



2024 Pre-departure Guide



acu.edu.au/international





Acknowledgement of country

In recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' deep spiritual connection to Country, and in continuing the university's commitment to reconciliation, it is customary to acknowledge Country as we pass through it.

We acknowledge and pay our respects to the First Peoples, the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waterways where Australian Catholic University campuses are located, and we thank them for their continued custodianship.

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Welcome

The aim of this guide is to help you with your preparations to leave home and come and study at ACU in Australia.

You can also find a lot of useful information on the **ACU website**.

ASKACU

You can start asking any general questions you have about studying at ACU before you start! The **AskACU** team are here to help you.

HOW CAN YOUR INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ADVISER (ISA) HELP YOU?

International Student Advisers provide a support, information and referral service. Think of the ISA as your go-to person when you have any concerns or need help.

The course coordinator is your contact for any course related and course map queries.

Did you know ACU offers 24 hour support for international students?

Office opening hours:

Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm.

Out of Hours ACU Student

Assistance Hotline:

Monday to Friday, 5pm-9am and 24 hours on the weekend.

P: 1800 180 391

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ADVISERS



All campuses (*based in North Sydney*):

Peter Freeman (Senior ISA)

P: +61 2 9465 9273

peter.freeman@acu.edu.au



Ballarat Campus:

Fiona Bradley

P: +61 3 5336 5370

intadviser.bal@acu.edu.au



Canberra Campus:

Peter Freeman (Senior ISA)

P: +61 2 9465 9273

peter.freeman@acu.edu.au



Brisbane Campus:

Michelle Miles

P: +61 7 3623 7336

intadviser.qld@acu.edu.au



Melbourne Campus:

Candice Ager

P: +61 3 9953 3882

intadviser.mel@acu.edu.au



**Blacktown/North Sydney/
Stathfield Campuses**

Natalie Lastary Dewi Lee

P: +61 2 9739 2094

intadviser.nsw@acu.edu.au

EXCHANGE AND STUDY ABROAD STUDENT SUPPORT



All campuses (*based in Brisbane*):

Meghan Lawrence

P: 61 7 3623 7506

globallearning.inbound@acu.edu.au

Preparing to come to Australia

WHAT SHOULD I PACK?

Australia's climate is variable and has four seasons. These seasons are:

Autumn (March to May)

Autumn is mild to cool. You can expect an average temperature range of 11–20 degrees Celsius with between 10–13 hours of daylight.

Bring: light jumpers, jeans, waterproof shoes and jackets, plus an umbrella.

Winter (June to August)

Winter is usually cold and relatively wet with a day temperature range averaging 6–18 degrees Celsius and approximately 10 hours of daylight. At night, the temperature can drop to near zero degrees in certain areas. Of all the cities, Melbourne and Canberra are likely to be coldest.

Bring: warm jumpers, thick waterproof coats, scarves, gloves, jeans/warm trousers, warm waterproof shoes, and an umbrella.

Spring (September to November)

Spring is mild and usually wet. The average temperature range is 10–22 degrees Celsius with 12–14 hours of daylight. This is usually the wettest season of the year.

Bring: light jumpers, t-shirts, light casual trousers and jeans, water proof shoes and jacket.

Summer (December to February)

Summer is the hottest season. The average temperature range is 14–30 degrees Celsius with 14–15 hours of daylight. However, the temperature can get above 35 or 40 degrees from time to time, especially in February.

Bring: light summer shirts and jumpers, shorts, light casual trousers, sandals and water proof shoes. Wear sunscreen with Sun Protector Factor (SPF) 30+ for protection against UV rays and skin cancer. The Australian sun is very harsh and you can burn quickly (even on a cloudy day). It is really important that you cover up and wear sunscreen.

Please be advised that if you will be studying in Queensland, the range of temperatures will be much higher than Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra.

For more specific information about the weather in each Australian city, please visit bom.gov.au

Most international airlines only allow around 20 kg of luggage per person, so you need to be diligent in packing to come to Australia. Make sure you read the Australian biosecurity information in this guide before you start packing.

When you arrive you will find that most students who study here dress very casually to come to class and study. If you're undertaking a work experience placement in your course you need to wear a uniform (more information will be given about your clinical uniform during orientation) or you may need to bring some smart business clothes (smart trousers, a shirt and tie for males) for business and education students.

You may also find a smart business outfit useful if you are intending to apply for a part-time job in Australia.

Many students also bring along some traditional clothes from their home country, which can be useful for cultural events on campus or even just to remind you of home when you are feeling homesick. You will find many people wearing some type of traditional dress on a day to day basis (especially around larger cities and towns) so don't be shy to express yourself through your clothing.

DOCUMENTS

Even if you have already submitted copies of your academic transcripts and proof of previous study you should bring all original documents with you as they may be required to apply for 'Prior Recognition of Learning,' also known as 'Credit'. Put all your important documents into a folder so that you have everything in one place. You might also like to add all the correspondence you have received from ACU and the Department of Home Affairs (DHA).

Daylight Saving (excluding Queensland)

During the warmer months most Australian states have daylight saving time, when the clocks move forward one hour to allow the daylight to last longer into the evening.

Daylight saving is usually from the last Sunday in October to the last Sunday in March, but each state can vary.



Left: Bondi Icebergs (Sydney, NSW). Top right: Flinders Street Station (Melbourne, VIC). Bottom right: South Bank (Brisbane, QLD).

Preparing yourself emotionally

Studying in a new country can mean leaving family, friends and familiar places. Whilst this can be incredibly exciting, it can also be an extremely emotional time. You may experience feelings of home sickness at some stage, but remember that this is normal.

Whether or not this will be your first overseas trip you need to mentally prepare yourself to help you adjust smoothly to the changes you are going to experience which may include:

- long absences from your family and friends
- Australian English in social and academic contexts
- unfamiliar styles of learning and teaching
- a different lifestyle sharing accommodation or living by yourself
- different social customs, values and religions
- differences in the number of people you see around you, distances to and from places, and transportation.

For some people such changes may be quite challenging and may involve loss of self-confidence, and withdrawal from the new environment. It is important to know who to ask for help. Just remember that asking for help shows great strength as it takes a brave person to admit that they need help.

You can speak to an ACU counsellor about any issue that is impacting on your well-being including relationship issues, or mental health concerns. Appointments with counsellors can be booked online. You can also contact the **ACU 24-hour Mental Health Support Line** if you are:

- feeling emotionally distressed
- experiencing mental health issues
- having thoughts of self-harm or other harm.

Listed below are a range of academic and social support services available to you at ACU to ensure that you achieve your academic and personal goals.

- International Student Advisers (ISAs) for each campus
- Academic Skills Unit
- AskACU
- Campus Ministry
- Careers and Employability
- Counselling
- Access and Disability Service
- Student Mentors
- PASS (Peer Assisted Study Sessions)
- Student Advocacy Service
- Student Associations and Clubs
- Student Transition and Retention
- IT Information and resources

For more information please visit:

acu.edu.au/student-life/student-services

ACU SUCCESSFUL GRADUATE COURSES

A suite of free courses to help you develop employability, academic and soft skills. Access details will be sent to you.

GATEWAY TO ACU (MELBOURNE AND BALLARAT STUDENTS)

Gateway to ACU is a new online transition program designed to help you adjust to your new home. It covers many things you need to know about life as a student at ACU in Victoria.

You can access the first module [here](#) and the remaining ones once you are enrolled and have access to ACU's online educational learning platform.



Entering Australia

AUSTRALIAN BORDER FORCE

The Australian Border Force manages the security and integrity of Australia's borders. It works closely with other government and international agencies, in particular the Australian Federal Police, the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) and the Department of Defence, to detect and deter unlawful movement of goods and people across the border.

For information about what you can and can't bring into Australia visit the [Australian Border Force](#) website.

UNACCOMPANIED GOODS

Unaccompanied baggage does not receive the same duty/tax concessions as goods that you bring with you. These goods may be subject to duty/tax unless you have both owned and used them for 12 months or more. This also applies to articles posted to Australia.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND WATER RESOURCES

If you are carrying food of any kind or plant and animal products in your luggage, you must tick 'YES' to declare this on your Incoming Passenger Card. These goods are of biosecurity concern as they could introduce pests and diseases into the country. Failure to comply with these strict laws can result in fines and in serious cases, you can even be sent to jail.

If you do not wish to declare, you can dispose of those items in specially marked quarantine bins in the airport terminal. When you declare items of biosecurity concern, you will be directed to a biosecurity officer to have them inspected. In most cases they will be returned to you. In some cases treatment may be necessary to remove the pest or disease risk. Items that require treatment attract a fee to cover treatment and postage costs to return the item to you. Prohibited items will be seized and destroyed by Department of Agriculture and Water Resources.

RECEIVING MAIL OR PARCELS FROM HOME

Australia's biosecurity and customs laws also apply to items that you might receive in the mail sent from family and friends at home.

The Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment operate in all the international mail centres, airports and seaports across Australia. The same strict regulations apply to goods arriving through the mail. Biosecurity officers, X-ray machines and detector dogs screen mail to find items of biosecurity risk. It is important that declarations on mail parcels are true and provide sufficient details about the goods inside.

It's a good idea to tell your family and friends about Australia's biosecurity requirements. Breaches of biosecurity laws can lead to prosecution, heavy fines and imprisonment

More information about Australia's biosecurity requirements for passengers and mail is available in a number of different languages on the **Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry** website

Help protect Australia's fauna and flora

Australia has a unique natural environment and important agricultural industries, protected by one of the strictest biosecurity systems in the world. Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment provides biosecurity inspection for the arrival of international passengers, cargo, mail, animals and plants. Detector dogs are on duty at all international airports and every piece of luggage is X-rayed or screened for prohibited items.



Arrival and accommodation

TRANSPORT FROM THE AIRPORT

ACU Airport reception service

An Airport Reception (pick-up) service is available to all new international students arriving to study at ACU. Students will be met in the arrivals hall and will be provided with a one-way transfer from the airport. Please note that for domestic arrivals at Sydney airport the driver waits until 10 minutes after the plane has landed before entering the car park. Please wait for your driver in the arrivals hall.

Students requesting airport pickup will need to pay airport reception charges as follows:

Brisbane Airport

Domestic and International to Brisbane CBD \$132.50

Up to 10 km radius outside Banyo: \$127.50

Melbourne Airport

Departing from International Terminal to CBD area: \$147.50

Departing from Domestic Terminal to CBD area: \$137.50

Canberra Airport

\$85 (sedan) to \$121 (people mover)

Sydney Airport

Departing from International Terminal and within a range of 15 km from the airport (but no more than 10 km from the CBD): \$148.00

Departing from Domestic Terminal and within a range of 15 km from the airport (but no more than 10 km from the CBD): \$144.00

You do not need to pay the driver. ACU will email you with an invoice, approximately 2–4 weeks after your arrival, outlining details of how to pay. Please note that you will also be charged GST (Goods and Services Tax).

At least 72 hours (3 working days' notice) is required for all bookings. If you fail to appear for an airport reception that has been booked on your behalf, you will be liable for a cancellation fee which will be the cost of transport and parking.

Please complete the **Airport reception booking form** if you require airport reception.

If any of your arrival details change, please contact your **ACU International Student Adviser** as soon as possible.

If you are a Study Abroad and Exchange student email globallearning.inbound@acu.edu.au to advise of any change in arrival details.

Our office is closed on Saturdays and Sundays so if you make a booking on the weekend, your details will be processed the following Monday.

When you make this booking ACU will email you the instructions on airport arrival and a phone number to call if your plane is delayed or you can't find the representative to pick you up.

If you prefer to arrange your own transport from the airport you will find bus, taxi, rideshare and trains (trains only in Sydney and Brisbane) which will be able to take you to the city centre or to your destination. If you have not booked a service prior to your arrival the 'Information Desk' at the airport will be able to provide you with more information.



PUBLIC TRANSPORT

In each state there are different transport options to get into the city from the airport.

Sydney - [sydneyairport.com.au](https://www.sydneyairport.com.au)

Brisbane - [bne.com.au](https://www.bne.com.au)

Melbourne - [skybus.com.au](https://www.skybus.com.au)

Canberra - [canberraairport.com.au](https://www.canberraairport.com.au)

Taxis

For details on catching a taxi from the airport into the city please visit:

Sydney - [sydneyairport.com.au](https://www.sydneyairport.com.au)

Brisbane - [bne.com.au](https://www.bne.com.au)

Melbourne - [melbourneairport.com.au](https://www.melbourneairport.com.au)

Canberra - [canberraairport.com.au](https://www.canberraairport.com.au)

For approximate costs of taxis to your destination, please visit [taxifare.com.au](https://www.taxifare.com.au)

RIDESHARE

Australia's most recognized rideshare is Uber. In general, it can be said that rideshare will be a more economical choice than a taxi.

Other options for rideshare in Australia other than Uber include but are not limited to **Ola** and **DiDi**. Remember to always check the car registration number before you get into a rideshare vehicle.

DRIVING IN AUSTRALIA

You must have a valid drivers licence to drive in Australia and carry it with you at all times while driving.

International students are regarded as temporary residents, which means that you are able to drive in Australia using your licence from your home country as long as it is current and valid.

For further details visit:
[insiderguides.com.au/driving-in-australia](https://www.insiderguides.com.au/driving-in-australia)

ACCOMMODATION

Finding a new home can be challenging at the best of times, especially when moving overseas. It is important to find accommodation where you feel safe, supported and relaxed when you are studying

For ACU students, there are three main accommodation options to choose between: managed student accommodation, private rental and homestay. The **ACU Rental Advisory Service** can assist students to make an accommodation choice which best suits your needs and budget. Some options are safe to book from overseas; unlike private rentals which are best booked once you are able to view the room yourself. The ACU Rental Advisory Service can discuss your options, your budget and help you to create a plan for your move to Australia.

ACU STUDENT ACCOMMODATION

Living in **ACU student accommodation** is a great way to get the most out of your university experience.

Our Residences are fully furnished and have all utility bills included, making them very affordable. You'll have access to unique sporting, leadership, spiritual and community engagement opportunities. In Sydney and Ballarat, you'll have the best of both worlds: off-campus independence with the full support of our residential services team.

Students of our Canberra campus can enjoy our brand new on-campus accommodation complete with games and media room and all the convenience and safety of being on campus.

Student accommodation is an excellent option for long stays as it is safe and you'll be living with fellow students. Some of the properties may have extra amenities such as gyms, BBQ areas or libraries.

PRIVATE RENTAL

Private rentals, or 'share houses' is housing that you rent from a landlord. Renting a house or apartment in Australia means you have more choice about where and with whom you live which can make this a cheaper option.

ACU recommends that you visit the property and read the rental agreement, which is a legal document, before signing anything with the landlord or paying any money to secure the property. If you require any assistance with your property search or with your rental agreement, you can contact the **Rental Advisory Service** for assistance.

HOMESTAY ACCOMMODATION

If you would like the experience of living like a local with an Australian family, you might like to try 'Homestay Accommodation.' It's a great way to immerse yourself in Australian culture and improve your English. Even if you don't want to stay in Homestay for the length of your course, it is an excellent option for a short stay of 4 – 6 weeks to learn about your new city in the safety of a family environment.

Visit the **Australian Homestay Network** for more information.

Health insurance

OVERSEAS STUDENT HEALTH COVER (OSHC)

If you have purchased your Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) with Allianz Care Australia through ACU, we will give you instructions on how to obtain your e-membership card. If you hold a student visa and have paid for your cover in advance, your OSHC cover is valid from the date you arrive in Australia.

If you obtain cover from a provider other than Allianz Care Australia, you are advised to confirm the details about commencement of cover with that provider.

Why OSHC?

International students are required by the Australian Government to have OSHC. This is a private health insurance scheme similar to Medicare (for Australian citizens & residents).

OSHC ensures you can access appropriate affordable healthcare. You are required to have OSHC for the duration of your stay in Australia because it is one of the conditions of your student visa. Students who do not maintain their OSHC are in breach of their visa conditions and may have their visa cancelled. OSHC allows you to claim some money back if you need to see a doctor when you are ill. Your health insurance covers up to 85 per cent of most medical services outside of hospitals and 100 per cent of scheduled fees in public hospitals. It is important to note that not all services are covered by OSHC and it is your responsibility to check what you are covered for before you commit to any treatment. You can check the specifics of what Allianz Care Australia OSHC covers as well as gain further insights into their services on their [website](#).

MONEY MATTERS

Australia's unit of currency is the Australian dollar (AUD\$), which is divided into 100 cents. Coins have values of 5, 10, 20 and 50 cents, and \$1 and \$2; notes have values of \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50 and \$100.

HOW CAN I PAY FOR THINGS IN AUSTRALIA?

Major credit cards

Visa, MasterCard, American Express, Diners Club are accepted throughout Australia.

Automated Teller Machines (ATMs):

24-hour access seven days a week are available in convenient locations such as shopping centres, petrol stations, convenience stores, banks, along main shopping strips and in malls or plazas.

Banks

There are also bank branches in major cities and towns where you can withdraw money.

EFTPOS

EFTPOS terminals can be found where goods or services are sold, for example supermarkets, retail outlets and restaurants. You can use your ATM card and account to pay for goods instead of cash. At large supermarkets and retail stores you can also withdraw cash from your account when paying with EFTPOS. Some retailers have limits on the amount of cash you can withdraw. It is important to check with your overseas bank that your bank card will be accepted in Australia and whether there are any associated fees. Most students decide to open an Australian bank account when they arrive in Australia. Some of the major banks will allow you to open an account from overseas before you arrive. You can find more information in the 'When you First Arrive' section of this guide.

SCAMS

Watch out for people who may be trying to take advantage of you. A scam is an unjust and unfair scheme designed to take your money dishonestly. Some things to remember:

- if a deal looks too good to be true it probably is
- do not let anyone pressure you into making decisions about money or investments: always get independent financial advice
- do not open suspicious or unsolicited emails (spam emails): delete them
- never reply to a spam email (even to unsubscribe)
- if you receive a phone call from someone claiming to be from the ATO (Australian Tax Office) it may be a scam. A legitimate ATO staff member will never: threaten you with arrest; demand immediate payment, particularly through unusual means such as bitcoin, pre-paid credit cards or gift cards; refuse to allow you to speak with a trusted advisor or your regular tax agent; or present a phone number on caller ID.

If you are in any doubt about an ATO call hang up and phone the ATO on 1800 008 540 to check if the call was legitimate or report a scam.

- never send your personal, credit card or online account details through an email
- money laundering is a criminal offence: do not agree to transfer money for someone else.

Further information can be found at: scamwatch.gov.au

International students should also be aware that when looking for accommodation you should never give a bond or pre-payment for accommodation without seeing the accommodation first. You also need to ensure you get a receipt for any payment made. More information about what to look out for can be found in the ACU accommodation web pages.

SAFETY WITH YOUR MONEY

It is not wise to carry around large amounts of cash. Firstly it is not very safe and secondly it is not necessary considering the amount of places you can pay through EFTPOS or obtain money from an ATM.





Orientation and enrolment

WHY IS ORIENTATION IMPORTANT?

Orientation will give you the best possible start to your studies at ACU.

Orientation is an excellent time for you to ask any questions you have about ACU, your campus and your course.

What will you gain from attending orientation?

Orientation will provide you with important information about living, studying and working in Australia. During orientation, you will:

- Find out more about the conditions of your student visa, including rules around working in Australia
- Learn about your Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC), what it covers, and how to use it
- Get to know your ACU campus and the support services available

- Learn more about your new city and the community and government services available
- Find out more about Australia, its culture and people
- Find out about clubs and societies you can join and activities and events you can take part in.
- Meet the staff who will be part of your journey at ACU
- Learn skills that will assist you throughout your studies in Australia.
- Learn about student mentors and how they can help you.

Most importantly you'll be able to meet other students - local and international - and start making friends that will last for the rest of your life.

Campus orientation programs

Each ACU campus has its own specific orientation program designed to introduce you to all the services available on your campus.

You can find more information about your ACU campus enrolment and orientation program on our [website](#).

ENROLMENT

In most cases enrolment can be completed online prior to orientation. You will be sent an email about enrolment approximately one month before your course starts. If you are required to attend an enrolment session you will be informed of this via email.

Applying for credit

If you wish to apply for credit from previous learning, you will need to bring your academic transcript and any other relevant documents from your previous studies for which you are seeking credit.

What if I need help to enrol?

We will be holding enrolment sessions for students who need assistance to enrol and for those who wish to apply for, or finalise, a credit application. You will be sent information about these sessions via email.

Timetable and Student ID card

Once you have enrolled in your course and selected your units you will be able to see your timetable.

You can order your student ID card online and can collect it from AskACU after 24 hours.

CAMPUS MAPS

Click on the links for the most current campus maps:

Ballarat
Blacktown
Brisbane
Canberra
Melbourne
North Sydney
Strathfield

CAMPUS VIRTUAL TOURS

Click on the following links for a virtual tour of our campuses:

Ballarat
Brisbane
Canberra
Melbourne
North Sydney
Strathfield





Studying at ACU

AUSTRALIAN ACADEMIC CULTURE

The Australian education system may be different from what you are used to. First of all, the language of instruction is English. You will be expected to organise and communicate your knowledge in both written and oral English.

As a university student, you will be expected to demonstrate a high level of analytical and critical thinking skills, as well as well-developed problem solving skills. You will need to demonstrate the ability to understand and apply key principles and concepts. You will need to be self-motivated and independent. Students are expected to research their own assignments, read widely and apply the knowledge they have learnt when writing their assignments and exams. It is not academically acceptable to merely “repeat” what a teacher has said in class. Academic writing needs to demonstrate that you have digested the information you have learnt and are able to formulate your own opinion of the course content.

For postgraduate research students, your ability to handle theory and concepts at an advanced level and your research skills and techniques are very important.

STUDYING IN A NEW ACADEMIC CULTURE

If you are studying in Australia for the first time, it is important to give yourself a positive start. Here are some suggestions to help you understand the Australian educational culture:

- Practice listening to the Australian accent by listening to Radio Australia. Programs are available from your Australian Diplomatic Mission (Australian High Commission, Consulate or Embassy) or online: radioaustralia.net.au
- Keep up to date with Australian news and current affairs by reading Australian newspapers and magazines at websites such as theaustralian.com.au and news.com.au
- Prepare for your program of study in advance. ACU produces undergraduate and postgraduate courses and unit handbooks, and a student resource guide that lists all the course regulations, course outlines and subject descriptions.

These **course enrolment guides** can be found on the ACU website.

NEW STUDY PATTERNS

Studying at ACU will provide you with many interesting challenges as you work through your course. One of the more challenging times will be in the first semester, when you will have to adapt to a new country and culture, and new academic culture. The following information may help you adjust – it provides a few hints to help you do well in your first semester.

Tertiary study

1. Use the unit outlines: for each of your units (subjects) it is important you read the outline carefully as this will explain all the assessments, marking criteria, exam and structure of the semester for this unit.
2. Manage your timetable - You must plan your own long and short-term timetables.
3. For every hour of face-to-face study, it is expected that you will undertake at least two hours of private study.
4. Assignments and essays will form a large part of your assessment marks. Lecturers and tutors will usually give these assessments out many weeks before the due date but will not follow you up with you to make sure you are completing them.
5. Lecture groups may be large. It is up to you to approach your lecturer or tutor if you are having difficulties. You cannot expect them to be aware of your particular needs.
6. You may be given a reading list of relevant material to assist you with the content of your unit. Wide reading about the subject matter is essential. Do not just read from one source.
7. You must identify and make notes on the main points in lectures and texts
8. You must acknowledge all your sources. To avoid plagiarism, you will need to learn referencing skills (footnotes including references, bibliographies). The Academic Skills Unit at the University has resources and advisers who will be able to assist you.

9. You need to: memorise information, ask questions, analyse the problem, examine evidence and think critically.

In most classes you will need to present your ideas to the class, either on your own or in a group. Presenting your opinions and ideas clearly is important; therefore it is vital to practice your spoken English as much as possible.

In other words you are expected to think independently and demonstrate your ability to critically analyse. You will also be expected to give your opinions in class and participate in workshops and in class discussions – it is important to 'get involved'.

GETTING HELP

The Academic Skills Unit can help you develop study skills, academic writing and referencing, maths and numeracy, and exam skills. It is important that you seek advice early if you are experiencing any confusion or difficulty in your academic study or in any other matters that affect your ability to study. On many matters you may find your classmates (international and local) can be helpful. Your lecturers will also be an important source of help so ensure you know where and when you can find them for consultation.

It is very important to ask for help early on and if you're uncertain where to go for assistance speak to an International Student Adviser who can help point you in the right direction.

ACCESS AND DISABILITY SERVICE

ACU Access and Disability Advisers can organise educational adjustments for persons with a disability in line with Australian legislation (**Disability Discrimination Act 1992** and the **Disability Standards for Education 2005**). We support students with vision and hearing impairments, learning disabilities, physical or mental health conditions and to students who provide significant care to someone with a physical or mental health condition.

In order to organise educational adjustments, your first step is to read our **documentation guidelines** to find out what documentation you would need in order to have adjustments put into place and formalised in a written document called an Educational Inclusion Plan (EIP). Please note that any assessment reports are your responsibility to obtain and submit to us. ACU does not conduct, or pay to

conduct assessments of your condition. It is often easiest to use the **ACU documentation form**. You should consider having this completed by a medical professional before you leave your home country.

It is important to note that Australian legislation on people with disabilities will differ to that of your country of origin. Thus, the adjustments that are organised for you here may differ to those you had in your country of origin. That said, we will endeavour to ensure you are receiving appropriate and reasonable adjustments based on your documentation and our discussions with you around your needs in the learning environment.

It is important that you understand the **inherent requirements** for your course, and consider how your reasonable adjustments can enable you to meet these requirements.





Living in Australia

AUSTRALIAN SOCIAL CULTURE

Australia is a diverse nation with a multicultural population. However, many of the social customs in Australia originate from an English background.

When in a new culture, it is a good idea to observe the habits and customs of people. You may find they express their feelings differently from people of your own culture.

Do not assume that because something is acceptable in your country that it will be in Australia. At ACU, you will have many opportunities to develop new friendships and to become involved in social activities or participate in sporting activities with students from many nationalities. Whilst it is very important that you are able to accept and adapt to local customs and traditions to help you assimilate into the Australian culture, it is equally important that you maintain your own customs and have confidence in them.

Further information about Australian social customs can be found at:
homeaffairs.gov.au

MEETING NEW PEOPLE AND MAKING NEW FRIENDS

You will find that Australians are generally friendly people and will often say hello and may have a chat with you. You will also meet new people where you are living and when you come to ACU for orientation. The best approach is to be cautious with any new friends when you first meet them until you get to know them better and trust them. To be safe don't give anyone you don't know your personal details such as your full name, phone number and address. Do not give cash to someone to make a payment or hold something for you and do not give your bank account details or your security access codes (PIN – Personal Identification Number) to anyone.

PUBLIC TELEPHONES

Public telephones can be found at the airport, all suburban shopping centres, railway stations, other public centres and road sides and are free of charge.

AUSTRALIA POST

Australia Post manages most postal services within Australia. Post offices can be found at most suburban shopping centres and main shopping streets.

The bill paying service allows you to pay most of your bills (telephone, electricity, gas, water, etc) at your local post office. The minimum postage cost of a standard letter within Australia is \$1.20.

Opening times: Monday to Friday from 9am - 5pm. However, in some major shopping complexes the post office may also open on Saturdays.

HOW TO CALL HOME?

International calls can be made direct from all telephones in Australia including public pay phones.

Simply follow these steps:

1. Dial the international access code: 0011
2. Dial your country code
3. Dial the area code for your city (remember not to dial "0" first)
4. Dial your home telephone number.

A call connection fee applies for all successful connections. International calls are timed and charged according to the destination, time of day and day of the week. Check costs with your provider.

MOBILE PHONES, LAPTOPS AND INTERNET ACCESS

If you are thinking about bringing your locally-connected mobile phone with you to Australia, make sure that you have global roaming which is supported in Australia. You must also check that your SIM card is not blocked from international use or locked to your network at home.

The bandwidth in Australia is 900 or 1800 GSM. This means that not all laptops with an internal modem are supported by Australian networks. For more information please visit the **Australian Communications and Media Authority website**.

When you arrive in Australia check with other students the phone and internet networks they use and what works best for them. You have the option to go onto a contract or to use a pre-paid system. Pre-paid phone connections are usually good for students on a budget as you won't be faced with an unexpectedly high phone bill and you are not locked into a contract.

A good place to start when comparing phone service providers is: **finder.com.au/mobile-plans**

Ensure you check all terms and conditions before signing any mobile phone contract and ensure that you fully understand how much your plan will cost you and what the changes are if you exceed your download limits.

Internet access is available at all campuses. Some accommodation will already have arrangements in place to enable internet access and you will probably be charged for using this. Most students prefer to arrange to have their own broadband, cable or wireless internet connection. A good place to start when comparing internet service providers is **Canstar Blue**.

When you first arrive

VOLTAGES – ELECTRICITY

Domestic electricity in Australia is 240/250 volts/50 Hz. The Australian three-pin outlet is different from most other countries, so you will need to purchase an adaptor plug for any electrical appliances that you bring with you. Transformers and adaptors are easily obtained from electrical appliance stores or travel goods stores or at the airport when you arrive.

ELECTRICAL GOODS

If you come from a country that operates on a different voltage, you must ensure that you are equipped with the appropriate transformer/adaptor. Alternatively, there are many discount electrical stores where you can buy various items (hair dryer, iron, etc) at reasonable prices (eg Harvey Norman, The Good Guys, Big W, Target, Kmart).

BANKS

You should open an Australian bank account shortly after you arrive in Australia. You will find banks located around city centres and in suburban shopping centres. The larger retailer banks are the Commonwealth Bank, National Australia Bank, ANZ Bank and Westpac Bank. You can go into any branch or check their websites for more details about their accounts and services.

You will find some of the banks have facilities to apply online for an account before you arrive (Commonwealth Bank for example). Westpac and ANZ (Australia New Zealand Bank) have branches in a number of countries outside Australia. If you are coming from the USA, you can operate a Bank of America account through Westpac in Australia. You will normally be required to show your photo

ID (passport), your address and proof that you are an ACU student. It's best to check with the bank exactly what you need to present to open an account. Always remember to ask for and read the 'Product Disclosure Statement' before making any decisions in regard to accounts and finances.

The common opening hours of most banks are:
Monday to Thursday: 9.30am-4pm
Friday: 9.30am-5pm.

Some banks are now open on Saturday mornings, however most banks are closed on weekends and on public holidays. Money can be withdrawn from an ATM 24 hours a day.

SAFETY TIP

Please only carry as much cash as is necessary for a few days. You should always be wary when using the ATM; don't draw out money alone in the middle of the night, don't let anyone see your PIN number (check for security cameras) and don't count cash in front of others. Most accounts come with phone and internet banking which makes it very easy for you to access your accounts at any time of the day or night. Most accounts will have facilities like BPAY (Biller payment – very useful for paying phone, internet and ACU tuition fee bills) and the ability to transfer funds to your overseas accounts/credit card. Also most student accounts have minimal or no fees so check this out with the bank when applying for an account.



PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Public transport modes and costs vary between Australian states:

- New South Wales: [131500.com.au](https://www.131500.com.au)
- Queensland: [translink.com.au](https://www.translink.com.au)
- Victoria: [ptv.vic.gov.au](https://www.ptv.vic.gov.au)
- ACT: [transport.act.gov.au](https://www.transport.act.gov.au)

Note: Most international students are not eligible for student travel concessions.

You can access ticket information here:

- New South Wales
[transportnsw.info/international-students](https://www.transportnsw.info/international-students)
- Queensland
[translink.com.au/tickets-and-fares](https://www.translink.com.au/tickets-and-fares)
- Victoria
[ptv.vic.gov.au/tickets/myki/concessions-and-free-travel/children-and-students/international-students/](https://www.ptv.vic.gov.au/tickets/myki/concessions-and-free-travel/children-and-students/international-students/)
- Australian Capital Territory
[transport.act.gov.au/tickets-and-myway](https://www.transport.act.gov.au/tickets-and-myway)

LIVING EXPENSES

The cost of living for a single international student is approximately AUD \$24,505 per year. This includes rent, food, transport and other essential living expenses. It does not include tuition fees, text books, the cost of running a car, or social activities.

The true cost of living depends on the sort of lifestyle you lead.

You may also find the following [Cost of Living calculator](#) useful when planning your budget.

How much do things cost?

FOOD AND ENTERTAINMENT

Lunch on campus: \$10–\$15 per day

Fast food (McDonalds, KFC, Hungry Jacks):
\$10–\$15 per meal

Movies (cheaper with student ID card):
\$10–\$18 per person

Haircuts (normal trim):
Men: \$25–\$60
Women: \$50–\$80

For more information, visit:

moneysmart.gov.au/tools-and-resources/calculators-and-apps/budget-planner

CLOTHING

To give yourself an idea of the range of items and prices for clothing in Australia you can visit the online catalogue of department stores:

Myer: myer.com.au

Target: target.com.au

Big W: bigw.com.au

Kmart: kmart.com.au

SHOPPING

Shop wisely - compare prices and also the quality of the items you want to buy. Read all tags, labels and signs carefully. Ensure you shop around when looking for more expensive electrical items as you can often find a cheaper price by comparing retailers.

Department stores and most other shops are open during the following hours as a general guide:

Monday to Wednesday: 9am–5pm

Thursday (suburbs) to Friday (CBD):
9am–9pm

Saturday: 9am–5pm

Sunday: 10am–4pm

PHARMACIES

At a pharmacy, you can purchase items such as medication for minor illnesses (coughs, colds, cuts and skin irritations) and personal items including make-up, perfume, after shave and a range of other personal items.

The resident pharmacist can give you general advice on the choice of everyday medication.

Medicines that require a prescription from a doctor, such as antibiotics, cannot be bought without a prescription. Most medicine is likely to be more expensive in Australia than in your home country. You should always consult a doctor if you are not feeling well.

OTHER SHOPS

Corner shops and convenience stores are small shops located in all suburbs. They sell everything from cold drinks and newspapers to canned food, breakfast cereal and milk. You will pay more for goods purchased from a convenience store. Their hours of trade are usually longer, so they can be useful when other places are closed.



LAUNDRY

If there is no washing machine or drying facilities where you live, you can take your clothes to a laundrette where you will find coin-operated washing machines and dryers.

FURNITURE

When moving into your new accommodation, you must remember that Australian properties are normally rented or sold without furniture (unless stated otherwise). You will need to arrange your own bedding, seating, utensils etc. Some larger trading stores (eg IKEA, Target, Kmart) have cheap new furniture and may provide a delivery service.

Second-hand furniture is available through **Gumtree**, the **Trading Post online** and at opportunity shops such as **Vinnies** at very reasonable prices. You will need a car and trailer, or van to pick up the goods if the seller is unable to help with delivery.

Many students who are leaving ACU advertise their second-hand goods (including desks, beds, and cooking utensils) so check the notice boards around campus.

SHOPPING LIST AND PRICES

Australian cities offer a large variety of shopping with a wide range of prices. Prices are often competitive; however, you will need to shop around to find the 'best buys'. Supermarkets offer convenience, but are not necessarily the cheapest. Many supermarkets stock their own generic or 'home' brands – they are always cheaper. You can also save money by looking out for weekly specials.

Markets are good places to buy fruit, vegetables and meat at cheaper prices; with fruit and vegetables a lot cheaper when in season.

You can get some idea of the prices of various items by looking up the information on the following websites:

Aldi: aldi.com.au

Coles: coles.com.au

Woolworths: woolworths.com.au

It is important to ask established students during orientation about the best places to shop near your campus, also where you may be able to find shops that sell food from your culture –Asian or Indian grocery stores are often very helpful places for homesick students.

*Note: All prices quoted in Australian dollars.

Working in Australia

International students are permitted to work in Australia. However, the following conditions apply:

You cannot commence work until your course start date has passed. Your course start date is the first day of your first semester at ACU, not the start date of your Confirmation of Enrolment.

You can work no more than 48 hours a fortnight while studying. Student visa holders have no work restrictions when their course of study or training is not in session.

It is important that study is your priority otherwise you risk failing units which may have an impact on your student visa and will cost you more money in the long run.

If you have come to Australia with your spouse, s/he may also be allowed to work. You must confirm this with the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) prior to your spouse starting work in Australia.

CAREERS AND EMPLOYABILITY

Careers and Employability supports students and graduates by providing a comprehensive range of services.

Careers staff are located across all ACU campuses and involved in career development learning from first year through to graduation and beyond. ACU graduates can access careers support up to two years post completion of studies.

STUDENT JOBS ON CAMPUS PROGRAM

The **Student Jobs on Campus** program connects students with ACU employers who are looking to hire staff. These positions could be for a few weeks or long term.

EMPLOYMENT

Make sure you bring your most recent resume with you.

You can look for part-time jobs on popular job websites such as **seek**, **unihub** or **careerone**.

Your employer is responsible for your working conditions and paying your wages and is required by law to follow standards of practice.

Before seeking employment visit the **Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO) website**.

The FWO is a government agency that helps employers and employees understand and follow Australian workplace laws. You have the same work rights as other Australians and be paid the same.

All services are free. If you require assistance call the infoline on 13 13 94 or for translating and interpreting services call 13 14 50.

TAX FILE NUMBER

Before you start working in Australia, you must register for a TFN from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). You will be asked to provide your TFN to your employer prior to starting work. If you do not provide your TFN, you will be taxed at a higher rate.

To obtain a TFN, you are required to complete a Tax File Number application or Enquiry for an individual form (NAT 1432). These forms are available from the [ATO website](#) or phone (13 28 61).

You will need to give information such as:

- your name and date of birth
- current Australian address
- date of arrival in Australia
- proof of identity (documents to be examined by the tax officer).

Paying tax in Australia

If you're enrolled to study in Australia in a course that lasts for six months or more, you may be regarded as an Australian resident for tax purposes. This means:

- you pay tax on your earnings at the same rate as other residents
- you're entitled to the benefits of the Australian tax system, such as the tax-free threshold (or part of it, if you're here for only part of the financial year)
- tax offsets
- generally lower tax rates than a foreign resident.

SUPERANNUATION

Superannuation (or 'super') is Australia's retirement savings system.

If you're a temporary resident working in Australia, your employer has to pay super for you if you're **eligible**.

When you leave Australia, you can claim your super as a Departing Australia Superannuation Payment (DASP) if you meet all **requirements**.

For more information about superannuation visit the [ATO website](#).

VISA INFORMATION

Student visas generally last for the period of the course, and are granted on the condition that students must leave Australia soon after completion of their studies. The University is required to report any student who does not attend classes or who is not making satisfactory academic progress. International students are required to complete the course within the minimum duration as provided on the CoE. If you wish to stay in Australia for your graduation ceremony (which takes place early in the year after completion of a course), you may need to apply in Australia for a visitor class visa.

STUDENTS WITH FAMILIES

If you intend to bring family members with you to Australia, you should first check with your nearest Australian consular office whether your visa allows for this.

While you are in Australia, you will be responsible for supporting any dependants (ie family members).

Safety in Australia

Australia is generally a safe place to live and study. However, crime does occur, so it is important to take basic precautions in order to stay safe.

SAFETY TIPS

- If you go out at night, don't walk alone. Take a friend with you, or arrange to catch public transport or take a taxi/rideshare.
- Never accept a ride from a stranger. Hitchhiking in Australia is illegal, and has been known to be very dangerous.
- If you're at a bar or club, never accept a drink from someone you don't know. Keep your drink in your hand at all times to avoid the possibility of someone putting alcohol or drugs into your drink without your knowledge or permission.
- Monitor your alcohol intake. Drinking too much in unfamiliar surroundings can make you an easy target.
- Don't feel pressured to engage in conversation with someone who is drunk or aggressive. Avoid eye contact and remove yourself from the situation.
- Try to withdraw money from the bank during daylight hours. Keep minimal money in your wallet or pockets and never write your PIN number down.
- Take your headphones off when walking alone at night, and when crossing the street, so that you can hear what's happening around you.

- Never leave your laptop unattended in a public space including on campus. Keep your phone and wallet safely stored in your bag, and keep laptops and tablets within arm's reach.
- Be vigilant when using your mobile phone. If your phone is stolen, call your provider to immobilise it.
- Never give your personal information, particularly your financial information to someone you don't know.
- Many burglaries happen when a door or window has been left open. Always lock up whenever you go out.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

- Be aware when using public transport at night and try to travel in groups rather than alone.
- Avoid sitting with your back to everyone on the train or tram.
- Keep expensive mobile telephones and other valuable items out of sight on the street. These can be stolen.
- Try to keep to areas/streets that are well lit.
- It is very unlikely that you'll ever feel threatened, but if you do, shout and scream. This will often deter an attacker.

It's not rude to avoid conversation or make eye contact with anyone behaving in an antisocial manner.

ROAD SAFETY

Remember in Australia we drive on the left side of the road. Always look left and right when crossing the road and use pedestrian crossings where possible.

BEACH SAFETY

At the beach make sure you swim at lifeguard patrolled beaches and that you swim between the red and yellow flags, the Australian ocean can be dangerous to those not used to it. Check out this [beachsafe website](#) and [water safety videos](#) for more information about staying safe at Aussie beaches.

FIRE SAFETY

The fire services recommend this simple safety checklist to assist in keeping your home fire-safe:

- installing an adequate number of suitable smoke alarms and testing them regularly is the first step in your home fire safety plan
- having a written escape plan in case of fire and practising it regularly
- make sure keys to all locked doors are readily accessible in case you need to escape
- never leave cooking or any other open flame including candles or oil burners unattended
- clean the lint filter of your clothes dryer each and every time you use it
- never smoke in bed and take extra care if consuming alcohol whilst smoking
- in winter take extra care when using heaters, electric blankets or open fires
- don't overload power points and switch off appliances when not in use
- always keep lighters and matches away from children and educate them that they are "tools not toys" to only be used by responsible adults. If you have a garage or shed remember to take extra care with any stored chemicals and fuels
- if you have a gas, electric or wood BBQ always check that it is in safe working order before lighting and that it is always in the care of a responsible adult when in use
- if you live in a bushfire prone area keep the ground around your home clear of leaves and other litter and remember to clean your gutters regularly.

SAFETY APPS

- [Safezone app](#)
- [Emergency Plus app](#)

SAFETY ON CAMPUS

Security on campus

All ACU campuses have 24-hour security services.

For information on reporting an emergency visit acu.edu.au/emergency-and-safety

ACU International Offices

ACU International Offices are located on the Brisbane, Melbourne and North Sydney campuses. These offices are open Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm.

International Student Assistance Hotline

An International Student Assistance Hotline (1800 180 391) is open from Monday to Friday, 5pm-9am and 24 hours on the weekend. It is also available to you on public holidays.

Please note that these are general support services. If you are in a life-threatening or dangerous situation that requires an emergency response, please dial Triple Zero (000).

EMERGENCY SERVICES

The emergency number for police, fire or ambulance is Triple Zero (000).

This number is free to call from any phone even when you do not have any credit.

Essential checklists

BEFORE LEAVING HOME - WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?	TICK ✓
Arrange student visa	
Make travel arrangements and book flights	
Arrive in time for 'Getting Started' and 'Orientation' activities	
Arrange for immunisations/vaccinations and medications from your doctor	
Ensure you have optical/dental check-ups and spare spectacles/contact lenses	
Apply for a credit card and/or arrange sufficient funds	
Open Australian Bank Account (if possible) and confirm overseas access to your funds with your bank	
Arrange some Australian currency for your arrival/first few days (for taxis, trains, trams, etc)	
Arrange important documents including:	
• Offer Letter from ACU	
• A copy of your Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE)	
• Credit Letter from ACU (if applicable)	
• Receipts of payment for tuition fee and Overseas Student Health Cover (if applicable)	
• Original or certified copies of your academic transcripts and certificates will be needed if you have a Conditional Offer, an offer for credit/advanced standing or you would like to apply for credit/advanced standing for previous study	
• Letter of Scholarship Award (if applicable)	
• Other formal identification:	
• international drivers licence/drivers licence from your home country	
• certified copy of your birth certificate (English translation)	
• citizenship certificate	
• country ID card	
• Final medical and dental check up report – bring all documentation and written medical advice relating to any existing medical condition	
• References from landlords if you have rented or leased housing before	
• Pre-placement documents if course course has a placement component – wil.acu.edu.au	
• Police check documents from home country for all international pre-service teachers in all states and territories	

BEFORE LEAVING HOME - WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?	TICK ✓
Reports or assessments from doctors/treating professionals that may be required to support any educational adjustments	
Check the Insider Guides to learn more about Australian culture and customs	
Take some time to prepare yourself emotionally for all the changes, new places, people and experiences that you will encounter very soon	
ON ARRIVAL - WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?	TICK ✓
Call home to let family and friends know you have arrived safely	
Attend 'Getting Started' and 'Orientation' activities for your course/campus.	
Explore your new city, use public transport and visit the ACU campus	
Open an Australian bank account (if applicable)	
Purchase household items and food	
Obtain a mobile phone	
Buy a laptop if you don't have one - this is essential for virtual classes and to complete your assignments	
Plan your budget and monitor your spending	
Settle into accommodation or start searching for longer-term accommodation	
Apply for a Tax File Number (TFN) if seeking part-time work	
AT ACU - WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?	TICK ✓
Get your ACU student ID card (after enrolment)	
Check your timetable after enrolment. You will be able to adjust your timetable once the timetables have been released.	
Download the Allianz MyHealth app or contact other OSHC provider	
Find out where you need to go on your first day	
Get involved in student life and associations	
Get to know your student mentor	
Ensure you are aware of your rights and responsibilities as an international student on a student visa and contact the International Student Adviser with any queries	
Schedule an appointment with Access and Disability Adviser if you have a medical condition, physical or mental health condition or learning disability which may affect your studies	

Got a question or feeling social?

We're here to help.

E: study.international@acu.edu.au

W: acu.edu.au/international

P: +61 3 8676 7040

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