



SUNSHINE COAST  
GRAMMAR SCHOOL

# International Student Handbook



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## How to use this Handbook

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

Example: Immediate Priority -



Colour Code		Information
		"I need to know <u>IMMEDIATELY!</u> "
		"I need to know by <u>the first week!</u> "
		"I need to know BEFORE classes begin!"
		"I need to know by the end of WEEK 4!"
		"I need to know by the end of WEEK 6!"
		"I need to go back and remind myself of this as I go through my study!"



## Section 1: Welcome

### Welcome

Principal – Mrs Maria Woods

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SUNSHINE COAST  
GRAMMAR SCHOOL



## Message from the Principal

Sunshine Coast Grammar School is a non-selective, co-educational Christian school sponsored by the Uniting and Presbyterian Churches, owned and operated by the PMSA (Presbyterian and Methodist Schools' Association), providing education to students from early childhood to Year 12.

The School is designed to embody the traditional structure and disciplines of a PMSA school whilst incorporating progressive teaching. The School's philosophy is of a Christian school with a strong emphasis on academic care.

Since 1997 we have shared one primary goal: to enable the children and young people entrusted to us to develop their potential to the full by fostering their talents and aspirations through stimulating teaching in a caring environment.

The School is located 90 kilometres north of Brisbane. The School campus is set amongst 88 acres of beautiful natural rainforest.

We are honoured to assist our young people as they become capable citizens and future leaders of a changing world; able to meet the challenges of life, whatever their calling, and cherishing wonderful memories of their school days.

Mrs Maria Woods  
Principal  
Sunshine Coast Grammar School



## SCGS CRICOS COURSE CODES

### CRICOS

Course **086205J**

Code:

Course Name: Primary Years 1-6 Boys & Girls

### CRICOS

Course **086206G**

Code:

Course Name: Junior Secondary Years 7-10  
Boys & Girls

### CRICOS

Course **086207G**

Code:

Course Name: Senior Secondary Years 11-12  
Boys & Girls





SUNSHINE COAST  
GRAMMAR SCHOOL

## Important Information and Emergency Contacts:

### Education Provider Main Contact Details:

Sunshine Coast Grammar School  
372 Mons Road, Forest Glen QLD 4556  
[www.scgs.qld.edu.au](http://www.scgs.qld.edu.au)  
Telephone: +61 7 5445 4444

### International Student Coordinator/Advisor

The Registrar +61 7 5445 4444

## Emergency Telephone Numbers:

**Police, Fire, Ambulance – 000**

### Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC)

Ground Floor  
299 Adelaide Street  
Brisbane QLD 4000

Office hours: 9:00am – 4:00pm  
Monday to Friday  
Telephone: 131 881

## Medical Centres:

Nambour General Hospital  
97/2 Hospital Road  
Nambour QLD 4560  
Telephone: +61 7 5470 6600

Sunshine Coast University Hospital  
6 Doherty Street  
Birtinya QLD 4575  
Telephone: +61 7 5202 0000

## Transport:

### Rail Transport

City Train services are available for connection to  
Brisbane. Nearest stations are –

Nambour Railway Station  
Civic Way  
Nambour  
Telephone: +61 7 5453 8200  
Office Hours: Open 24 hours per day

Landsborough Railway Station  
Cribb Street  
Landsborough  
Telephone: +61 7 5494 1008  
Office hours:  
Monday – Friday 5:00am – 7:40pm  
Saturday: 6:00am – 2:00pm  
Sunday: 7:00am – 7:00pm

**City Train website: [www.citytrain.com.au](http://www.citytrain.com.au)**

### Local Bus Company

Sun Bus  
9 Bonanza Court  
Marcoola  
Telephone: +61 7 5450 7888  
**Website: [www.sunbus.com.au](http://www.sunbus.com.au)**

Local Taxi Company:  
Suncoast Cabs  
Telephone: 131008  
**Website: [www.suncoastcabs.com.au](http://www.suncoastcabs.com.au)**

## Public facilities:

### Location of Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs)

ATM's are located outside some banks. ATM's are  
also located inside most large shopping centres.  
(For advice on the best use of ATM's see –  
Accessing Money from My Account in this  
handbook).

### Location of Public Telephones

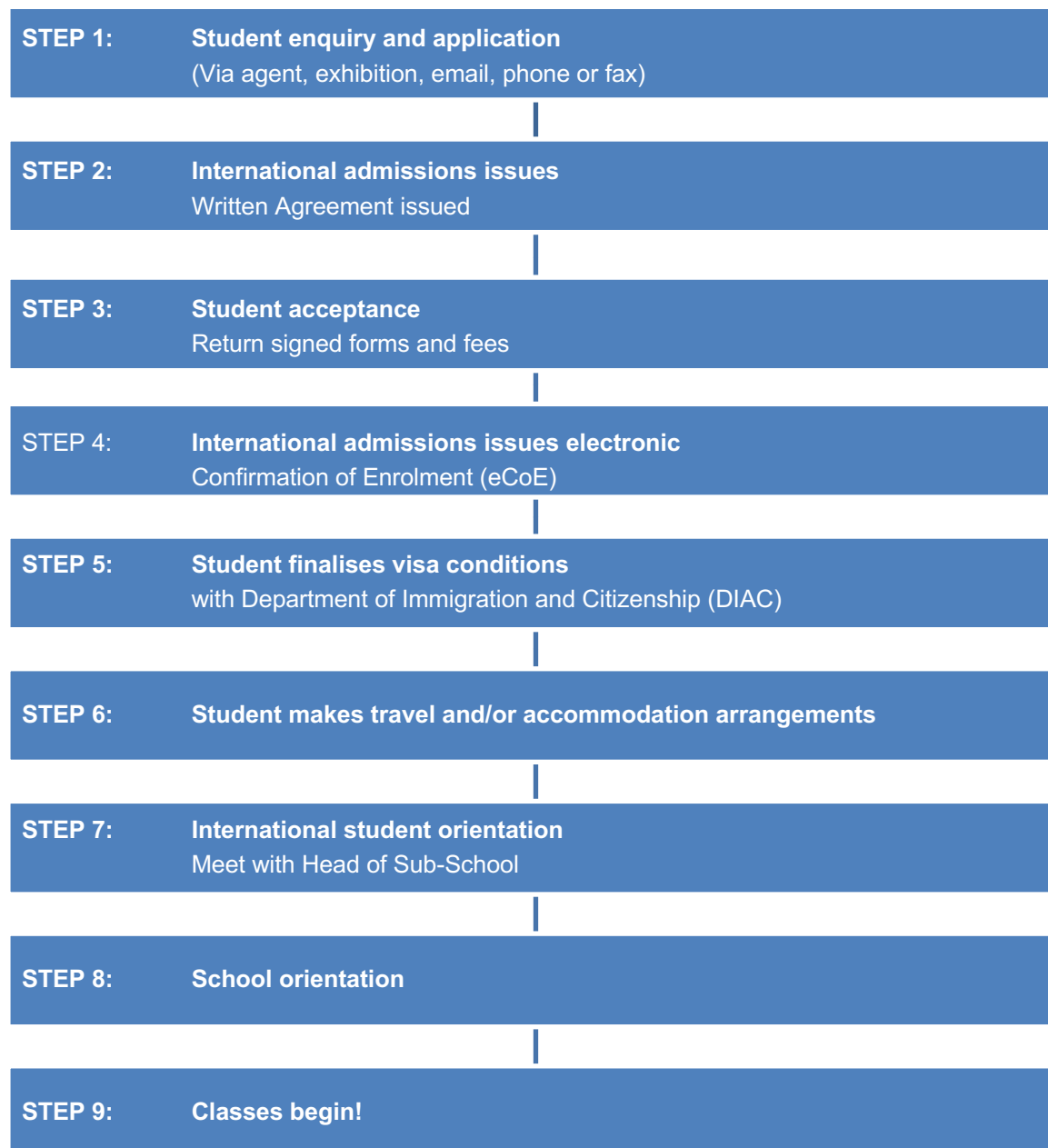
See section – Services: Telephones in this  
handbook.

### Australia Post Offices are located at:

Buderim – Lindsay Road  
Buddina – Kawana Shoppingworld  
Caloundra – Village Shopping Centre  
Maroochydore, Duporth Avenue



## Application Step-by-Step Process Model:







## Things to Do:



### Before Leaving Home:



- Apply for passport ..... ☐
- Arrange student visa -..... ☐
- Make contact with institution ..... ☐
- 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 institution of travel details..... ☐
- Pack bags being sure to include the following:
  - Name and contact details of an institution representative ..... ☐
  - Enough currency for taxis, buses, phone calls etc. in the event of an emergency ☐
  - Important documents:
    - THIS HANDBOOK! ..... ☐
    - Passport ..... ☐
    - Letter of offer ..... ☐
    - eCoE ..... ☐
    - Certified copies of qualifications & certificates ..... ☐
    - Travel insurance policy ..... ☐
    - ID cards, drivers 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 ..... ☐
  - Attend School interview ..... ☐
  - Open a bank account ..... ☐
  - Start classes ..... ☐
  - Get textbooks ..... ☐
  - Get student ID card ..... ☐
  - Get involved in student life and associations ..... ☐
- (eg music, sporting and cultural clubs).



## Section 2: Pre-Arrival



### Application Step by Step Process Model

#### Introduction to Australia

- Introducing the Sunshine Coast
- Introducing Sunshine Coast Grammar School

#### Arranging Visas

- DIAC
- DFAT
- Migration Agents
- Visa Conditions

#### Arranging Travel

- Documents
- What to Bring
  - Seasonal Considerations
  - Clothing
- Other Items You Might Need to Include
  - Bringing your Computer, Mobile Phones & Laptop

#### On your Flight

- Entry into Australia
  - Australian Immigration
  - Baggage Claim
  - Detector Dogs
  - Australian Customs & Quarantine
  - Arrivals Hall

#### Getting from the Airport

- Train
- Public or Shuttle Bus
- Taxis
- Airport Reception Service

#### Keeping in Contact

#### Accessing Money

- How Much to Bring
- Currency Exchange
- Electronic Transfer
- ATMs
- Credit Cards



## Introduction to Australia



Australia is a natural wonderland of beautiful beaches, crystal blue waters, amazing ancient rock formations and pristine rainforests. Australia is the sixth largest country in the world and has the lowest population density per square kilometre. Much of Australia's exotic flora and fauna cannot be found anywhere else in the world and the lifestyle is one second to none.

### Culture and Customs

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.

There are no laws or rules on clothing, but you must wear certain clothing for school and work situations. At most schools the students will be expected to wear a school uniform.

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 beaches.

### Language Customs

The most commonly spoken languages (other than English) are Italian, Greek, Cantonese, Arabic, Vietnamese and Mandarin.

'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.

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.

Most Australians blow their noses into a handkerchiefs or tissues, 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.

### Rights

Australians can vote in or stand for an election. Voting gives Australians the right to choose a representative in Parliament, and to influence how they run the country. Australian democracy gives us the right to change ruling parties on a regular and peaceful basis by the use of elections.

Australians are all entitled to equal rights and to equal respect. Australian laws make sure that no one is subject to discrimination because of their race, their colour, their religion or gender. Each of us has a right to participate in our community and achieve our full potential, no matter what our background is. All Australians have the right of freedom of speech, freedom of association, freedom of assembly, freedom of religion, and freedom of movement.



## Tolerance

As a community, Australians agree that to express one's own culture and beliefs means that Australians accept the right of others to express their views and values. It is unlawful to insult, humiliate, offend or intimidate another person or group in public because of their race.

## States and Territories

Australia is made up of six states and two territories. To find out more about each state and territory, use the map below:





## Introducing the Sunshine Coast



Just 1.5 hours drive north of Brisbane, the Sunshine Coast encompasses blue waters and sweeping beaches to magnificent mountain ranges and vast cane plantations. Here, the five star resorts live in harmony among the unspoilt, yet cosmopolitan, beachside townships and hillside villages.

With picture perfect weather and warm inviting beaches, the Sunshine Coast is a great place to visit, but an even greater place to live and go to school.

The subtropical Sunshine Coast averages 7 hours of sunshine daily - one of the highest ratings in the world. The residents and visitors can enjoy year round warm balmy temperatures. There is a comparatively high rainfall and humidity. During summer temperatures range from 17c to 30c and winter temperatures range from between 8c and 22c.

Daily coach services connect Maroochydore and Mooloolaba with all Australian capital cities and other Queensland destinations. Train services run regularly into Nambour from Brisbane with Sunbus connections to hinterland towns and the Sunshine coast.

The Sunshine Coast Airport, is only 10 minutes away and provides direct flights daily to and from Sydney, Melbourne and daily commuter flights from Brisbane. Shuttle buses meet all flights and provide door to door services to all accommodation.

## Introducing Sunshine Coast Grammar School

At Sunshine Coast Grammar School we focus upon providing students with diverse learning opportunities and encourage each individual to strive for their personal best in all they do, in the classroom and beyond.

Our Primary School comprises Prep – Year 6 and provides an environment where learning is stimulating and fun, where opportunities to explore, experiment and interact are plentiful and where children grow in knowledge and in character.

Building on a firm foundation of literacy, numeracy and life skills, an outstanding team of specialist staff ensure that children engage in the study of languages, physical education and the arts from an early age.

Our Secondary School comprises Years 7 – 12 - in Years 7 – 9 we pay particular attention to the unique needs of adolescents – a challenging time in the lives of our young people. Our goal is these years is to inspire our young people; to fully engage and challenge students so that they love learning and love coming to school because of it.

In Years 10 – 12 our priority is to achieve quality educational outcomes for all students, of all abilities by offering a flexible curriculum, broad subject and extra-curricular offerings and well-established partnerships with universities and other tertiary institutions.

At Sunshine Coast Grammar School we are committed to providing every student with the opportunity to fulfil their goals, and become a self-motivated, confident, disciplined and responsible young adult, capable of becoming a future leader in our community.



## Arranging Visas:

Most international students wanting to study in Australia require a **student visa**. Some other visa holders are also eligible to study as international students in Australia. Many students apply for a visa themselves on-line or via the Australian Diplomatic Mission in their country. The visa application process can be complicated and for students from some countries it may be better to submit an application with the assistance of an accredited agent due to their familiarity and experience in the field. You should check with the education provider in Australia for their accredited agents in your country.

In order to apply for a visa you will need a **valid passport**, an **electronic Confirmation of Enrolment (eCoE)** and any **other documentation** required by the Australian diplomatic post with which you lodge your application. For example, if you are under 18 you must have a completed **CAAW form** to ensure your accommodation and welfare is approved by your education provider.

You must ensure to **allow enough time** for processing between lodging your application and the start of your academic program, as it can be a lengthy process depending on your country of origin.

## Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC)

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

## Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)

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

## Visa Conditions:



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

- Complete the course within the duration specific in the CoE
- Maintain satisfactory academic progress
- Maintain approved Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) while in Australia
- Remain with the principal education provider for 6 calendar months, unless issued a letter of release from the provider to attend another institution
- Notify your training provider of your Australian address and any subsequent changes of address within 7 days.

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

[www.immi.gov.au/students/visa-conditions-students](http://www.immi.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 4 days before the start of School to allow enough time for settling-in, school interviews, adjusting to the climate and overcoming jet-lag.

You should fly into Brisbane International Airport which is the closest international airport to the Sunshine Coast. Visit [www.brisbaneairport.com.au](http://www.brisbaneairport.com.au) Brisbane is located 90 kms from Brisbane 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 Sunshine Coast Grammar School
- Confirmation of Enrolment (eCoE) issued by Sunshine Coast Grammar School
- Receipts of payments (e.g. tuition fees, OSHC, bank statements etc.)
- Insurance policies
- Original or certified copies of your academic transcripts and qualifications
- Other personal identification documents, e.g. birth certificate, ID card, driver's licence
- Medical records and/or prescriptions

**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.

## 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 [www.aqis.gov.au](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.

### Seasonal Considerations

Summer in Australia is from December to February, autumn from March to May, winter from June to August, and spring from September to November. For most of the country the hottest months are January and February.

If you arrive in June or July, the coldest months of the year, you may need to bring or buy winter clothing.

### Clothing

Students will be required to wear a School uniform to School each day and also when attending official School functions outside School hours.

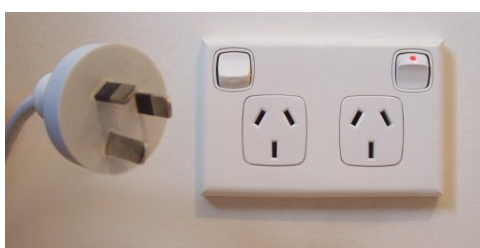
For casual wear outside school hours jeans or slacks with t-shirts or blouses, sneakers or "running shoes" are almost standard dress. Shorts are often worn during the summer months and sandals are the most common footwear. It is acceptable for both men and women to wear shorts and sleeveless t-shirts. This is common during the hotter months.



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.

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

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> alarm clock                           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> scientific or graphics calculator  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bath towels, bed sheets, pillow cases | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> camera                             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> dictionary (bilingual)                | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> spare spectacles or contact lenses |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> small sewing kit                      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> your optical prescription          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> music CDs or iPod                     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> photos of friends and family       |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> sporting equipment                    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> swimming costume                   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> toiletries                            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> small gifts from home              |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> umbrella                              |  |



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](http://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 (follow the signs 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 you will move to baggage claim (follow the signs) and 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.

### 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.daffa.gov.au/aqis](http://www.daffa.gov.au/aqis).

### Arrivals Hall

You will be able to leave the restricted area and enter the Arrivals Hall once you have cleared Customs.



## 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.

## 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\$1500 to AU\$2000** 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 Brisbane, you can also change money at any bank.

### 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.



## Section 3: Settling-in

### Living on the Sunshine Coast

Weather and Seasons

Time Zones

Lifestyle

### Where can I get help?

#### Services

##### Telephones

Calling Emergency Services

Public Telephones

Making Phone Calls within  
Australia

Calling Australia from Overseas

Mobile/Cell Phones

Computer & Internet Access

Australia Post

Small Letters

Envelope Layout

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Shopping

### Where to Shop

#### Business Hours

How to Shop

Bargaining/Haggling

Purchasing an Item

Yellow Pages

### Health

Emergencies – Dial 000

Police

Fire

Ambulance

State Emergency Service

Lifeline

Poisons Information Line

Emergency Translation

Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)

### Health – cont'd

Types of Health Care in Australia

Public System

Private System

Attending an Australian Hospital

General Practitioners (GPs)

#### Medical Services

What do I do if I'm sick?

Seeing a Doctor (GP)

Public Hospital Waiting Times

Pharmacies

Prescription Medication

Over-the-counter Medication

Dental and Optical

Interpreter Services

#### Medical Facilities on the Sunshine Coast

Hospitals

Medical Centres

X-ray

Pathology

Pharmacies

#### General Health

Mental Health

Physical Health

Sexual Health

Alternative Therapies

### Managing my Finances

#### Initial Expenses

#### On-going Expenses

#### Setting up a Bank Account

#### Bank & ATM locations in Brisbane

#### Bank & ATM locations near my Accommodation

#### Banking Hours

#### Bank Fees



## Section 3: Settling-in – cont'd

### Accessing Money from my Account

- ATM's Automatic Telling Machines
- EFTPOS
- Telephone Banking
- Internet Banking
- Over-the-counter Service
- Paying Bills

### Using an ATM

### Safety When Carrying Money

### Laws and Safety in Australia

### Obedying the Law

### Legal Services & Advice

### Child Protection Laws

### Internet Safety & Security

- Internet Access on Arrival

### Personal Safety

### Public Transport Safety

- Buses
- Trains
- Taxis

### Road rules

- Owning a Car
  - Registration
  - Insurance
- Speed
- Mobile Phones & Driving
- Demerit Points Scheme
- Licence Requirements
- Drinking Alcohol & Driving
- Blood Alcohol Concentration levels
- Legal BAC Limits
- Factors Affecting your BAC
- Drinking Limits Advice
- Random Breath Testing
- Increased Risk of an Accident
- Account Statements

### Alcohol, Smoking & Drugs

- Alcohol
- Standard Drinks
- Smoking
- Drugs
- Drink Spiking

### Hitchhiking

### Avoiding Dangerous Areas and Activities

### Making New Friends

### Sexual Assault

### What do I do if I am Assaulted?

### Social Activities

- What is Schoolies Week?





## Living on the Sunshine Coast:



The Sunshine Coast consists of urban centres (Maroochydore, Caloundra, Nambour and Noosa), rural hinterland (Maleny, Montville and Kenilworth) and beachside tourist precincts (Mooloolaba, Alexandra Heads, Coolum and Noosa Heads). Living on the Sunshine Coast offers an environment that is relaxed in atmosphere, yet is also vibrant, with myriad possible activities to choose from.

The main shopping precincts are based in the Maroochydore, Caloundra and Noosa areas.

Many of the activities on offer are centered around the beach culture including Surf Life Saving, a variety of water sports and recreational fishing and beach activities.

The nearest capital city, Brisbane, is easily accessible from the Sunshine Coast by either private transport, bus or train. Many of our international students choose to travel by train to Brisbane for day trips on the weekend.

Australia Zoo is located at Landsborough on the Sunshine Coast and is also a popular attraction for our overseas students.

## 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

On the Sunshine Coast there is very limited access to Public Telephones. Personal mobile phones are the main source of telephone communication.

#### 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](http://www.whitepages.com.au) and [www.yellowpages.com.au](http://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 9999 3662*

### Mobile/Cell Phones

Before bringing your mobile phone to Australia check with the Australian Communications and Media Authority [www.acma.gov.au](http://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/>

[www.telstra.com](http://www.telstra.com)



[www.optus.com.au](http://www.optus.com.au)



[www.vodafone.com.au](http://www.vodafone.com.au)



[www.boost.com.au](http://www.boost.com.au)



[www.dodo.com.au](http://www.dodo.com.au)



*(Source: on-line search)*

### 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.

Students from Year 4 – 12 at Sunshine Coast Grammar School bring their own devices and are part of the School's BYOD Program.

On commencement, students will visit IT Services, located in the Secondary Resource Centre, to have their device linked to the School system and to download textbooks and programs as required.



## Australia Post



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 posting a small letter for distribution in Australia is an **AU\$1.00 postage stamp** which you affix to the envelope.

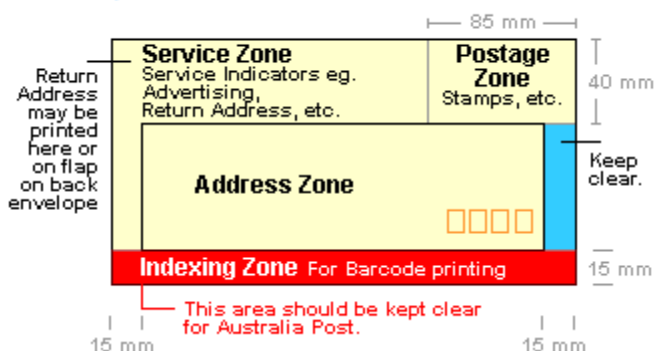
A small letter has the following characteristics:

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

### Envelope Layout

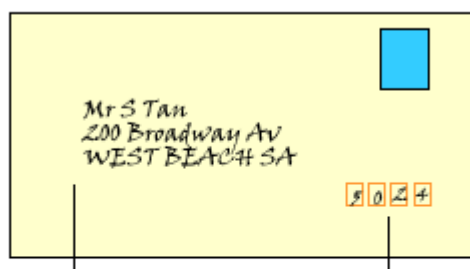
Australia Post uses advanced letter sorting technology to read the address on each envelope electronically. These machines work best when address formats are structured in a consistent manner. That is why it is necessary to address your mail clearly and correctly. The information below demonstrates how.

#### Envelope Face Format - Allocation of Zones



[www.auspost.com.au](http://www.auspost.com.au)

#### Typical Hand Addressed Envelope





## Support Groups



Should you be seeking details of a local cultural support group, please contact the School's International Co-ordinator in the first instance who will endeavour to provide you with contact details.

Some established cultural groups on the Sunshine Coast are:

**Alliance Francaise De La Sunshine Coast PO Box 810 Buddina Qld 4575**

[www.afsunshinecoast.org.au](http://www.afsunshinecoast.org.au)

**German Club, Sunshine Coast Inc PO Box 624 Caloundra Qld 4551**

**Kawana Community Centre Nanyima Street Buddina - (07) 5496 0121**

**Italian School Committee Inc (Comitato Scolastico Italiano) Suite 9, 68 Jessica Boulevard Minyama**

**Qld 4575 [www.thinkingitalian.net](http://www.thinkingitalian.net) (07) 5444 3122**

**Japan Culture and Arts Interest Group PO Box 1758 Sunshine Plaza Qld 4558**

## Shopping

Shopping hours will vary depending on the Centre. As a general rule on the Sunshine Coast and in Brisbane shopping hours for major shopping centres are:

- Open Monday to Saturday 9:00am – 5:30pm (excluding Thursdays)
- Open Thursday 9:00am – 9:00pm
- Open Sunday 10:00am – 4:00pm

Shopping Centres will close on some public holidays e.g. Christmas Day, Anzac Day and Good Friday.

### Where to Shop

Grocery items are usually purchased from one of the major Grocery stores such as Coles or Woolworths (opening hours as above). Depending on the area in which you live, smaller grocery stores may also operate e.g. IGA Supermarkets. The opening hours of these smaller stores will vary from the opening hours of the major Supermarket stores.

Clothing items can be purchased from smaller boutique shops of which there are many on the Sunshine Coast. Clothing can also be purchased from department stores in major shopping centres e.g. Sunshine Plaza and Noosa Central. Some of our international students enjoy travelling to Brisbane for a day's shopping at the major department stores located in Brisbane city centre.

### How to Shop

#### 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.

## 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

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. This number can be accessed via the White Pages online.

#### 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. You will be required to provide proof of your Australian OSHC at the time of applying for your visa.

### What am I covered for?

OSHC provides a safety net for medical expenses for international students, similar to that provided to Australians through Medicare. Additionally, OSHC includes access to some private hospitals and day surgeries, ambulance cover and benefits for pharmaceuticals.

### 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. 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.

### How do I make a claim?

You can make a Medibank Claim either online or by visiting a Medibank office. To make a claim online visit the Medibank site – [www.medibank.com.au](http://www.medibank.com.au)

The Medibank office on the Sunshine Coast is located at Sunshine Plaza, Maroochydore.

## Renewal information

Renewal of your Health Cover will be organised by the School as and when it falls due.





## 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.

See also: Attending an Australian hospital.



### 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'.

See also: Public hospital waiting times.

### 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 handbook 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).

### 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 your education provider. If your illness is more serious or the doctor is unsure of a diagnosis she or he may refer you for further tests eg: 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/drug store 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. If the cost is more than \*AU\$30.70 you can claim the difference 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.immi.gov.au](http://www.immi.gov.au) or phone 131 450

\*2008 Applicable limit

## Medical Facilities on the Sunshine Coast

### Hospitals

Sunshine Coast University Hospital  
6 Doherty Street  
Birtinya Telephone: 5202 0000

Nambour Public Hospital  
2/97 Hospital Road  
Nambour Telephone: 5441 1367

Caloundra Hospital  
West Terrace  
Caloundra Telephone: 5436 8500

Noosa Hospital  
111 Goodchap Street  
Noosaville Tel: 5455 9200

### Medical Centres

There are many Medical Centres easily accessible on the Sunshine Coast. For details of your closest medical centre you should discuss with your homestay parents. Locations of the closest medical centres can also be accessed by accessing the White Pages online at [www.whitepages.com.au](http://www.whitepages.com.au)

### X-ray

For information on locating the closest X-Ray Centre please follow the information above relating to Medical Centres.

### Pathology

For information on locating the closest Pathology Centre please follow the information above relating to Medical Centres.

### Pharmacies

All major shopping centres will have at least one pharmacy. Many smaller shopping precincts will also accommodate a pharmacy. For your nearest location please check with your homestay parents or access the location online via the White Pages (as above).



## 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

If you are experiencing any type of mental health problem or emotional issues such as homesickness, grief, bullying, stress, anxiety, relationships etc there are a number of people available to assist you. In the first instance you should discuss these issues with either your homestay parent (who would then notify the relevant School staff member), the Homestay Co-ordinator, Dean of Students or Head of House at School.

In the case of a mental health issue, the Dean of Students, Head of House or Homestay Co-ordinator will assist in referring you to a qualified Professional to assist you in dealing with the issue. **If you are suffering from a mental health issue it is important that you seek help as soon as possible.**

In the case of emotional issues such as homesickness, grief, stress, anxiety, relationships etc you should discuss these issues with the Homestay Co-ordinator, Dean of Students or Head of House. If you feel comfortable doing so you can also discuss these issues with your homestay parent who will make contact with the School to seek assistance from School staff in helping you deal with the issues.

In the case of bullying, the School has a documented Anti-Bullying Policy to protect all our students against bullying. You should always discuss any issue relating to bullying with a School staff member as soon as possible. The School's Anti-Bullying Policy is located on the School website – [www.scgs.qld.edu.au](http://www.scgs.qld.edu.au) under the section 'Policies'. The School takes any issues relating to bullying very seriously and we urge any student who feels they are the victim of bullying to speak with a staff member as soon as possible.

### 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](http://www.nutritionaustralia.org).

- ☒ **Exercise** – do at least 30mins 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.

### 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.

### Alternative Therapies

There are a number of local businesses on the Sunshine Coast offering alternative therapies including Acupuncture, Chinese Medicine, Naturopathy.

On the Sunshine Coast you can contact Kunara Natural Food Store at Forest Glen (located beside the School) and they will give you contact details for practitioners that they recommend.

Kunara Natural Food Store can be contacted on tel: 5445 6440

## Managing my Finances



### 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 your institution 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.



## Bank & ATM Locations on the Sunshine Coast

Bank and ATM locations nearby the School are:

BANK	WEBSITE	LOCAL ADDRESS
National Australia Bank	<a href="http://www.nab.com.au">www.nab.com.au</a>	Burnett Street, Buderim
ANZ	<a href="http://www.anz.com.au">www.anz.com.au</a>	Burnett Street, Buderim
Commonwealth Bank	<a href="http://www.commbank.com.au">www.commbank.com.au</a>	Burnett Street, Buderim
Westpac Bank	<a href="http://www.westpac.com.au">www.westpac.com.au</a>	Burnett Street, Buderim

## 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 Telling 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 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 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. 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

From 26 April 2008, people granted student visas will automatically receive permission to work with their visa grant. Most student visa holders will no longer need to apply separately in Australia for permission to work. Please note that you will NOT be able to work in Australia 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 20 hours per week during the term and unlimited hours when your course is **not in session**.
3. The Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) considers your course to be '**in session**':
  - for the duration of the advertised semesters (including periods when exams are being held)
  - if you have completed your studies and your Confirmation of Enrolment is still in effect
  - 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 Immigration and Citizenship)

For a full list of **mandatory** and **discretionary** student visa conditions please visit  
[www.immi.gov.au/students/index.htm](http://www.immi.gov.au/students/index.htm)

### 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

**Online** - try these online companies:



[www.seek.com.au](http://www.seek.com.au)



[www.careerone.com.au](http://www.careerone.com.au)



[www.getjobs.com.au](http://www.getjobs.com.au)



[www.mycareer.com.au](http://www.mycareer.com.au)



[www.jobsinoz.com.au](http://www.jobsinoz.com.au)



[www.jobsearch.com.au](http://www.jobsearch.com.au)

(Source: On-line 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](http://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](http://www.ato.gov.au)
- For a registered tax agent visit [www.tabd.gov.au](http://www.tabd.gov.au)
- Tax returns are lodged at the end of the Australian tax year – (1 July to 30 June).

### Superannuation

If your monthly wage is more than AU\$450, your employer must contribute an additional sum equal to 9% 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](http://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: **[www.australia.gov.au](http://www.australia.gov.au)**.



## 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. Should this occur you should advise the School immediately and they will assist you in obtaining legal advice.

## Child Protection Laws

Child Protection Legislation is in place in Queensland. An international student who will be working/volunteering in any role that involves contact with children (a young person under the age of 18 years) should familiarise themselves with the requirements under this Legislation.

Information on this legislation can be obtained by visiting the Department of Child Safety Queensland website [www.childsafety.qld.gov.au](http://www.childsafety.qld.gov.au)

Queensland

(Department of Child Safety)

<http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/OQPChome.htm>

### Principal Acts:

Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld)

Other relevant Acts:

Commission for Children and Young People and  
Child Guardian Act 2000 (Qld)

Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld)

Public Health Act 2005 (Qld)

Adoption of Children Act 1964 (Qld)

Family Law Act 1975 (Cth)

If you are going to be working or volunteering in a role that involves contact with children you will be required to obtain a Blue Card. To check your suitability for a Blue Card and/or to make application for a Blue Card you should visit [www.ccypcg.qld.gov.au](http://www.ccypcg.qld.gov.au)

## 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.

## Internet Safety & Security



### Internet Access on Arrival

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

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.
- If you are socialising in a public place never leave your drink unattended. Read about Drink Spiking under 'Alcohol, Smoking and Drugs'.

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/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. In addition:

- 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 10metres)! 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.

#### 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 Traffic Authority, 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 licence if you comply with these conditions and can continue to prove your genuine visitor status to State Police if required.

**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.

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. An International Driving Permit is not a license to drive. It should still be accompanied by a current driving license.

If you are a temporary overseas visitor and you wish to obtain an Australian licence seek advice from your local Police Station.

(Source: Roads and Traffic Authority, 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:***

- Provisional and Learner Licences - A holder of a provisional or learner's licence is prohibited from having any alcohol in their system whilst in control of a motor vehicle. In other words, a strict 0.00% limit applies. However, a holder of a provisional licence who is of age 25 or over is permitted to have a blood alcohol content of less than 0.05%.
- Open Licence - An open licence holder is permitted to have a blood alcohol content of less than 0.05%. This means a blood alcohol content of less than 50mg of alcohol per 100ml of blood.
- Special Cases - A strict 0.00% also applies to the drivers of trucks, buses, articulated vehicles, vehicles carrying dangerous goods, pilot vehicles, and taxis.



### 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 effects you, please see the Australian Drug Foundation website: [www.druginfo.adf.org.au](http://www.druginfo.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.

### 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.

### 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.

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 socialising 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**. Crimes against international students are sometimes 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 **International Student Co-Ordinator**.

## 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 leaves 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. Please advise your homestay parent and Homestay Co-ordinator IMMEDIATELY. They will then contact the Police. Should you need to ring the Police yourself from a **public phone or mobile phone**, ring the police on **000**. Some points to remember:

1. 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.  
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.
2. Remember, **you are the victim**. You have nothing to feel guilty or ashamed about.  
A School representative will accompany you when you meet with the Police. 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.
3. The School will organise appropriate counselling and support for the victim.

## 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.

Should you wish to participate in 'Schoolies Week' at the conclusion of your Year 12 studies and are under 18 years of age you will need to speak to the School to discuss being covered by appropriate Welfare Arrangements. This is very important.





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 schoolie and present schoolie 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 school 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 you are a school leaver and choose to be a part of schoolies celebrations, here are some good safety tips 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.

**Stay with your friends and don't take chances.**

**Volunteers will be clearly identifiable  
and are there to assist you in a number of ways.**

**Look out for them**

**if you require assistance.**

- 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 Sunshine Coast Grammar School**

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#### **What to Do First**

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#### **International Student 'Code of Conduct'**

#### **Academic Policies & Procedures**

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#### **Student Administration Information**

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#### **Timetables**

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### **Study Skills**

#### **Plagiarism**

#### **Resources**

#### **Tutoring**

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#### **Assessment & Reports**

#### **Library Services**

#### **Computer Labs**

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#### **Health & Safety on Campus**

#### **My Student Survival Page**



## To Begin



### Arrive early

Australian education providers will provide an International Student Orientation before the commencement of classes and often before commencing local students commence. It is a requirement of the ESOS (Education Services for Overseas Students) Act 2001. 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 orientation information which the institution 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. 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.

**It is essential to arrive at least 3 days before the commencement of the School term to allow you to attend your enrolment interview, orientation session and purchase your School uniform and stationery. These appointments will be organised for you prior to your arrival and you will be advised of dates and times.**

### International Student 'Code of Conduct'

For information on all SCGS Student Policies please visit the School's website:  
[www.scgs.qld.edu.au/enrolments/international](http://www.scgs.qld.edu.au/enrolments/international) students

This includes the following:

- Student Code of Conduct
- Academic Progress
- Complaints & Grievances
- Attendance

### International Student Visa Conditions

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

[www.immi.gov.au/students/index.htm](http://www.immi.gov.au/students/index.htm)

### Current Address Details

Students on an International Student Visa no longer need to keep DIAC informed of their home address in Australia, as DIAC 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



### ID Cards

You should contact either your Head of House or Dean of Students and they will arrange for you to be supplied with a Student ID Card.

### Refund & Cancellation Policy

You will be supplied with a copy of the School's Refund Policy prior to enrolment. A copy of the School's Refund Policy can be found on the School website under 'Policies'.



## Student Diary

**You will be provided with a Student Diary on commencement. This is a key document for your time at Sunshine Coast Grammar School.** This Diary includes information regarding:

- Key personnel for student welfare issues
- Key personnel for academic issues
- Map of School Campus
- Information on the online location of School Policies including:
  - School Assessment Policy
  - Assessment & Excursion Calendar
  - Child Protection Policy
  - Technology Code of Conduct
  - Mobile Phone Protocol
  - Anti-Bulling Policy
  - Middle and Senior Schools Homework and Assessment Policies
  - Student Driver Policy
  - Dimensions of Learning
- Information on School Procedures
- Student Code of Conduct
- Uniform Requirements
- Sun Protection Policy
- Homework Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Plagiarism

## Subject Selection

Subject selection will be carried out during your enrolment interview with the Head of Senior School

## Textbooks

Textbook hire is included as part of the initial fee payment. A student from your subject class will accompany you to the Senior Library where you will be issued with textbooks. These textbooks must be returned to the Library at the conclusion of your year's study. If they are not returned or are returned in very poor condition you will be billed for the replacement cost.

## Timetable

You will be provided with your weekly timetable prior to commencement of School on your first day of attendance.

## Student Support Services:

Academic Progress Academic Support	Class Teacher / Head of sub-School Learning Enrichment Co-Ordinator
Pastoral Care	Head of Year
Counselling	School Psychologist
Student Services	Dean of Students



### Quick Guide to Key Personnel:

Class/Subject Teachers	Questions about content of units, teaching procedures, assessment
Course Coordinator/Head of Subject	Questions about the program as a whole, academic regulations, difficulties with study, decision to change Subjects
Learning Support Co-ordinator	Help with reading, writing, note taking, preparation for exams and assignments
Dean of Students	Student services
School Counsellor	Social/emotional problems

## My Student Survival Page

**EMERGENCY** 000 or 112 from my mobile (to override key locks)

**Government Departments DIAC** – Department of Immigration & Citizenship

131 881 [www.immi.gov.au](http://www.immi.gov.au)

**ATP – Australian Taxation Office**

Tax File Number: 132 861 [www.ato.gov.au](http://www.ato.gov.au)

**Health Cover**

**Institution 24hr Emergency:** Sunshine Coast Grammar School

**Telephone: (07) 5445 4444**

## My Important People & Places



## Section 5: Social and Cultural

### Adjusting To Life in Australia

#### Culture Shock

- Overcoming Culture Shock
  - Recognition
  - Be Objective
  - Set Goals
  - Share Your Feelings

#### Australian Culture

##### Social Customs

- Greeting People
- Clothing Customs
- Polite Behaviour
- Australian Slang
- Responding to an Invitation
- Tipping

##### Public Holidays & Special Celebrations

- New Year
- Australia Day
- Easter
  - Easter Traditions
- Anzac Day
- Labor Day

##### Queen's Birthday

##### Melbourne Cup Day

##### Christmas

##### Sports & Recreation

##### Clubs & Organisations

##### Entertainment

##### Eating Out

##### Religion & Faith

##### Where to Find Out What's Going On

##### Home Fire Safety

- Smoke Alarms
- Electricity
- Heaters
- Candles, Oil Burners & Cigarettes

### Cooking

### Plan Your Escape

#### Sun Safety

- Sun Protection

#### Beach Safety

- Remember the F-L-A-G-S
- The Surf Environment
  - Rips
- Surf Skills
  - Escaping From a Rip
  - Negotiating the Surf

#### Bush & Outback Safety

- In the Bush
  - Advice for Motorists Caught in **Bushfires**
- In the Outback

#### Storm Safety

#### Dangerous Animals & Plants

- Bites and Stings
  - Anaphylaxis – allergic reactions
  - General First Aid for Bites & Stings

#### Appendices

- Student Transfer Request Assessment Policy
- Complaints & Appeals Policy



## 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!**

(Source: Macquarie University)



## 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.

### PROCESS OF CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT

#### Before Leaving

Happy, excited, YIPPEE!

(sad to say goodbye)

#### Graduation

Happy, excited, YIPPEE!

(sad to say goodbye)

#### Arrival

Happy, tired, jet-lagged

(a little bit confused)

(for some the process will

not be as severe)

#### Adjusting

Making friends, feeling happy,





## 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!

1. **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.
2. **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!
3. **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.
4. **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 school, 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.cultureandrecreation.gov.au/articles/slang](http://www.cultureandrecreation.gov.au/articles/slang)

### 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 (1800 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 Immigration & Citizenship)

### 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



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 school 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.

## Labor Day

Labor Day is celebrated on different dates throughout Australia. As elsewhere in the world, Labor 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.

## 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, stopping 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 wagers 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 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, & 3<sup>rd</sup>, 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 any day, gentlemen in suits of all sorts, and assorted other costumes. It’s a very colourful time to be in Melbourne.

## 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, schools 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)

## 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

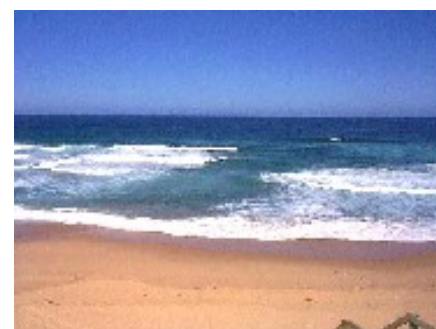
#### Rips

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.

(Source: Surf Lifesaving Australia)



## 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 fire fighting 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.

(Source: Visit Victoria. 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 eg. 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](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/poisonsinformationcentre/bits_stings)

(Source Queensland Health)



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# APPENDICES

## GRAMMAR POLICIES

Available at [www.scgs.qld.edu.au/Enrolments/International Students](http://www.scgs.qld.edu.au/Enrolments/International%20Students)



## Acknowledgements

This project could not have been completed if it were not for all the wonderful international student resources that have been developed to support international students and programs throughout Australia. This is specifically to acknowledge the International Student Handbooks and online support services developed by the following education providers from whom examples of 'best practice' were sought:

[Australian National University](#)

[Study Victoria](#)

[Central Queensland University](#)

[TAFE NSW](#)

[Charles Darwin University](#)

[TAFE Queensland](#)

[Curtin University of Technology](#)

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