

## Information for International Students

### PART 1: BEFORE YOU GET HERE

#### Obtaining a Student Visa

##### *Availability of Student Visas*

The Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs student visa program enables overseas students to come to Australia to undertake full time study in registered courses in Australia. Temporary visa holders in Australia, for example visitors, working holiday makers and short stay business visa holders) from gazetted countries, may be able to apply for their first student visa in Australia.

##### *Work Rights*

As an overseas student in Australia, you should have enough money to support yourself and your family for the entire time that you are studying. However your student visa also gives you the right to work once you are in Australia.

You will only be allowed to work for 40 hours per two weeks while the Australian education provider you are studying at is in session. However, you can work for longer periods during your holidays.

*The money you earn from working in Australia should only supplement your income and not be used as your only source of income.*

For more complete information on Australian visa matters see: [www.immi.gov.au](http://www.immi.gov.au)

##### *Other Australian Visas*

If you have a valid visa other than a student visa for entering Australia, you may also study at Unity College as either a full time or part time student. You would need to check the work rights as they applied to that particular visa.

#### Cost of Living in Australia

Before lodging your application you should consider whether you will have enough money to set up house in Australia as well as pay for your air fares (including return), course tuition fees, overseas student health cover (OSHC) and all general expenses during your stay in Australia.

As a general guide, your accommodation, food, transport, clothes and expenses could cost you between AUD \$18,000 to AUD \$26,000 or more a year, depending on your lifestyle and where in Australia you will study.

For example, a single person renting accommodation would need at least \$250 a week to spend on living expenses (excluding tuition) and a married couple would need at least \$350 a week. If accompanied by family members, you will also need enough money to cover their expenses including school fees.

You should be aware that these amounts are only an indication of everyday expenses and do not include airfares.

To check current exchange rates see: [www.currencyguide.com/exchange](http://www.currencyguide.com/exchange).

## **Overseas Student Health Insurance Cover**

It is a condition of the grant of your Overseas Student Visa that you and your dependents have acceptable health insurance cover during the whole time you are in Australia. To be covered for health insurance, you will have to pay the Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) for yourself and any family members travelling with you.

The OSHC provides medical and hospital insurance for overseas students and their dependents who have travelled to Australia with them. All applicants must show evidence that they have health insurance cover before a visa can be issued to them.

To arrange for the OSHC, students can pay the OSHC premium to the education provider which will then arrange to pay the health insurance cover on their behalf.

*Student Health Cover for Students from Norway and Sweden Students applying from Norway and most Swedes do not need to obtain OSHC because the Department of Health and Aged Care has advised that these countries have a national health scheme or other arrangements that provide acceptable health insurance for them while they are overseas. For the OSHC requirement to be waived, Norwegian students should have documentation proving that they are covered by the Norwegian National Insurance Scheme. Swedish students should have proof that they have insurance provided by CSN International (the Swedish National Board of Student Aid). OSHC is available to Norwegian and Swedish nationals if they require it.*

### **Travel Insurance**

*You may wish to take out travel insurance for your travel to Australia. Read what is covered very carefully as there are different kinds of policies. It is important that this is done before you travel to Australia.*

## **PART 2: ONCE YOU ARRIVE**

### **Arrival in Canberra**

The Canberra International Airport is about 30 minutes from Unity College in the suburb of Belconnen. The more notice you can give of your arrival time the more chance that it can be arranged for someone to meet you (There is a fee for this service). It would be especially helpful if you could let the College know the following details at least two weeks before your arrival:

Date of Arrival; Time of Arrival

Airline; Flight Number

Number of adults / children; Names of adults / children

Number of pieces of luggage

If something goes wrong and you are stuck, call the Unity College office on (02) 6161 0050 during business hours.

### **Accommodation**

Sometimes people from local churches will be able to offer you hospitality for your first week or so in Canberra. However, there is no guarantee that such temporary housing will be available.

Other short-term accommodation might include the Youth Hostel in Canberra:

7 Akuna St, Canberra City. 2601

Phone: (02) 6248 9155

Fax: (02) 6249 1731

Email address: [Canberra@yhansw.org.au](mailto:Canberra@yhansw.org.au)

For other accommodation options and assistance, contact UCA at [info@unity.edu.au](mailto:info@unity.edu.au). Please note that if you are seeking rental accommodation in Australia, you will need to bring any rental references you have from your home country.

### **Local Transport**

Public transport service is by Bus. The Canberra campus of Unity College Australia is ideally located next to the Belconnen bus interchange.

Details can be found at the ACTION Bus services website:

[www.action.act.gov.au](http://www.action.act.gov.au)

Some route maps and timetables are also available at the Unity College office.

## **Driving & Obtaining an Australian Driver's Licence**

If you have a driver's licence that is not in English, you must have it translated into English and carry both the licence and the translation whenever you are driving. It is also often asked for as identification for banking transactions and other paperwork. If you are staying less than 6 months, this is sufficient for driving in Australia. However you may wish to study our road rules, remembering that we drive on the left hand side of the road and give way to the right.

If you are planning to stay 6 months or longer, and you already have a drivers licence (and it has not expired in the last 5 years) then you have only 3 months in which to obtain an Australian drivers licence.

Ask for the separate information sheet on obtaining a licence at the Unity College Office.

## **Opening a Bank Account**

You will need your passport for identification, and evidence of your residential address. For example a receipt showing the rent you have paid, and the address of your residence.

Some advice... To avoid bringing large amounts of cash or a bank draft you may like to investigate putting money into your VISA (or similar) account in your home country so that it is in credit, then on arrival at the bank taking a cash advance from your VISA with which to open your new account. This avoids any delays with 'wire transfers'.

## **Shopping**

This is not an exhaustive list or an endorsement, but to make the first few weeks easier you may try the following places: (Most shopping areas are easily reached by bus).

For shopping including groceries (Woolworths, Coles, Aldi) and larger stores (Big W, David Jones, Myer): Woden Plaza, Belconnen Mall, Gungahlin Town Centre, Tuggeranong Hyperdome

For second hand clothing and other items:

Salvation Army Family Store (Macquarie, Fyshwick, Mitchell, Phillip)

St Vincent de Paul Society (Belconnen, Curtin, Dickson)

Koomari (Fyshwick, Belconnen, Tuggeranong)

Also look under Furniture second-hand in the Yellow Pages

## Other

You can join the ACT Public Library system while you are in Australia. You will need proof of a residential address. In addition to borrowing rights the Libraries provide free internet access.

We would suggest setting up a free web based email account for use while in Australia.

Some sites that allow you to do this are:

[www.hotmail.com](http://www.hotmail.com)

[www.google.com](http://www.google.com)

[www.yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com)

You may also like to investigate:

[www.whereis.com.au](http://www.whereis.com.au) or [www.goeureka.com.au](http://www.goeureka.com.au) which provides an Australian search engine and maps for any address in Australia.

To find out more about Canberra have a look at [www.canberratourism.com.au](http://www.canberratourism.com.au)

## Phone calls

Phone numbers in Australia are 8 digits, preceded by a 2 digit area code that begins with a '0'. If you are dialling a number in the same area code, you do not need to dial the 2 digit area code.

Mobile telephones have a ten-digit number, mostly starting with '04'.

To dial Australia from other countries dial your international access code, then 61 (for Australia) then the area code of the Australian number (omitting the leading '0') then the 8 digit number.

For example to call from the USA to the Unity office dial 011 61 2 6161 0050

## Contact Details

Phone (02) 6161 0050 Australia

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+61 2 6161 0040 International

Email: [info@unity.edu.au](mailto:info@unity.edu.au)

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Snail Mail: PO Box 467, Belconnen ACT 2616

Location: Belconnen Churches Centre, 54 Benjamin Way, Belconnen ACT 2617