

# International Students

## Pre-arrival Planning



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**SYDNEY**



### **Congratulations!**

We are delighted you have chosen to continue your studies at the University of Sydney, one of the world's leading higher education institutions.

Before you leave home, there are a number of important arrangements you need to make and things you need to plan for and understand.

Some of these things are included in this booklet. You might like to use it as a check list of things to do before you arrive in Australia.

If you follow these guidelines before you arrive in Australia, it will make your journey to Australia as smooth as possible and help you to settle into the University of Sydney community quickly.

There is also information about living in Sydney that provides useful tips to make your first few weeks in Sydney as trouble free as possible! This includes information about laws, your rights and responsibilities, services available to you, transport information and ways to keep yourself safe.

Also look at our post arrival guide that will provide more information about settling into life in Sydney quickly. And keep an eye on your email for invitations to International Student Arrival Information sessions and other Welcome Week and information sessions especially for International students.

If you have any other questions, please email us: [international.support@sydney.edu.au](mailto:international.support@sydney.edu.au)

You can also join the Sydney University International Student Community on Facebook: [facebook.com/Student.Transition](https://facebook.com/Student.Transition)

You might also want to look at the Australian Government's website for International Students: [studyinaustralia.gov.au/global/live-in-australia](http://studyinaustralia.gov.au/global/live-in-australia) or Study NSW's website: [study.sydney](http://study.sydney)

Keep reading tips below and we'll see you in Sydney!

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The University of Sydney

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**W** [sydney.edu.au](http://sydney.edu.au)

# Things to do before you arrive in Sydney

## Travel Arrangements

- After you [accept your offer](#) of a place at the University of Sydney, organise travel arrangements including airline tickets and travel insurance and make sure your passport and student visa are valid for the length of your stay in Australia.
- Ensure your hand luggage complies with your airline's requirements in terms of size and weight. Some airlines will not allow you to carry bottles with liquid in them that are larger than 100ml, aerosol cans or sharp implements in your hand luggage.
- Pack a folder with your *original documents used for Admission of your course* (as they may be requested to see) and other important documents (passport, air ticket, travel insurance and other valuables) and place it in your hand luggage. Make sure you take a few photocopies of your passport as well.
- Check Australia's customs and import requirements and identify any items you cannot bring or that you will need to declare at the airport on arrival. Before you travel to Australia, it's important to be aware of the [Australian Government's biosecurity requirements](#), the link covers biosecurity requirements and lists products that cannot be brought to Australia, and includes tips to ease border clearance. It is important you make yourself aware of this as there are strict penalties for trying to bring in prohibited items.
- Purchase padlocks and address tags for your luggage and secure them to your bags.
- Pack some of your personal items such as photos, address books with contact details of family, friends and your country's embassy in Australia.
- Work out how to get to your accommodation in Sydney from the International Airport. Visit the [Welcome Desk](#) when you arrive for information.
- If you are arriving within the 4 weeks prior to Welcome Week, you maybe eligible for the Free Airport shuttle service. Please check [our website](#) for more information. Outside of this peak period, there are several options for transport from Sydney Airport including trains, buses (you will need an Opal card: [opal.com.au](#) to take public transport – check they go where you want to go: [transportnsw.info](#)) or taxis that will take you directly to your destination. Make sure you research the route you will need to take and how much it will cost at [sydneyairport.com.au](#). A taxi is usually the easiest way to travel from the airport, especially if you have lots of luggage.
- Have at least AUD\$1500 in your bank account available for use on arrival in Sydney (plus approximately AUD\$300 in cash). You can exchange most currencies at the airport but you can do this before your arrival. Most businesses including taxis accept credit cards but there may be a surcharge.
- **TOP TIP:** When you arrive - always look left and then right before crossing the road. Traffic in Australia may be different to what you are used to in your home country.

## Packing

- Sydney can have extreme weather conditions – it can be very hot and dry in summer and cold, wet and windy in winter. Make sure you pack clothes for all weather conditions including jumpers and jackets.
- There are easily accessible, relatively cheap clothes, bedding, stationery and other supplies available across Sydney. You do not need to weigh down your luggage with too many toiletries or other items that you can purchase after you arrive.
- Don't forget to check with your airline what the maximum your luggage can weigh so you don't have to pay excess luggage charges.



## Cost of Living

- It is important to make sure you will be able to afford your living costs in Sydney. There is information about estimated general expenses (accommodation, food, transport etc) available: [sydney.edu.au/study/finances-fees-costs/living-costs.html](http://sydney.edu.au/study/finances-fees-costs/living-costs.html)
- A useful budget planner to help you manage your money is available: [www.moneysmart.gov.au/tools-and-resources/calculators-and-apps/budget-planner](http://www.moneysmart.gov.au/tools-and-resources/calculators-and-apps/budget-planner)

## Accommodation Arrangements

- Organise at least temporary accommodation, either on or off campus – see the [Student Accommodation Services](http://sydney.edu.au/current_students/accommodation) website for help with this: [sydney.edu.au/current\\_students/accommodation](http://sydney.edu.au/current_students/accommodation) for catered or self-service accommodation or access their database of private accommodation options.
- The University has a [range of accommodation options](#) but they often fill up quickly – make sure you apply for accommodation early.
- There are also websites that help you find private accommodation and share houses, such as [flatmatefinders.com.au](http://flatmatefinders.com.au) or [flatmates.com.au](http://flatmates.com.au)
- Buy powerpoint converters for any of your electrical equipment and appliances that may have different plugs in Australia.

## Health and Medication

- Have medical/dental check-ups and pack spare pairs of glasses/contact lenses and prescriptions for medications. Bring at least a month's worth of medication if possible.
- Check with your doctor that you will be able to obtain the medications you require in Australia. Bring a letter from your doctor explaining what your medications are and why you take them, and information about your medical history.
- If you have an ongoing or chronic health condition, ask your doctor for a letter of referral to a health practitioner in Australia.
- Ensure your vaccinations are up to date and bring copies of your vaccination records.
- Ensure your Overseas Student Health Cover is arranged. You can find out about OSHC at: [sydney.edu.au/study/finances-fees-costs/living-costs/health-insurance.html](http://sydney.edu.au/study/finances-fees-costs/living-costs/health-insurance.html)

## Documentation

Ensure you bring translated copies (where possible) of the following documents with you:

- valid passport and photocopies of passport and student visa
- travel documents (itinerary, tickets, travel insurance) and a list of goods you are bringing to Australia for yourself, as well as customs
- all offer letters sent to you by the university and receipts of payments you have made
- all original documents used for Admission of your course (as they may be requested)
- identification such as certified copy of birth certificate, driver's licence, international drivers licence (if needed)
- credit cards, travellers cheques and bank account records
- any previous reference letters written by landlords, employers etc to assist in obtaining accommodation or work (if allowed under your visa)
- referral letters from your doctors if you require specialist care or medications while you are in Australia, as well as information about any relevant medical history or chronic conditions that will require ongoing treatment in Sydney
- the same documents for any family members travelling with you, including student reports for any school age children



## Family Visas

- Most student visas allow you to bring your family members to Australia as subsequent entrants. For information about applying to the The Department of Home Affairs for your family's visas visit <https://archive.homeaffairs.gov.au/trav/stud/brin>
- Check with your health insurance company about whether your family members are covered or if they need to get their own cover.

## Schools & Child Care

- Information about schooling, school fees and child care in Australia can be found at the NSW Department of Education website: [dec.nsw.gov.au](http://dec.nsw.gov.au)
- School fees may apply at some private and public schools. More information is available: <https://www.deinternational.nsw.edu.au/study-options/fees>
- You can also search and compare specific primary and secondary schools in Australia using the MySchool website: [myschool.edu.au](http://myschool.edu.au)
- Five child care centres currently operate on or near the Camperdown, Darlington and Cumberland campuses catering to over 200 children aged from 0 to five years. The University's Child Care Office can provide you with further information about these services and other assistance available to you: [sydney.edu.au/stuserv/child\\_care](http://sydney.edu.au/stuserv/child_care)

## Know your rights in Australia

- In Australia, there are many laws to protect you and keep you safe that may be different than in your own country, including:
  - Rights as a consumer: Whether you are buying a car or entering into a mobile phone contract, you have rights. Read up on them here: [accg.gov.au/consumers/consumer-rights-guarantees](http://accg.gov.au/consumers/consumer-rights-guarantees)
  - If you plan to work in Australia, you have rights relating to minimum wages, work conditions and your treatment at work. Become familiar with your working rights here: [fairwork.gov.au](http://fairwork.gov.au)
  - If you rent a property in Australia, you have rights and responsibilities. Find out about them here: [tenants.org.au/resources/all](http://tenants.org.au/resources/all)
  - As an international student, there are many government services that you can access. Call Services NSW for information about getting a drivers' licence, opening an eToll account or getting a tax file number, call 13 77 88 or visit: [service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/support-international-students](http://service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/support-international-students)
  - You have the right to feel safe at all times in Australia. Learn the Australian emergency number. Call **000** for police, fire brigade or ambulance.
  - You can access free legal services as an international student through the Student Representative Council (SRC) for undergraduate students and Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA). Check the University website for contact details: [sydney.edu.au](http://sydney.edu.au)
  - There are free support services available to you at the University, including Counselling and Psychological Services, Careers Services, Disability Services, Health Services, Multifaith Chaplaincy services and academic services. Find out more at: [sydney.edu.au](http://sydney.edu.au)



# Preparing for University

## Enrolment

- The University of Sydney offers online enrolment for most courses and depending on your travel dates, you may be able to finalise this before you arrive in Australia. Visit the University of Sydney enrolment website to find out how to enrol: [sydney.edu.au/current\\_students/enrolment/index.shtml](https://sydney.edu.au/current_students/enrolment/index.shtml)
- You can read about the units of study that are offered in each degree on the University's website. Search for the course you have been offered on the site to access the Faculty handbook: <http://sydney.edu.au/study/find-a-course.html>
- Become familiar with your Faculty. Check their website to find out about key dates for enrolment, orientation and study: [sydney.edu.au/about/faculties\\_schools.shtml](https://sydney.edu.au/about/faculties_schools.shtml)
- Once you accept your offer, you will receive your Unikey log in and your University of Sydney (institutional) email address. Check this email regularly for information and invitations to orientation and transition events especially for International students to help you to settle in quickly in Sydney.
- You will need your student card to borrow library books, use the printers and access some buildings. As soon as you accept your offer, upload a photo so your student card can be prepared and ready for you: [sydney.edu.au/study/student-administration/student-cards.html](https://sydney.edu.au/study/student-administration/student-cards.html)

## Scholarships

- The University of Sydney has many scholarships available for international students. There are also scholarships that are funded by the government and various industries. Because of the variety of scholarships on offer, the eligibility criteria for each of them are different. Please read through the conditions of the scholarships thoroughly before applying. Visit the Scholarships website for information about scholarships and applications: [sydney.edu.au/scholarships/prospective/international\\_students.shtml](https://sydney.edu.au/scholarships/prospective/international_students.shtml)
- Another option is a scholarship provided through the Australian government's Australia Awards scheme. For eligibility and application information, visit [sydney.edu.au/future-students/international/undergraduate/australia-awards-scholarship](https://sydney.edu.au/future-students/international/undergraduate/australia-awards-scholarship)
- Don't forget to explore scholarship opportunities in your home country as well.

## Welcome Week

- Welcome Week is a very important period before semester begins where you will find out everything you need to know to start University as prepared as you can be. Attend International Arrival Sessions to find out about services and support for students at the University, find out how to keep yourself safe in Sydney, learn more about public transport and good places to know about, and have a campus tour to become familiar with the University. You should also attend your faculty welcome and other sessions listed on the website or the Welcome Week app that interest you.
- Keep an eye on your institutional email address for more information and your invitations to events.
- Welcome Festival is run by the University of Sydney Union (USU) and is the social part of orientation to the University. Make friends, join clubs and societies and find out how to get involved in all areas of University life. Watch the University website for more information.

**We look forward to seeing you in Sydney!**



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