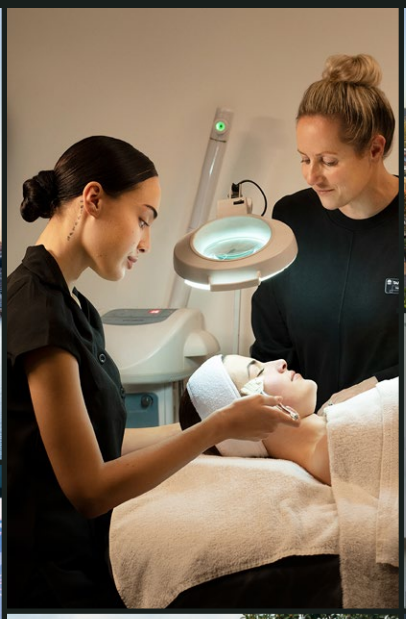
TAFE NSW

INTERNATIONAL

International Student Pre-arrival Guide







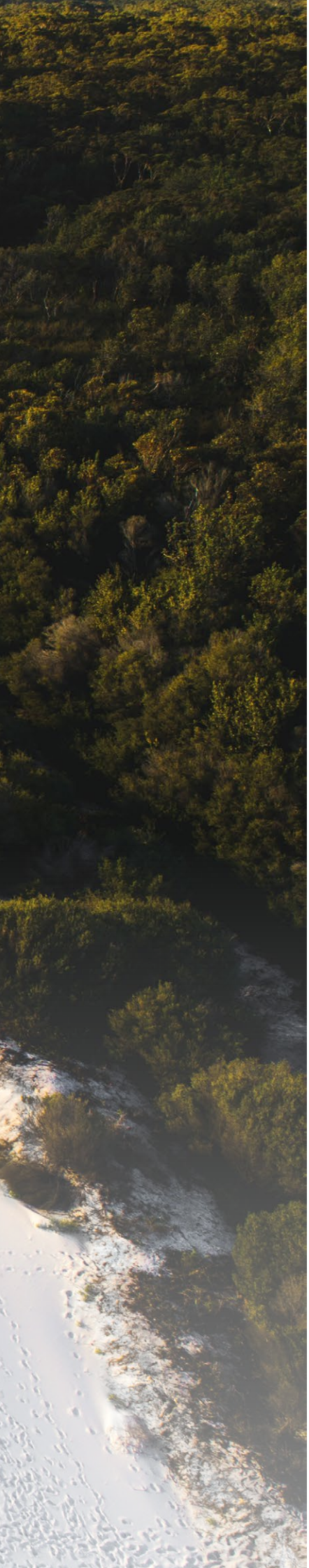



tafensw.edu.au/international



In the spirit of reconciliation, TAFE NSW acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

Hyams Beach, Wandi Wandian Country,
South Coast, NSW: traditional lands of the Jerrinja people.



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Welcome

For over 50 years, TAFE NSW has welcomed international students and educated them to operate in a global economy. Every year we attract international students from more than 80 countries, contributing enormously to our student diversity. With over 100 courses and qualifications to choose from, including certificates, diplomas and Bachelor degrees, international students can select the course and level of study suitable for them.

Australia enjoys a high standard of living and is one of the safest places in the world to live, study and work. New South Wales is home to people from all around the world, with freedom of expression and diversity highly valued and protected.

This guide will help you make the most of your exciting new adventure at TAFE NSW.

> It is with great pleasure that we welcome you to TAFE NSW to begin your studies and start your international educational journey.

You've received your Confirmation of Enrolment – what now?

Congratulations on receiving your Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) from TAFE NSW. We look forward to welcoming you to TAFE NSW.

In terms of your TAFE NSW enrolment, the next steps you need to take are:

- Organise your Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) – instructions are included in this guide.
- Apply for your visa – instructions are included in this guide.
- Attend the virtual pre-departure sessions.
- Attend the **mandatory** International Student Orientation. This orientation will be held about two weeks before your course starts. You may receive the invitation with your CoE or closer to your start date. It is mandatory that you attend this session. The session will introduce you to your International Customer Experience Coordinator, inform you of your rights and responsibilities as an international student, and explain the many types of support services available to you during your studies.



- Complete your Enrolment Form and Student Information Record and return these, along with a copy of your passport and visa. You may receive these documents with your CoE or closer to your start date. You will need to set up a Unique Student Identifier (USI) once you've arrived in Australia before returning your Enrolment Form – instructions are included in this guide.
- Read the International Student Orientation Guide that you will receive at the orientation or with your enrolment documents. This guide details information about TAFE NSW term dates, TAFE NSW processes, policies and systems, your rights and responsibilities, support services, emergency contact details, and all important information related to your safety.
- Attend your Course Orientation. This orientation differs from the International Student Orientation and is delivered by your teachers. This orientation may be held the week before your start date or on your first day of class. This session explains your course, including content, assessments, work placement (if applicable), timetable, textbooks and materials, and teachers.
- Visit Customer Service at your TAFE NSW campus to pick up your TAFE NSW Student Card, TAFE NSW email address, username and password, so you can start using all of TAFE NSW's services and systems.

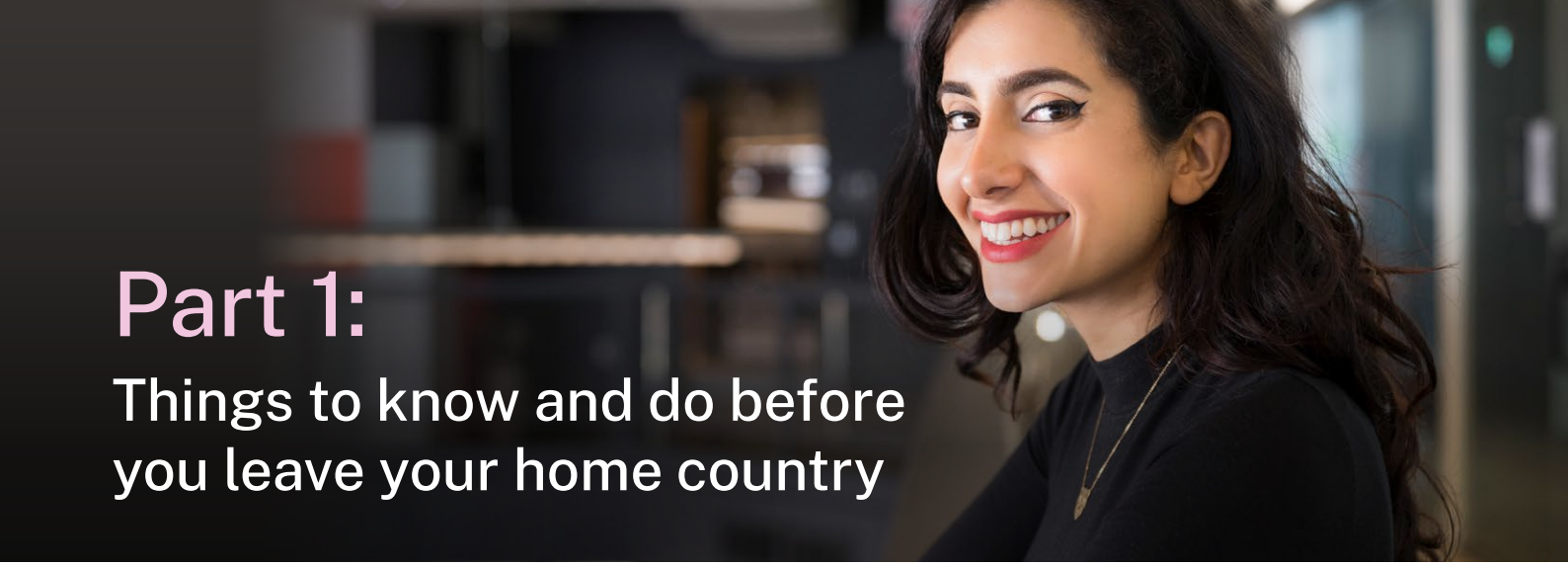
Hot tip

It is important that you inform the TAFE NSW International Team whenever you change your information, such as phone number, email address or home address.

It is a condition of your student visa that you inform both TAFE NSW and the Department of Home Affairs of any changes to your contact details.

Before you attend orientation and start your course, there are many other things you will need to organise. To help you, this guide includes information about the common things you will need to do before you leave your home country, as well as the things you will need to do once you arrive in Australia.

James Flannagan
Head of International Business - TAFE NSW



Part 1:
Things to know and do before you leave your home country

Overseas Student Health Cover

Health insurance, called Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC), is mandatory for international students for the duration of your stay in Australia. It covers you for certain medical costs if you need to visit a doctor or go to hospital.

To make things easier for you, TAFE NSW can arrange standard OSHC for you with our partner, Medibank Private. If you want TAFE NSW to organise this for you, simply tick the box on your TAFE NSW application form and pay the OSHC amount on your first fee statement. If you did not select this option at the time of application and now wish for TAFE NSW to arrange this, email the Admissions Support Officer who issued the offer letter.
For more information about our OSHC partner, Medibank Private, visit www.medibank.com.au/overseas-health-insurance/oshc

Alternatively, you may choose to select your own OSHC provider and policy. There are many different providers and policies available. When doing your research, check the OSHC policy carefully, including the details of what is covered. Providers offer a range of policies with different levels of cover, some with extra cover available for an additional fee. Most importantly, ensure your chosen provider and cover meets the Student Visa eligibility requirements set out by the Australian Government. More information is available at the following website: immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/help-support/meeting-our-requirements/health/adequate-health-insurance

Hot tip

You will need to arrange OSHC before you can apply for your Student Visa.

Serious medical conditions should be treated before you come to Australia, because standard OSHC generally does not cover pre-existing medical conditions.

Welfare arrangement for under 18s

If you are aged under 18 years of age at the time of your arrival in Australia, you must have suitable accommodation and welfare arrangements in place until you turn 18. Options include:

- living with parents or relatives approved by the Department of Home Affairs
- living with parent-nominated homestay with distant relatives or close family friends, as approved by TAFE NSW
- living in homestay accommodation arranged by TAFE NSW

More information about these options is available at www.tafensw.edu.au/international/get-started/accommodation.



Student visa

Once you have received your electronic Confirmation of Enrolment (eCoE) from TAFE NSW and arranged your Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC), you're ready to apply for your visa.

Applications are done online. Visit immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-listing/student-500 and click the *Apply* button.

A Student Visa (subclass 500) allows you to visit Australia to study an eligible course (or multiple courses) for a period of up to 5 years (in line with your enrolment). In some circumstances, you will be allowed to bring family members to Australia with you. To apply you must:

- be enrolled in a course of study in Australia
- hold Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC), or fall in one of the exemption categories
- prove you have a welfare arrangement if you are under 18
- hold an eligible substantive visa, if already in Australia

To see what documents and evidence you will need to provide, visit immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/web-evidentiary-tool .

Hot tip

Apply for your visa as soon as possible. On average, visa applications take 3-6 months to process. It may take longer if your application is incomplete, so make sure you fill the application in correctly and provide all the requested documents.

If you require assistance with your visa application or other documents, a registered education agent can assist you. To find your nearest TAFE NSW registered agent visit www.tafensw.edu.au/international and click on *'Find an Agent'*.



Choosing a place to live

Where you live and who you live with plays an important role in how you experience your time in Australia.

Make sure you choose accommodation which is a close travel distance to your TAFE NSW Campus. NSW is a large place, so what looks closely located on a map may not be so. The following steps will help you to judge the distance between points on a map:

1. Find the address of your TAFE NSW Campus at www.tafensw.edu.au/locations
2. If using public transport visit www.transportnsw.info/trip. Enter the address of the accommodation into the 'From' field, and enter the address of your TAFE NSW Campus into the 'To' field. This will calculate the modes of public transport, number of transport changes and duration of your trip.
3. If driving, visit www.google.com/maps and click on the 'Directions' tab. Enter the address of the accommodation in the 'A' field and enter the address of your TAFE NSW Campus into the 'B' field. This will calculate the distance and duration of your trip by car and any tolls (road usage fees) that you may have to pay.

Types of accommodation to consider

Homestay

TAFE NSW can help you find short-term homestay accommodation for when you arrive in Australia (minimum of 4 weeks stay).

Homestay is when you live with an Australian family in their home. The family provides you with meals, laundry facilities, and your own room with a study desk. Homestay also gives you a chance to practice your English with your homestay family, and learn more about Australian culture, customs and lifestyles. More information is available at cd.tafensw.edu.au/api/-/media/Files/PDFs/International/TAFE-International-Approved-Homestay-Providers-List.pdf

Hot tip

Homestay is a fantastic option for your first month of living in Australia – or longer. Homestays allow you time to explore NSW, your campus location and get familiar with the public transport options available to you, before you make longer term accommodation decisions.



Short-term accommodation

Hostels and short-term accommodation options such as student accommodation, serviced apartments/ hotel rooms and hostels can be a good alternative while deciding where you want to live long term. These options provide budget accommodation, where you can rent a bed and share a bathroom. Private rooms are often also available. You can find short-term accommodation at:

- www.expedia.com.au
- www.airbnb.com.au

Rentals

You can rent a room in a share house (as a flatmate) or rent a place on your own. You will need to supply your furniture if the property is unfurnished, including towels, pillows, sheets and blankets. Plus, you will have to pay your share of rent, electricity, gas, water and internet, as well as buy your food and do your own laundry.

When renting, you will need to pay a security deposit or 'bond' (it can vary from two to four weeks rent), as well as rent in advance (usually two weeks). You can find rental accommodation at:

- www.flatmates.com.au
- www.realestate.com.au/rent
- www.domain.com.au/rent
- www.flatmatefinders.com.au
- www.realestate.com.au/share

Please note that your bond is kept by the Department of Fair Trading, and is returned to you when you leave the property if you are up to date with rent payments, provide sufficient notice that you are moving out, and the property is in the same condition as when you moved in, including being clean with no damages.

It is important that you are aware of your rights and responsibilities before you sign an agreement. For more information about renting Australia and your rights as a tenant, visit:

- www.tenants.org.au
- www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au

Hot tip

Before you sign an agreement, always:

- View the property, either in person or virtually
- Meet your housemates, either in person or virtually
- Request and read a written agreement that outlines:
  - the rent
  - frequency of rent payments
  - bond amount
  - inclusions (such as water, electricity, internet etc)
  - your responsibilities and rights
  - property inspection, termination and damage reporting processes
- Request receipts for every payment



Be aware of accommodation scams

To avoid potential issues when renting accommodation, TAFE NSW provides the following advice for your safety and wellbeing. Signs of potential scams:

- Be wary if there is a sense of urgency that you move in immediately
- The landlord (person you are renting from) does not let you inspect the property
- The landlord asks you to pay a very high amount of money in advance and/or pay the money into a non-Australian bank account
- The landlord asks you to pay using crypto-currency, gift vouchers, money orders or other unusual methods
- The landlord tells you they will mail you the keys after you have made payment
- The landlord refuses to sign a lease agreement or hand writes the agreement onto a piece of scrap paper
- The landlord wants to keep the originals of your ID documents (not photocopies), or asks for confidential information, such as your banking password
- The place is overcrowded, with people sleeping in non-bedroom areas
- There are regular rent increases (more than once per six months) and you are not provided with sufficient notice
- You are not provided your own set of keys

Hot tip

If you find a great place that is cheaper than other accommodation in the area and urgent action is required to secure the deal, be careful, as this may be a potential scam! Always compare prices with similar rooms located in the same area.

Fair Trading provides useful resources about renting properties and identifying scams – visit www.nsw.gov.au/departments-and-agencies/fair-trading. You can report scams at www.scamwatch.gov.au.



Living on a student income

Compared to other places in the world, the cost of living in Australia can be high. Apart from your course fee, you should budget monthly expenses to include:

- accommodation
- food
- travel
- social events
- emergencies

As a minimum, you should have access to at least AUD$29,710 in income and/or savings for each year of study in Australia (Source: Education and living costs in Australia www.studyaustralia.gov.au). Please remember, this amount may be higher depending on your lifestyle and where you choose to live. This amount is for living expenses only and does not factor in your course fees. If you are arriving with your family, an additional amount of AUD$10,394 should be budgeted per year for your partner and AUD$4,449 should be budgeted per year per child for living expenses, and AUD$13,502 per year per child for schooling expenses.

To help you prepare a budget, use the cost of living calculator at insiderguides.com.au/cost-of-living-calculator or visit www.studyaustralia.gov.au/en/life-in-australia/living-and-education-costs

To convert these costs to your own currency, visit www.xe.com.

Average costs of common items
in Australian Dollar (AUD)

Cup of coffee
$4 – $5 per cup

Groceries and eating out
$140 – $280 per week

Gas and electricity
$10 – $20 per week

Phone and internet
$15 – $30 per week

Public transport
$30 – $60 per week

Entertainment
$80 – $150 per week



Tips for understanding and integrating into Australian culture

It is hard to generalise any culture into one set of rules as situations and people vary, meaning what might be appropriate around one group of people in one situation may differ to another group of people or situation. Keeping a curious, patient, open minded and adaptable attitude and approach will assist you to understand and integrate into Australian culture – but it will take time, so don't be too hard on yourself.

Below are some general tips to help you get started:

- Australian English differs from English spoken in other countries, not only because of the accent and pronunciation, but also because of the vocabulary, grammar, and spelling. Australians particularly like to shorten words and even people's names: for example the name Matthew may be shortened to Matt.
- Australians are not very formal – when they first meet you, they may use first names only and introduce themselves with a handshake and a smile. Other than handshakes, Australians generally do not touch during conversations unless they are family or close friends.
- Australians value a culture of equality.

Hot tip

It is hard to generalise any culture into one set of rules, as situations and people vary, meaning what might be appropriate for one group in one situation may differ to another group.

Practise your Aussie slang:

- Mate – Friend
- Cuppa – Hot drink
- Barbie – BBQ
- Arvo – Afternoon
- Brekky – Breakfast
- Ta – Thank you

Weather in New South Wales (NSW)

In Australia, temperature is measured using degree Celsius (°C), where 0°C refers to the freezing point of water and 100°C refers to the boiling point of water. 1°C is equivalent to 1.8 degrees in the Fahrenheit scale.

In summer (December, January and February) the temperature in most parts of NSW typically ranges from 18°C to 36°C, with some hotter days. Humidity ranges from 60% – 70%. **The Australian sun carries a high UV index even on cloudy days. It is advisable that you wear appropriate sunscreen (minimum SPF 30+) on exposed skin – even on cloudy days.**



In winter (June, July and August) temperatures in most parts of NSW typically range from 8°C to 22°C during the day and 0°C to 10°C at night, with some colder temperatures depending on which part of NSW you are in. It does not snow in Sydney, but does snow in some regional areas of NSW.

The weather in Spring (March, April, May) and Autumn (September, October, November) is typically mild to moderate, usually in the middle of the Summer/Winter temperature ranges.

What to pack

Last minute packing can be very stressful, so plan well in advance.

Be sure to check luggage restrictions with your airline prior to your departure. In some cases, you may prefer to arrange to ship/courier some items later, once you are settled in your accommodation.

To help reduce your stress, below is a list of suggested items to pack:

Hand luggage for the plane

- [ ] A folder containing all your important documents:
    - Passport
    - Proof of vaccination
    - Australian visa
    - Other personal identification documents, e.g. birth certificate, ID card, driver's license
    - Plane tickets
    - Australian address and directions
    - Insurance policies
    - Original or certified copies of your academic transcripts and qualifications
    - TAFE NSW Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE)
    - Receipts of payments (e.g. tuition fees, Overseas Student Health Cover, bank statements etc.)
    - Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation and Welfare (CAAW) form issued by TAFE NSW if you are under 18 years of age and have requested TAFE NSW to approve your living arrangements

  If you are travelling with your family, you will need to include their documents too. Make certified copies that can be left behind with family and sent to you in the case of an emergency.

- [ ] Prescription medicine and a copy of your medical history

On your flight

Before landing in Australia, passengers are given an Incoming Passenger Card (abf.gov.au) to fill in. This is a legal document. You must tick **YES** if you are carrying any food, plant material (including wooden items), 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 at the airport. If you have questions, don't be afraid to ask airline staff.

When you arrive at Sydney, Western Sydney or Newcastle airport

Important information for international students arriving in Sydney and NSW
www.study.nsw.gov.au/current-students/international-student-welcome-experience

Customs

The Australian Government is extremely strict on **food, plant and animal products** that can be brought into the country. Please visit www.agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity-trade/travelling for items that are either banned or must be declared and inspected. Carrying these items undeclared may result in financial penalties. It will also lengthen your processing time at the airport.

You are also not allowed to bring firearms, weapons and ammunition into Australia.

In addition, Australian law limits the amount of cash you can bring into the country. If you are bringing **AUD$10,000** or more (or the equivalent in foreign currency) you must declare this to customs officials on arrival in Australia. We recommend that you limit the amount of cash you arrive with to AUD$300. There are money exchange facilities at Sydney Airport, and you can also exchange money at Australian banks.

If you are bringing **prescription medication**, please ask your doctor to write a letter (translated into English) stating why you need the medicine. You may need to show this documentation when you pass through customs. This will also be useful if you need to see a doctor about the same condition in Australia.

Airport transportation

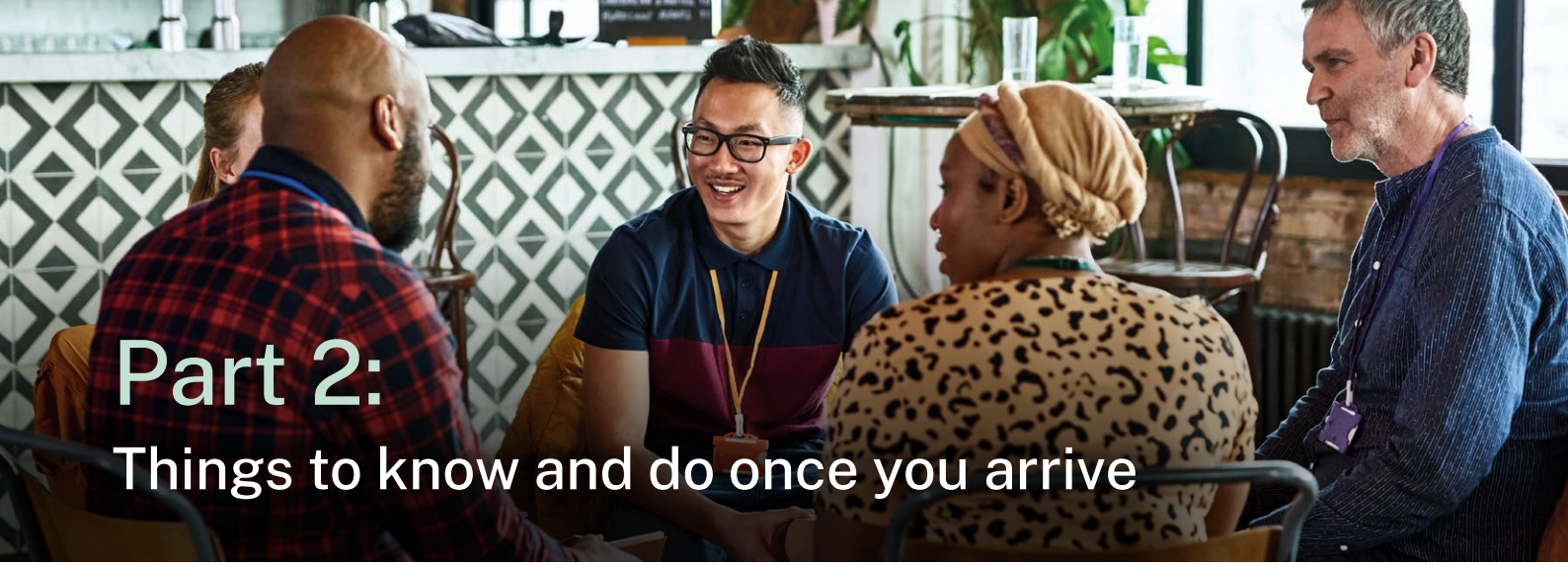
If you would like TAFE NSW to arrange an **airport pickup**, please contact your TAFE NSW Admissions Support Officer.

If you are not using the airport pickup service, you can:

1. Take a taxi to Sydney's city centre (approximately AUD$50)

OR

2. Take the Airport Link Rail Service, which runs from Sydney Airport to Sydney's city centre every 10 minutes during peak hours. The fare from the Airport to Central Station is approximately AUD$20. You can then get trains or buses to Sydney metropolitan areas or NSW regional centres.



Part 2:
Things to know and do once you arrive

Adjusting to life in Australia

Adjusting to life in a new country and culture that's different to your own can be challenging. You may have conflicting emotions; excited about your new journey and independence, whilst anxious and/or homesick. Culture shock may last a few days or longer, but your feelings will change over time. You need to realise that this is all a normal part of an international student's experience.

Support services

TAFE NSW International Customer Experience Coordinators

If you are finding it hard to manage your feelings or negative feelings persist, talk to your TAFE NSW International Customer Experience Coordinator (ICEC). If you are yet to be introduced to your ICEC, then contact your TAFE NSW Admissions Support Officer and ask to be put in contact with the ICEC at your campus. Your ICEC can help to connect you with support services. The earlier you reach out for support, the quicker we can help you to feel better.
Visit www.tafensw.edu.au/international/support/services

Hot tip

It's important to know that you're not alone. There are many support services offered by TAFE NSW and the community which can help you through what may be a difficult period of adjustment.

TAFE NSW counsellors

TAFE NSW counsellors are here to support you and can advise on matters such as settling in and coping with culture shock and missing home. You can talk to a counsellor in private about any matter. To arrange an appointment, visit www.tafensw.edu.au/counselling-career-development-services. **This is a free and confidential service.**

Doctors and medical professionals

Talk to your Doctor (General Practitioner) about your feelings and concerns, as they can help you through referrals to specialised services. Fees paid to see the doctor should be claimable from your Overseas Student Health Cover.



Free emergency mental health services and crisis numbers

- **Police and Ambulance** – Phone 000 from any phone to connect to emergency services if you are feeling unsafe and/or thinking of harming yourself. This call is free, and they can arrange emergency help for you to ensure your immediate safety.
- **Lifeline** – 24-hour crisis support telephone service and suicide prevention services.
  + www.lifeline.org.au
  + 131 114
- **Beyond Blue** – Talk to a trained mental health professional any time of the day or night. Calls are confidential. They will listen, provide information and advice, and point you in the right direction to seek further support.
  + www.beyondblue.org.au (they have an online chat option)
  + 1300 22 4636
- **Kids Helpline** – A telephone counselling support line for young people up to the age of 25.
  + www.kidshelpline.com.au
  + 1800 551 800
- **NSW Mental Health Line** – A mental health professional will answer your call about mental health concerns for you or someone you are concerned about.
  + www.health.nsw.gov.au/mentalhealth/Pages/mental-health-line.aspx
  + 1800 011 511
- **Suicide Call Back Service** – National service that provides free 24/7 phone, video and online professional counselling to people who are affected by suicide.
  + www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au
  + 1300 659 467
- **Transcultural Mental Health Centre** – The Centre works with communities across NSW to support positive mental health for people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities.
  + www.dhi.health.nsw.gov.au/transcultural-mental-health-centre



Setting up your Unique Student Identifier (USI)

All students require a USI to enrol into a nationally accredited training course with an Australian education provider (if the course is being studied in Australia). This is an Australian Government requirement. The USI is provided by the USI registry system, not TAFE NSW. You will keep the same USI even if you study at different education providers.

You will require a USI before we can enrol you into your course. To register for a USI, or retrieve a USI, visit www.usi.gov.au. You will need one form of personal identification, such as your passport. You can only create your USI once you've arrived in Australia, as the registration will not work if you are still located overseas.

The personal details you provide to TAFE NSW at enrolment must match your USI personal details, and these must also match your passport and visa. This means your name and the order of any additional names must match exactly.

Making the most of your once in a lifetime experience

Good friends and fun activities can help make your new home feel like home quicker and easier, while also improving your English. Below are some suggestions on how you can meet new people and form friendships:

- Talk to people in your classes, attend campus events and accept social opportunities presented to you.
- Thousands of social groups exist for all different hobbies and special interests, from bushwalking groups, cooking groups, coffee and movie groups, to cultural groups – there is something for everyone. Members can interact online and attend in-person events, download the free meetup app or visit www.meetup.com/en-AU
- Volunteer in your local community. There are thousands of volunteer groups, from helping the environment or animals, helping disadvantaged communities, to being a volunteer firefighter or even a lifeguard. To explore opportunities, visit www.volunteering.nsw.gov.au or www.volunteer.com.au
- Find a flatmate – visit www.flatmates.com.au, www.flatmatefinders.com.au, www.realestate.com.au/share
- Join a sports team or gym – visit www.sport.nsw.gov.au/find-a-sport
- Meet other international students from all over NSW by participating in Study NSW's events and programs. To stay up to date with exclusive international student opportunities subscribe to the Study NSW newsletter www.study.nsw.gov.au/subscribe



Things to see and do

New South Wales (NSW) is the most visited state in Australia, with diverse landscapes from beautiful beaches, refreshing national parks and peaceful countryside, to world famous harbours.

To find ideas on things you can see and do, check out the below links:

- Places to visit – www.visitnsw.com/destinations
- Things to do – www.visitnsw.com/things-to-do
- Road trip ideas – www.visitnsw.com/things-to-do/drives-and-road-trips
- Events – www.visitnsw.com/events or www.eventbrite.com.au
- What's On In Sydney – www.sydney.com/events or www.whatson.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au
- What's On In Western Sydney – www.sydneyolympicpark.nsw.gov.au/things-to-see-and-do or atparramatta.com/discover

To find groups, activities and events in your local suburb, you can also follow your local council's facebook page or visit their website to subscribe to their newsletter. Visit www.olg.nsw.gov.au/public/find-my-council

Medical care

Australia has one of the world's best healthcare systems, with modern, well-equipped hospitals, medical centres and doctors' offices located all over New South Wales.

If you require treatment for a life-threatening medical emergency, you should visit the emergency department of your nearest hospital. You can phone an ambulance (000) to take you if you cannot get there by other means.

Apart from an emergency, if you need medical treatment the best option is to visit a doctor (called a General Practitioner or GP). Doctors have broad knowledge and skills to treat most, if not all of the health issues you might have. You may need to schedule an appointment first. It is recommended that you bring a copy of your medical history and medication prescriptions to Australia to assist the Australian doctor to know and understand your medical history. Your doctor can assist with:

- non-life threatening injuries and illnesses
- health advice
- prescriptions for medications
- ongoing care if you have a chronic condition



- health screening tests
- vaccinations
- care if you're feeling overwhelmed or depressed
- a medical certificate or report – you will require a medical certificate for absences from your studies and may also be asked for one by your employer

The doctor will refer you to a specialist or hospital if further treatment is required.

Information discussed at a medical appointment is kept confidential and private. This is Australian law. There are very few exceptions to this law; e.g.: to protect you from serious harm. If you're unsure or concerned, ask your medical care provider to explain to you what is confidential and what isn't.

You can find a list of GPs in your area by visiting www.healthdirect.gov.au/australian-health-services.

Paying for medical care

Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) providers often have direct billing relationships with medical clinics and doctors to ensure students can access treatment with no, or minimal, up-front expenses. This enables you to simply show your OSHC card. They will invoice your OSHC provider directly. If this option is unavailable, you may need to pay for the appointment. If so, ask for a receipt and then send the receipt to your OSHC provider to claim a refund. Payment arrangements differ between OSHC providers, so contact your provider for more information.

To start using your Medibank OSHC, you will need a valid membership card. To activate your membership and order your card, visit www.medibankoshc.com.au/oshcactivate. If you are unable to activate online, phone 132 331 or visit a Medibank store.

More medical information

- International Student Health Hub – www.study.nsw.gov.au/current-students/staying-healthy-and-safe/health-hub
- NSW Health – www.health.nsw.gov.au
- Medibank – www.medibank.com.au/overseas-health-insurance/oshc

If you would feel more comfortable explaining your medical issue in your native language, the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) provides access to interpreters over the phone, or are available to attend in-person appointments. Usually, this service is free to use. For more information visit tisnational.gov.au.

Finding work

Part-time work is a great way to earn money as well as gain experience, practice English language skills and make new friends. There are plenty of part-time work opportunities available. Once you have started your course, your student visa usually allows you to work part-time up to 48 hours every two weeks during the semester, and unlimited hours during scheduled vacations (check your visa conditions for eligibility before you start looking for a job).

Popular part-time work opportunities are:

- retail – for example supermarkets, department stores, clothing stores
- hospitality – for example cafés, bars, restaurants, hotels, delivery services
- services – for example childcare, aged care, cleaning
- office work – for example administration type work
- tutoring

How to find work

There are many ways to find part-time work, such as:

- checking the job advertisement section in newspapers
- talking to friends and your teachers
- attending TAFE NSW workshops/support sessions organised by your International coordinator
- building your personal and professional networks
- contacting a recruitment company
- checking job websites:
  - www.seek.com.au
  - www.careerone.com.au
  - www.jobs.explorewithus.com.au
  - https://au.indeed.com

Hot tip

The Counselling and Career Development Service at your TAFE NSW campus can assist you with finding work and applying for job opportunities.

- To book an appointment with a careers counsellor at your campus visit www.tafensw.edu.au/counselling-career-development-services
- TAFE NSW Jobs Connect is a free service that helps you find jobs and connect with employers www.tafensw.edu.au/study/support-servicesjobs-connect

Steps in applying for a job

1. Research. Check the company's website to understand what they do, their values and why you would be a good match for them and the role.
2. Complete the job application form. Some companies will have their own application form that you need to complete and submit, usually in addition to the resume and cover letter.
3. Prepare your resume, a two or three page overview which includes:
   - your name and contact details
   - key skills and achievements
   - previous work history (companies you've worked for, dates of employment, key responsibilities)
   - qualifications (type of qualification, where you studied, dates, awards/achievements)
   - reference contact details (people who know you and can tell the potential employer about your abilities)

   Most advertised jobs include a position description and outline the experience, skills, qualifications and personal qualities required to do the job. Make sure you customise your resume to match this and make sure you double check for spelling mistakes and other errors.
4. Prepare your cover letter, a one-page letter that introduces you and demonstrates why you are the best person for the job. Each job you apply for will need its own customised cover letter, which should match the job criteria written in the job advertisement.

5. Submit your application. Make sure you have included everything asked for in the job advertisement. If there is anything missing, the employer may not consider your application.
6. Attend your interview. The employer may invite you to attend an interview with the manager or a group of employees. At the interview, you will be asked questions to determine if you are a good match for the job and company. Interview tips:
   + Arrive at the interview early
   + Prepare and practice answers to potential interview questions
   + Dress appropriately
   + Make a positive first impression by smiling, offering a firm handshake, making eye contact and using a confident tone of voice
   + Take a copy of your application, references, portfolio of sample work (if required)
   + Answer questions honestly and ensure you include examples of past work experience
   + Ask questions, listen and show you are interested
7. Attend training or a work trial. Your employer may ask you to undertake training before your first shift, such as safety training. They may also ask you to complete one trial shift to see if you are the right person for the job. **Be aware: you should be paid for any work that you complete.**

Your rights

Once you are employed, you have the same rights at work as Australian workers. The Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO) provides free guidance to international students on their work rights, minimum pay rates, leave and lunch break entitlements and other conditions. FWO also helps to resolve workplace issues and enforce relevant Australian workplace laws. For more information about your workplace rights, visit www.fairwork.gov.au/tools-and-resources/fact-sheets/rights-and-obligations/international-students or phone 13 13 94.

You can get advice from FWO or report issues without giving your name, if you prefer. You won't lose your visa by talking to FWO. Advice is also available in multiple languages.

Hot tip

Australia has a minimum wage. You must be paid at least this amount – it's the law! You must also be given a payslip within one working day of getting paid. Normally, workers get paid weekly, fortnightly or monthly. The payslip can be used to prove you are an employee if you are injured or get sick at work, and need access to your employer's insurance.

Your employer must give you appropriate training, supervision, information and equipment to ensure you can work safely. If you notice a safety issue in your workplace, or you are concerned that safety practices are not being followed, you should talk about it with your supervisor. For more information visit www.safework.nsw.gov.au.

For confidential advice, support or assistance about forced labour and modern slavery, please visit: https://dcj.nsw.gov.au/documents/legal-and-justice/our-commissioners/anti-slavery-commissioner/nsw_anti_slavery_commissioners_fact_sheet.pdf

Tax File Number

When you earn money from a part-time job, you must pay Australian tax. A Tax File Number (TFN) is issued by the Australian Tax Office (ATO). Apply for a TFN online before starting work. At the end of each financial year (30 June), you complete an Income Tax Return with the ATO and may receive a refund. For more information, visit www.ato.gov.au or phone the ATO Helpline on 13 28 61.

You should also provide your TFN to your bank.

Travelling around

Public transport

Most parts of NSW are connected by a public transport system that operates most hours of the day, 7 days a week. Your transport options could include trains, buses, light rail and ferries.

For fees, maps and timetable information contact 131 500 or visit www.transportnsw.info. You can also use the trip planner on this website to find the quickest and easiest way to get from one place to another.

Public transport payment options

To travel on public transport, you will need an Opal Card. The Opal Card is a smartcard ticket that you load value onto and reuse to pay for travel on all public transport in Sydney, the Blue Mountains, Central Coast, Hunter, Illawarra, Southern Highlands and regional locations. Opal cards only work in NSW.

You can purchase and top up your Opal Card at newsagencies, train and ferry stations, transport customer service centres, or online at www.opal.com.au. You can also link the Opal Card to a credit or debit card.

Hot tip

There are a range of excellent apps which you can download to your mobile to help you plan your travel from one place to another, and track your bus/train/light rail/ferry in real time to see exact departure/arrival times – https://transportnsw.info/apps.



When you travel, you need to tap your Opal Card at the start of your journey on the Opal Card reader located at train stations, ferry wharves, light rail stops and inside the door of buses. At the end of your journey, you must tap off again on an Opal Card reader located at your destination. The system automatically calculates the correct fare and deducts it from the value on your card. **Be careful – if you forget to tap off then the maximum fare will be deducted from your card, wasting your money. If you forget to tap on, you could be fined for not having a valid ticket.**

Please note: international students are unfortunately not eligible to buy a concession 'student' ticket and will need to use a standard adult ticket. If you are caught travelling on a concession 'student' ticket, you may receive a fine (financial penalty).

Alternatively, if you have an American Express, Mastercard or Visa credit or debit card, you can use it to pay for your travel by tapping on and tapping off at Opal readers instead of using an Opal Card. To work, your card must be contactless-enabled. Just look for the contactless payment symbol on your card to ensure it will work. However, be careful using an overseas-issued card, as your bank may charge international transaction fees.

Another option is to use your phone, tablet or watch that is linked to your bank account, the same way you would to make a purchase in a shop. You must tap on and tap off with the same card or linked device for all your travel all week to receive the travel benefits and rewards transportnsw.info/tickets-fares/fares/opal-benefits.

Safety on public transport

Travelling on public transport should be safe, as many security measures are in place including public transport security officers, a regular police presence, train guards, 'help points' on trains and platforms, well-lit stations and CCTV security cameras.

Taxis and Uber

Taxis can be an expensive travel option, especially for anyone on a budget. Taxis charge for the time your trip takes, not the distance. To get a taxi on the street, wave your arm in the air when it approaches. Or you can choose to book a taxi. Some popular taxi companies are below:

- Taxis combined 133 300
- Legion Cabs 13 14 51
- Premier Cabs 13 10 17
- Silver Service 133 100

Uber is another popular way of travelling and can be cheaper than a taxi, with the added advantage of getting an upfront price and tracking how far away your driver is. To book an Uber, all you need is an email and phone number to create an account. You can book an Uber at www.uber.com or use the Uber app.

Driving in Australia and cycling

International students can drive a car in NSW if you hold a valid and current driver's licence from your home country.

Whenever you drive, you must always carry with you:

- your original valid, current licence from your home country
- **EITHER** an International Driving Permit OR a certified English translation of your licence (if your licence is not written in English). This is issued by the motoring association or embassy of the country that you are licensed to drive in
- your passport and visa, or a certified copy of these documents

It is illegal to drive without being properly licensed. Before attempting to drive on any road in Australia, make sure that you know the road rules. For details about driving on your overseas licence and Australian road rules, visit www.nsw.gov.au/driving-boating-and-transport/driver-and-rider-licences/visiting-or-moving-to-nsw/visiting-from-overseas-or-interstate

Cycling is a great way to get exercise as you discover your new city. Just remember to stay safe and follow the road rules. Visit https://roadsafety.transport.nsw.gov.au/stayingsafe/bicycle-riders/index.html for more information.

Road rules for drivers and cyclists

To get a copy of the Road User Handbook covering the main rules you need to know, visit www.nsw.gov.au/topics/roads-safety-and-rules/safety-updates-for-nsw-road-users/road-user-handbook

Walking

If you are walking, make sure you only cross the road at traffic lights when the green walking symbol is showing, or at specially marked pedestrian crossings. You may be fined by the Police if you don't follow these rules or, worse, get hit by a vehicle.



Safety

Personal safety

Even though Australia is much safer than many other countries, it is still wise to avoid dangerous situations and to take precautions where possible. The following tips will help you to stay safe during your studies:

- Always tell someone where you're going and when you expect to return
- Do not leave personal belongings unattended – keep valuables out of sight and secure
- Take particular care of your passport
- Most trains have secure carriages and these carriages are clearly identified with a blue light which is located next to the guard's compartment. It is highly recommended that you use these carriages when travelling out of peak time such as at night, or when traveling alone. On public transport pick a seat close to other passengers. Pick a well-lit area to wait for public transport and check the timetable to avoid a long wait
- If you feel threatened in any way, call the police (000). You can use any mobile phone or, if you do not have one, find the nearest shop or house and ask them to phone for you.

Beach safety

Australia is famous for its beautiful beaches and NSW has some of the best, including the iconic Bondi Beach. The following safety tips will help you to enjoy your beach visit:

- Always swim at a beach patrolled by lifesavers
- Always swim under supervision or with a friend
- Read and obey the signs
- Swim between the red and yellow flags – they mark the safest areas
- If you are unsure of the conditions, ask a lifesaver
- Don't swim directly after a meal
- Don't swim at night
- Don't swim under the influence of alcohol
- Conditions change regularly – check each time before you enter the water
- If you get into trouble in the water, don't panic – signal for help by waving your arm in the air, float and wait for assistance
- Float with a rip current or undertow – do not try to swim against it

For more information visit www.beachsafe.org.au. For safety tips for visiting national parks visit www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/safety.

Fun fact

It would take 27 years to visit a new Australian beach every day!

Sun safety

Even on overcast days, the Australian sun is strong enough to cause sunburn and permanent skin damage in just a few hours. By minimising your exposure to the sun's damaging ultraviolet radiation (UVR), you can protect your skin and prevent sunburn, skin damage and skin cancer.

Apply SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before you go out into the sun, and then reapply regularly.

In addition to sunscreen, there are five other simple steps you can follow to protect your skin:

1. Try to stay out of the sun during the hottest part of the day, between 10am and 3pm
2. Seek shade under trees or other shelter when outdoors
3. Wear suitable clothing that provides good sun protection
4. Choose a broad brim hat that will protect your face, neck and ears
5. Wear UV protective sunglasses

Australian currency and banking

Currency

Australian currency is referred to as the Australian Dollar (AUD$). 100 cents (c) make up one dollar ($).
The exchange rate for the Australian dollar goes up and down, depending on the foreign exchange market.

Australian currency is made up of five different coloured notes representing different values:



Purple/pink note = $5



Blue note = $10



Red note = $20



Yellow/gold note = $50



Green note = $100



Small round silver coin = 5c



Medium round silver coin = 10c



Large round silver coin = 20c



Very large 12-sided silver coin = 50c



Large round gold coin = $1



Small round gold coin = $2

Money can be exchanged at outlets located at the airport and in major cities/shopping centres, or at most banks. To monitor the daily exchange rate, visit www.xe.com/currencyconverter.



Banking

There are many advantages of setting up an Australian bank account. The main advantage is having quicker and easier access to your money to pay for day-to-day expenses without incurring international transaction fees, which may happen if you use your non-Australian bank account. Your employer or landlord may also require you to use an Australian bank account.

There are many different banking providers in NSW to choose from, ranging from large Australian-wide providers to smaller, state-based banks. When contacting banks, ask them if they have any special student discounts or products – for example, lower account fees for students. The major banks in NSW are:

- Australia and New Zealand Banking Group (ANZ) – www.anz.com.au/personal
- Commonwealth Bank of Australia (Commbank) – www.commbank.com.au
- National Australia Bank (NAB) – www.nab.com.au
- Westpac Banking Corporation (Westpac) – www.westpac.com.au

Each bank will have slightly different requirements and processes for opening an account. Generally, you will need to provide your:

- Student ID or proof of enrolment (CoE)
- Passport
- Other forms of identification

Some banks may also require an Australian Tax File Number to enable you to access special interest rates. For information on setting up an Australian Tax File Number, visit Apply for a TFN.

Accessing your money

After you've set up your Australian bank account, your bank will issue you with a bank card – either a debit card or credit card or both, depending on the type of account you set up.

Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs) are available everywhere, including at shopping centres, petrol stations and outside banks. Be aware that some banks may charge you an extra fee using their ATM if your bank card belongs to a different bank.

Hot tip

Once you've set up your Australian bank account, login to your account online or download the bank's app to schedule automated payments for expenses such as your rent. This will ensure the payments are made on time and you don't forget them.

Telecommunications

Mobile phone

It is recommended that you set up an Australian phone account and use an Australian phone number to save on expensive international data roaming fees that you may incur if you use your overseas phone number. There are two types of mobile phone accounts you can choose from:

- **Prepaid** – this option allows you to add money up-front in credit onto your account, controlling how much money you spend
- **Contract** – this option may save you money if you use your mobile phone a lot and plan on staying in Australia for 12 months or longer.

There are many providers and different offers available. Below are some providers to help you get started:

- Optus – www.optus.com.au
- Telstra – www.telstra.com.au
- Vodafone – www.vodafone.com.au

Internet

Many of the phone service providers also provide internet services. Internet services are also usually offered as prepaid or contract options, as per the above. Make sure you choose the option that is going to provide you with the data size and speed you require.

Hot tip

Want to save on international calling fees? Use the below free, or low cost, apps instead:

- WhatsApp
- Messenger
- Skype
- Zoom
- Viber
- WeChat

Calling overseas

To make international telephone calls from Australia, dial 0011 followed by the country code, the area code (if required) and the telephone number. To call Australia from overseas, dial 61 followed by the area code and telephone number.

To check the current time in the country you're calling, visit www.timeanddate.com

Electricity

Australia's power outlets supply 230-250 volts, which is similar to most countries in Asia, Africa and Europe. Therefore your electronic devices should be able to be plugged into Australian power outlets, although you may need to use a power plug adapter. An adapter changes the power plug configuration, so your overseas plug fits into an Australia power outlet, which has three long rectangular holes – see example.





Shopping

Shopping centres

Most shopping centres are open every day between 9.00am and 5.00pm, and 10.00am to 4.00pm on Sundays. There is late night shopping every Thursday, when shops are usually open until 9.00pm.

Supermarkets

Supermarkets are usually open every day from 8.00am to 10.00pm. The larger stores have many types of food and fresh produce, such as fruit, vegetables, meat and fish. Some even have international food sections. The largest and most common supermarkets are:

- Aldi – www.aldi.com.au
- Coles – www.coles.com.au
- IGA – www.iga.com.au
- Woolworths – www.woolworths.com.au

Second-hand stores

Like variety stores, second-hand stores sell clothes, shoes, accessories, jewellery, furniture and household items. These items were previously owned (also called pre-loved!). The largest and most popular second-hand stores are:

- The Salvation Army (Salvos) – www.salvosstores.com.au
- St Vincent de Paul (Vinnies) – www.vinnies.org.au/vinnies-shops

Shopping tips

- Displayed prices usually already include taxes – referred to in Australia as Goods and Services Tax (GST)
- Tipping is not common practice in Australia and generally is not necessary
- You usually don't bargain/negotiate the price of an item, with some exceptions being community markets, electrical goods stores, furniture shops, or when purchasing a motor vehicle



Alcohol laws

There are laws in NSW that regulate the sale, consumption and provision of alcohol. Proof of age may be requested before alcohol can be purchased. There are also laws governing drunk and disorderly behavior. In addition, unless you are at a registered venue, it is against the law to drink alcohol in most public places, including parks, beaches and public transport.

Smoking and vaping laws

You must be over 18 years of age to purchase tobacco products. Proof of age may be requested before any tobacco or non-tobacco smoking product can be purchased. The Smoke-free Environment Act 2000 bans smoking and the use of e-cigarettes (vaping), in enclosed public places and certain outdoor public areas, especially commercial outdoor dining areas.

Smoking and vaping is prohibited on TAFE NSW grounds with the exception of designated smoking areas. Some campuses do not permit smoking anywhere on the campus, and students must leave the campus grounds to smoke or vape.

Summary checklist

Before you leave

- [ ] Organise your Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)
- [ ] Arrange your welfare arrangements if you are aged under 18
- [ ] Apply for your student visa
- [ ] Research and arrange your accommodation – at least temporary accommodation for when you first arrive
- [ ] Prepare a budget
- [ ] Research Australian culture and practice your Aussie slang
- [ ] Pack your bags (remember to check the biosecurity website for items that you are not allowed to bring)
- [ ] Arrange or plan your airport transportation

After you arrive (complete in any order)

- [ ] Research and access support services if you are having difficulties with adjusting to life in Australia
- [ ] Research transport options and map out your routes
- [ ] Research and find longer-term accommodation
- [ ] Read and understand the safety tips included in this guide
- [ ] Research and set up an Australian bank account
- [ ] Research and set up an Australian phone and internet account
- [ ] Explore your local area and locate your local supermarkets and shopping centres
- [ ] Meet new people and make friends
- [ ] Prepare a bucket list of places to see and things to do
- [ ] Activate your Overseas Student Health Cover membership and order your card
- [ ] Research and find a doctor (GP)
- [ ] Apply for an Australian Tax File Number
- [ ] Research and apply for jobs
- [ ] Research and understand your Australian workplace rights
- [ ] Save the key contacts (located inside the back cover) in your phone
- [ ] Subscribe to the Study NSW newsletter
- [ ] Follow TAFE NSW's social media pages

Before you commence classes

- [ ] Attend the International Student Orientation
- [ ] Apply for a Unique Student Identifier (USI)
- [ ] Complete and return the Enrolment Form and other documents
- [ ] Read the International Student Orientation Guide and save it in a safe place
- [ ] Attend your course specific orientation (if applicable)
- [ ] Pick up your TAFE NSW Student Card from Customer Service
- [ ] Join the TAFE NSW International Students Resource Hub on Microsoft Teams

Key contacts

In the case of an emergency, phone 000 for Police, Fire and Ambulance emergency services.

If you need to talk to the Police and it is not an emergency (i.e. the issue is not life-threatening), you can phone the **Police Assistance Line (PAL)** for general enquiries and reports on 13 14 44.

TAFE NSW International

Visit www.tafensw.edu.au/international for general information or visit www.tafensw.edu.au/international/support/services to find the contact details of the TAFE NSW International Customer Experience Coordinator at your campus.

Once enrolled, you should also join the TAFE NSW International Students Resource Hub on Microsoft Teams – look out for the link at your orientation session or in newsletters.

Department of Education and Training

For information about your rights and responsibilities as an international student under the ESOS Act, visit www.education.gov.au/international-education

Department of Home Affairs

For visa matters visit www.homeaffairs.gov.au or phone 131 881 (if in Australia), or contact the Department of Home Affairs office in your country.

NSW Health

For all health-related information, news and advice relevant to New South Wales, visit www.health.nsw.gov.au

Study NSW

Study NSW is a dedicated unit within the NSW Government, responsible for advocating for international students. The unit delivers a selection of programs to enhance the experiences of international students, plus a range of other functions. Their website includes lots of valuable information, including more detailed information about living and studying in NSW, programs and events available for international students, plus news and tips. Visit www.study.nsw.gov.au. We highly recommend that you also subscribe to their e-newsletter – www.study.nsw.gov.au/subscribe

TAFE NSW

INTERNATIONAL

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