be negotiated by diving underneath, giving you time to reach the bottom and lie as flat as possible on the sand while the wave passes over.

Your hands can be dug into the sand in front at arm's length for stability and as a pull forward when ready to surface.

If the water is deep enough, bring your knees up under your body so you can get a good push off the bottom, like an uncoiling spring. This gives added force to your next dive. Repeat this process until in chest-deep water, then start swimming.

If a broken wave approaches when the water is not too deep, dive down and run or crawl along the bottom. In deep water, do not use extra energy trying to reach the bottom; instead duckdive to just below the turbulence. Wait for the wash to pass and then push or kick to the surface (off the bottom, if possible).

Stick to your predetermined path on the swim out.

Check your position by occasionally raising your head for a quick look when swimming on top of a swell.

Bush & Outback Safety

Australia has many extraordinary and beautiful places to explore. If you are going on a trip, travel with other people, make sure someone knows where you are at all times and stay on a road or a walking track.

In the Bush

Be prepared if you plan some time in our bushland. Plan your hike. Always tell someone where you are going and what time you expect to return. Let them know when you return safely.





- Check the weather forecast and be prepared for unexpected changes in weather
- Check the length and degree of difficulty of your planned walk. Consider using a local guide when taking long or difficult walks
- When walking or exploring outdoors drink plenty of water (allow at least one litre of water per hour of walking). Wear sturdy shoes and socks, a hat, sunscreen lotion, comfortable clothing and insect repellent. Other handy items for long bushwalks include food, warm clothing, first aid supplies, a torch and a map
- **Never walk alone.** Read maps and signs carefully. Stay on the track and stay behind safety barriers
- **Never dive** into a rock-pool, creek, lake or river. Stay away from cliff edges and waterfalls
- Do not feed or play with native animals. You might get bitten or scratched
- Limit your use of fire. Use a fuel stove for cooking and wear thermal clothing to keep warm. Never leave fires unattended or unconfined
- Visit the ranger station or park information centre to obtain details on the best places to visit and any additional safety tips for that park.

Advice for Motorists Caught in Bush Fires

Bush fires are common occurrences in Australia during our often long hot summers. If you are in smoke and fire-affected areas, you should stay off the roads. If you must get in the car, put your headlights on, dress in protective clothing and footwear and make sure you take food and water - you could be stuck for long periods if your journey is blocked by road closures. Turn the car radio on and keep it tuned to local stations for bush fire updates.

- If you are caught in the middle of a bush fire, park the car immediately and remain calm
- Look for a clear area, preferably off the road. Areas clear of grass or bush are safest - they will not sustain fires of high intensity
- Do not leave the vehicle. Many people have lost their lives by exiting the vehicle only to be trapped on foot in the open. Your vehicle will help protect you from radiant heat, the chief danger
- Switch the ignition off. It is unlikely that a vehicle's fuel tank will explode from the heat of a passing bush or grass fire
- Close all windows and vents or turn vents to recycle
- Put the headlights on so that the car is as visible as possible, especially to fire tankers
- Everyone must get down on the floor, below window height and cover all exposed skin with a wool or cotton blanket. Do not use synthetics, which may give off toxic vapours or melt
- Stay in the vehicle until the fire front has passed. Generally this will take between 30 seconds and one minute. During this time it will be hot, noisy and frightening. It will last a short time even though it may seem longer
- If you have water, drink it
- Never attempt to drive through smoke or flame. Crashes can occur when drivers run off the road, striking trees or other cars
- Once the fire front has passed, exit the vehicle and inspect it for damage before proceeding
- Do not proceed until you are satisfied that the fire has passed and that you are not likely to be trapped a second time
- Falling trees and branches are a hazard during and after intense fires. Do not park or drive under trees
- Exit the area as quickly as possible. Remember fire vehicles may be trying to enter the area and your presence may hinder firefighting operations.

(Source: NRMA)



In the Outback

Australia's outback is vast. Our remote wilderness areas have few towns and facilities, often with large distances between them, so be aware and plan your trip.

- When planning each day of travel spend some time to calculate how long it will take to drive between destinations. Be realistic about how far you can drive in a day
- Inform family and friends or the local police of your travel plans. The local police can also provide helpful advice on facilities and road conditions
- Always carry a current road map
- Make sure your vehicle is in good working order and has been serviced recently
- Use a four-wheel drive vehicle on unsealed roads in remote areas. Take extra care when driving these vehicles. For example, drive at reduced speeds on unsealed roads
- Always carry a spare tyre, tools and water. If travelling to remote areas off major highways take extra food, water, fuel and tyres. Do not overload your vehicle and never carry spare fuel inside an enclosed vehicle
- If you have trouble with your vehicle, don't leave your vehicle because it will provide you with shade and protection from the heat. Wait for help to come to you
- Hire appropriate emergency communication equipment, such as a satellite phone or an Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon device (EPIRB)
- Obey road closure signs and stay on recognised routes
- Fires in desert and bush areas can spread very quickly. If required, be prepared to evacuate the area immediately
- Australian wildlife and livestock often graze on the roadside and can stray onto the road. Be very careful when driving at sunrise, sunset and at night, when animals are most active. If an animal crosses in front of you brake gently, do not swerve wildly to avoid it
- During daylight hours always drive with your headlights on low beam, as outback conditions can make it difficult to see oncoming vehicles.



For more information, please visit the following websites:

- <https://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/safety/outback-safety>
- www.visitnsw.com.

Storm Safety

Storms can happen anywhere and at any time of the year. Storms are more common during storm season – from October to the end of April, but it is important to be aware all year round.

Severe storms can cause major damage. They may be accompanied by torrential rain, strong winds, large hailstones, loud thunder and lightning. Storms can cause flash flooding, unroof buildings, and damage trees and powerlines.

You can also be indirectly affected by storms even if your property is not damaged; such as losing power, or access roads being cut.



The SES is responsible for managing the clean-up and helping people during and after a storm.



During a storm, there are some things you can do to stay safe:

- Stay indoors and away from windows
- Unplug sensitive electrical devices like computers, televisions and video recorders
- Listen to your radio for weather updates
- Don't use a landline telephone during an electrical storm.

If you are caught outside during storm:

- Get inside a vehicle or building if possible
- If no shelter is available, crouch down, with your feet close together and head tucked in
- If in a group – spread out, keeping people several metres apart.

Dangerous Animals & Plants



Australia is home to a variety of native animals. Even if they seem friendly to you, do not touch or feed them - they are not used to close contact with humans and may hurt you.

If you are visiting any of Australia's beautiful parks or forests:

- **Be wary of animals in their natural habitat.** Stay well back from goannas, crocodiles, snakes, dingoes, cassowaries, and also wild pigs, cattle, horses and buffaloes. People have been seriously injured or killed by wild animals
- Be very careful about approaching any injured animal, such as kangaroos or possums. They are likely to bite and scratch if you attempt to touch or move them
- **Never feed or play with wildlife.** Native animals are by nature timid, however, having been provided food from people, may become aggressive in pursuit of food. You may get bitten or scratched. In addition, human foods may be harmful to native animals.

In the warm waters of Tropical Queensland:

- Take care to avoid marine stingers
- Do not enter water where crocodiles may live.

Bites and Stings

The majority of insects in Australia are not harmful to humans. Some insects bite and sting if they are threatened so it is best to avoid touching them if you want to avoid being stung or bitten.

The Australia-wide **Poisons Information Centres** have a common telephone number: **131 126**.

Some people are allergic to certain insect bites or venom. In the case of an allergic reaction to bites or stings, medical attention should be sought immediately. Call a doctor or hospital for guidance, or **000**.

Anaphylaxis – allergic reactions

Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction that can occur in sensitive individuals from exposure to any chemicals foreign to the body, including bites and stings, plants, or medications. Parts of the body, for example the face or throat swell up so much that the patient can't breathe. In severe cases the patient may go into shock within a few minutes and the heart can stop.

For any patient who shows signs of anaphylaxis, call 000 for an ambulance, and have the patient taken immediately to the Emergency Department of the nearest hospital.

General First Aid for Bites and Stings

For bites or stings from these creatures seek first aid assistance straight away, stay calm, and as immobile as possible:

- all species of Australian snakes, including sea snakes
- funnel web spiders
- blue ringed octopus
- cone shell stings.

For all other bites and stings:

Seek or apply basic first aid.

- Wash with soap and water and apply an antiseptic if available
- Ensure that the patient's tetanus vaccination is up to date
- Apply an ice-pack to reduce local pain and swelling
- Pain relief may be required e.g. paracetamol or an antihistamine (to reduce swelling, redness and itch)
- The patient should seek medical advice if they develop any other symptoms or signs of infection.

www.health.qld.gov.au/poisonsinformationcentre/bits_stings

Revision History:

Version No:	Date	Description of modifications	Staff responsible
1	Dec 2017	First Review and alignment of PP to new National Code 2018 and SRTOs 2015.	CEO
2	Jan 2018	New PP approved	CEO
3	Aug 2018	Review of PP and change Academic Coordinator to Academic Manager	CEO
4	Sep 2018	Review of PP	CEO
5	Jan 2020	Review and update changes to information	CEO

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