

## Part 2:

# Pre Arrival – Preparing for leaving your home country and arriving in Melbourne



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## **Arranging Visas:**

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

In order to apply for a visa you will need a **valid passport**, an **electronic Confirmation of Enrolment (eCoE)** and any **other documentation** required by the Australian diplomatic post with which you lodge your application.

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

## **Department of Home Affairs (DHA)**

The Australian Government's DHA provides comprehensive information about student visa requirements and the application process, as well as application document checklists to assist you with your application. Visit <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/Trav/Stud> for the latest information.

## **Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)**

As well as links from the DHA website the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade website has a comprehensive list of Australian embassies, high commissions, consulates and representative offices around the world. <http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/our-locations/missions/Pages/our-embassies-and-consulates-overseas.aspx>

## **Migration Agents**

A migration agent can assist you in submitting your visa application and communicate with DIBP on your behalf, but please note that **you do not need to use a migration agent** to lodge any kind of visa application.

## **Education Agents**

Education agents promote various Australian education programs and institutions internationally and are a good way for students to apply to study in Australia. Agents are experienced in making international student applications and applying for visas. Most speak both English and the local language so this makes the application process a lot simpler and generally hassle free for students and parents. Most do not charge for their service as they collect a commission from the institution you choose to attend. However, some agents do charge small amounts or offer additional services for which they charge. You can check with your Australian education provider for contact details of agents they recommend.

**Please Note: Although able to assist in completing education and visa applications, Education Agents are NOT licensed to provide migration advice.**

## **Visa Conditions:**

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

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

For a full list of **mandatory** and **discretionary** student visa conditions please visit [http:// www.homeaffairs.gov.au/Trav/Stud/More/Visa-conditions/visa-conditions-students](http://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/Trav/Stud/More/Visa-conditions/visa-conditions-students)

### **Arranging Travel:**

You will need to make your own travel arrangements to Australia. Please try to arrive at least 1-2 weeks before the start of the International Student Orientation to allow enough time for settling-in, adjusting to the climate and overcoming jet-lag.

You should fly into Melbourne International Airport which is the closest international airport to Melbourne. Visit [www.melbourneairport.com.au](http://www.melbourneairport.com.au). Melbourne is located 25km from Melbourne International Airport.

### **Documents**

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

- Valid passport with Student Visa
- Offer of a place / admission letter from ANIBT
- Confirmation of Enrolment (eCoE) issued by ANIBT
- Receipts of payments (e.g. tuition fees, OSHC, bank statements etc.)
- Insurance policies
- Original or certified copies of your academic transcripts and qualifications
- Other personal identification documents, e.g. birth certificate, ID card, driver's license
- Medical records and/or prescriptions

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

### **What to Bring**

Students are often surprised by how strict Australian Customs Services and quarantine can be. If you're in doubt about whether your goods are prohibited or not, **declare it anyway** on the Incoming Passenger Card which you will receive on the plane. Students have received on the spot fines for not declaring items. Visit the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) homepage [www.aqis.gov.au](http://www.aqis.gov.au):

- Read “**What can't I take into Australia?**”
- And also let your family and friends know “**What can't be mailed to Australia?**”

Baggage allowances flying into Australia will vary according to your carrier, flight class and country of origin. Please check with your carrier prior to departure. Economy passengers are generally permitted 1 x checked luggage (35kg) and 1 x carry-on (7kg) for international flights, but only 20kg of checked luggage on domestic flights within Australia. This will significantly limit the amount of things you can bring, especially if you will fly within Australia to get to your final destination. Therefore, it is essential to think the packing process through very carefully. You will be able to purchase most things upon arrival in Australia but the price may be higher than in your own country.

### **Seasonal Considerations**

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

If you arrive in June or July, the coldest months of the year, you may need to bring or buy winter clothing and blankets. You may also need to purchase a heating appliance once you arrive.

### **Clothing**

On most campuses, students usually dress informally. Jeans or slacks with t-shirts or blouses, sneakers or “running shoes” are almost standard dress. Shorts are often worn during the summer months and sandals are the most common footwear. It is acceptable for both men and women to wear shorts and sleeveless t-shirts. This is common during the hotter months.

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

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

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



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

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

## Bringing Your Computer

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

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

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

## Mobile Phones & Laptops

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

## On Your Flight

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

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

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

## Entry into Australia

### Australian Immigration

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

### Baggage Claim

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

### Detector Dogs

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

### Australian Customs and Quarantine

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

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

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

For more detailed information about bringing in food, animals, plants, animal or plant materials or their derivatives visit [www.daffa.gov.au/aqis](http://www.daffa.gov.au/aqis).



## **Arrivals Hall**

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

## **Getting From the Airport:**

### **Public Buses**

#### **Skybus**

SkyBus offers an express bus service from the airport to the city centre.

This service operates 24/7, including all public holidays. Buses run from every 10 minutes throughout the day.

Tickets can be purchased on arrival at bus stop or purchased online.

SkyBus also provides a complimentary city hotel transfer service, subject to availability.

**For more information visit [www.Skybus.com.au](http://www.Skybus.com.au).**

### **Public Buses**

Public Buses operate from the terminal, to various areas in Melbourne. Information on destinations and schedules can be obtained from the information desks within the airport, or on the numbers listed below.

#### **Dandenong Area**

Phone: (03) 9782 6766  
[www.airportbusdandenong.com.au](http://www.airportbusdandenong.com.au)

#### **Frankston & Peninsula Bus Service Melbourne**

Phone: (03) 9786 6214 option 5  
[www.skybus.com.au/peninsula-express/](http://www.skybus.com.au/peninsula-express/)

#### **Geelong Area Gull Airport Services Suburbs**

Phone: (03) 5222 4966  
[www.gull.com.au](http://www.gull.com.au)

#### **Melbourne North-West Suburbs**

**Tullamarine Bus Lines**  
Phone: (03) 9338 6466  
[www.tullamarinebus.com.au](http://www.tullamarinebus.com.au)

#### **Melbourne Western Suburbs** [www.skybus.co.au/western-express](http://www.skybus.co.au/western-express)

**Metropolitan Bus Lines**  
Phone: (03) 9311 1228

#### **Melbourne Northern & Eastern**

**Airport Bus Eastside**  
Phone: (03) 9729 7622  
[www.airportbus.com.au](http://www.airportbus.com.au)



## **Taxis**

Taxis are available from the ground floor level of Melbourne Airport, outside the International Terminal and three domestic Terminals. Expect a taxi fare of around A\$80 to A\$85 for a return trip between the CBD and Melbourne Airport.

A \$2.00 taxi parking fee applies at Melbourne Airport. This \$2.00 per vehicle fee only applies to passengers leaving Melbourne Airport from a taxi rank. A \$3.00 per vehicle pre-booked taxi fee also applies for passengers catching a limousines or taxis from the Premium Parking area opposite T2.

## **Keeping in Contact:**

Before you leave home, you should provide your family and friends, and your education provider in Australia, with details of your flights to Australia and where you will be staying when you arrive. (Do not change these details without informing them.) Once you have arrived in Australia, you should then let your family and friends know that you have **arrived safely**. It is important to **ALWAYS** let someone know where you are and how to contact you by phone or by post.

ANIBT office hours are 8.30am -5 pm Monday to Friday. After your arrival you can contact us via telephone 9620 2922 or come and see our Reception on Level 7, 474 Flinders Street, Melbourne. If you have arrival problems outside working hours, you can call the emergency phone number 0402 125 752.

## **Accessing Money:**

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

## **How Much to Bring**

You will need to make sure you have enough funds to support you when you first arrive. It is recommended that you have approximately **AU\$1500 to AU\$2000** available for the first two to three weeks to pay for temporary accommodation and transport. You should bring most of this money on a non-cash method such as an international credit/debit card. Please get advice from your bank at home.

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

## Currency Exchange

Only Australian currency can be used in Australia. If you have not brought some with you, you will need to do so as soon as possible after arrival. You can do this at the airport. Once you have arrived in Melbourne you can also change money at any bank or at currency exchanges in Melbourne.

## Electronic Transfer

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

## ATMs

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



## Credit Cards

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

## Arranging Accommodation:

ANIBT can offer advice to students when seeking short or long term accommodation.

## Temporary Accommodation:

### Hotels, Motels & Backpackers

Generally, the price you pay for accommodation will determine its quality. However, it can be expensive to stay in a good quality motel or hotel for a long period of time. Backpacker accommodation is relatively inexpensive but you may need to bring your own pillow and sleeping bag if you choose this option.

## **Some Temporary Accommodation options**

### **Hostel**

Le Student 8 Melbourne, 205 Bell Street, Melbourne, VIC 3072, Reservations: +61 3 9485 0086

YHA Melbourne Central, 562 Flinders St, Melbourne 3000, Phone: (03) 9621 2523

### **Hotel**

The Victoria Hotel Melbourne: 215 Little Collins Street, Melbourne Victoria 3000, Australia.  
Phone: +61 3 9669 0000

## **Staying With Friends or Family**

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

## **Bringing My Family**

Most student visas allow you to bring your family members to Australia as your dependants (check your individual circumstances with the Department of Immigration and Citizenship See: **Arranging Visas**). Family members include your spouse, and you and your spouse's dependent children. Before bringing your spouse or children to Australia, you will have to prove that you can support them financially. The cost of supporting a family in Australia is very high. You may have to consider and discuss many issues with your family.

### **Issues to Consider**

Rather than bringing your family together with you to Australia, some students may find it useful to arrive first, settle into studies, find appropriate accommodation, adjust to living in Australia and then arrange for their family to join them.

Before making a decision to bring your family to Australia it is important to consider the following issues:

- The cost of airfares for your family to and from Australia;
- Possible higher rent for a larger home;
- Limited employment opportunities for your spouse; Extra costs for food, clothing and other necessities;
- The effect on you and your studies if your family is not happy in Australia; Whether your children will adjust to school in Australia;
- Waiting lists for child care centres; and
- Whether to come alone to Australia first and arrange things for your family or to all come at the same time.

For more information visit: [www.homeaffairs.gov.au](http://www.homeaffairs.gov.au)

## Child Care

Finding suitable childcare in Australia requires patience and planning. Waiting lists for places in most childcare centres are long.

Many schools offer before-school and after-school care programs (usually 7:30am-8:45am and 3:30pm-6:00pm). Children who need these programs must be registered with the school.

### ChildCare Centres near Campus

Centre Name	Address	Phone Nr
Sun Kids Child Care	546 Collins St, Melbourne	(03) 9614 3011
Kids on Collins	600 Collins St, Melbourne	(03) 9629 4099
ABC Developmental Learning Centre – Melbourne Central	La Trobe St, Melbourne	(03) 9663 2881

Other childcare information can be found at:

<http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/info.cfm?top=17&pg=562>

## Schools:

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

1. It is an immigration policy that school-age dependants of international students undertake formal schooling while they are in Australia.
2. Typically, children who have their **fifth** birthday before 1st April of that calendar year are eligible to start school. Please check with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (Victoria) for latest information.
3. You will need to provisionally enrol your child in a school before you leave your home country and you will normally have to pay the school fees one semester in advance. The school will issue an electronic Confirmation of Enrolment Form (eCoE) stating the program and its duration, so that you can obtain the appropriate visa for your child.
4. The Diplomatic Mission in your country can tell you which State schools are registered to take international students. Fees are payable by international students at all State schools unless you:
  - Are in receipt of sponsorship or scholarships from the Australian Government (e.g. the Australian Development Scholarship, IPRS);
  - Hold a higher institution or approved non-government scholarship. These scholarships must be approved by the State government for the dependants to be exempt from school fees.
5. You will be responsible for school fees and other costs including school uniforms, books, excursions and stationery.

6. When choosing the most appropriate school for your child, it is best to ask questions about the school's curriculum, size, extra-curricular activities and the size of individual classes.
7. You should also take into consideration the distance from the school to **your education institution**, the suburb in which you intend to live and the method of transport you plan to use.

For further information, please contact the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, ph (03) 9637 2000, <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/>.

There are two types of schools in Australia – State schools and independent schools.

### **State Schools**

Victorian government schools are part of a strong and vibrant education system that ensures every child has the opportunity to thrive, learn and grow. You can be confident that high educational standards are maintained, no matter where you are in Victoria. Within this statewide system, each school has the flexibility to tailor their programs to meet the individual needs of students.

Government schools also form an important part of the local community. The people who make our schools great places for your child – principals, teachers, school staff and school councillors – make every effort to be involved in and connect with their community.

### **Independent Schools**

Independent schooling in Victoria goes back more than 150 years. Today's independent schools, young and old, are dedicated to excellence in education.

Independent schools are accountable to government authorities and must comply with existing laws but they are independent – able to develop their own policies, practices and procedures for student welfare, uniform, enrolment, curriculum and expected standards of behaviour.