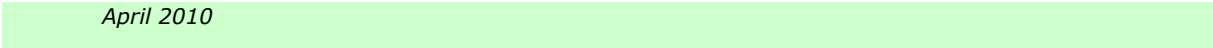




# **Advice for Parents/Carers of International Students Studying in Australia**

*The contents of this guide were written and created by Dr Felicity Fallon and Desma Smith, with funding provided by the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.*

*The views expressed here are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. This publication does not purport to be legal advice and is provided as a general guide only. Some information may become superseded through changes to the law. Users should seek advice from a legal practitioner in relation to any particular legal issues.*



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## Section A – Overseas parent/carer role in supporting a student in Australia

### Importance of support

The decision to send your child overseas to study is an important one. In Australia we believe that the support of international students studying in this country, particularly younger international students, is a combined responsibility and family support from home is a very important part of successful study and a happy experience. There are both law and cultural expectations on students, education providers, and others who provide services to students which require each to take some level of responsibility.

The aim of this guide is to advise you about your child's journey and how and when your support is important. We will refer to your child's school, college or university as an *education provider* throughout this guide.

The first challenge you and your child will face is the application process. **Appendix 1a and 1b** provide a description of the requirements as a step by step process to aid your understanding.

### From outside Australia

International students travel a long way from home to study in Australia, often travelling on their own and will not have the day-to-day family support they are used to. As a parent/carer it is important that you know and understand some of the differences and challenges your child might experience during their time studying in Australia. To know more about the important adjustments your child will be dealing with read this guide and more information at the links provided.

### Within Australia

During your child's time in Australia, you should feel free to contact either your child's education provider or your child's accommodation provider if you have concerns in either of these areas.

In Universities, the person who will provide support for your child is usually called an \*International Student Advisor. However, if your child is 18 years of age or over, privacy laws in Australia will restrict the information that can be provided to you without the student's express permission. (Please read the section below on Australian law and age).

**\*Note:** *In schools or colleges, this person may have a different title. Check the material supplied by the education provider to find the title and contact details of this important person.*

## **Australian law and students of different ages**

In Australian culture, when a young person reaches the age of 18, they are legally considered an adult and they are generally considered able to take responsibility for all matters relating to their lives, their study and their well-being. The Australian Government recognises that this is not the case in all cultures and that the international students who come to study here vary greatly in the experiences they have had in caring for their own welfare. The legislation governing those who provide education to overseas students, the [Education Services to Overseas Students Act 2000 \(ESOS\)](#), requires by law that all overseas students are provided with a minimum level of support to assist their welfare and study experience in Australia.

There is a requirement that all students receive a minimum of information such as;

- before they leave home often called Pre-Departure (from the home country), or Pre-Arrival (in Australia) material
- support upon arrival usually in the form of airport pick-up and transfer to accommodation (if requested by the student)
- support from the education provider in the form of orientation to the buildings, services available at the institution, life in Australia and the study they will undertake, and the ability to find on-going support and advice throughout their studies.

### **If your child is under 18 years of age**

For students under 18 years of age, Australian law requires the education provider to take on a significant role in monitoring and supervising students (see also the Section on Visas in this guide). For these younger students, the education provider will know a lot about the student's progress, both academically and in their day-to-day living, and they will often share this information with parents in the form of academic and other reports. They will be interested to hear if parents have a concern about their child, their progress, or issues with their daily life and they will generally feel free to share any information they have about your child with you.

### **If your child is over 18 years of age**

There is a Privacy Law in Australia which applies to all adults, including international students who are 18 years of age or older. Because of this, the International Student Advisors and other representatives of education providers cannot provide information about an over 18 student to anyone including parents unless the student has specifically given permission to do so. Some education providers will ask international students to provide this permission; others may not. In some cases, the student may not be able to be reached to gain this permission. In many cases, such as an emergency where you have concerns, the international student advisor or other appropriate representative from the education provider will

provide you with information and assistance. Where the law prevents them doing this, there are organisations in the local community who may be able to help. Please see Section E: Welfare and Support Systems for further information about these organisations.

*It is very important that you keep in regular contact with your child. They are the ones who are living their lives away from the family support systems they have grown up with. You may not understand the issues they might find difficult, but knowing that you will be there regularly to listen will greatly help their adjustment and their progress.*

*If your child is under 18, keeping in touch with their carers and the education provider will assist you, but your contact will be important to your child. If your child is 18 or older, they are the ones who can best provide you with information about their progress and well-being.*

## **Helping them prepare to come to Australia**

You have a very important role to play in preparing your child to come to Australia and the contents of this guide are designed to help you do this. This preparation includes practical matters such as what he/she should and can bring into Australia and more general matters about the Australian way of doing things and how your child may react to this experience once they have arrived and are away from their home support.

One of the most important things both you and your child can do before they leave home is to learn as much as you can about their study destination. The more they know about the city they will live in, the easier it will be for them to adjust to the many new challenges they will face. Having read about where your child will be studying before they leave home gives both of you a common talking point, and an opportunity for them to share how it feels to be living in the culture you have read about together. It also helps you to visualise where your child will be living.

## **Pre-departure information and checklist**

Education providers are required to provide certain information to students before they leave their home country to assist them with preparing for their time in Australia. It may be called either a Pre-Departure (that is before leaving your home country), or Pre-Arrival (that is before arriving in Australia) Guide. This information is often provided electronically, or some may be in book form. You can help your child in their preparations by reading this information with them. It will also help you to be sure that they are prepared before they leave home. If your child's application has been handled by an agent, you should make sure

that the agent passes on this information when it is sent. It is usually provided with the Letter of Offer received for the course, or as soon as the offer has been accepted. Many education providers will also include a Pre-departure Checklist for their incoming students. **Appendix 2** of this guide gives sample checklists and you can read further sample pre-departure advice in [Section 2: Pre-Arrival](#) of the Orientation Handbook Template *the Rainbow Guide*. Learn about the Student Education Project which developed the Rainbow Guide in the Acknowledgements at the end of this guide.

## **What you can bring into or mail to Australia**

To protect Australia's unique environment and agriculture and tourism industries, strict quarantine rules are in place. Australian customs and quarantine take their responsibility to protect Australia from disease very seriously. If your child arrives with, or if you send items to them while they are in Australia which are prohibited there are large fines they are likely to receive. While your child is in Australia, you will want them to eat well. To help them do this you may want to send them food with which they are familiar and which you have purchased or prepared. Unfortunately it is not possible to do this. Be careful to check first on any items of food or plant materials that you send with them or wish to send to them in Australia, as heavy fines and penalties will apply.

All food, plant and animal products must be declared for inspection on arrival in Australia. Some items may require treatment to make them safe. Other items that pose pest and disease risks will be seized and destroyed by the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS). You should advise your child that, if they are in doubt about whether their goods are prohibited or not, they should **declare it anyway** on the *Incoming Passenger Card* which they will receive on the plane. Students have received on-the-spot fines for not declaring items. This can be a distressing start to a student's time in Australia. For further information visit the AQIS homepage [www.aqis.gov.au](http://www.aqis.gov.au):

### **And read:**

- "What can't I take into Australia?"
- "What can't be mailed to Australia?"

Remember also that Australia is a very multicultural country and food from many other countries in the world can be found fairly easily, particularly in the capital cities.

Baggage allowances flying into Australia will vary according to your child's airline, flight class and country of origin. Please check with the airline 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 your child can bring, especially if they will fly within Australia to get to their final destination. Therefore, it is essential to think the packing process through very carefully. Your child will be able to purchase most things upon arrival in Australia but the price may be higher than in your own country.

It is also illegal to bring more than \$AUD10,000 or the equivalent in another currency in cash into Australia without declaring it. Check the pre-departure information from the education provider for advice about opening bank accounts and transferring money. Further information about accessing money can be obtained from [Section 2: Pre-Arrival](#), and managing finances from [Section 3: Settling in](#), of *the Rainbow Guide*.

## **Adjusting to life in Australia**

The education provider will probably discuss with your child the difficulties people experience when moving from one culture to another. Early after your child's arrival these difficulties may be referred to as 'homesickness' or if they follow a well-studied path it could be referred to as 'culture shock'. You can have a role in supporting your child through this transition period to understand what is happening to them and that it is a very normal response. You may be able to give your child some practical suggestions on how to cope with the situation, and remind them to speak with their International Student Advisor who can provide advice on the help available to them on campus. When and how your child will experience culture shock may depend on many factors including their personality, their time of stay in Australia, how different your culture is from Australian culture, and perhaps the area of Australia in which your child will live.

Culture is a bit like an iceberg – there are very obvious things you can see above the surface of the water – dress, language, food – and then more subtle things below the water that require a little more thought to understand why a culture is the way it is and does what it does – those things that motivate us, offend us, etc., and that become more obvious as you spend more time in a different culture.

## **Culture shock**

- Simply a term to describe the **emotions one gets when moving into an unfamiliar culture** – inclusive of the shocks of being in a new environment, meeting new people, using a foreign language, separation from family and friends.
- Especially when you are jet-lagged and in a new environment, small differences can seem much larger.
- Some common symptoms:



- homesickness
- headaches or stomach aches
- easily tired
- loneliness or a sense of hopelessness
- distrust of people
- withdrawal from people and activities
- lowered work performance
- anger, or anxiety and suspicion
- Your child may or may not experience any of the above – but if they do, it is perfectly normal. You can help by suggesting that it may be a normal reaction, that it is very likely they are not the only ones feeling that way, and that they should speak with an advisor to see what programs are available to help them settle in. (See below, W-Curve and homesickness). The following issues alone or together may also affect their ability to adjust after they arrive.

### **Climate**

- The climate where your child will study may be very different from their home country and this can have psychological effects.
- Try to find out what the climate is like where they will study before they go and make sure the clothes they are taking will be suitable.

### **Food**

- At first, they may find the food different or strange and may miss items from home. This can often result in eating unhealthily and eating 'fast' meals.
- If their meals are provided, suggest they try to find local shops that stock familiar foods and supplement their diet with fresh fruit and vegetables. Suggest that they try new things.

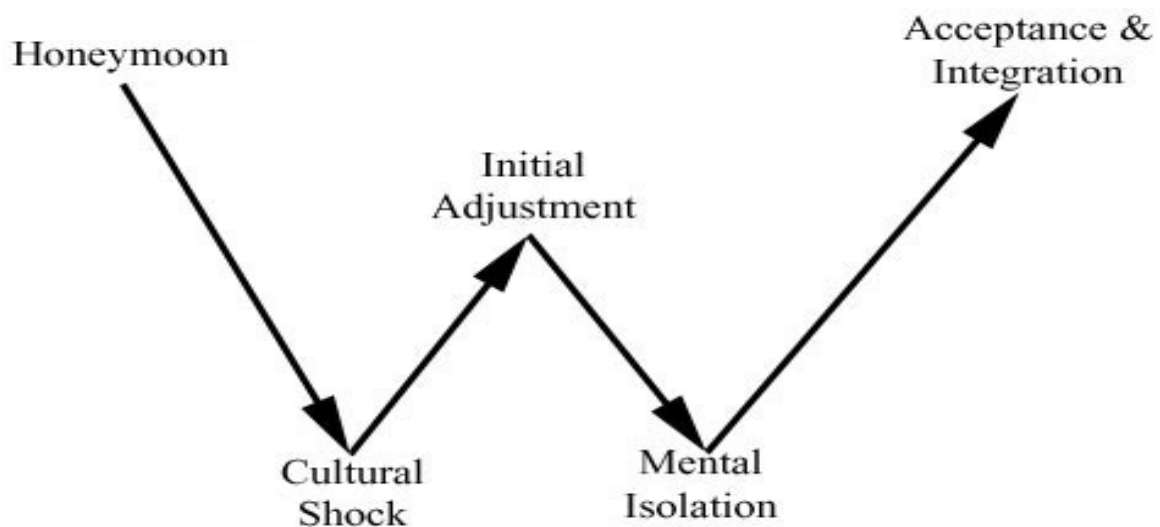
### **Language**

- Constantly speaking in a second language can be exhausting. Additionally, people for the most part don't often expect the range of accents that they may encounter in a new country, which can make understanding the language even more difficult.
- Suggest that they practice, practice, practice and try to make some friends who are native speakers. This will help them to improve not only their language for the classroom, but also the social language unique to where they are living and the friends they will make over time.

### **Education systems culture**

- The education system in Australia can be very different from many education cultures in other countries.
- It is important that your child attend sessions in the orientation period and at other times which are designed to help international students understand and function well within the Australian education system.

## The W-Curve – stages of cultural adjustment



- **Honeymoon Phase** – occurs when someone first arrives in a new culture. The excitement of being somewhere new and different! Although they may also experience some nervousness, the overall feeling is generally one of excitement and positive anticipation. It is also common for students to begin to have some feelings of homesickness mixed in with the fun and energy of a new beginning.
- **Cultural Shock** - may be noticeable after a few days or weeks. Those initially exciting cultural differences may now cause them to feel insecure or confused, as they struggle to understand the rules of the new culture they find themselves in; perhaps with the learning and teaching environment, or in their relationships with staff or other students, or with their accommodation. At this stage, they may find that they miss their family and home support structures the most; Making new friends is fun, but it can also be draining. It can be a period of personal anxiety and frustration.
- **Initial Adjustment** - As initial adjustments are made and your child has successfully managed many of the issues that have come their way they may feel a greater sense of well-being. They may begin to feel they have regained some sense of control in their lives. Conflict or challenges still come and go, but they may begin to now feel more confident in dealing with them. They will by now probably have worked out how to operate in their new cultural environment - how to interact with people and make friends, where to shop, eat and socialise, as well as to understand and cope with their new learning environment. They will most likely start to accept the differences between their home culture and those of the new culture and to feel more relaxed.

- **Mental Isolation** - Culture shock studies suggest that students can relapse into a sense of isolation as they make comparisons between the new culture and their home country. They may display a sense of not feeling like they belong in either culture. This requires integrating the values and beliefs of their home culture with their new school and living environment.
- **Acceptance and Integration** - brings with it a feeling of self-assurance and more complete understanding of your home and the new culture. Differences and similarities are valued and you feel confident about handling most or all situations. There is less dependence on parents. It may be difficult for you as a parent to hear your child refer to Australia as "home". But a true sense of integration occurs when a student has successfully adapted to their new world.

**N.B.** *Remember, not everyone will experience culture shock the same way, some will experience all of the stages for differing lengths of time, and some may only experience part of the W-Curve. This is just a guide to help you understand some of the emotions your child may encounter during their time abroad. It is often helpful to remind them that the way things are done in Australia are not better or worse than home, just different.*

(Adapted from: Journal of College and University Student Housing, Volume 23, No. 2, 1993. Culture Shock and The First-Year Experience by William J. Zeller and Robert Mosier and Culture and Culture Shock: What should I expect? at [www.bris.ac.uk/international/yearabroad/study/.../culture.doc](http://www.bris.ac.uk/international/yearabroad/study/.../culture.doc))

Culture Shock can also be experienced when a student returns to live in their home country after spending time studying in Australia, particularly if they spent a long period of time away from home. Sometimes called reverse culture shock.

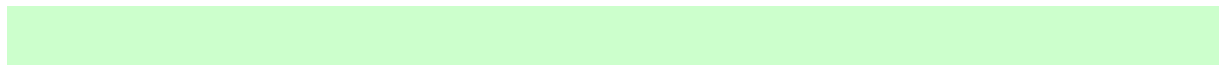
*You can help your child cope with Culture Shock by:*

- *Helping them realise it is a normal part of their adjustment*
- *Helping them analyse objectively the differences they find between their home and their host countries i.e. looking for reasons why the host country does things differently*
- *Helping them set some goals e.g. small tasks that they can accomplish each day to redevelop a feeling of control over their lives. Such tasks could include going shopping, learning five new words a day or watching TV in their new language for 30 minutes.*
- *Encourage them to share their feelings with their friends.*

- *When situations do not seem to make any sense, remind them that people may be following social rules unknown to your child. Encourage them to ask a trusted advisor about social customs.*
- *Ask them what they miss most from home. See if they can find ways to meet those desires or replace them with something new.*
- *Remind them it is important to have friends from both their own culture, and from Australia.*

*(Source: Rotary International Youth Exchange & University of Bristol, School of Modern Languages; The Year Abroad Handbook, 2009-2010.)*

**See also Appendix 3:** *"How most students' experience studying away from and returning to their home country"*



## **Section B – Maintaining contact**

It is very important that you maintain regular contact with your child throughout their study. Regular phone calls and sessions on the internet are very important for both you and your child. How often you make this contact will depend partly on the age of your child and how well they are adjusting to life in Australia. Set a particular time e.g. once a day or once a week for this contact to occur and try not to vary this arrangement. This time must, of course, not be when a student is scheduled to be in classes.

### **Time differences between countries**

It is important to be mindful of the time difference between your country and Australia. For example, for many places in Asia there is a three-hour time difference with Australia. This means that a phone call at 11.00 pm in your country would reach the student at 2.00 am in Australia. It is generally not appropriate for a student to be awake at that time. Further into the northern hemisphere, time differences may be up to 18 hours. Classes in Australia generally start at 9.00 am and sometimes at 8.00am. It is important for students to be punctual for their classes and get enough sleep to be successful in their studies. Failure to attend classes can affect both a student's visa to study in Australia (see Section F: Visa Requirements and Conditions) and their ability to make satisfactory academic progress.

### **Planning to visit your child in Australia**

It is wonderful for your child if you can visit them while they are studying in Australia but again care must be taken not to interrupt their study periods by this visit. When they are having a break from classes is the best time to visit them. Coming during a study term or semester might mean they miss a number of classes and their study progress is interrupted.

*Maintain regular contact with your child at an appropriate time and if you visit them make sure it is in term/semester breaks.*

## Section C – Students' rights and responsibilities

Under the [Education Services for Overseas Students Act, 2000](#) (ESOS), education providers in Australia must provide support and advice to international students. This support can take many forms and should be available throughout all of a student's time at any institution. Extra support is required of institutions offering education services to under 18 students, (considered minors in Australia) to assist with their safety and well-being while studying. Orientation programs are run by all institutions to outline the support services available; where and how to access them; and to meet the staff who provide them, along with enrolment, academic, social and cultural activities. Orientation programs are highly recommended. Students who do not attend orientation programs may experience greater difficulties settling in to their studies, or experience difficulties knowing about or accessing support services when they need them.

[The ESOS Act](#), and [The National Code 2007](#), together define the responsibilities of government bodies and education providers in relation to the services provided to international students studying in Australia and the rights and responsibilities of these students. Areas covered include services provided before enrolment, student support, study choices and assistance with making those choices, changing enrolment, course progress and attendance reporting, and complaints and appeals policies and procedures.

Animations that explore some of the details of these student rights and responsibilities can be found in the [Student Education Project Videos](#). Learn about the Student Education Project in the [Acknowledgements](#) at the back of this guide.

*View these videos and / or encourage your son or daughter to also look at them.*

## Section D – Important Dates

Dates which are important to students will be listed on an education provider's website and in the printed material provided to students. You can usually find them by looking for the *Academic Calendar*.

There are several dates which are very important to a successful study experience, academic progression and to avoid extra financial penalties. It is very important that students are in Australia and available to attend classes and other required activities for the full period indicated by the term or semester dates, including examination periods. You can support the student by being aware of these dates and their implications.

### Term or Semester dates

1. The orientation period at the beginning of the course of study is not an optional activity but it is a time when the student acquires vital information that will enable them to function effectively and happily during their time in Australia.
  - Missing all or part of the orientation period can mean that a student has greater trouble than normal adjusting to their new environment, misses vital information about their course of study and the support options that are available to them, and possibly misses the early classes in their course which makes it very difficult for them make satisfactory progress in those subjects.
  - Students should plan to be in the city or town where they are studying at least one week before the start of the orientation Program to allow time for them to settle into their accommodation, become familiar with their surroundings, open their bank account and organise their mobile phone and internet access. Attempting to undertake these activities in the orientation period can mean that they miss very important sessions held during that period.
2. Scheduled class sessions.
  - Attendance at class by your child is very important.
  - Missing too many classes may also directly affect their visa (see Section F: Visa Requirements and Conditions).
  - It will also affect their ability to make satisfactory progress in their academic work, to improve their spoken English and to make friends and settle into life in Australia.
3. Payment due dates.
  - If your child is under 18 years of age, it is likely that you or another adult you have nominated as responsible for your

child while in Australia will receive notice of fees due and their due date.

- If your child is a student in a university where each subject is billed at the beginning of the study period in which the student is enrolled, payments not received by the date requested may result in the student's enrolment being withdrawn for that semester.
  - Students will receive a warning notice for non-payment of fees, but a debt left unpaid may result in the student being excluded from their course.
- 4.** The examination period at the end of each semester, and in some programs at the end of each term, is another time of compulsory attendance. Examinations usually form a large part of the assessment of a subject.
- Students should not book flights to return home until after the final date of the examination period.
  - Examinations will not be rescheduled for a student because they have booked a flight home during the designated examination period.
  - Failure to sit an examination is likely to cause the student to fail the subject requiring them to repeat that subject and severely disrupting their course of study.
  - In the Vocational Education and Training (VET) or university education sector where each subject studied is paid for individually, this will also cause an extra financial cost to re-enrol in the subject at a later time.

Flights in and out of Australia can be very heavily booked, particularly in the peak periods when students are arriving to study, returning home for semester breaks and leaving Australia at the end of their course of study. This means that flight bookings should be made as early as possible. It is not too early to consider booking a flight for a December return home in March or April. Students should not return home in term or semester breaks if they are unable to get a flight back to Australia before classes resume.

If your son or daughter has any unavoidable problems regarding the timing of travel and attendance at classes, they should contact their International Student Advisor or the equivalent person at their education provider. Students who arrive late for an orientation program should report to the International Office as soon as possible after arrival.

*Check term and payment dates on the institution's website. Make sure your child's flight bookings get them into Australia before the start of an orientation program or classes and back home after the end of the listed examination period. These will be listed under 'Academic Calendar'.*



## **Family and religious celebrations**

Australia is a multicultural nation and we acknowledge the importance of people of all faiths being able to practice their religion, undertake religious practices and participate in their religious celebrations. We also acknowledge the importance of family celebrations to a student's happiness and well-being. However, attendance at such activities in the student's home country cannot be used as an excuse for not meeting the requirements of the student's visa that they attend classes and make satisfactory progress.

A particular problem can arise when the timing of a celebration such as Chinese New Year coincides with the beginning of the academic year in Australia. Missing classes, in some cases several days or a week of classes, at the beginning of a semester or short-term program to celebrate such an occasion in the student's home country can mean the student faces severe difficulties later in the year. Even minor illnesses can mean that a student does not meet their attendance requirements (See Section F: Visa Requirements and Conditions).

Missing the introductory classes in a course can mean that the student does not have vital basic knowledge that is necessary to understand the later parts of the course. This makes satisfactory progress very difficult to achieve. Arriving late for the start of a semester or short-term course can place a great deal of strain upon a student that can severely exceed any benefits they experience by remaining with their family during that period. In some university or VET courses the Faculty may refuse a student to start a course if they miss a certain number of initial classes.

## **Religious faith and practice in Australia**

Australia is predominantly a Christian country but there is a wide variety of religious beliefs and practices everywhere. International students studying in Australia are encouraged to continue their religious practices while they are studying in Australia. Links to religious communities are also encouraged as an extra source of support for the student.

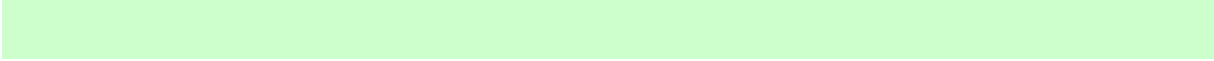
If information about where to find a particular place of worship is not provided during orientation or in the written material provided by the education provider, the campus chaplain, International Student Advisor or contact person at their education provider can put students in touch with communities of their own religious faith.

The following is a short list of web sites of some of the major religions:

Buddhist	<a href="http://www.buddhanet.net">www.buddhanet.net</a>
Christian Anglican	<a href="http://www.melbourne.anglican.com.au">www.melbourne.anglican.com.au</a>
Catholic	<a href="http://www.melbourne.catholic.org.au">www.melbourne.catholic.org.au</a>
Hindu	<a href="http://www.hinducouncil.com.au">www.hinducouncil.com.au</a>
Islamic	<a href="http://www.icv.org.au">www.icv.org.au</a>

Jewish  
Sikh

[www.jewishaustralia.com.au](http://www.jewishaustralia.com.au)  
[www.gurudwara.net](http://www.gurudwara.net)



## **Section E – Welfare and Support Systems**

As indicated in Section C: Student's Rights and Responsibilities, the Government requires each education provider to have in place appropriate welfare and support systems for their students. The nature of these systems will vary with age of the students taught, the size of the education provider and the type of courses being offered.

*Encourage your child to know who provides support, where to find them and how to contact them, especially in an emergency.*

### **For students under 18 years of age**

Education providers must have a comprehensive monitoring and support program in place for students under 18 years of age. Different education providers will run these programs in different ways. Some rely heavily on homestay host families and other types of specialised care-givers. Some have specialised mentoring or interview systems within the structure of their academic programs. All will have specially designated staff members younger students can turn to when they have problems with their studies, accommodation, relationship issues or other matters of daily living. Parents are considered a part of the team that monitors and supports a student under 18 years of age. Your child's education provider will appreciate you keeping in regular contact with your child, though not so often or at such inappropriate times that your contacts interfere with your child's ability to study and live a well rounded life in Australia. The education provider will also appreciate hearing about any concerns you may have about your child's study program and life in Australia.

*Find out as early as possible who the appropriate person is to contact when you have concerns about your under 18 child and contact them when you have these concerns.*

### **For students 18 years or older**

As indicated earlier, Australian law regards students who are 18 years or older as being adults and therefore as being more independent than younger students and more able to take responsibility for their own well being and to seek help when they require it. However, this does not mean that support services are not provided for these students. It means that the students are not monitored as closely, but are expected to ask for the services provided when they need them. Available services are outlined at orientation and in written form in guides and on the institution website. It also means that under the Privacy Act, information about your child cannot be provided to you unless your child has given permission for that information to be provided.

All education providers should have a comprehensive list of support services. In some institutions support services such as counselling services and accommodation placement services are provided especially for international students. In other institutions these services are provided for all students - Australian and international students at the same office. The education provider will give your son or daughter information about the support services that they provide. This can happen in a variety of ways – in printed material, on the provider’s website, and through presentations during the orientation program. You have an important role to play in keeping in regular contact with your child and in encouraging them to seek help when they have a problem. If your son or daughter is not sure how to access the support appropriate to their particular problem, suggest to them that they ask their International Student Advisor or whoever fills that role at their education provider.

Most students will be able to solve their problems through assistance given by their education provider or through advice given to them by friends they have made, both international students and local people, or with the help of groups in the local community with which they have contact (See [Section H: Friends and Living in Australia](#)). Most students who study in Australia do not break Australian laws or get into trouble with the Australian police. If, however, your child has broken an Australian law and needs assistance, particularly if you are having trouble contacting your child, an organisation such as [International Student Care](#) may be able to assist you. This is an independent organisation and further information about the services they provide can be found at [internationalstudentcare.com](http://internationalstudentcare.com)

Some State Governments now also fund similar services, eg: in Victoria the [International Student Care Service](#) can provide crisis intervention, assist with emergency support or provide information on legal, health or social isolation issues, and more if requested. You can also email them on [info@iscs.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@iscs.vic.gov.au)

*To keep your son and daughter functioning successfully in their studies in Australia*

- *Keep in regular contact with them – as appropriate*
- *Encourage them to seek help from the support services made available to them by their education provider*
- *Encourage them to talk to their International Student Advisor or the equivalent person if they do not know where to seek assistance*
- *Encourage them to make friends with both local and international students, and to become involved with groups in the local community*

## Section F – Visa Requirements and Conditions

Your child will firstly have to discover all of the requirements expected of them to submit their visa application. [The Department of Immigration and Citizenship](#) (DIAC) provides all of the information needed and there will be a *Checklist* available for the visa category they will be applying for to make the application process easier.

### **Medical conditions and Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)**

All student visa holders are required to obtain Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) for the length of their visa. Your child's education provider will request some payment in advance to verify the student has cover, or the student will have to show proof of their own cover for their visa application.

OSHC insurance assists international students to meet the costs of medical and hospital care, and also includes ambulance and some prescription medications. The Australian Government has currently licensed five health cover providers to offer this product and your child's education provider may have a preferred provider agreement with one of those insurers. For further understanding of the cover go to the [Australian Government, Department of Health & Ageing website](#) for the OSHC Frequently Asked Questions page.

It is advisable for students to have a thorough medical check up which may also be required for the visa application. It is also a good idea to get a letter from your doctor with details of any existing medical conditions and medication that your child may already have.

### **Maintaining visa conditions**

The Australian government has a number of conditions that are attached to the Student Visas that they issue. The conditions apply because the Australian government wants a successful outcome for all international students in Australia and previous experience has shown that these conditions must be met for this to happen. If a student fails to meet any of these conditions they can have their visa cancelled.

To maintain their visas, all international students must along with other individual requirements;

- make satisfactory progress in their studies
- work for no more than 20 hours a week during class time

- maintain current Overseas Student Health Cover
- maintain a current Australian address and contact details with their education provider and inform them of any changes to this address and these details within 7 days of changing them.

### **For students at education providers other than universities**

For international students at all education providers other than universities, i.e. schools, English language schools, foundation programs and vocational education and training, there is a requirement of their visa that the student attends 80% of all scheduled classes over specified periods. Failure to do so can lead to a cancellation of the student's visa. It is important to remember this when planning a visit to your child. Time taken away from classes to meet or farewell you at the airport, or travel or visit relatives with you, can make it difficult in some cases for a student to meet this condition. The use of the internet or the telephone for communication in the middle of the night can make it difficult for a student to get to classes the next morning. Please remember the time difference that exists between your country and Australia when you organise the times at which you talk to your child by telephone or via the internet.

### **For students at universities**

Although 80% attendance is not a specific visa requirement, students at universities will also have attendance and assessment expectations from the university which must be met to pass the course or each subject that they enrol in. Meeting assessment requirements is what the university will monitor to consider the student is making satisfactory academic progress and therefore meeting that visa requirement. Students at universities will find out at their orientation sessions and in their first classes what is required to meet satisfactory academic progress. Each subject they study will have expectations of attendance, and assessments such as assignments and examinations that are needed in order to pass and progress through their course.

### **For students under 18 years of age**

Students under 18 years of age have special requirements attached to their visas to allow for proper support and monitoring to take place. This proper support and monitoring is the responsibility of your child's education provider and has two components.

1. Accommodation. The student must live in accommodation arrangements that are approved by their education provider. This means that your child who is under 18 years of age cannot change their accommodation arrangements without gaining the approval of

their education provider. If they do so, they are in breach of their visa conditions. Many education providers prefer that younger students live in a homestay arrangement but other types of accommodation may also meet the requirement. This decision rests with your child's education provider.

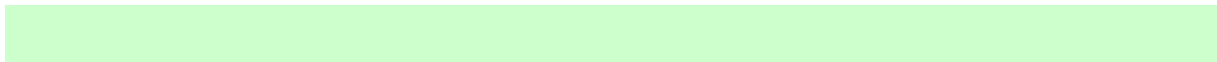
*Further information about possible accommodation arrangements can be found in Section I.*

- 2. Appropriate Support and Monitoring.** Different education providers will provide this support and monitoring in different ways. It may sometimes be linked to the student's accommodation arrangements and sometimes it is not. Make sure that you know who to contact if you have concerns about your child's welfare.

For further information about visa requirements visit [www.immi.gov.au/students/](http://www.immi.gov.au/students/)

*To avoid unnecessary stress, check regularly that your child is meeting all the conditions attached to their Student Visa. This includes;*

- *meeting attendance requirements*
- *not working more than 20 hours a week*
- *renewing their Overseas Student Health Cover if it expires*



## Section G – Financial Arrangements and Employment

### Finances

Living expenses in Australia can be high compared with living expenses in your home country. They can also vary for different parts of Australia. Your child's education provider should supply them with estimates of the costs of various aspects of living in Australia. It is advisable that both you and your child have looked carefully at this information and understand the costs involved, especially if they are under 18 years of age. Keep in regular contact with your child to see how they are managing any money you have provided for their expenses.

Your child will need access to a considerable amount of money when they first arrive and setting up their access to this money can be a stressful part of the initial settling in process. Many education providers will give advice on local banks offering student accounts, or accounts which can be set up in advance from overseas.

A comparison of accounts in banks throughout Australian can be found at: <http://www.banks.com.au/personal/accounts/>

For the student's safety do not send them to Australia carrying large amounts of cash. Comprehensive information about the Australian banking system can be found under Managing My Finances in [Section 3: Settling In](#) of *the Rainbow Guide*.

This section of *the Rainbow Guide* also contains valuable advice to students about seeking and maintaining employment in Australia.

### Employment

It should always be remembered that the primary reason that a student is in Australia is to study and their visa requires them to make satisfactory progress with their studies. If their employment is such that it interferes with their studies, then it is not appropriate employment. All international students working in Australia must do so in a legal way i.e. their employer must take out the required insurance relating to their work and the student must lodge yearly tax returns with the Australian government and pay any taxes required. This is the only way that;

- it can be guaranteed that the student is paid a fair wage
- they will be covered by workplace insurance if they are injured while performing their work. (Their OSHC will not cover them in such a case.)



Advise your child not to work in a situation where they are offered cash by an employer with no tax or insurances paid. It is highly likely that they will be paid much lower wages than workplace law in Australia will allow; that they will not be covered by insurance if involved in a workplace accident; and that the employer may threaten them with reporting to immigration if they do not make themselves available for the working hours requested. These practices are illegal in Australia, and there are laws to protect the rights of workers.

If your child is unsure about an offer of work, work conditions or their wages they can:

- call the Fair Work Infoline on **13 13 94**  
Monday – Friday 8.00am – 6.00pm
- or visit the Fair Work website at [www.fairwork.gov.au](http://www.fairwork.gov.au)

The Fair Work Ombudsman's office has specifically developed two valuable documents with advice for international students working in Australia. See: [Do you know your workplace rights?](#) and the [employment checklist](#) for international students to consider important questions before they accept an offer of employment.

*As a parent, you should*

- *check that your child is not working more than 20 hours a week*
- *discourage them from working if this work is interfering with their studies*
- *discourage them from working in a situation where they are threatened or feel exploited*
- *encourage them to check the Fair Work Ombudsman's website before choosing an offer of work*

## Section H - Friends and Living in Australia

It is important that your child makes friends in Australia from at least two different groups. They need international student friends or family members who share their cultural background, understand the way that they react in certain situations, and can provide them with emotional support in a culturally appropriate way. However, these friends may not fully understand local Australian ways of doing things, local laws and customs and all the opportunities that exist locally. International students should therefore seek friends among local students and other people in their local community also, to help provide a more rounded understanding and local knowledge.

Your child's education provider will supply information about many aspects of Australia culture. This will happen through pre-arrival material provided, through information on the provider's website, through special sessions during the orientation program, and sometimes within the context of academic classes. A comprehensive discussion of this topic can also be found within [Section 5: Social and Cultural](#) of *the Rainbow Guide*

However, none of this material can replace the experience of actually being part of activities both at the education provider and in the local community. Making friends with local students who share your child's classes may be difficult for them to do initially. Local students often have busy lives and their own long established friendship groups and interests. Common interests, such as music or sport, form a strong basis for friendships so encouraging students to join clubs at their education provider, in the wider community, or taking advantage of special programs that may be offered will help both short term and over the longer period of study in Australia. Both Australian and international students can participate in sports such as soccer, basketball and cricket. If your child is confident enough, the benefits of learning about and/or participating in a particularly Australian sport such as Rugby or Australian Rules football or surfing can be a great opportunity.

Groups associated with centres of religious worship can also provide a great deal of support for your child and access to useful local knowledge. In some places, there may a group in the local community of people who originated in your home country but now live in Australia and are Australian citizens. These groups will often provide support and help for international students from their home country. Have your child check with their International Student Advisor or other appropriate person about the existence of these groups nearby.

Australia has its own culture of special events, celebrations and Public Holidays, you may wish to read about some of the best known in [Section 5: Social and Cultural](#) of *the Rainbow Guide*.

It is important that students become aware of these days and activities. On Public Holidays many shops are closed and public transport may run less often. More importantly students might benefit from participating in some of the special activities associated with these events. Watching the processions and attending any public festivals will give them a richer knowledge of Australian culture. They should also offer to share their special cultural days and rituals with their Australian friends. However, please note that education providers cannot adjust their schedules of classes to cater for all cultural groups represented among their international students. Only official Australian Public Holidays will be observed.

*Encourage your child to make friends among Australian people and learn more about Australian culture by*

- *joining clubs and societies run at their education provider*
- *joining clubs and activities in the local community*
- *learning about and participating in the special days celebrated in Australia*
- *celebrating with friends the special days that occur in their home country and sharing them with Australian friends.*

## Section I – Accommodation

Living in suitable accommodation is a vital component of a successful period of study in Australia. While both you and your child will want to get their accommodation for as small a cost as possible, there is not always suitable cheap accommodation close to the education provider where your child will be attending classes. You will need to be realistic about the amount of money that will be spent in this area. Paying a lower amount for rent will not make up for extra time and money that might be needed to travel to and from classes. Refer to the estimates of costs of living provided by the education provider as a close guide to what is realistically available.

For your child to be able to study and live successfully in Australia their accommodation arrangements should include the possibility of privacy and a sufficiently large and quiet space in which they can study. Sharing a room with another student may be a cheaper option but there can be many problems associated with this type of arrangement. Living in a crowded house or apartment where one or more of the students' sleeps in the living area or where students rotate the use of a bed is not an appropriate arrangement in which a student can complete a successful course of study. Legislation in Australia indicates the maximum number of people that can live in particular rented houses and apartments. This number should not be exceeded. There are also laws to protect the rights of tenants in houses, apartments, rooming houses and student accommodation. No legislation exists at present in relation to homestay accommodation arrangements, except that there can be no more than 3 students living with a particular homestay host family.

All education providers must provide some assistance to students in making their accommodation arrangements but the amount and type of assistance given will vary from one institution to another depending on the size and nature of the institution and the age of the student.

**For students under 18 years of age,** their accommodation arrangement is an integral part of the monitoring and support system that underpins the granting of their visa to study in Australia. The accommodation arrangement must be approved by the education provider before the visa can be granted and any subsequent changes in the student's accommodation arrangement must be approved by the education provider before any contracts are signed or any move made. Education providers will provide assistance to students under 18 years of age in all matters relating to their accommodation.

**For older students,** information will be provided and advice given but it will be expected that they will independently seek out and organise their

own accommodation. In most large universities, an accommodation service is provided but this is available to all students, both Australian and international students. Students should be advised to begin applications for accommodation early to ensure they are successful.

**When problems occur** within a student's accommodation arrangements, whether they relate to the student's relationship to the owner of the property or to the student's relationship to others who are living with them, advice on how to resolve the situation will be available through an appropriate person at the education provider. State organisations in the wider community such as the Tenants Union and the Consumer Affairs Department will also give advice and help. It is best, however, if your child has a problem for them to speak first to the appropriate person – International Student Advisor, Accommodation Officer, etc. – in their education provider. This person may then refer them on to an outside organisation.

Extensive advice on renting and choosing a roommate can be found under Things to Keep in Mind When Renting in [Section 3: Settling In](#) of *the Rainbow Guide*.

There is a shortage of rental accommodation in some of the big cities in Australia at present and students may find that gaining appropriate accommodation can be difficult and time consuming. Sufficient time before commencement of the academic year must be allowed for these arrangements to be made. The orientation period is not a time when a student should be looking for accommodation.

*As a parent your role is*

- *for younger students, to work as part of the team consisting of yourself, the education provider and the accommodation provider to ensure the appropriate monitoring and support of your child by communicating with them regularly and with both the education provider and the accommodation provider when you have concerns.*
- *for older students, to ensure that students arrive in Australia a while before the start of the orientation program to allow them sufficient time to find appropriate accommodation, encourage realistic expectations about the availability and cost of suitable accommodation, discourage inappropriate accommodation arrangements (particularly those that involve overcrowding) and encourage your child to seek help as soon as problems arise.*

## Section J – Learning about Australian life and culture

You child's life in Australia will be much more enjoyable and much richer if they make an effort to learn about Australian life and Australian culture. The main purpose of your child's time in Australia is to study, but study must be balanced with recreation time. Your child will feel more comfortable in the presence of friends who come from their home country or who share a common language and cultural background with them. It is very important that they have such friends to provide emotional support and help for them in difficult times: but, if they spend all their recreation time with these friends and do not meet Australian people they will miss out on many things, some exciting experiences, and the support of people who have local knowledge.

Many Australian education providers have programs whereby international students are linked with local families or individuals in a variety of ways. Students have to volunteer to be part of these programs. Encourage your child to sign up for any such activity that is happening at their education provider. Activities for international students are also sometimes organised by local sporting groups or local government councils. They will be advertised to the students through the education providers. Encourage your child to participate in these activities.

Clubs and activity groups at universities and other education providers are also a good way for students to get to know Australians and participate in the Australian way of life. Religious groups, sporting groups, music groups and other activities out in the wider community are excellent places to meet Australians and experience the Australian way of life. Encourage your child to seek out information about these activities and to become involved.

Australia is a beautiful and interesting country. Encourage your child to travel to other parts of the State/Territory and to other parts of the country during class breaks.

*Encourage your son or daughter to become involved in clubs and activities within their education provider and in the wider community. Also encourage them to travel and see more of Australia.*

## Section K – Health

[Section 3: Settling In](#) of *the Rainbow Guide* contains important information about various matters relating to an international student's health and the medical system in Australia. Some important things to note are;

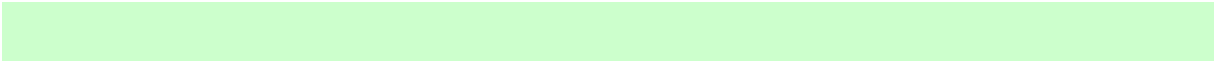
- Because of different climatic conditions to those that they have previously experienced; germs unfamiliar to their body; and other factors, international students may be more prone to illness than they were in their home country.
- Stress arising from Culture Shock, the pressures of living in a new environment, and academic matters can cause students to exhibit physical symptoms of illness such as headaches and stomach complaints.
- Keep in regular contact with your child and, if they are showing any signs of illness encourage them to seek medical help. Conditions in Australia may be very different to those in your home country and medicines brought from home may not be effective in Australia.
- Australia has a large variety of fresh food available, including foods traditional to the many cultures who share our country. Encourage your child to find markets and stores which stock good food that they enjoy and to continue a good diet while living in Australia. Doing so will help their study, their health and their quality of life.
- Many large education providers have their own Health Services staffed by doctors and nurses who are familiar with the needs of students. The education provider should supply your child with information about the best place for them to seek medical help. If your child does not seem to have received this information, encourage them to check with their International Student Advisor or other appropriate person about this information as soon as possible so that they have the information when it is needed.
- For younger students, whoever is providing your child's accommodation will be able to assist them in seeking medical help when it is necessary. Older students will need to seek this help themselves or with the assistance of friends. Please note, unlike some countries, doctors in Australia see patients at private clinics and not at hospitals. The Emergency Wards of hospitals are there to cope with people who need emergency medical treatment i.e. those who have been in severe accidents.
- Unlike doctors in some countries, doctors in Australia do not usually sell or give medicine to their patients. Read more about this in the Section of the *Rainbow Guide* listed above.
- It is very important that your child's Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) is kept up-to-date. If they allow this OSHC to lapse and

they then become quite ill or need an operation, the costs involved which you must pay could amount to thousands of dollars.

- Students should be clear under what circumstances their OSHC will pay for transport to a hospital by ambulance. Generally the OSHC provider will only cover this cost if it is an emergency i.e. the student is not conscious, they are having severe difficulty in breathing, they are bleeding severely or they have may have a broken back, neck or leg. A more suitable way to get to a hospital with a lesser condition is to go by taxi or a friend's car. If an ambulance is called and the OSHC provider believes that it was not required it can cost many hundreds of dollars. Some OSHC providers have a 24-hour medical help line. If your child has OSHC with one of these providers, and the condition is not an emergency, it is best to call this line for advice first.

*As a parent you should*

- *Keep in regular contact with your son or daughter to determine if they are keeping well.*
- *Encourage them to seek help locally if they are not.*
- *Always keep their OSHC up-to-date.*





## Section L – Safety

Australia is a relatively safe country but, as in all countries in the world, there are some people, particularly in large cities, who do bad things. Local knowledge about how to keep safe is therefore a very important thing. Your child's education provider should provide them with information about;

- Emergency numbers that they can use if something bad does happen to them
- Tips on keeping safe in the local community and area.

In [Section 5: Social and Cultural](#) of the *Rainbow Guide* you can read extensively on the following Safety Areas;

- home safety
- sun safety
- beach safety
- bush and outback safety
- storm safety
- dangerous animals and plants

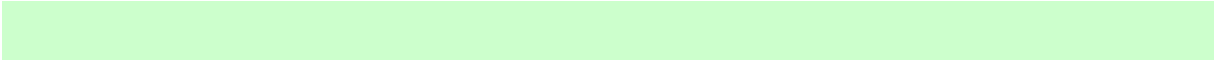
This information is highly likely to be provided to students at orientation or in their orientation handbook and will be specific to the area in which the student is living and studying. You may find that understanding some of these conditions helps you to understand what your child may experience, and to share some of the knowledge they will gain while in Australia.

Please note the police, fire and ambulance services in Australia are well-trained, helpful and friendly people who will assist your child if required. Please encourage your child to seek help from police if they need to. Speaking to the police will not affect their Student Visas in anyway. No record of them will stay on police files unless they have committed a crime. Also help your child to understand that the police cannot solve all crimes instantly but, if they report a crime such as a burglary, the police will take the situation seriously and do all in their power to find who did it and place them before the courts. As in many countries in the world, this may be a very long process.

Other emergency workers such as fire fighters are also well-trained, helpful and interested in matters to do with international students. Representatives from both the police and the fire service are often involved in the orientation activities for international students and/or information days at later stages in their programs of study. Government authorities, the police and emergency service workers all work together with the education and accommodation providers to ensure that international students in Australia are as safe as possible.

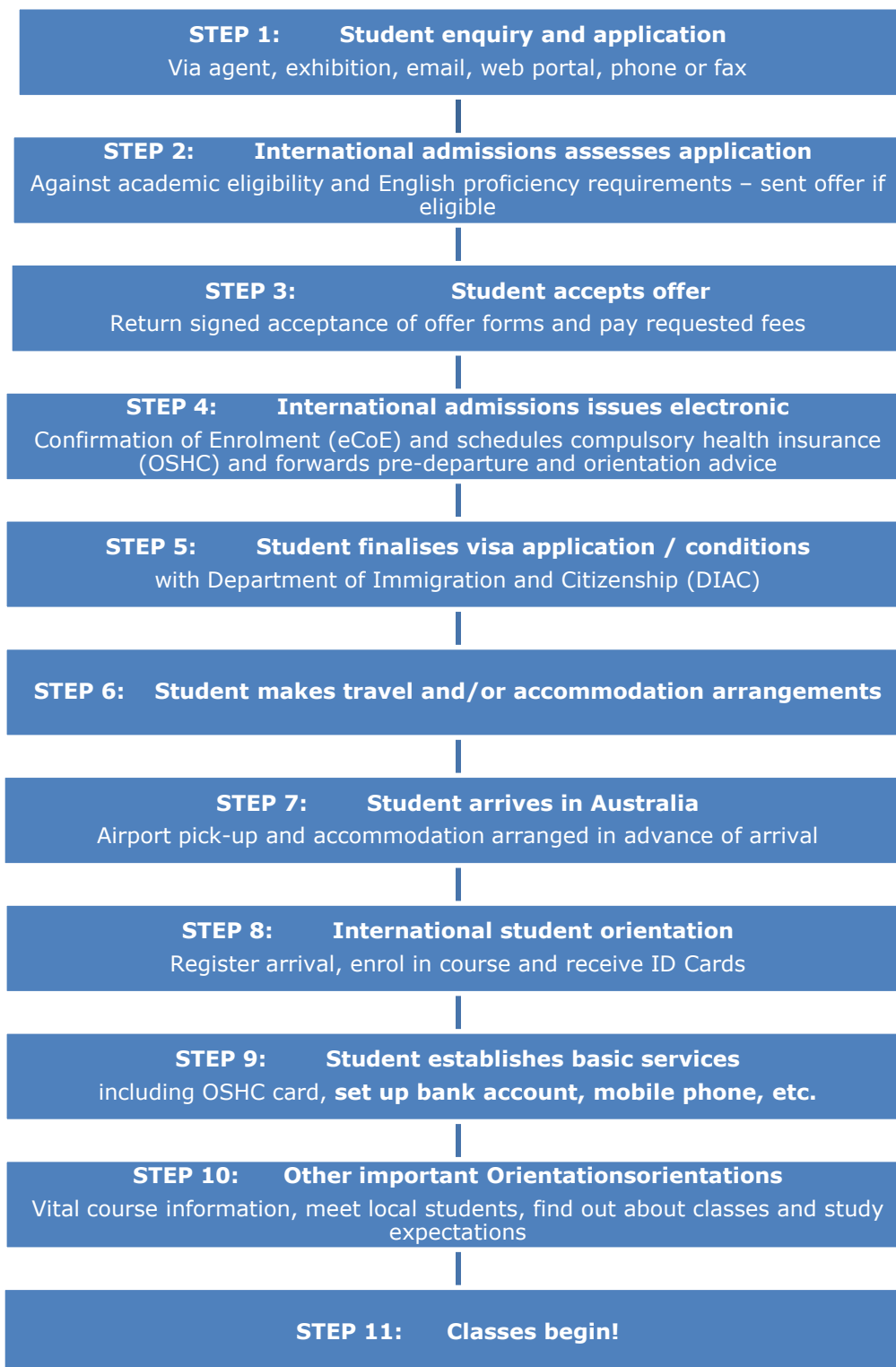
Many people in Australia do care about the safety of your child during their time studying in Australia. Make sure that they have the local emergency numbers. Encourage them to seek help from the police if they need it.

***This will be a wonderful time in the life of your child. Keep in regular contact with them. Encourage them to find out all the information that they need by reading the material provided to them and attending their orientation. Encourage them to ask for assistance when they need it from their International Student Advisor or other appropriate person. Encourage them to make friends both among other international students and Australian friends and to join to some club or activity outside their study. Come and visit them in the semester break and perhaps travel with them to see some more of Australia.***



# Appendix 1a

## Application Step-by-Step Process Model



## Appendix 1b

### Application Step-by-Step Process Model - Description

For international students planning to study in Australia, the application process involves a number of steps – these steps are fairly standard, no matter whether you are planning to study English or a higher education research degree.

Applying for a course normally requires the following documents:

- Certified copies of an academic history to date, including high school results/Certificates and any studies undertaken after high-school (often called post secondary studies). If applicants have undertaken any post secondary studies they will need to provide their academic transcripts of subjects studied and any Completion or Graduation Certificates with their application.
- Certified copies of English Language proficiency (eg. IELTS, TOEFL or evidence that the medium of instruction in the student's past studies was English). All institutions have individual, specific English Language Proficiency requirements for entry into their courses – these standards vary greatly depending on the course selected.
- A certified copy of your passport and evidence of any Australian visa (if currently in Australia).
- For research degree applicants, a copy of a research proposal will also be required.

Once an application has been received by an education provider, it will be assessed by the admissions office/staff to determine if it meets both the academic and English Language requirements for the selected course. The possible outcomes of the application are:

- A Rejection Letter: which confirms that the application has not met the entry requirements for the selected course.
- A Conditional Letter of Offer: confirms that the applicant is eligible for entry to the selected course, pending the provision of further information to the admissions office. For example, the applicant may be required to provide a Completion/Graduation Certificate if s/he was finishing his/her current studies when s/he applied for his/her course or provide evidence of a IELTS or TOEFL test if s/he is sitting his/her English test after having applied for the selected course. Once the additional documentation has been provided and meets the stated conditions, the applicant will be issued with a Full Letter of Offer
- A Full Letter of Offer: which confirms that the applicant is eligible for direct entry into the selected course.

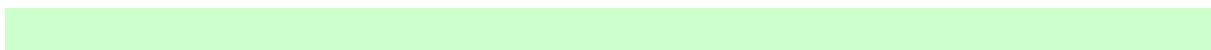
- A Package Letter of Offer: which confirms that the applicant has a Full Letter of Offer to one course and an additional Conditional Letter of Offer to a following course. For example, an applicant may receive both a Full Letter of Offer to a Diploma course with a Conditional Letter of Offer to the following Bachelor degree (which is conditional upon successfully completing the Diploma course)

If the applicant has been successful in his/her application, the next step is to formally accept the offer by:

- Signing the Offer Acceptance Form included in the offer
- Paying the tuition fees outlined in the letter of offer – this is generally the amount of one full study period’s tuition fees at that education provider.
- Paying the Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) outlined in the letter of offer – unless the applicant has been studying in Australia and has current OSHC accepted by the new education provider.

Once the applicant’s acceptance and payment have been received and confirmed by the education provider, a Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) will be issued, which will then be required for a student visa application.

Please note that applicants from Assessment Level 3 or 4 countries, cannot accept their Letter of Offer until they have completed a Pre-Visa Assessment (PVA) in their home country. PVAs are a procedure of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) whereby applicants from these countries who are applying for a student visa offshore can have their genuineness as a student assessed on the basis of a letter of offer before obtaining a CoE from their prospective education provider.



## Appendix 2

### 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

Arrange accommodation [\[some institutions will do this for the student\]](#)

Arrange transport from airport to accommodation [\[if applicable\]](#)

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:

Pre-Departure Guide from your education provider

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

Purchase household items and food

Enrol children in school (if applicable)

Attend international student orientation

Get student ID card

Advise health insurance company of address & get card

Open a bank account

Attend faculty/course specific orientation sessions

Get textbooks

Start classes

Apply for tax file number if seeking work

Get involved in student life and associations  
(eg music, sporting and cultural clubs).

## Appendix 3

### HOW MOST STUDENTS EXPERIENCE THE EARLY DAYS OF LIFE IN A FOREIGN COUNTRY

#### LEAVING HOME

- Farewells
- Happy & Sad



#### ARRIVAL IN NEW COUNTRY

- Confused
- Tired
- Basically Happy



#### CULTURE SHOCK

- Lonely
- missing family
- New
- food
  - study
  - culture



FEELING VERY UNHAPPY  
'Was I right to come to this country?'  
'Will I achieve my goal?'

### HOW MOST STUDENTS EXPERIENCE LIFE RETURNING TO THEIR HOME COUNTRY

#### COMPLETION OF STUDIES



#### LEAVING HOST COUNTRY

- Farewells
- Happy & Sad

#### ARRIVAL IN HOME COUNTRY

- Getting to know family & friends again
- Starting work
- High expectations



#### ADJUSTING

- Confident
- Study OK
- New friends & activities



#### REVERSE CULTURE SHOCK

- Disappointed if expectations are not met
- Negative feelings about home
- Comparing host country with home country



#### RE-ADJUSTING

- Successfully re-establishing lifestyle



#### ADAPTION TO LIFE IN HOME COUNTRY

- Sense of achievement
- 'I have benefited from my experience overseas'



## Acknowledgements

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### The Student Education Project

One of the links you will find recommended throughout this guide is commonly called *the Rainbow Guide*. The rainbow guide is made up of best-practice examples of information currently provided to international students by education providers, brought together into one document to inspire and assist all Australian institutions when developing their own pre-departure, arrival and orientation information. Further information was added by accommodation providers, police, fire and ambulance services, and other community groups who now have experience in the concerns and issues international students deal with.

**Important Note:** Although these materials are publicly available for all to view, students should access these materials for their information only but understand that your education provider will produce similar information specific to the conditions of study and services available at your institution, and will include important local information and services both on and off-campus.

To raise awareness of quality assurance and consumer protection mechanisms embedded in the Education Services for Overseas Students legislation and to highlight the rights and responsibilities of students there are;

- six short animated videos and to assist education providers, agents and others who advise international students [Student Education Project Videos](#)



- a template example of best-practice pre-arrival and orientation information with provision for education providers to insert their local information [Orientation Handbook Template](#) known as the *Rainbow Guide*.

**The *Rainbow Guide* which is mentioned throughout this publication, can be referred to in order to obtain further understanding of a topic (if required). However, information specifically provided by the education provider is important and will be tailored to that institution, city, community and State/Territory. Students should consider their education provider's information first but may obtain further understanding from the *Rainbow Guide* template document.**