



University of  
**Southern  
Queensland**  
Australia



# International Student Pre-arrival Information



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## Introduction

There are many things to arrange and get ready before you leave your home country and arrive in Australia. This pre-arrival fact sheet will provide tips to consider before you arrive and help you prepare for your stay in Australia.

We would suggest you read this information before your arrival, on arrival and some information you will be able to refer to once you have been in Australia for a few days or weeks.

It is recommended you arrive in Australia and allow a few days to settle in to familiarise yourself with your location, campus, and surrounds, attend to tasks e.g.: attend bank appointment, learn where the facilities are and shop for daily living necessities, settle into your accommodation and find some time to rest – Ready to embark with your study.

## Planning

If you can, aim to arrive in Australia with free time available to settle in, meet people (and do some sightseeing!) before classes begin. This may be a week or more before Teaching Period starts.

When booking your flights, keep in mind the [study dates](#), including Orientation which takes place the week before Teaching Period begins and is an important time for new students.

## Arrival

Did you know that UniSQ provides [free airport pick up services](#) for new arriving students? Simply complete the online booking form and ensure you submit the form at least 7 days before you arrive. It is important to ensure you include the flight itinerary and accommodation arrangement information so that we can process your request without delay.





## Location and distance from the university



The drive from Brisbane Airport to Toowoomba takes approximately 2 hours with Ipswich and Springfield about an hours' drive from the airport.

Consider the time of day/night you arrive and plan for the possible weather change from where you have left from.

Temperature in Toowoomba is usually cooler than Ipswich and Springfield especially at night and in the early morning and you may need a jacket with you.



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## Transport

For Brisbane buses, trains and water taxis refer to the [Translink website](#).

For metropolitan travel you will need a [go card | Translink](#). This will be required when utilising public transport in the Springfield and Ipswich area.

UniSQ has an inter-campus shuttle bus service that operates between the Toowoomba, Ipswich and Springfield campuses daily (Weekdays only). This service is FREE, and Wi-Fi is provided on the bus.



In Toowoomba the public transport system consists of a network of buses, and you require Australian cash to purchase a ticket for each commute. Please refer to the Translink website.

There are also two regular bus services ([Greyhound](#), [Murrays](#)) from Toowoomba to Brisbane, each with their own special discounts and deals for travel.

## Driving in Queensland

Driving in Australia may be different to your own country. In Australia each state and territory have their own driving and traffic rules, licencing requirements. In Queensland you can drive with a valid overseas licence Refer to: [Queensland Government website](#)

Please read - Tips for [driving safely](#) and become familiar with the [road rules](#). You should also consider comprehensive car insurance if you decide to drive in Australia.



## Renting in Australia

**PLEASE NOTE: Currently there is an unprecedented shortage of rental properties available across Australia.** It is important to consider your accommodation needs before you arrive in Australia. You will need to arrange a few nights' accommodation if your permanent accommodation is not available.

Information about renting in Australia can be found on the [Study Australia website](#). Rentals in Australia usually require signing a lease which is a contract for a period of time (often 6 or 12 months). Please read the conditions of the contract as this can bind you to the conditions and period of lease contract and can be challenging if your circumstances change.

The [Rental Tenancies Authority \(RTA\)](#) is a state government authority that helps make renting work for everyone. They provide tenancy information, bond management, dispute resolution, investigation, and policy and education services. All rentals in Queensland should be lodged with the RTA.



Visit their webpage to find out more about your [Rights and Responsibilities](#) as a tenant. More information on what do to before starting a tenancy, what to expect whilst renting and how to end your tenancy is also available.

The [Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal \(QCAT\)](#) is an independent tribunal that assists with dispute resolution. They can assist with residential tenancy disputes.

## Student Accommodation

UniSQ has three owned & operated Residential Colleges at the Toowoomba campus. Currently there is no University operated student accommodation at either Springfield or Ipswich campuses. Residential Colleges only have private, single occupancy rooms, and currently do not offer rooms for couples or families.

To find out more information about our Residential Colleges, head to our [website](#). You can complete your application online to live on colleges. It is essential you complete this application prior to arrival as there is high demand for our on-campus student accommodation.

## Other accommodation options

Option close to Toowoomba campus

- [Student Village Toowoomba](#) – Contact via the website or Tel: +61 7 4690 0000

Options close to Ipswich campus:

- [Unilink](#) – Email: [lifeisgood@unilinkvillage.com.au](mailto:lifeisgood@unilinkvillage.com.au)
- [87 Thorn Street](#) - Email: [rentals.87thornstreet@gmail.com](mailto:rentals.87thornstreet@gmail.com)
- [Campus View](#) - Email: [jenny@campusviewapartments.com.au](mailto:jenny@campusviewapartments.com.au)

Option close to Springfield campus:

- [Hive](#) - Email: [Springfield@hivepropertygroup.com.au](mailto:Springfield@hivepropertygroup.com.au)

Other websites

- [Real Estate.com](#)
- [Flatmates.com](#)
- [Australian Homestay Network](#)



## Utilities – Electricity, Gas and water

In a rental property, tenants usually pay for services such as electricity, gas, phone and internet. You may also be charged for water. [Water charging | Residential Tenancies Authority \(rta.qld.gov.au\)](https://www.rta.qld.gov.au)

You should check if a service is available, and connected, before signing a tenancy agreement. Also check in student accommodation if all utilities and internet is included in the rental costs.

## Mobile phones and internet

The [Student Australia website](https://www.studentaustralia.com) can provide information about mobile (cell) phones and internet in Australia. It is best to purchase a SIM card or Australian mobile number when you arrive in Australia, as using your home phone number will incur high costs. There are two types of mobile phone accounts you can choose from: Prepaid or you may consider a contract. You can compare the range of insurances and mobile phone plans available in order to decide which suits your needs.

A range of Prepaid SIM cards are available at the Post Office on the Toowoomba campus which is open Monday to Friday 8:30am to 5pm.

**REMINDER** : Always keep your information up to date! If you change address, mobile or email [please update asap](#). This is a requirement of your student visa. Also make sure your next of kin details and emergency contacts are correct too.



## Money, Banking & Budgeting

### Currency

Australian currency (AUD) includes a range for denominations in dollars or cents. Most services, products and transactions can be paid by Electronic Transfer Funds (EFT) or by using a physical card that you can apply for when setting up an Australian Bank account.



### Setting up a Bank Account

There are many banks, credit unions and building societies available in Australia – it is good to consider which financial institution will best suit your needs. Visit [Banking - Moneysmart.gov.au](http://Banking-Moneysmart.gov.au)

In some countries the process to setting up an Australian bank account can begin prior to arrival. Otherwise, you will need to arrange an appointment at the bank of your choice within the first day or two of arrival. Bank's opening hours differ however are usually open Monday to Friday 9:30am to 4:00pm with some extended hours at some branches available.

It is useful to have some cash with you as a bank account may take up to 5-10 business days to be established.

You will need to have with you: -

- Photo identification (such as your passport)
- Proof of Australian address
- Proof of Enrolment
- Tax File Number (TFN) While you do not require a Tax File Number (TFN) to set up a bank account, you will be taxed heavily on the interest you earn in your account if you do not provide a TFN. To find out more about getting a TFN, visit: [ato.gov.au](http://ato.gov.au).
- For more information about what you will need to set up a bank account please see the [Student Australia website](#).



## Banking on campus

At the UniSQ Toowoomba campus there is a [Heritage bank](#) which many students choose to use. This Heritage Bank branch is open Mon to Fri , 10:30am – 2:00pm and has an ATM available 24/7. All other banks are located in the local areas of Ipswich, Springfield, nearby shopping centres or in the Toowoomba CBD.

## Living Costs

Understand and budget for living costs and other expenses such as food, electricity, phone/internet, transport and entertainment - the [Study in Australia website](#) and [Insider Guides Cost of Living Calculator](#) provide useful information to help estimate your cost of living in Australia.

## Shopping

Opening hours for the shopping centres are usually Monday to Friday 9:00am to 5:00pm with some opening till late on Thursday nights. Most shopping centres are also open on Saturday and Sunday between 9:00am to 5:00pm as well. Supermarkets are open later until 9:00pm weekdays and to 5:00 or 6:00pm on weekends. There are 4 major supermarkets where people buy their groceries from or online in Australia, named, Woolworths, Coles, Aldi and IGA. Also, a range of international small grocery stores offering foods and ingredients from around the world are located in regional and metropolitan areas. Many suburbs in the major metro and regional cities also have small community-based markets selling vintage clothing, fruit and vegetables, homewares, books, plants, and homemade food on weekends.



## Insurance

To find out about the different types of insurances which you might consider while in Australia, such as car and home/contents insurances please refer to the [Study Australia website](#) for information.

## Health for International Students

### Health and Medication

Have medical/dental check-ups and pack spare pairs of glasses/contact lenses and prescriptions for medications. Bring sufficient medication, if possible, to enable you to locate the most appropriate medical and health service to meet your needs.

It is recommended you bring a letter from your doctor stating the name of the medication, dose required, reason for the medication and information about your medical history. Also check with your doctor that you will be able to obtain the medications you require in Australia. This applies to complementary medications as well e.g., herbal, homeopathic or traditional medications. If you have an ongoing or chronic health condition, ask your doctor for a letter of referral to a health practitioner in Australia.

Prescriptions are required for specific medication prescribed by a General Practitioner (GP) or specialist and can be purchased at a pharmacy (also known as a chemist). Pharmacies also sell a range of over the counter/non-prescribed medicines such as cough medicines or paracetamol. Pharmacists can provide advice and information about these medicines and general health products.

Ensure your vaccinations are up to date and bring copies of your vaccination records.

Ensure your Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) is arranged. The Department of Home Affairs requires international students to maintain OSHC for the duration of time they are in Australia. For further information please visit the [Study in Australia](#) website. [Bupa](#) is UniSQ's health and care partner and preferred OSHC provider. Please explore the OSHC [Bupa website](#) to understand the extent of and limits to your cover.



### Accessing health care services in Australia

In Australia, if you don't feel well, the first place you will usually go is a GP. These types of doctors are skilled in a broad range of medical conditions and can assist you if you feel unwell, need a prescription, blood tests or a vaccination. Your GP can also provide general sexual health assistance, including contraceptive advice and birth control, pap tests, sexually transmitted disease testing and pregnancy testing and advice. You can also see a doctor in



their private practice or a medical centre, with part or the entire doctor's fee being covered by your OSHC insurance. You will need to make an appointment to see a GP.

You will need to have your [OSHC card](#) with you, or have it downloaded on your phone using the [Bupa App](#). Some GP surgeries will request full payment at the time of consultation, and you'll need to get a receipt to claim the rebate from your OSHC provider.

OSHC providers such as Bupa have a 'find a doctor' [link](#) and UniSQ can also support you to [locate a doctor or health service](#).

Visit [studyaustralia.gov.au/english/live/insurance](http://studyaustralia.gov.au/english/live/insurance) for further information regarding health care for students while in Australia including health issues related to sexual health, contraception, pregnancy, HIV testing and health rights and responsibilities in Australia.

## Emergency

For **Emergency Services (Police, Fire Brigade or Ambulance) dial 000**. Ambulances will take you to an emergency department at the local hospital if you require immediate care due to acute illness or injury.



## Working in Australia

You must have a valid student visa that also allows you to work in Australia. Generally, you cannot work until you have started your course and you are limited to working 48 hours per fortnight during semester. For further information please refer to: [Subclass 500 Student visa \(homeaffairs.gov.au\)](#)

It is important you know both your rights and responsibilities as a worker. Contact the Fair Work Ombudsman and download their guide for international students: [Visa holders & migrants - Fair Work Ombudsman](#)

You will need a Tax File Number (TFN) if you want to work in Australia. Find out about how to get a TFN at: [ato.gov.au](http://ato.gov.au)

There are important details about tax and superannuation that depend on how long you will be in Australia. More information: [ato.gov.au/Individuals/Super](http://ato.gov.au/Individuals/Super)

## Finding a job

Once you have arrived you might like to look for a job. You will need a current resume detailing your education, employment history, experience, skills, referees and may need to respond to selection criteria detailing how you meet the requirements of the role. The process may also include an interview and some roles need specific requirements such as a Police Check or a Working with Children's Card or vaccination status or specific certificates.



Popular job advertising websites include:

- [Seek.com.au](https://www.seek.com.au)
- [CareerOne.au](https://www.careerone.au)
- UniSQ Access: [accesshub.usq.edu.au](https://accesshub.usq.edu.au)

## Local facilities

Each city and town in Queensland are located in a local council that manage local public facilities such as parks, libraries, recreational and sporting facilities e.g., swimming pools, community venues, galleries and museums. To learn more please explore the following websites – [Toowoomba Regional Council](https://www.toowoomba.qld.gov.au) and [Ipswich City Council](https://www.ipswich.qld.gov.au).

## Schools & Child Care

If your children are between the ages of 6 and 15, it's compulsory that they attend school in Australia. You can apply for your children to attend [Queensland public \(state\) schools](https://www.qld.gov.au/education/schools) or private schools. A list of [Queensland Government Schools](https://www.qld.gov.au/education/schools) is available and further details to consider ensuring your children have a positive start to their education please refer to Education Queensland International [website](https://www.education.qld.gov.au). There are many private schools which can be found on the Queensland Private Schools [Guide](https://www.qpsa.qld.gov.au).

Child Care services can be located by searching the [Child Care Finder](https://www.childcarefinder.gov.au) website, entering the postcode (E.g. Toowoomba 4350). This will provide a list of Child Care services noting if they have a vacancy, services offered, program details, operating hours, fees and their overall rating with the National Quality Standards will be available. This will assist with important childcare decisions.

Your child/children will need to be up to date with their [vaccinations](https://www.health.gov.au), prior to starting childcare and schooling.

## Water safety

While in Australia you may take the opportunity to visit one of the many beaches or go swimming at a local pool. Water safety is very important in Australia and for some general tips please read thoroughly [water safety tips](https://www.water.gov.au).

## Support at UniSQ

Iconnect is your first point of contact for all enquiries at UniSQ. They can answer a variety of questions regarding your studies. Available by chat, email: [usq.support@usq.edu.au](mailto:usq.support@usq.edu.au), phone at



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+61 7 4631 2285 or face-to-face, we work closely with all areas of the university to ensure you get the answers you need.

UniSQ students can access a range of other support services such as; [counselling](#), [disability support](#), [wellbeing](#), [careers](#) and [multifaith/chaplaincy](#) services.

For [academic support](#), the UniSQ library offers online and face to face advice and guidance with assignments, study skills, mathematics, referencing and writing.

There are a range of support services available for all students and UniSQ welcomes all students to access support when needed. UniSQ understands you are taking a big step towards your personal and professional development, by gaining a degree to pursue a career, all while being away from your home and family. You may find you have times of challenge, and we encourage you to reach out for support.

If you have any questions, please [book an appointment](#) with a [UniSQ Student Advisor \(Wellbeing\)](#).

#### **Additional Useful Information**

Refer to Study Queensland website: [qldstudenthub.qld.gov.au/live-in-queensland](http://qldstudenthub.qld.gov.au/live-in-queensland)

Engage in orientation - [unisq.edu.au/orientation](http://unisq.edu.au/orientation)

Find out about Student supports - [unisq.edu.au/support](http://unisq.edu.au/support)

#### **To connect with UniSQ**

Facebook page: [facebook.com/unisqaus](https://facebook.com/unisqaus)

Instagram: [instagram.com/unisqaus](https://instagram.com/unisqaus)

Twitter: [twitter.com/unisqaus](https://twitter.com/unisqaus)

Tik Tok: [tiktok.com/@unisqaus](https://tiktok.com/@unisqaus)

