

GOLD COAST CHRISTIAN COLLEGE



INTERNATIONAL STUDENT HANDBOOK

Seventh-day Adventist Schools (South Queensland) Ltd.
CRICOS Provider # 02708C – Version 15/08/2019

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HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK

The information contained within this handbook has been colour coded for your convenience in order of priority. Each page is colour tagged according to its urgency.

Color Code



Information

**"I need to know
IMMEDIATELY!"**



**"I need to know by
the first week!"**



**"I need to know
BEFORE classes
begin!"**



**"I need to know by
the end of WEEK 4!"**



**"I need to know by
the end of WEEK 6"**



**"I need to go back
and remind myself of
this as I go through
my study!"**

SECTION 1



Welcome

SECTION 1: WELCOME

Welcome

Mr Guy Lawson , Principal

Overview

Educational Philosophy

Primary Goals of Adventist Education through Gold Coast Christian College

Important Information & Emergency Contacts

Education Provider Main Contact Details

International Student Coordinator/Advisor

International Student 24 Hour Emergency Contact

Homestay Coordinator

Important Telephone Numbers

Emergency Police, Fire, Ambulance

DIAC

Medical Centres

Transport

Public Facilities

Location of Automatic Teller Machines

Location of Public Telephones

Post Office

Application Step by Step Process Model

Things To Do:

Before Leaving Home

Upon Arrival in Australia

Welcome From The Principal



Dear Parent/Student,

Gold Coast Christian College offers a comprehensive educational and accommodation service to overseas College students. We provide an educational service that prepares students for Senior High School. Our College enrolls students from Prep (5 years old) to Year 12 (17 years old).

Once the International Scholar (student) is enrolled full time we continue to support him/her in the classroom with our English as a second language support program as well as general class support.

Gold Coast Christian College has developed a good reputation for the care our staff show towards International students. Our College program offers students the benefits of musical, artistic, sporting, recreational and Biblical opportunities all within the pastoral ministry of a vibrant Christian community.

In parallel with our educational service the College has a network of Christian families associated with Gold Coast Christian College who are willing to open their homes for accommodation to international students. This also helps the new student quickly adapt to his/her new environment. The families are carefully chosen and know how to cater for the needs of the international community.

As is evident in this International Student Handbook Gold Coast Christian College offers a comprehensive service to the International Scholar, from accommodation, school curriculum to advice and information.

Take your time and peruse the enclosed information. If you have any further questions please phone or email us.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'G' followed by a horizontal line.

Mr Guy Lawson
PRINCIPAL

Educational Philosophy

Seventh-day Adventist Schools are part of a co-educational school system concerned with providing quality Christian education, which upholds family values and fosters the overall development of each student.

Seventh-day Adventist Schools are committed to seeing each student develop to their full potential in the academic, spiritual, physical and social spheres of life. Students are helped to see themselves as individuals of real value, capable of living happy productive lives. Seventh-day Adventist Schools are owned and operated by the Seventh-day Adventist Church and are part of a worldwide Adventist education system that operates 5500 Schools, Colleges & Institutions worldwide.

Our School provides a Christian educational experience, based on a world wide view derived from the Christian faith. This view begins with an eternal loving and personal God, who has always existed, is all-powerful and is the source of all life, truth, beauty and Christian values. Our staff are committed to their task of educating in a caring Christian environment where the worth and personal development of each student is respected and enhanced.

Seventh-day Adventist Schools are open to all students without regard to their ethnic background, sex, nation, origin or religious affiliation. All students are expected to live in harmony with the schools standards and show respect for Christian principles while attending all religious classes and activities.

Our aims are to promote in students:

- | | |
|---|---|
| ▪ An understanding of God | ▪ Joy of imagination |
| ▪ Christian values for their lives | ▪ The satisfaction of effective communication |
| ▪ A tolerance for the rights and opinions of others | ▪ The spirit of co-operation at College home and in the wider community |
| ▪ An appreciation of the need to acquire knowledge | ▪ An appreciation of a healthy lifestyle in regard to diet, recreation, exercise and rest |
| ▪ The process of critical thinking | |

Primary Goals of Adventist Education through Gold Coast Christian College

Spiritual

To foster and promote:

- An acceptance of Jesus Christ as our personal saviour.
- A desire to be led by the Holy Spirit.
- A commitment to a consistent Christian Lifestyle.
- A desire to serve God and each other.
- An appreciation of Christian worship and spiritual fellowship.

Academic

To foster and promote:

- An appreciation of knowledge and truth in harmony through God's word as found in the Bible.
- A commitment to excellence through diligent effort.
- The ability to think logically, critically and creatively.
- A desire to become a life-long learner.

Social

To foster and promote:

- The treatment of all people with respect and dignity.
- The development of self-control and self-discipline.
- Tolerance of others and a concern for their welfare.
- Acceptance of responsibility for one's own actions.
- Appropriate manners and behaviour.
- A sense of occasion and College pride.

Personal

To foster and promote:

- A recognition of our responsibility to develop talents as God-given gifts to be used in leadership and service for others.
- Responsible citizenship within the community.
- A genuine compassion for the needs of others.
- A sense of rightness and fair play.
- A sense of pride in a job well done.
- A recognition that we have a responsibility to care for our physical and emotional wellbeing.

Important Information and Emergency Contacts:



Education Provider Main Contact

Details:

Gold Coast Christian College
7 – 9 Bridgman Drive
Reedy Creek QLD 4228
Ph: +61 7 5593-4571
F: +61 7 5593-8538
E: info@goldcoastcc.qld.edu.au
W: www.goldcoastchristiancollege.qld.edu.au

International Student Coordinator/Advisor

International Student Contact:
Cara Berkeley Ph: 07 5593-4571
After Hours Emergency only: Ph: 0432 270 364
Email: international@goldcoastcc.qld.edu.au
Homestay Coordinator
Cara Berkeley

Emergency Telephone Numbers:

Police, Fire, Ambulance – 000

Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC):

Ground Floor
299 Adelaide Street
Brisbane QLD 4000
Counter hours – 9:00am to 4:00pm
Monday – Friday
NOTE: If you need to attend the office
for visa evidencing outside of these hours,
please use the Visa Entitlement Verification
Online (VEVO) system.
Ph: 131 881

Medical Centres:

Reedy Creek Village Medical Centre
1 Kingsmore Blvd.
Reedy Creek Shopping Centre
Ph: 07 5522-0555

After Hours Med Call
Doctors on House calls every night, weekend and
holiday.
Ph: 07 5531-1224

Transport:

College: Gold Coast Christian College has its own
private bus system which covers the majority of
the Gold Coast. For more information please
contact the Bus Manager on 07 5593-4571 or
busmanager@goldcoastcc.qld.edu.au

Public: For public transport information
throughout Southeast Queensland go to:
translink.com.au

Public Facilities:

Location of Automatic Teller Machines:

- Robina Town Centre
Robina Town Centre Drive
Robina QLD
Ph: 07 5575-0480
- Stocklands Shopping Centre
West Burleigh Rd
Burleigh Heads QLD 4220
Ph: 07 5535-9666

Post Office:

Australia Post – Robina Post Shop
Robina Town Centre
53 / Arbour Ave
Ph: 13 13 18

Application - Step by Step Process Model



STEP 1: Student enquiry and application

(Via agent, exhibition, email, phone or fax)

STEP 2: International admissions issues

'offer of place'

STEP 3: Student acceptance

return signed forms and fees

STEP 4: International admissions issues electronic

Confirmation of Enrolment (eCoE) (OSHC)

STEP 5: Student finalises visa conditions

with Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC)

STEP 6: Student makes travel and/or accommodation

Arrangements

STEP 7: Student arrives in Australia

STEP 8: International student orientation

registration and ID Cards

STEP 9: Student registers for OSHC card and

sets up bank account, mobile phone, etc.

STEP 10: Faculty orientation

STEP 11: Classes begin!

Things to Do



Before Leaving Home:

- ☐ Apply for passport
- ☐ Arrange student visa
- ☐ Make contact with institution
- ☐ Arrange for immunisations and medications from my doctor
- ☐ Apply for a credit card and/or arrange sufficient fund
- ☐ Confirm overseas access to your funds with your bank
- ☐ Make travel arrangements
- ☐ Arrange travel insurance
- ☐ Advise institution of travel details
- ☐ Arrange accommodation if applicable
- ☐ Arrange transport from airport to accommodation
- ☐ Pack bags being sure to include the following:
 - ☐ Name and contact details of an institution representative
 - ☐ Enough currency for taxis, buses, phone calls etc. in the event of an emergency
 - ☐ Important documents:
 - ☐ **READ THIS HANDBOOK!**
 - ☐ Passport
 - ☐ Letter of offer
 - ☐ CoE
 - ☐ Certified copies of qualifications & certificates
 - ☐ Travel insurance policy
 - ☐ ID cards, drivers licence, birth certificate (or copy)

NOTE: Make sure you leave any originals or copies of these documents safely with family in your home country in case of loss.

Upon Arrival in Australia:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Call home<input type="checkbox"/> Settle into accommodation<input type="checkbox"/> Contact institution<input type="checkbox"/> Purchase household items and food<input type="checkbox"/> Enrol children in school (if applicable)<input type="checkbox"/> Attend international student orientation<input type="checkbox"/> Get student ID card<input type="checkbox"/> Open a bank account | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Advise health insurance company of address & get card<input type="checkbox"/> Open a bank account<input type="checkbox"/> Attend faculty/course specific orientation session<input type="checkbox"/> Get textbooks<input type="checkbox"/> Start classes<input type="checkbox"/> Apply for tax file number if seeking work<input type="checkbox"/> Get involved in student life and associations (eg music, sporting and cultural clubs). |
|---|--|

SECTION 2



Pre - Arrival

SECTION 2: PRE-ARRIVAL

Introduction to Australia

Introducing Australia & the Gold Coast

Introducing Gold Coast Christian College

Arranging Visas

DIAC

DFAT

Migration Agents

Education Agents

Visa Conditions

Arranging Travel

Documents

What to Bring

Seasonal Considerations

Clothing

Other Items You Might Need to

Include

Bringing Your Computer

Mobile Phones & Laptops

On your Flight

Entry into Australia

Australian Immigration

Baggage Claim

Detector Dogs

Australian Customs & Quarantine

Arrivals Hall

Getting from the Airport

Keeping in Contact

Accessing Money

How Much to Bring

Currency Exchange

Electronic Transfer

ATMs

Credit Cards

Arranging Accommodation

Temporary Accommodation

Hotels, Motels & Backpackers

Staying with Friends or Family

Bringing My Family

Issues to Consider

Child Care

Schools

State Schools

Independent Schools

Bringing My Family

Issues to Consider

Child Care

Schools

State Schools

Independent Schools

AUSTRALIA

Australia is a natural wonderland of beautiful beaches, crystal blue waters, amazing ancient rock formations and pristine rainforests.

Australia is the sixth largest country in the world and has the lowest population density per square kilometre.

Australia has 16 world heritage listed properties with its historic townships, bustling cities, vivid landscapes and exotic flora and fauna all adding to its unique appeal.

Much of Australia's exotic flora and fauna cannot be found anywhere else in the world and the lifestyle is one second to none.

Culture and Customs

The culture and customs consists of a rich tapestry of nationalities including traditions, legends, myths and folklore. The indigenous 'Dream time' forms the base of tens of thousands of years of spiritual aboriginal art and culture.

Language

In Australia over 200 different languages and dialects are spoken, including 45 indigenous languages. The most commonly spoken languages (other than English) are Italian, Greek, Cantonese, Arabic, Vietnamese and Mandarin.

States and Territories

Australia is made up of six states and two territories. To find out more about each state and territory, use the map below:



THE GOLD COAST



Famous for its sun, surf and sand, the City of Gold Coast stretches along 57 kilometres of coastline.

Beyond our beautiful beaches is vast rainforest hinterland with breathtaking scenery - all a short drive from our regional centres.

The Gold Coast is the sixth largest city in Australia and one of the fastest growing regions in our country.

Covering an area of 1400 square kilometres, the city's boundaries extend from just south of Beenleigh to Coolangatta, taking in South Stradbroke Island and part of Moreton Bay and extending west to the hinterland of Mount Tamborine and the Lamington and Darlington Ranges.

Population

City of Gold Coast's current population is 513,954 residents*. This is expected to continue to grow by 13,000 to 16,000 people per year, so that by 2026 City of Gold Coast will be home to over 730,000 residents**.

For more information on Gold Coast City's population and demographics, please visit the [Gold Coast Population Profile](#).

**As of 30 June 2011. Source: ABS, Regional Population Growth, Australia, 2011.*

***Based on projected figures. Source: Office of Economic and Statistical Research, Queensland Government population projections, 2011.*

Climate

The City of Gold Coast's climate is sub-tropical with an average of 300 days of sunshine annually.

- Average Summer temperatures: 21 to 28 degrees Celsius (69 to 82 degrees Fahrenheit)
- Average Winter temperatures: 12 to 21 degrees Celsius (54 to 69 degrees Fahrenheit)

GOLD COAST CHRISTIAN COLLEGE



Gold Coast Christian College was established in 1982 by the Seventh-day Adventist churches on the Gold Coast and is a part of the Seventh-day Adventist School System that operates within Australia and throughout the world. The school is situated approximately 7km inland from the beautiful world-renowned Gold Coast beaches and is nestled in on a peaceful setting of 10 acres of bushland. The College is blessed with a diversity of native birds and plant life.

Gold Coast Christian College is a smaller school with a family atmosphere. It encourages interaction and shared learning between the classes and seeks to develop a commitment to serving others, within the school and the wider community. Gold Coast Christian College owns and operates an exclusive bus service only for the students who attend Gold Coast Christian College.

Gold Coast Christian College is ***open to families of all faiths*** who have regard for its Christian values. The goal of Adventist Education is to promote an intrinsic relationship between each student and Jesus Christ and to facilitate spiritual growth through a nurturing Christian environment. The College curriculum reflects the importance of balancing the Spiritual, Academic, Physical and Social needs of our students.

At Gold Coast Christian College, we offer each student the opportunity to succeed and become respected members of the wider community. The foundation for this future can be found in the Gold Coast Christian College Strategic Management Plan. This process involved the participation of staff, students, parents, churches and administration. The Strategic Management Plan provides the blueprint to ensure Gold Coast Christian College becomes one of the finest Christian educational facilities in the Gold Coast.

The School facilities include seven permanent buildings, which house Primary and High School classrooms, 2 computer labs, a state of the art Library / Resource centre, Science lab, Home Economics facilities (sewing and cooking), Art lab, Industrial Technology building, music room, an office, 2 staffrooms, 2 toilet blocks and a canteen. Each classroom has access to audio-visual equipment, a large variety of fiction and non-fiction books and DVD/videos, computers and sports equipment, which cater to the various ages of the students. Each teacher has access to the internet and computers and a variety of learning resources in their classroom and in the staffroom from which they can prepare their lessons. All High School students lease their own tablet PC's from the College.

Gold Coast Christian College is well serviced by local sporting and recreational venues including Coopers Swim Centre, Varsity Gymnastics Centre, Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary, Robina Library, Pizzey Park Sports Centre, the beautiful Gold Coast Hinterland Bushland and of course the gorgeous Gold Coast white sandy beaches. Major shopping centres include Robina Town Centre and Pacific Fair. Other attractions nearby consist of the Theme Fun Parks including: Wet n wild, Movie World, Dreamworld and Sea World.

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 a visa 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 better to submit an application with the assistance of an accredited agent due 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 student 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. For example, if you are under 18 you must have a completed **CAAW form** to ensure your accommodation and welfare is approved by your education provider.

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 Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC)

The Australian Government's Department of Immigration and Citizenship provides comprehensive information about student visa requirements and the application process, as well as application document checklists to assist you with your application. Visit www.immi.gov.au/students/index.htm for the latest information.

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)

As well as links from the DIAC website the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade website www.dfat.gov.au/embassies has a comprehensive list of Australian embassies, high commissions, consulates and representative offices around the world.

Migration Agents

A migration agent can assist you in submitting your visa application and communicate with DIAC 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 CoE
- Maintain satisfactory academic progress
- Maintain approved Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) while in Australia
- Remain with the principal education provider for 6 calendar months, 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 www.immi.gov.au/students/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 International Student Orientation to allow enough time for settling-in, adjusting to the climate and overcoming jet-lag. You should fly into Brisbane or Gold Coast International Airport which is the closest international airport. [Students are generally met by their agent or a representative of the College can be arranged.](#)

Documents

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

- o Valid passport with Student Visa
- o Offer of a place / admission letter from Gold Coast Christian College
- o Confirmation of Enrolment (eCoE) issued by Gold Coast Christian College
- o Receipts of payments (e.g. tuition fees, OSHC, bank statements etc.)
- o Insurance policies
- o Original or certified copies of your academic transcripts and qualifications
- o Other personal identification documents, e.g. birth certificate, ID card, driver's licence
- o Medical records and/or prescriptions
- o CAAW if you are under 18 years of age.

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 and 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:

- 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

Students of the College will be required to wear a school uniform to classes and other school activities. You should check with the College or go onto the College website to see what the uniform requirements are as it changes from time to time.

Other items you might need to include (most can also be purchased in Australia):

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

Voltage



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 AU\$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 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.

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:



Please visit:

<http://www.bne.com.au/parking-transport/transport-options>

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.

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 as either Traveller's Cheques or on an international credit card. Traveller's cheques can be cashed at any bank or currency exchange in Australia.

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 educational 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 at the Gold Coast, you can also change money at any bank or at currency exchanges.

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 too 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 ACCOMODATION



Welfare and Accommodation Policy

Gold Coast Christian College approves the following accommodation options for overseas students:

- ☐ The student will live with a parent or relative as permitted by DIAC. In this case the College does not provide a welfare letter (CAAW) via PRISMS. The student's family provides proof of relationship to DIAC for the purposes of visa application.
- ☐ The student will live in College approved accommodation and the College will generate the welfare letter (CAAW) via PRISMS to accompany the student's Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE).
- ☐ College approved accommodation options for full fee paying 571 visa subclass students under 18 years of age include:
 - Homestay Program operated by **Gold Coast Christian College**
 - Private accommodation arrangements approved by the College which meet all requirements under relevant state and commonwealth legislation
- ☐ For College vacation periods, the following accommodation options are available to full fee paying 571 visa subclass students under 18 years of age:
 - Student returns home to parents
 - Student continues to live in / is placed in Homestay arranged and approved by the College

- Student may spend vacation with friend's family or relatives if all requirements are met in order to attain College approval
- Student may attend a supervised excursion, camp, etc., if all requirements are met in order to attain College approval
- If the College has taken responsibility for approving arrangements for student care and welfare, should the College not approve requests for changes to agreed arrangements, and the student refuses to maintain the approved and agreed arrangements, the College will advise the student this will be reported to DIAC and the student will need to contact DIAC to ensure visa implications are understood. This includes any requests by students under 18 years of age to attend "Schoolies Week" on completion of Year 12.
- All students are required to notify the College of a change of address while enrolled in the course, and students who live in College approved accommodation must not change agreed arrangements without prior approval of the College.

Homestay Programs operated by **Gold Coast Christian College** or approved by **Gold Coast Christian College** meet Queensland legislative requirements under Education (Overseas Students) Regulation 1998 s9 and the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian as well as under Standard 5 of the National Code. These include:

- Continuous dates for approved welfare arrangements
- Documented procedures for checking suitability of accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements
- Guidelines for selecting family and ensuring the family can provide a stable environment for the duration of the student's enrolment at the College
- Criteria about accommodation services to be provided, and contract for arrangements about providing accommodation services
- Orientation program from families new to provision of homestay services
- Bluecard for adults living in the homestay other than overseas students
- Compliant Homestay risk management strategy, reviewed annually, undertaken by operator of the homestay program

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.immi.gov.au

CHILD CARE



Finding suitable childcare in Australia requires patience and planning. Waiting lists for places in most childcare centres are long. Gold Coast Christian College offers before and after school care as well as vacation care during the holiday periods. Hours of operation are as follows:

Before School Care: 7:15am to 8:00am

After School Care: 3:30pm to 5:30pm

Vacation Care: 7:30am to 5:30pm

Children who require these programs must be registered with the College and under the age of 13 years.

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. Children who have their fifth birthday before 30th June 1st April of that calendar year are eligible to start school.
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 nongovernment 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, extracurricular 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 Queensland Department of Education:
30 Mary St, Brisbane QLD 4000
Ph: (07) 3237 0111

SECTION 3



Settling – In

SECTION 3: SETTLING - IN

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ACCOMMODATION:



Choosing Where To Live

Most students want to live within walking distance of the campus but this is not always possible and is usually determined by availability and cost. Often it is more convenient and more cost-effective to live further from the campus but closer to shops and public transport.

SERVICES:



Telephones

Calling Emergency Services DIAL 000

In Australia dial 000 from any phone for fire, police or ambulance services. 112 may also be dialled from mobile phones. Dialling 112 will override key locks on mobile phones and therefore save time. Emergency Services operators answer this number quickly and to save time will say, "Police, Fire, or Ambulance". If you are unsure of what emergency service you need tell the operator what the emergency is. You will then be connected to the appropriate service to assist. It is wise to think ahead with the most important information which will help them to respond. Where you are; (note street names and the closest intersection), what has happened and to whom; what their condition is. The operator may then ask you to stay on the phone until the emergency services arrive. In life threatening situations the operator may also give you some instructions to assist until the emergency unit arrives. If you are concerned about your English, remain calm and work with the operators who are very experienced with all cultures. (See also: Health – Emergencies)

Public Telephones

Australia has an extensive network of Public Phones throughout the country. They are easily recognized by the orange and blue Telstra emblem. The cost of local calls is 50 cents (AUD) with most phones accepting coins and prepaid telephone cards. Long distance call charges vary depending on time of day and distance.

Sundays are an excellent day to make interstate or international calls due to all day discount rates.

- Pre-Paid telephone cards offer competitive calling rates to all countries 24 hours per day.
- Pre-Paid Telephone Cards cost \$5, \$10, \$20 and \$50 and may be purchased at most newsagencies, post offices and convenience stores.



Making Phone Calls within Australia

- **To make international phone calls:** Dial – international access code (0011) + the country code + the area code (if required) + phone number (when adding a country code to a number, any leading 0 (zero) on the area code following it is NOT dialled. See the example under Calling Australia from Overseas.)

•To make domestic phone calls: Dial – the area code + phone number

Area Code	States
(02)	ACT, NSW
(03)	VIC, TAS
(07)	QLD
(08)	SA, WA, NT

Visit www.whitepages.com.au and www.yellowpages.com.au for directories of residential, commercial and government phone numbers in Australia; and for a list of country codes and area codes for international calls.

Calling Australia from Overseas

To contact Australia, first dial the international access code from that country (this will vary in each country), then Australia's country code prefix (61) followed by the area code without the first zero (for instance Sydney would be 2 instead of 02), and then dial the required number.

Example: International access number +61 2 9999 3662

Mobile/Cell Phones

Before bringing your mobile phone to Australia check with the Australian Communications and Media Authority www.acma.gov.au to make sure it can operate here. Some countries, such as Japan and the USA, use mobile phone networks that are not available in Australia. If not, you can buy your mobile phone in Australia. Australian telecommunications providers offer a wide range of services which provide a mobile phone within the cost of using that service. There are many differences to the services provided. You should understand what deal you are accepting before signing a contract with a provider. For a comparison of mobile phone plans in Australia see: <http://www.mobiles.com.au/mobilephoneplans/>

www.telstra.com		www.optus.com.au	
www.three.com.au		www.vodafone.com.au	
www.virginmobile.com.au		www.dodo.com.au	
		www.crazyjohns.com.au	

Computer & Internet Access

Many of the above companies will also provide you with internet access. In fact, you may be able to make arrangements with a company where you can get cheaper rates if you have internet and mobile phone through the one service provider. In addition, with providers Telstra and Optus, you could get a packaged deal for your home phone, internet and mobile phone.

Australia Post is one of our nation's largest communications, logistics and distribution businesses; and is committed to providing high quality mail and parcel services to all people within Australia.

Small Letters The cost of posting a small letter for distribution in Australia is an AU\$0.50 postage stamp which you affix to the envelope. A small letter has the following characteristics:

- No larger than 130mm x 240mm
- No thicker than 5mm
- Maximum weight 250g.

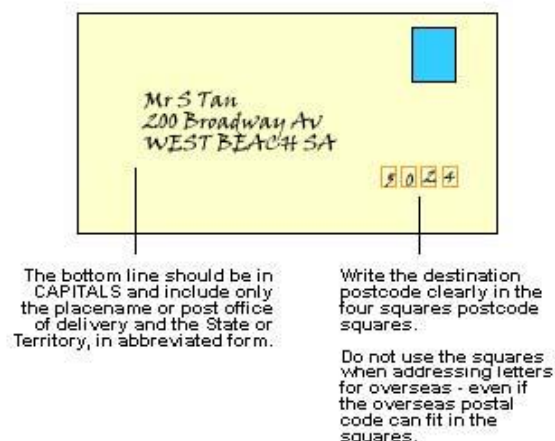
Envelope Layout

Australia Post uses advanced letter sorting technology to read the address on each envelope electronically. These machines work best when address formats are structured in a consistent manner. That is why it is necessary to address your mail clearly and correctly. The information below demonstrates how.

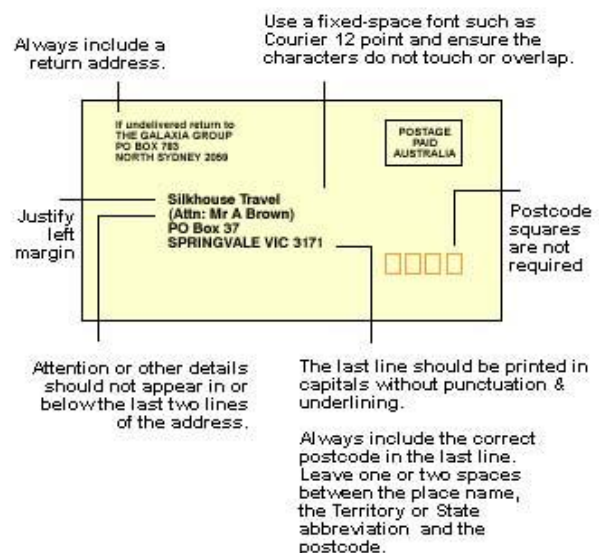
Envelope Face Format - Allocation of Zones



Typical Hand Addressed Envelope



Typical Machine Addressed Envelope



Getting Around

Student may wish to use any of the following modes of transport:

- Public Transport
- Taxis
- Driving
- Bicycles (Bicycle helmets must be worn at all times when riding a bicycle in Queensland)

Shopping

Shopping Hours are generally as follows:

Monday – Wednesday	9:00 am – 5:00 pm
Thursday	9:00 am – 9:00 pm
Friday	9:00 am – 5:00 pm
Saturday	9:00 am – 5:00 pm
Sunday	10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Where to Shop

There are many retail centres on the Gold Coast but some of the larger centres are as follows:

Robina Town Centre
Harbour Town
Stockland Shopping Centre
Pacific Fair
Australia Fair
Westfield Shopping Centre

When shopping in Australia, you generally don't bargain or barter (also called haggling) for the price of an item. The displayed price for items is fixed and if Australian GST (Goods & Services Tax) is applicable it will already be included in the displayed price. However, there are exceptions to this rule. There are places and circumstances in which it is perfectly acceptable to barter for the best price possible. These may include: at garage sales, community markets, second hand dealerships, or at electrical goods' stores, furniture shops, or when purchasing a motor vehicle if you are offering to pay in cash, or have seen the item at a competitor store for a better price.

If you are paying by CASH and, if you are buying more than one item, you may have more bargaining power. Begin the bargaining process by asking:

"What's the best price you can give me?"

Or at a garage sale, you might pick up several items whose combined total is \$50 and say:

"I'll offer you \$30 for all of these."

Purchasing an Item

The most common methods of purchasing items are by cash or EFTPOS. EFTPOS (Electronic Funds Transfer at Point of Sale) allows you to use the card attached to your Australian bank account to make purchases and withdraw cash at the same time (at the retailer's discretion) from more than 103,000 merchants across Australia. Just swipe your keycard through the EFTPOS card reader, select your account type and enter your PIN number. EFTPOS is available at most supermarkets, petrol stations and retail outlets. Just look for the

EFTPOS sign. You can choose to make the EFTPOS transaction from your savings account, cheque account or credit card. You receive a printed receipt after each purchase and the transaction appears on your statement.

Yellow Pages

The Yellow Pages are a telephone directory or section of a directory (usually printed on yellow paper) where business products and services are listed alphabetically. They are a GREAT timesaver and very useful when you are looking for specific products or services. “Let your fingers do the walking!” These books may be provided in rental properties, and are available at Post Offices around Australia.

www.yellowpages.com.au

HEALTH



Emergencies – Dial 000

The Triple Zero (000) service is the quickest way to get the right emergency service to help you. It should be used to contact Police, Fire or Ambulance services in life threatening or emergency situations only. Emergency 000 lines should not be used for general medical assistance.

Police

In Australia police protect people and properties, detect and prevent crime, and preserve peace for everyone. They are not connected to the military or politics. The police can help you feel safe. In a non-emergency situation you can contact the local police station directly.

Fire

The fire brigade extinguishes fires, rescues people from fires in cars and buildings, and helps in situations where gas or chemicals become a danger. As soon as a fire starts call 000 no matter how small or large the fire may be.

Ambulance

Ambulances provide immediate medical attention and emergency transportation to hospital. Dial 000

State Emergency Service

The State Emergency Service (SES) is an emergency and rescue service dedicated to providing assistance in natural disasters, rescues, road crashes and extreme weather conditions. It is made up almost entirely of volunteers and operates in all States and Territories in Australia. For emergency assistance in a FLOOD or STORM dial 132 500.

Lifeline

Lifeline’s 13 11 14 service is staffed by trained volunteer telephone counsellors who are ready to take calls 24hour a day, any day of the week from anywhere in Australia. These volunteers operate from Lifeline Centres in every State and Territory around Australia.

Anyone can call Lifeline. The service offers a counselling service that respects everyone’s right to be heard, understood and cared for. They also provide information about other support services that are available in communities around Australia. Lifeline telephone counsellors are ready to talk and listen no matter how big or how small the problem might seem. They are trained to offer emotional support in times of crisis or when callers may be feeling low or in need of advice.

Poisons Information Line

The poisons information line provides the public and health professionals with prompt, up-to-date and appropriate information, and advice to assist in the management of poisonings and suspected poisonings. The seriousness of a poisoning situation is assessed after a detailed history is obtained from the caller. Members of the public may be then given first aid instructions, information on possible symptoms, and advised on the need for assessment by a doctor or referral to hospital. The Australia-wide Poisons Information Centres have a common telephone number: 131 126.

Emergency Translation

For translation service in an emergency situation dial 1300 655 010

Overseas student health cover (OSHC)



Overseas student health cover (OSHC) is insurance that provides cover for the costs of medical and hospital care which international students may need while in Australia and is mandatory for international student visa holders. OSHC will also cover the cost of emergency ambulance transport and most prescription drugs.

How do I get OSHC?

You may be or have been asked for an OSHC payment in the education offer package you receive from your chosen education provider, if they have a preferred provider agreement and don't need to complete a formal application form. If not, you may need to complete an Application for OSHC which is available from registered OSHC providers and most educational institutions. Your local education adviser can lodge your OSHC form and payment at time of processing your enrolment to study in Australia.

Only Australian health funds that have signed an agreement with the Australian Government can provide OSHC. Most Australian education institutions have a preferred OSHC provider. Depending on the institution you will be attending you will be required to join one of these four registered health funds. You may choose to change your health fund at anytime, but will need to abide by the conditions of change of the health fund provider you are leaving

OSHC Providers

Medibank Private: www.medibank.com.au

OSHC Worldcare: www.oshcworldcare.com.au

BUPA OSHC: www.overseasstudenthealth.com

Australian Health Management: www.ahm.com.au

Students may also take out additional cover in the form of Extra OSHC and students who could not previously access OSHC may now be able to access Optional OSHC. Some students may be exempt from enrolling in the OSHC such as students from countries whose Governments may have Reciprocal Health Agreements for students in Australia. Note: only some reciprocal health agreements cover students in Australia, some will only cover visitors. You should determine if you are eligible before you apply for your

visa to come to Australia.

Further information on OSHC can be found at:

www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/privatehealthconsumers-overseascovers.htm

If you come to Australia on a visa other than a student visa and undertake a short course of study of three months duration or less you will not be eligible for OSHC. It is wise to purchase travel or private medical insurance in this case.

What am I covered for?

OSHC provides a safety net for medical expenses for international students, similar to that provided to Australians through Medicare. Additionally, OSHC includes access to some private hospitals and day surgeries, ambulance cover and benefits for pharmaceuticals.

How Do I Use my OSHC Card?

If you need to visit a doctor or medical centre, show your card at the end of the visit. You will be charged the doctor's fee and the government fee component of that may be processed by the medical centre. If the medical centre is not able to process the government fee, pay the total amount, keep the receipt and you can claim the government fee back from your OSHC provider.

How do I make a claim?

A claim can be made by visiting medibank.com.au. Please also visit this site for your nearest Medibank private store where you can make a claim in person.

Types of Health Care in Australia



The Australian healthcare system is mixed. Responsibilities for healthcare are divided between the Federal and State governments, and both the public and the private sectors play a role.

Government programs underpin the key aspects of healthcare. Medicare, which is funded out of general tax revenue, pays for hospital and medical services. Medicare covers all Australian citizens, pays the entire cost of treatment in a public hospital, and reimburses for visits to doctors.

Public System

The major provider of healthcare services in Australia is the Public Health System (Medicare). The Public Health System provides a comprehensive free of charge healthcare service for all Australian citizens covering both hospital based and community based medical services. Public hospitals are owned by the State. One of the problems with such a system is that waiting times in public hospitals can be extensive due to a shortage of healthcare professionals and facilities. See also: Attending an Australian hospital.

Private System

Private hospitals provide about a quarter of all hospital beds in Australia. Private medical practitioners provide most non-bed medical services and perform a large proportion of hospital services alongside salaried doctors. Most dental services are provided by private practitioners. For Australians who take out private health insurance a range of services can be covered, such as access to your own Doctor in a private hospital, and extra services such as dental, optical and physiotherapy.

Attending an Australian Hospital

Few private hospitals have emergency departments, so, in an emergency, most Australians rely on the public hospital system. If you attend an Emergency Department in a hospital you will be attended to immediately by a triage nurse for information about you, your cover, and your current health condition. The triage nurse will determine the urgency of your condition in comparison to others in need in the emergency room and it is likely that you will remain at the emergency room for several hours. Whether you are seen immediately by a Doctor, or have to wait, it is customary to keep you in the emergency room for several hours to monitor your condition before releasing you to go home, or admitting you to hospital in more severe cases.



There are extensive waiting times for elective surgeries at public hospitals, e.g. for orthopaedic surgery. One of the attractions of health insurance is the ability to bypass public hospital waiting lists and go through the private system.

Private hospitals are very expensive for treatment and hospitalisation. Your OSHC will cover some of the cost of some private hospitals but you will have to pay the difference.

Your health insurance (OSHC) covers the total cost of accommodation in a shared ward of a public hospital. It also pays for the 'schedule fee' for the doctor but you will have to pay the difference if the doctor's fee is higher than the 'schedule fee'. See also: Public hospital waiting times.

General Practitioners (GPs)

In Australia you do not have to go to a hospital to see a doctor. You can see a doctor (also known as a GP – General Practitioner) in their private practice or medical centre, with part or the entire doctor's fee being covered by Medicare or OSHC. You must make an appointment to see a GP. It is important to note that

some GP surgeries will request full payment from you at the time of consultation and you will need to present the receipt to claim the rebate back from your health cover provider.

Medical services



What do I do if I'm sick?

Choose a doctor from the list of medical facilities in this handbook or use the Yellow Pages and phone the GP's surgery or medical centre to make an appointment. If you have woken in the morning feeling unwell and would like to see a doctor that day, you will need to phone the doctor's surgery early in the morning (8:00am – 8:30am) for an appointment. Please note however, that it may not be possible to get an appointment on the same day you may have to wait one or two days before you can see a doctor (in some regional areas of Australia it may be a week or two before you can get an appointment).

If you are under 18, your [homestay parent](#) or [International Student Advisor](#) can help you find a doctor and accompany you to the appointment.

Seeing a Doctor

When you attend your appointment, the doctor will ask you questions about your health and may give you a brief physical examination, such as checking your breathing, your throat, ears etc. The doctor will then give you some advice regarding management of your illness, and may give you a prescription for some medication. If you have had, or need to take time off studies you will need to get a medical certificate from the doctor to provide to your education provider. If your illness is more serious or the doctor is unsure of a diagnosis she or he may refer you for further tests eg: blood tests or xrays, or to see a specialist Doctor. It is important to note that if you are dissatisfied with the diagnosis or service of the Doctor you see, you have the right to obtain an opinion from another Doctor.

Public Hospital Waiting Times

If you cannot get an appointment with a GP and want to go to a public hospital to see a doctor, you may find a public hospital which has a general practice clinic attached. If not, and you attend an emergency room to see a Doctor, be prepared to wait a VERY long time. It is not uncommon to wait more than 3 hours, and at some hospitals you could wait as long as 56 hours to see a doctor. It is common practice for a doctor or a nurse to make an initial assessment of your condition when you first arrive to prioritise the emergencies in the hospital. You will be seen as soon as the most urgent patients have been attended to. It is also common to remain in the emergency room for some time after a doctor has attended to you before you are instructed you can leave. Emergency department rules may include keeping you a little longer to observe you and ensure that your condition does not change and it is safe to send you home with the recommended treatment. It is the same for all patients – international students and Australian citizens alike.

Pharmacies

GP surgeries do not have medications to dispense to you. You must take the prescription given to you by the doctor to a Pharmacy or Chemist to obtain the medication. You will need to provide the pharmacy with your OSHC card, your full name and address. You are able to walk in off the street to any pharmacy/chemist/drug store in Australia and will only have to wait a short while for your prescription medicine to be prepared.

Prescription Medication

Medication prescribed by your doctor is not free. You must pay the pharmacy. If the cost is more than *AU\$30.70 you can claim the difference back from your OSHC provider. Many pharmacists will offer you the option of having a "generic" brand of medicine. If the prescription medicine the Doctor has prescribed

is also made available by a company which produces generic brands at cheaper prices, this option will be offered to you. This is ONLY offered if the content of the medicine is exactly the same as that prescribed by your Doctor. It will, however, assist you to pay less for your medicine.

Over the Counter Medication

Pharmacies/chemists also provide a variety of over the counter medications useful for treating colds, headaches, allergies and the like which do not require a prescription. Ask the pharmacist on duty for advice regarding the best medication for your symptoms. Ensure that you advise the pharmacist of any other medications you may be taking.

Dental and Optical Dental and optical health services are not covered by your OSHC unless you take out extra cover. If you need to see a dentist or optometrist you will need to make an appointment (see the Yellow Pages) and pay the full fee of this service.

Interpreter Services

We are lucky in Australia to have a variety of healthcare professionals from many different cultural backgrounds, so you may be able to see a doctor who speaks your first language. However, if you are having difficulties communicating with your doctor, the Translation and Interpreter Service (TIS) can be used. For more information visit www.immi.gov.au or phone 131 450.

Medical facilities on the Gold Coast



Hospitals

Gold Coast Hospital
108 Nerang St, Southport
Ph: 5519 8211

Robina Hospital
2 Bayberry Lane, Robina
Ph: 5668 6000

Medical Centres

Robina Town Medical Centre
Robina Town Centre
Level 4 / 27 Arbour Lane Terraces
Ph: 5578 9000

X-Ray

QSCAN Radiology
2 Classic Way
Burleigh Waters
Ph: 5587 6333
Robina Town Centre
Robina Town Medical Centre
Level 4 / 27 Arbour Lane Terraces
Ph: 5578 9000

Medical Centres (cont.)

Mermaid Central Medical Centre
Mermaid Beach
2431 Gold Coast Highway
Ph: 5575 2444

Burleigh West Medical Centre
138 West Burleigh Road
Ph: 5535 0681

Palm Beach Medical Centre
7 Palm Beach Avenue
Ph: 5525 7455

Classic Way Family Practice
2/6 Classic Way
Burleigh Waters QLD 4220
Phone: (07) 5568 0600

Pharmacies

Good Price Pharmacy Warehouse
86 – 104 Robina Town Centre Drive
Super Centre
Ph: 5562 1966

Pathology

QML Pathology
Robina Town Centre
Ph: 5593 3682

Chemist Warehouse
7 Classic Way
Burleigh Waters
Ph: 5593 7100

General Health



Maintaining good health is of vital importance when studying abroad.

While living in another environment is a good way to change a daily routine, it is important for students who are experiencing difficulties in their own country (relationship, health, emotional, substance abuse, etc.) not to expect a vacation from their problems.

Going abroad is not a “geographic cure” for concerns and problems at home (that is, thinking that you can solve your personal dilemmas by moving from one place to another). Sometimes students feel that a change of venue will help them to move past their current problems. However, living and studying in a foreign environment frequently creates unexpected physical and emotional stress, which can exacerbate otherwise mild disorders.

It is important that all students are able to adjust to potentially dramatic changes in climate, diet, living, and study conditions that may seriously disrupt accustomed patterns of behaviour. In particular, if students are concerned about their use of alcohol and other controlled drugs or if they have an emotional or physical health concern, they should address it honestly before making plans to travel and study abroad.

(Source: Education Abroad Program, UCLA)

Mental Health

Gold Coast Christian College offers support services and extracurricular activities to international students. If interested please contact the following:

1. Chaplain
2. Class teachers

GCCC also offers the opportunity to join church and social groups in their community on a weekly basis. For more information about this, please contact the College chaplain.

Physical Health

A big part of staying healthy involves eating healthy foods, and getting enough exercise for fitness and relaxation. Nutrition Australia provides some great information about healthy eating, exercise and lifestyle on its website www.nutritionaustralia.org.



- **Exercise** – do at least 30mins of moderate exercise a day

- **Sleep** – get at least 89 hours of sleep a night
- **Nutrition** – keep a balanced diet remembering to eat lots of vegetables and fruit everyday
- **Binge drinking** –This is an extremely dangerous activity and GCCC strongly discourages the use of alcohol and drugs and recommends complete abstinence.

Sexual Health

Taking care of your sexual health means more than being free from sexually transmissible infections or diseases (STIs or STDs); it also means taking responsibility for your body, and your decisions about sex. We recommend abstinence from sexual relations as the best protection. Consult your doctor if you have health concerns or for advice regarding safe sexual procedures.

Alternative Therapies

There are a range of alternative therapies available in the local area such as osteopathy, chiropractic care, massage and naturopathy.

MANAGING MY FINANCES



Initial Expenses

Please allow adequate finances to cover such needs as:

- Mobile phone usage
- Stationery items
- Incidentals
- Entertainment costs

Please see Gold Coast Christian College's written agreement for all school related costs.

Setting up a bank account



You can choose to open an account in any Bank, Credit Union or Building Society in Australia. Do your research to get the best deal. To open a bank account you will need:

- your passport (with arrival date stamped by Australian immigration)
- student ID card
- money to deposit into the account (this can be as little as \$10)

Anyone who wishes to open a bank account in Australia must show several pieces of personal identification which are allotted a points system. 100 points of identification is required to establish your identity as the person who will be named in the account. Your passport and proof of your arrival date in Australia will be acceptable as 100 points IF you open an account within six weeks of arrival in Australia. After this time you will be required to produce additional documentation. As a student you will be able to open an account with special student benefits. Many banks have 'Student Accounts' which contain no or minimal fees for transactions that might normally be attached to regular savings accounts. You will also require the student ID card from your institution to prove you are a student and should have access to the benefits offered by

a student bank account. For a comparison of accounts in banks throughout Australia see: www.banks.com.au/personal/accounts

Most people in Australia enjoy the convenience of Internet banking and/or Telephone banking, which enables them to manage their money, pay bills etc. from home. At the time you are setting up your account you can request these services from your bank.

Bank and ATM locations on the Gold Coast

ATMS's are located in all shopping centres and plazas throughout the Gold Coast.

Banking Hours

Most bank branches are open from Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 4:00pm (except on public holidays). Some branches have extended trading hours during the week and may be open Saturdays (check with your individual bank). ATMs remain open 24 hours a day. However, you should be aware of your personal safety if accessing cash from an ATM at night in quiet areas where there are not a lot of people around.

Bank Fees

Bank fees are the price you pay for the products and services that banks offer. Different banks charge different fees for different products and services, and the best way to find out what fees apply is simply to ask your bank. Any fees that apply to your accounts are fully disclosed in information leaflets and terms and conditions that your bank can provide before you open your account. Some banks waive some fees if you are a fulltime student and nominate a student account. The way you do your banking may also affect the fees that apply for example: internet banking rather than walking into a branch.

If you don't understand any fee which has been charged, contact your bank.

Accessing money from my account



Bank accounts offer lots of options for accessing your money. Some of the most popular options are described below.

ATMs (Automatic Telling Machines)

ATMs can be used to withdraw cash from an account by using the ATM card which is available with most bank accounts. You can also use ATMs to get an account balance and transfer money into other accounts. Some ATMs also allow you to deposit cash and cheques into your account. Using the ATMs of your bank will generally cost less money than if you use another bank's ATMs. Fees for using ATMs can vary between banks and between accounts. See also: Using an ATM.

EFTPOS

Short for 'Electronic Funds Transfer at Point Of Sale', EFTPOS terminals can be found where goods or services are sold, for example, supermarkets, service stations, restaurants, doctors' surgeries and gymnasiums. You can pay for goods and make payments through EFTPOS using your ATM card, rather than paying with cash. At some stores, when you use EFTPOS you can also withdraw cash from your account at the same time. You should be aware that there are some retailers who put limits on how much cash can be withdrawn which may be dependent on the amount which is spent in the store.

When paying by EFTPOS, you also use your PIN to access your account. The same rules apply about keeping the PIN confidential and never handing it over to anyone. Be careful no-one is looking over your shoulder

when you enter your PIN. See: Using an ATM.

Telephone Banking

You can use telephone banking to transfer payments to and from accounts, get your account balances, get recent transaction information and pay bills. You will need to register to use telephone banking and will then be given a password or an identification number that allows you to access your accounts over the phone. It's important never to give your password to anyone else.

Internet Banking

Internet banking allows you to view and check your accounts, review recent transactions, apply for loans and credit cards, or transfer money and pay bills – all online. Most banks offer Internet banking facilities, but you will need to register with your bank to gain access. You will then be given a password that allows you to use your accounts online. Never give this password to anyone else.

There are security issues that need to be considered when using Internet banking. It is recommended that you install and keep up to date antivirus software and a firewall, update security patches and be suspicious of emails requesting you to hand over confidential information such as your Internet banking logon password. Your bank will never ask you for this information, especially in an email. In addition, many banks publish security guides on their websites and this provides important information on precautions that you can take to protect your information online. If you are unsure about any approach that appears to be from your bank to provide personal information. Refuse to provide that information until you can attend your nearest branch to discuss the request over the counter with bank staff. There is no charge for discussing your banking options at a branch.

Over the Counter Service

You can also go into a branch of your bank and, with the assistance of bank staff, conduct transactions including withdrawals, deposits, transfers, and account balance checks. If you do not have a branch close by, you may be able to visit an agency of your branch, such as an Australia Post outlet, to conduct certain transactions. Bear in mind that over the counter transactions usually incur higher fees than electronic transactions.

Paying Bills

Most bank accounts offer lots of easy options for paying bills. Transaction accounts with cheque book facilities allow you to pay bills by cheque, and most transaction accounts and savings accounts allow you to pay bills electronically (e.g., using facilities such as telephone banking, Internet banking) and using direct debits.

A note of caution on direct debits – they are a convenient way to pay everyday bills, but always make sure you've got enough money in your account to cover the cost of the debit. If your pay or allowance goes into your account on a certain date, make sure your direct debit payments are scheduled to come out of your account after your pay goes in, or you might end up with an overdrawn account or a dishonoured payment – both can cost you money.

Account Statements

Most banks will provide regular statements for your accounts (just how regular can depend on the type of account). On request, banks will provide statements on a deposit account at more frequent intervals, but this may attract a fee. Bank statements are your record of everything that has happened in your account over a given period – the withdrawals, deposits and transfers that were made, and any bank fees and government taxes you were charged. Telephone and Internet banking can make it easy to check your statements, and some banks even offer 'mini statements' through their own ATMs.

Check your statements regularly to make sure you've got enough money in your account to cover your expenses and keep track of your spending, as well as make sure that all transactions made in your account are legitimate. Refer to your statements to see what fees you are paying on your bank accounts and why, and to see whether a few simple changes to your banking habits could help you to reduce the fees you pay (for example, using your own bank's ATMs instead of other banks' ATMs).

(Source: Australian Bankers' Association Inc.)

Using an ATM

You will be given a PIN (Personal Identification Number) which you will enter into the ATM to access your account. It is the key to your account and it is important that you never tell anyone your PIN. A bank or reputable business will never ask you for your PIN. If anyone does, be suspicious, don't hand it over and report the incident to the bank and the police. Be careful no one is looking over your shoulder when you enter your PIN.



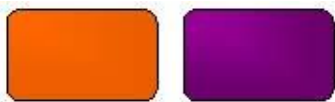
These general rules should be followed for ATM safety, especially at night:

- Minimise your time at the ATM by having your card ready when you approach the machine;
- Take a look around as you approach the ATM and if there's anything suspicious, don't use the machine at that time (report any suspicions to the police);
- If you don't feel comfortable using a particular ATM, consider continuing on to another branch or using off-street ATMs;
- Do remember that EFTPOS can be used to withdraw cash at many other places, like supermarkets and service stations;
 - If you simply want to check your account balance or transfer funds between accounts, telephone or Internet banking can be used instead of an ATM.

If your ATM or credit card is lost or stolen (or if your PIN has been revealed to another person), notify your bank immediately. This will enable your bank to put a stop on your card immediately so that no one else can use it and get access to your money. Most banks have a 24-hour telephone number for reporting lost cards – it's a good idea to keep a record of this number handy at all times, just in case. If you don't know the number, ask your bank.

(Source: Australian Bankers' Association Inc.)

Safety when carrying money



The first and fundamental rule of safety when carry money is:

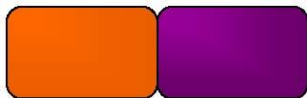
“Don't carry large amounts of cash!”

The second is:

“Don't advertise the fact that you are carrying money!”

- Divide your cash into different locations on your person (front pocket, coat pocket, shoes, etc.).
- Keep your wallet in one of your front pockets at all times.
- Do not carry cash in a backpack or back pocket.
- Sew a small money pocket into the cuff of a trouser, sleeve of a shirt or even a bra.
- Divide your bank/credit cards and keep them in separate locations.
- Do not place money or valuables in lockers.
- Be very careful how you carry your handbag, and never leave it open for someone to slip their hand inside.

WORKING IN AUSTRALIA



Permission To Work

From 26 April 2008, applicants granted student visas will automatically receive permission to work with their visa grant. Most student visa holders will no longer need to apply separately in Australia for permission to work. Please note that you will NOT be able to work in Australia until the first official day of classes when the education provider will confirm your study commencement. Your education provider may do this automatically on the first official day of classes, or you may need to request that they do.

Working While Studying

1. You are not permitted to start work until you have commenced your course of study
2. You can work a maximum of 20 hours per week during the term and unlimited hours when your course is not in session.
3. The Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) considers your course to be ‘in session’:
 - for the duration of the advertised semesters (including periods when exams are being held)
 - if you have completed your studies and your Confirmation of Enrolment is still in effect
 - if you are undertaking another course, during a break from your main course and the points will be credited to your main course.

Finding Work

You may find it difficult to find work in Australia, as you will be joining the general Australian population in your search; therefore, you should not rely on income from employment when budgeting to pay for living expenses. There is no guarantee that employment companies will find work for you.

There are many different ways to find a job in Australia:

- Newspapers
- Online: try the following online companies:

	www.mycareer.com.au
	www.jobsinoz.com.au
	www.jobsearch.com.au
	www.seek.com.au
	www.careerone.com.au
	www.getjobs.com.au

(Source: Online search)

Earning an income



Taxes

Taxes are managed through the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). The tax you pay depends on how much you earn.

Getting a Tax File Number

You must obtain a Tax File Number to be able to work in Australia. A tax file number (TFN) is your unique reference number to our tax system. When you start work, your employer will ask you to complete a tax file number declaration form. If you do not provide a TFN your employment will be taxed at the highest personal income tax rate, which will mean less money in your wages each week.

You can apply for your TFN online at www.ato.gov.au or phone 13 28 61, 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday. For the ATO translating and interpreter service phone: 13 1450.

Taxation Returns

If you pay too much tax, you are entitled to a refund. To get a refund you will need to lodge a tax return. You can lodge online using etax (free), by mailing a paper tax return, or by paying a registered tax agent to complete and lodge the return for you. If you lodge by etax your refund will normally be issued within 14 days.

- Lodge online using etax at www.ato.gov.au
- For a registered tax agent visit www.tabd.gov.au
- Tax returns are lodged at the end of the Australian tax year – (1 July to 30 June).

Superannuation

If your monthly wage is more than AU\$450, your employer must contribute an additional sum equal to 9% of your wage into a superannuation (pension) account for you. In most cases, you can access your contributions when you leave Australia permanently, although the contributions will be taxed.

To check your eligibility to claim your superannuation and to apply for your payment, visit:

www.ato.gov.au/departaustralia

You will need to provide the details of your superannuation fund. (Source: Australian Taxation Office).

LAWS AND SAFETY IN AUSTRALIA



Obeying the Law

One of the reasons we have such a wonderful lifestyle in Australia is due to our representative democracy, the separation of powers, and our respect for the rule of law. We have a lot of laws in Australia and as a result, society runs smoothly.

In being granted a visa to study in Australia, you signed a document (Australian Values Statement Temporary) agreeing to respect Australian values and obey the laws of Australia for the duration of your stay. Failure to comply with the laws of this land (including State and Territory laws) could result in a fine or the cancellation of your visa and possible deportation back home. If you are convicted of a serious crime, it could result in imprisonment. Nobody wants this to happen!

You can find a comprehensive outline of Australian law and the legal system at:

www.australia.gov.au.

Legal Services & Advice

If you do break the law are arrested and need to attend a court appearance you will need legal representation to negotiate Australia's complex legal system.

Legal Aid Queensland

www.legalaid.qld.gov.au

Ph: 1 300 651 188

Child Protection Laws

Queensland (Department of Child Safety) http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/OQPChome.htm	Principal Acts: Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld) Other relevant Acts: Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000 (Qld) Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld) Public Health Act 2005 (Qld) Adoption of Children Act 1964 (Qld) Family Law Act 1975 (Cth)
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Home security



Housebreaking is one of the most common crimes. Most house break-ins appear to be crimes of opportunity with entry gained through an open or unlocked window or door. Most intruders are looking for (and often find) a house left open or unlocked where they can get what they want with ease and make a quick getaway.

Some General Security Tips:

- Your house number should be clearly visible from the street in case of an emergency.
- Keep your front door locked when you are at the back of the house.
- Do not leave messages on the front door. It lets people know you are not home.
- Avoid having parcels left on the door step.
- If you have to have something delivered while you are out, have the neighbours collect it.
- When out, leave a radio or television on or a light in the evening to give the impression you are home.
- Keep cash and valuables out of sight.



Home security is an issue for you to consider when you are deciding on a place to live. Windows and doors should preferably have security screens or locks; doors should have dead bolts, a security chain and a peep hole; and if the property has an alarm system that would also make it an excellent choice.

Contents Insurance

It is recommended that if you are in a rental property that you obtain Contents Insurance for your belongings. This is a form of house insurance that insures the contents of the house. Landlords will usually have House Insurance but your belongings will not be covered. Contents insurance will replace your belongings if your house is robbed and your belongings are damaged or stolen, or you have a house fire and your belongings are destroyed or damaged. This may cost you up to \$200 per year depending on the value of your belongings.

Internet safety & security



Internet Access on Arrival

Internet cafes are located in most major cities, or book a computer at a community library.

All students from Years 7 – 12 at Gold Coast Christian College will be issued with a laptop equipped with internet access when on campus. The costs associated with this are included in your tuition.

The internet has now become an essential business, social, entertainment and educational resource for most Australians. The increasing level of economic transactions on the internet is making it the focus of criminal activities. It is important that internet users protect themselves from falling prey to these activities. The following tips list some simple precautions you can take to minimise the chances of becoming a victim of online criminals.

- 1 **Install antivirus and other security software**, such as antispyware and antispam software. Use and update this software regularly.
- 2 **Regularly download and install the latest security patches for your computer software**, including your web browser. Use automatic software security updates where possible.
- 3 **Use a firewall and make sure it is turned on**. Firewalls help prevent unauthorised access to, and communications from, your computer.
- 4 **Delete suspect emails immediately**. Don't open these emails.
- 5 **Don't click on links in suspect emails**. Visiting websites through clicking on links in suspect emails may result in malware (malicious software), such as a 'trojan', being downloaded to your computer. This is a commonly used and effective means of compromising your computer.
- 6 **Only open an attachment to an email where the sender and the contents of the attachment are known to you**.
- 7 **Don't download files or applications from suspect websites**. The file or application could be malware. Sometimes the malware may even be falsely represented as security software designed to protect you.
- 8 **Use long and random passwords** for any application that provides access to your personal identity information, including logging onto your computer. Don't use dictionary words as a password. Ideally, the password should be eight or more characters in length. Change passwords regularly.
- 9 **Use a limited permission account for browsing the web**, creating documents, reading email, and playing games. If your operating system allows you to create a limited permission account, this can prevent malicious code from being installed onto your computer. A 'limited permission' account is an account that does not have 'Administrator' status.

(Source: Australian Communications and Media Authority)

Personal safety



When you are out and about it is important to be alert and aware of your personal safety.

If you are going out at night remember:

- Think ahead consider how you are going to get home what about pre-booking a taxi or arranging transport with a friend or family member?
- Never hitchhike.
- Make sure that you stay with your party and that someone knows where you are at all times.
- Make sure you have enough money to get home or to phone.
- Keep away from trouble if you see any trouble or suspect that it might be about to start move away from the scene if you can. The best thing you can do is to alert the police and keep away.
- Walk purposely and try to appear confident. Be wary of casual requests from strangers, like someone asking for a cigarette or change they could have ulterior motives.
- Try not to carry your wallet in your back trouser pocket where it is vulnerable and in clear view.
- See also "Drink Spiking" under Alcohol, Smoking & Drugs.

If you are out and about:

- Be alert to your surroundings and the people around you, especially if you are alone or it is dark

- Whenever possible, travel with a friend or as part of a group
- Stay in well-lit areas as much as possible
- Walk confidently and at a steady pace
- Make eye contact with people when walking let them know that you have noticed their presence
- Do not respond to conversation from strangers on the street or in a car continue walking
- Be aware of your surroundings, and avoid using personal stereos or radios you might not hear trouble approaching
- always keep your briefcase or bag in view and close to your body
- Be discrete with your cash or mobile phones
- When going to your car or home, have your keys in your hand and easily accessible
- Consider carrying a personal attack alarm
- If you do not have a mobile phone, make sure that you have a phone card or change to make a phone call, but remember emergency 000 calls are free of charge.

(Source: Australian Federal Police)

Public Transport Safety

Travelling on public transport should be a safe and comfortable experience. Numerous security measures have been adopted to maximise the safety of travellers including: security officers, police, guards, help points, good lighting and security cameras. Most drivers also have two-way radios and can call for assistance.



Buses

Waiting for a bus:

- Avoid isolated bus stops
- Stand away from the curb until the bus arrives
- Don't open your purse or wallet while boarding the bus have your money/pass already in hand
- At night, wait in well-lit areas and near other people
- Check timetables to avoid long waits. Riding on the bus:
- Sit as close to the bus driver as possible
- Stay alert and be aware of the people around you
- If someone bothers you, change seats and tell the driver
- • Keep your purse/packages close by your side. Keep your wallet inside a front coat pocket
- Check your purse/wallet if someone is jostling, crowding or pushing you
- If you see any suspicious activity, inform the driver



Trains

Many of the same safety tips when travelling by bus apply for trains. In addition:

- Most suburban trains have security cameras installed or emergency alarms that will activate the cameras
- Carriages nearest the drivers are always left open and lit
- Try not to become isolated. If you find yourself left in a carriage on your own or with only one other



person you may feel more comfortable to move to another carriage with other people or closer to the driver.

Taxis

Travelling by taxi is generally quite a safe method of public transport. To increase your confidence when travelling by taxi, consider the following suggestions:

- Phone for a taxi in preference to hailing one on the street. A record is kept by taxi companies of all bookings made
- You are entitled to choose the taxi/taxi driver of your preference. If a driver makes you feel uncomfortable you are within your rights to select another taxi
- Sit wherever you feel most comfortable. This may mean travelling in the back seat of the taxi;
- Specify to the driver the route you wish to take to reach your destination. Speak up if the driver takes a different route to the one you have specified or are familiar with
- Take note of the Taxi Company and fleet number. This will help in identifying the taxi if required. If you are walking a friend to catch a taxi, consider letting the driver know that you have noted these details e.g., "Look after my friend, Mr/Ms Yellow Cab No.436"
- Stay alert to your surroundings and limit your conversation to general topics
- If you don't want your home address known, stop a few houses away from your destination

If the driver harasses you when travelling in a taxi your options include:

- Ask the driver to stop. You may choose to make up an excuse to do so;
- Leave the taxi when it stops at a traffic sign or lights
- Call out to someone on the street to attract attention and seek assistance. This may also cause the driver to stop
- Read out the fleet number and advise the driver you will report him/her if they don't stop

(Source: Queensland Police Service)

Road rules



If you are going to drive in Australia, no matter whether you are an experienced driver and have an international drivers' licence or not, **YOU MUST KNOW THE ROAD RULES** before you attempt to drive (even 10 metres)! Many lives are lost on Australian roads every year and international visitors are at high risk! If you come from a country where you drive on the opposite side of the road to Australia it is sometimes helpful to have a companion drive with you to ensure you both take note of traffic conditions and signs until you are more familiar with driving on the left side of the road. A handy tip is not to think of it as the other side of the road, but to think that the "white line" (or centre dividing line on the road) is on your side as the driver, just as it is in all countries. It is recommended that you take one or two driving lessons in Australia before you begin to drive here on your own.

Owning a Car

Registration:

Any motor vehicle you own must be registered before you drive it on the road. You must register it in your name and provide the State car registration board with your driver's licence details and your residential address in Australia.

Insurance:

It is recommended that you have car insurance if you own a car, this will protect you if you have an accident that is your fault as it will help pay for any damage you may have caused to your car or another car.

Speed

There are very obvious reasons for having speeding and traffic rules. The risk of being involved in an accident increases with the speed a vehicle is being driven because there is less time to react, less control of the vehicle and the distance needed to stop is longer. The higher the speed a vehicle is travelling when it hits a pedestrian, the greater the chance of a fatality occurring. Speed kills.

Mobile Phones and Driving

The use of mobile phones when driving is dangerous, against the law if it's not hands-free, and potentially fatal. This applies to sending or receiving text messages as well as calls. Operating a mobile phone while driving makes you nine times more likely to be killed in a collision. Police actively target the use of mobile phones by motorists. Fines are considerable and demerit points penalties do apply. You should be aware of how to legally use a mobile phone while driving.

Demerit Points Scheme

The Demerit Points Scheme is a national program that allocates penalty points (demerits) for a range of driving offences. The scheme is designed to encourage safe and responsible driving. Along with financial penalties, demerit points provide a strong incentive to drive within the law. Different offences have a different number of demerit points. A complete list of all offences, demerit points and fines can be downloaded from the related links section.

(Source: Roads and Traffic Authority, NSW)

Licence Requirements

In most States/Territories of Australia if you hold a current driver licence from another country, you are allowed to drive on your overseas licence as long as: You remain a temporary overseas visitor Your overseas licence remains current You have not been disqualified from driving in that State or elsewhere and You have not had your licence suspended or cancelled or your visiting driver privileges withdrawn.

Most overseas visitors are not required to obtain an Australian licence if you comply with these conditions and can continue to prove your genuine visitor status to State Police if required.

Note: If you are a licence holder from New Zealand, you must obtain an Australian driver licence within three months of residing in Australia or you must stop driving.

When driving in NSW you must carry your overseas driver licence. Your licence must be written in English or, if the licence is not in English, you must either carry an English translation or an International Driving Permit.

If you are a temporary overseas visitor and you wish to obtain an Australian licence seek advice from your local Police Station.

Drinking Alcohol and Driving

If you are going to drink alcohol, don't drive. If you are going to drive, don't drink alcohol. Anything else is a risk, not only to you, but also to other motorists and pedestrians. Alcohol is involved in about one-third of all serious motor vehicle accidents. As the level of alcohol increases in your body, you have more risk of being involved in an accident. Driving with a blood alcohol content above the legal limit is dangerous to others as well as yourself and severe legal penalties apply. If you are above the prescribed blood alcohol content level, as the level of alcohol in your body increases so does the severity of your fine and or jail sentence.



Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) Levels

The blood alcohol concentration (BAC) is the amount of alcohol in the bloodstream. A BAC of 0.05 means you have 0.05 grams of alcohol in every 100ml of your blood. As the liver metabolises alcohol at around one standard drink per hour, the BAC level drops unless more alcohol is consumed. BAC is measured with a breathalyser, or by analysing a sample of blood.

Legal BAC Limits

There are legal limits as to the BAC level permissible if you are driving. Provisional drivers or P Plate Drivers have a zero limit.

Factors Affecting your BAC

The more you drink, the higher your BAC. But two people who drink the same amount might register quite different BACs. There are many factors that will affect this, including:

- **Body size:** A smaller person will have a higher BAC than a larger person because the alcohol is concentrated in a smaller body mass.
- **Empty stomach:** Someone with an empty stomach will reach a higher BAC sooner than someone who has just eaten a meal. Food in the stomach slows down the rate at which alcohol passes into the bloodstream.
- **Body fat:** People with a lot of body fat tend to have higher BACs because alcohol is not absorbed into

fatty tissue, so alcohol is concentrated in a smaller body mass.

- **Women:** After drinking the same amount of alcohol, a woman will almost always have a higher BAC than a male.

Because of all these variable factors, counting the number of standard drinks you consume can only give a rough guide to your BAC. For more detailed information about alcohol and how it affects you, please see the Australian Drug Foundation website: www.druginfo.adf.org.au .

Drinking Limits Advice

To stay below 0.05 BAC, drivers are advised to limit their drinking to:

- **For men:** No more than two standard drinks in the first hour and no more than one standard drink every hour after that.
- **For women:** No more than one standard drink in the first hour and no more than one every hour after that.

Random Breath Testing (RBT)

Random breath testing of drivers for blood alcohol levels and drug use is common at any time of the day or night. Police officers have the right to stop any vehicle at any time and require the driver to supply samples for screening. Any person driving a motor vehicle is required by law to have less than a specified amount of



alcohol in their blood. If a driver exceeds the level which applies to them the driver has committed an offence.

Increased Risk of an Accident

It is safest not to drink alcohol at all if you are going to drive. The more alcohol you have in your body, the more risk you have of being involved in an accident.

- **At 0.05%** Blood Alcohol Content (BAC), your risk of being involved in a road accident is double that of a 0.00% reading.
- **At 0.1%** BAC your risk is more than seven times as high of being involved in a road accident, than at 0.00%.
- **At 0.15%** your risk increases to 25 times that of driving at 0.00%.

DON'T DRINK & DRIVE!

(Source: Australian Federal Police)



Alcohol, Smoking, & Drugs

Gold Coast Christian College strongly discourages the use of alcohol, cigarettes and drugs.

Alcohol

Alcohol use is legal for those aged 18 years or over. There are laws governing how alcohol may be used in each State and Territory of Australia.

Smoking

Australian law makes it an offence to sell or supply tobacco products to a person under the age of 18 years. It is illegal for anyone under 18 to purchase tobacco products. There are also a number of laws regulating and restricting the advertising, promotion and packaging of tobacco products. Regulations have been introduced to restrict smoking in public areas such as shopping centres, hotels, restaurants and dining areas, and in some workplaces.

Drugs

Each State and Territory has laws governing the manufacture, possession, distribution and use of drugs, both legal and illegal. Drug laws in Australia distinguish between those who use drugs and those who supply or traffic drugs. The Federal Customs Act covers the importing of drugs, while each State has laws governing the manufacture, possession, distribution and use of drugs, both legal and illegal.

(Source: Australian Drug Foundation)

DANGER: Drink Spiking! Whether you are drinking alcohol or not, keep your drink close to you and watch it at all times. Drink spiking (putting extra alcohol or other drugs into a person's drink without their knowledge) is an unfortunate risk to people who are out trying to have a good time. Drink spiking can happen to anyone: male or female, young or old whether they are drinking alcohol or not. Never accept an open container of drink if you did not see it being poured and if you suspect you or your friends have had a drink spiked, call 000 (zero zero zero) immediately to report it and get help.

Hitchhiking



A person who waves at unknown drivers from the side of the road to request a ride with a driver further along the road is called a Hitchhiker. Hitchhiking is illegal in Queensland and Victoria. Elsewhere in Australia it is illegal to hitchhike on motorways (where pedestrians are prohibited and where cars are not allowed to stop). Some travel companies promote hitchhiking as an inexpensive means of travelling around Australia.

HOWEVER: Many crimes have been committed against innocent hitchhikers including violent personal crimes and abductions. You do not know anything about the person whose car you get into.

Our advice to you is: DON'T HITCHHIKE! It simply is not worth the risk.

Avoiding dangerous areas and activities



It is important to always be alert and aware of your surroundings and to avoid dangerous areas and activities, particularly at night.

A public place can vary through the course of the day. It may be used by different groups of people at different times. It may be busy at certain times and isolated at others. It may be different during the day than it is at night. These differences can have a very different impact on the way you feel when you are in them. For example:

The street outside a hotel in the morning is likely to be used by people going to and from work or shopping. At night however, the people most likely to be on the street are hotel patrons. Alcohol consumption has now become a factor in these places, and for many (particularly for women), some areas may become less safe.

A shopping mall during the day has lots of different people using it. Once it closes, it is often isolated and usually dark.



A school between the hours of 8 am and 5 pm is usually lively and active. After 5 pm or during school holidays however, it may be isolated or dominated by particular groups of people. Being in a place when it is busy is very different from when the place is isolated. There is often no reason to be afraid, But – be alert, be aware, and be careful.

Making new friends



There is no magic trick to making friends. And if you are in a foreign culture it can seem more difficult than usual to find people who you really “get along” with. Be kind to yourself remember that making friends takes time. If you make the most of social opportunities during your life in Australia, just as you would back home, it will be quicker and easier for you to fit in, make friends and feel at home.

However, you meet people, **remember to be careful**. When you meet someone new, be cautious until you get to know the person better and feel you can trust him or her. If a stranger starts talking to you, they are probably just being friendly. But be safe, and don't give them any of your personal details like your full

name, your phone number or your address. With people you don't know well; always arrange to meet them in a public place, like a café or a park, instead of inviting them to your home or going to theirs, until you feel you have built a relationship with them, know more about them and feel comfortable with them.

Many international students spend time hanging out with other students and people from their own country and culture while they're in Australia. These people can make you feel accepted and you may be able to communicate much more easily with them than you can with the locals, particularly when you have just arrived. When everything around you is new and different, it can feel like a big relief to find people from your own country and cultural background. But remember, you need to be careful at first, until you get to know them better, just as you should with anyone else. Even though you may feel like you have a lot in common, remain cautious until you feel you know them reasonably well and can trust them. Many crimes against international students are committed by people from their own culture.

If you have any concerns or questions about someone you have met, or want to talk to someone about Australian mannerisms and communication "norms" (widely acceptable behaviour), make an appointment to talk it over with your International Student Advisor.

Sexual assault



Sexual assault is a criminal offence. It includes sexual harassment, unwanted touching, indecent assault and penetration of any kind. It is important to remember that it can happen to anyone and at any time but certain precautions may make it more difficult for a possible perpetrator:

- When socialising, be smart. Drink in a way that leaves you in control. Leaving drinks unattended leaves them open to being spiked quite easily.
- Walk with confidence and purpose.
- Avoid lonely or dark places.
- Be wary of strangers, whether they are on foot, in cars or at parties.
- Be aware of the people around you.
- Respect your intuition.
- If placed in a situation where you feel uncomfortable say "No!" loudly and with conviction.

What do I do if I am assaulted?

It is very difficult to tell someone that you have been sexually assaulted. It is important to remember that sexual assault is a serious crime and can happen to people regardless of their gender or sexuality. Your first point of contact, should be the Police or your closest Sexual Assault Service.

- 1 From a public phone or mobile phone, **ring the police on 000.**
- 2 Do not wash, shower, change clothes or clean up in any way until after talking to the police and going to the hospital. You could destroy vital evidence. Don't drink alcohol or take tranquillisers or other drugs as you will have to give a clear account of what has happened. Try to remember everything you can about your attacker.

Remember, **you are the victim**. You have nothing to feel guilty or ashamed about. Police officers are aware that a person who has been assaulted, sexually or otherwise, is likely to be suffering from emotional shock. They will do all they can to make things as easy as possible for you. It is likely they will provide a female police officer for a female victim. If not, you have the right to request one. You can also

ask the police to contact a friend, family member, interpreter or religious adviser to be in attendance with you when you are dealing with the circumstances surrounding the report of assault.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES



What is Schoolies Week?

If you are an international student attending high school in Australia, you will hear a lot of talk about "Schoolies Week" which refers to the Australian tradition of high school graduates (known as "Schoolies" or "Leavers") having weeklong holidays following the end of their final exams in late November and early December.



Stay with your friends and don't take chances.

Volunteers will be clearly identifiable and are there to assist you in a number of ways.

Look out for them

if you require assistance.

Official schoolies events, which are drug and alcohol free, are held at many schoolies destinations, they include concerts, dances and parties. For all official events, attendees are required to be a registered schoolie and present schoolie ID on entry. This schoolies ID, which at some locations includes a photo, is given to schoolies upon registering, which requires the presentation of current school ID and incurs a small fee. At many destinations, the official events are held in fenced off areas or in nightclubs to prevent the infiltration of toolies ("too old for schoolies", which are associated with the targeting of drunk teenagers for sex) and to maintain crowd control. Some events are free while others (often those held at nightclubs) incur an entry fee.

If you are a school leaver and choose to be a part of schoolies celebrations, here are some good safety tips to keep in mind: Celebrate but watch your friends:

- Stay with friends and don't take chances. Remember there is safety in numbers.
- Plan ahead with your friends. Work out how you will share costs and how you will look out for each other.
- Book your own accommodation don't expect that you can just stay with friends.
- Know where you are staying and how to get there.
- Before you go out, have a plan for getting home and tell someone where you are going.
- Negotiate a designated driver at the beginning of the evening and support them in their decision not to drink. During the week, take turns to be the designated driver.
- Stay clear of a driver who has been drinking or using drugs.
- Ask an official volunteer to walk you home if you are alone — don't walk home at night alone.
- Always keep enough money for a phone call, taxi or public transport.
- Stranger danger still exists for adults — don't accept lifts from anyone you don't know, and don't stay at a stranger's place.
- Don't swim at night and don't swim at all if you are intoxicated or using drugs.

SECTION 4



Studying at GOLD COAST CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

SECTION 4: STUDYING AT GOLD COAST CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

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- Administrative
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- Campus map

Subject Selection

Timetables

Academic Support & Expectations

- Teaching & Learning in Australia
- Keys to Academic Success
- Study Skills
- Plagiarism
- Resources
- Tutoring
- English Language Support

Assessment & Reports

Library Services

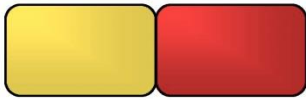
Computer Labs

- How to Access Internet on Arrival

Health & Safety on Campus

My Student Survival

TO BEGIN



Arrive Early

Australian education providers will provide an International Student Orientation before the commencement of classes and often before commencing local students attend an orientation. It is a requirement of the ESOS (Education Services for Overseas Students) Act 2001. Staff who run the orientation work hard to ensure that you as a student will be well equipped to achieve the best possible success in your studies. If you read through the pre-departure, arrival, and orientation manuals which the institution provides for you, you will see that there is a lot of information for you to understand and consider as you move through your studies. Although the manual will outline what you need to know, it is impossible to understand and recall everything. Once you are concentrating on your studies, you will feel less stressed if you are already comfortable with the institution, its staff and its services.

Arriving early gives you the chance to;

- See and talk to the most important people you will need to know at the institution.
 - International Office staff and their duties
 - Course or Academic Advisor
 - ESL Advisor (English as a Second Language)
 - Student Services staff
 - Religious/Cultural/Ministry staff
 - Accommodation/Homestay Coordinator
 - Counsellors
- Enrol early which will help you to get your student card early. You will need your student card to open bank accounts, borrow books from the library, and more.
- Meet and get advice from your Academic or Course Advisor
- Meet representatives of Student Associations, Clubs, and Mentors
- Find your way around the campus
 - Library
 - Computer rooms and facilities
 - Recreation and eating facilities
 - Clubs and Associations
 - Classrooms
- Meet other International students who may share your classes, share your concerns or fears. Knowing another face on campus as you become more comfortable with the routines can really help you avoid any feelings of isolation.
- Find your way around the public transport/ City/ to and from your accommodation.
- Feel as though you already know some of the things local students know before you get to meet them at orientation activities later.

What To Do First

Report to Reception in the Administration Building of the College at:

7 – 9 Bridgman Drive
Reedy Creek QLD

International Student Orientation

Students will need to report to reception upon arrival where they will be given a tour of the College, shown to their classes and introduced to their teacher

STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

International Student Code of Conduct

Rationale:

At Gold Coast Christian College, we strive to provide all students with a safe and orderly working environment that will encourage students in their learning and work towards achieving their potential. In accordance with Gold Coast Christian College's Student Welfare policy all students have the right to work and play without interference or harassment. Teachers should expect to be able to teach in an atmosphere of order and co-operation.

Students at Gold Coast Christian College respect the rights of others and understand that they have a responsibility to act to promote environmental safety, equal access to education and individual wellbeing.

Standards of Behaviour:

The students at Gold Coast Christian College will:-

- Acknowledge that our Christian beliefs form the basis of all expectations and underpin every action and behaviour, and
- Acknowledge that the College rules are in place for their protection and safety and that of others:-

Therefore, they will:-

- Follow Directions
- Work quietly. Do not disturb others who are working.
- Respect others. Be nice with your words and actions.
- Work and play safely
- Respect personal and school property

Students are responsible for:-

- Wearing the correct uniform
- Setting a good example at all times
- Helping to ensure the school is tidy
- Treating each other with respect
- Trying to do their best
- Listening attentively
- Tolerating opposing opinions, no put downs
- Sharing play areas, equipment and resources
- Taking pride in personal and school achievements
- Being willing to participate in conflict resolution
- Being punctual and co-operative
- Getting enough sleep so that they are ready for learning when at school
- Eating a healthy meal at the appropriate times to give them the energy to participate
- Leaving chewing gum and jewellery at home
- Saying sorry when in the wrong
- Attending school on a regular basis
- Completing classroom and homework accurately and on time
- Preparing for quizzes, tests and assignments
- Contributing to a safe school free from fear. Acts of violence, weapons and contraband are never acceptable.

What happens if a student does not work within the Code?

Certain behaviours are unacceptable in the course of or in connection with being a student at **Gold Coast Christian College**. While it is not possible to list all of them, the following are examples, but are not exclusive, of behaviour that may result in the possibility of a child's immediate suspension or enrolment being terminated:

- a. Misuse or unauthorised use of College property
- b. Refusing or failing to carry out any reasonable instruction given by a teacher
- c. Coming to school under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- d. Possession, distribution, sale, transfer or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the school
- e. Undertaking any illegal activity in the school
- f. Bringing inappropriate material to school in the form of pornography, being, digital, printed or other
- g. Wilfully or habitually violating health and safety regulations
- h. Engaging in horseplay or other disorderly conduct which endangers the safety of others or themselves
- i. Fighting or threatening violence in the school
- j. Possession of dangerous or unauthorised materials such as explosives, firearms or weapons of any kind on the College property
- k. Wilfully damaging, destroying or stealing property belonging to the College
- l. Theft of College property or inappropriate removal or possession of College property

ACADEMIC POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Entry requirement Policy

- 1) **Gold Coast Christian College** will consider enrolment applications from students wishing to apply for a Student Visa, subject to compliance with minimum requirements and conditions set by the College, and with legislative requirements of the State of Queensland and the Commonwealth of Australia, including any requirements to undertake extra tuition to learn English to meet the English language proficiency standard needed to enter mainstream classes.
- 2) Applications for enrolment must be made on GCCC's Enrolment Application form. This must be correctly completed, and must be accompanied by the following documents to support the application:
 - Copies of Student Report Cards from the previous 2 years of study, including a copy of the latest Student Report;
 - A completed Reference Form from the student's current or most recent school Principal is also required if student Report Cards do not record student behaviour or commitment to studies;
 - A completed Subject Choices Form for Years 9 – 12;
 - Appropriate proof of identity and age;
 - Written evidence of proficiency in English as a second language
 - Photocopy or scanned copy of passport page with name, photo identification, passport number and expiry date
 - Letter of Offer from another registered provider if applicable
 - Completed Homestay Application Form
 - Enrolment Application Fee
 - Application to the Queensland Assessment and Curriculum Authority (QCAA) for relaxation of completed Core requirements if applicable.
- 3) Where the above documents are not in English, certified translations in English are required, with necessary costs to be met by the applicant.
- 4) An application for enrolment can only be processed when all of the above are in the hands of the Admissions Officer.
- 5) Applications from overseas students are processed according to established policy and procedures and are dealt with on their merits.

- 6) Assessment procedures include an evaluation of reports from previous schools and of English language proficiency. In cases where report cards are not available or are inconclusive for any reason, the school may require relevant testing of the applicant to assess the application.
- 7) Onshore applications for Years 11-12, where the student is transferring from another CRICOS registered provider, will only be considered where the transfer, if accepted, allows the student to achieve a successful study outcome at the end of the enrolment.
- 8) Offshore applications for enrolment in Years 11-12 will not be considered after the Year 11 course has commenced unless the student can complete course assessment before the end of the first semester of Year 11.

Gold Coast Christian College requires evidence that the applicant's academic ability and English proficiency is sufficient to successfully meet the entry and curriculum demands of the intended course. This is a requirement under the 2018 National Code of Practice, Part B Standard 2.

Minimum academic and English language requirements are as follows:

Academic Requirements

Students must provide evidence of satisfactory academic performance appropriate to entry to the Year level requested on the Application for Enrolment or offered as an alternative point of entry by the school in a Letter of Offer.

- For Primary School (Prep – Year 6) students:
 - Evidence of application to school work and age-appropriate achievement in literacy and numeracy areas of the curriculum
- For Junior Secondary (Year 7 – 10) students:
 - A pass level or “C” grade or better for the majority of core subjects
- For Senior Secondary (Year 11 & 12) students:
 - A pass level or “C” grade or better for the majority of core subjects

English Language Proficiency Requirements

1. Applicants are assessed individually based on the contents of their report cards and personal references and may also be required to undertake a language proficiency test set by the school.
2. If supplied, Gold Coast Christian College will assess evidence of English language proficiency presented by a student at the time of application but reserves the right to confirm the student's English language proficiency through additional tests.
3. If not presenting appropriate evidence of English language proficiency at the time of application, Gold Coast Christian College will assess the student's application for entry based on satisfactory test results as follows:

Acceptable Test	Minimum Test Result	For Entry to
NLLIA ESL BandScales	Level 1	Primary Years Lower [Year 1 to Year 3]
NLLIA ESL BandScales	Level 2	Primary Years Upper [Year 4 to Year 6]
NLLIA ESL BandScales	Level 3	Secondary Years Junior [Year 7 & Year 8]
NLLIA ESL BandScales	Level 4	Secondary Years Junior/Middle [Year 9 & Year 10]
NLLIA ESL BandScales	Level 5	Secondary Years Senior [Year 11 – 12]

4. Students should note that if their language proficiency is below that outlined above, they may be required to undertake an intensive English language course before beginning mainstream studies.
5. If undertaking an intensive English language course before beginning mainstream studies, English language proficiency will be reassessed at the conclusion of the language course to ensure the student's level of proficiency is sufficient to allow them to commence their mainstream course.

COURSE CREDIT STATEMENT

Gold Coast Christian College will assess all applications for course credit for students enrolling in Senior Secondary Studies.

The student may receive course credit for units completed based on evidence provided of studies undertaken under the relevant state or territory curriculum assessment authority or nationally accredited framework.

Gold Coast Christian College assesses and records course credit, according to requirements of the [Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority \(QCAA\)](#).

COMPLAINTS & GRIEVANCES

Complaints and Appeals Policy

A copy of this policy will be provided to the student (or parent(s)/legal guardian if the student is under 18) at a reasonable time prior to a written agreement being signed *and again during orientation or within 7 days of the commencement of student attendance of the enrolled course.*

1. Purpose

- a. The purpose of Gold Coast Christian College's Complaints and Appeals Policy is to provide a student or parent(s)/legal guardian with the opportunity to access procedures to facilitate the resolution of a dispute or complaint involving *Gold Coast Christian College*, or an education agent or third party engaged by *Gold Coast Christian College* to deliver a service on behalf of *Gold Coast Christian College*.
- a. The internal complaints and appeals processes are conciliatory and non-legal.

2. Complaints against other students

- a. Grievances brought by a student against another student will be dealt with under the College's Student Code of Conduct.

3. Informal Complaints Resolution

- a. In the first instance, Gold Coast Christian College requests there is an attempt to informally resolve the issue through mediation/informal resolution of the complaint.
- b. Students should contact the teacher in the first instance to attempt mediation/informal resolution of the complaint.
- c. If the matter cannot be resolved through mediation, the matter will be referred to the Primary / Secondary Coordinator or Principal and Gold Coast Christian College's internal formal complaints and appeals handling procedure will be followed.

4. Formal Complaints Handling and Appeals Process

- a. The process of this grievance procedure is confidential, and any complaints or appeals are a matter between the parties concerned and those directly involved in the complaints handling process.
- b. The student must notify the College in writing of the nature and details of the complaint or appeal.
- c. Written complaints or appeals are to be lodged with the Principal or chosen delegate.
- d. Where the internal complaints and appeals process is being accessed because the student has received notice by the school that the school intends to report him/her for unsatisfactory course attendance, unsatisfactory course progress or suspension or cancellation of enrolment, the student has 20 working days from the date of receipt of notification in which to lodge a written appeal.
- e. Complaints and appeals processes are available to students at no cost.
- f. Each complainant has the opportunity to present his/her case to the Principal/ or their nominated delegate.
- g. Students and / or the School may be accompanied and assisted by a support person at all relevant meetings.
- h. The formal internal complaints and appeals process will commence within 10 working days of lodgement of the complaint or appeal with the Principal/ or their nominated delegate and will be finalised within 20 working days or as soon as practicable.
- i. For the duration of the internal complaints and appeals process the student's enrolment will be maintained, as required under the *National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018* and the student must continue to attend classes.

However, if the Principal or their nominated delegate deems that the student's health or well-being, or the well-being of others is at risk he/she may decide to suspend or cancel the student's enrolment before the complaints and appeals process has been accessed or fully completed. In such cases, the student may still lodge a complaint or appeal, even if the student is offshore

- j. Once the Principal/ or their nominated delegate has come to a decision regarding the complaint or appeal, the student will be informed in writing of the outcome and the reasons for the outcome, and a copy will be retained on the student's file.

- k. If the complaints and appeals procedure finds in favour of the student, *Gold Coast Christian College* will immediately implement the decision and any corrective and preventative action required, and advise the student of the outcome and action taken.
- l. Where the outcome of a complaint or appeal is not in the student's favour, the school will advise the student within 10 working days of concluding the internal review of the student's right to access the external appeals process.

However, the school is only obliged to await the outcome of an external appeal if the matter relates to a breach of course progress or attendance requirements. For all other issues, the school may take action (including making changes to the student's enrolment status in PRISMS) in accordance with the outcome of the internal appeal.

5. External Appeals Processes

- a) If the student is dissatisfied with the conduct or result of the complaints procedure, he/she may seek redress within 10 working days through an external body at minimal or no cost.
 - a. If the student wishes to complain or to lodge an external appeal about a decision made or action taken by Gold Coast Christian College, he/she may contact the Overseas Students Ombudsman at no cost. The Overseas Students Ombudsman offers a free and independent service for overseas students. Please see: www.oso.gov.au or phone 1300 362 072 for more information.
 - b. If the student wishes to appeal a decision made by Gold Coast Christian College that relates to:
 - i. refusal to approve a transfer application (under Standard 7), or
 - ii. suspension or cancellation of the student's enrolment (under Standard 9)

any choice to lodge an external appeal with the Overseas Student Ombudsman is at the student's discretion. The school need not await the outcome of any external appeal lodged, before implementing the outcome of the internal appeal.

6. Other legal redress

- a. Nothing in the School's Complaints and Appeals Policy negates the right of an overseas student to pursue other legal remedies.

7. Definitions

- a. Working Day – any day other than a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday during term time
- b. Student – a student enrolled at Gold Coast Christian College or the parent(s)/legal guardian of a student where that student is under 18 years of age
- c. Support person – for example, a friend/teacher/relative not involved in the grievance.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT VISA CONDITIONS

For a full list of mandatory and discretionary student visa conditions please visit:

<https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/trav/stud>

If a student is under 18 years of age, the following visa condition applies:

<https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/trav/visa-1/500-?modal=/trav/stud/more/visa-conditions>

No.	Subclasses	Description
8532	All Students	<p>If you are younger than 18 years of age, you must have accommodation and support, and your general welfare must be maintained for the duration of your stay in Australia.</p> <p>To maintain your welfare, you must stay in Australia with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• your parent or legal custodian or• a relative who has been nominated by your parents or custodians who is aged over 21 and is of good character or• have accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements in place that have been approved by your education provider. <p>You must not change your arrangements without the written approval of your education provider.</p> <p>If your welfare arrangements are approved by your education provider you must not travel to Australia until your welfare arrangements start.</p>

1. If the student is accompanied by a student guardian, the adult visa holder who fulfils this role has the visa conditions detailed here (<https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/trav/visa-1/590->)

'No further stay' condition

You must comply with the visa's 'no further stay' condition. This means that you cannot apply for any other visa while you remain in Australia, unless it is one of the following:

- a further student guardian visa
- a visa to engage Australia's obligations under the 1951 UN convention relating to the status of refugees.

Departing Australia

You cannot leave Australia without the student for whom you are the guardian, unless you provide the Department of Home Affairs with evidence that:

- there are compassionate or compelling circumstances for you to leave the country

- you have made alternative arrangements for the student's accommodation, general welfare and support until your return.

Note: If the student is less than 18 years, the alternative arrangements must be approved by the education provider.

General obligations

You must:

- not engage in work, however, voluntary work may be permitted. **See:** <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/trav/visa-1/590-?modal=/Visas/supporting/Pages/590/the-visa-.aspx>
- stay in Australia for as long as the student stays or up until the student turns 18 years of age
- study an English Language Intensive Course for Overseas Students (ELICOS) for less than 20 hours per week
- maintain Overseas Visitor Health Cover for yourself and any dependent children living with you in Australia
- continue to satisfy the primary criteria for the grant of the visa
- live with the student for whom you are the guardian and provide appropriate accommodation, general welfare and other support.
- study another course for up to three months.

2.If the student is being accompanied by an adult with a student guardian visa, this process applies:

- The College notifies the parent / visa holder in pre-enrolment materials that the College is aware of the visa condition regulating departure from the country, and that, in the event of there being compelling circumstances for leaving the country, the parent / visa holder should contact the College to discuss: a) the circumstances, b) the accommodation and welfare arrangements that are intended for the student and c) the details and start and end dates of these arrangements
- If the College approves arrangements for the specified dates, then the College provides the parent / visa holder with a letter noting the circumstances given and confirming that alternative arrangements for the accommodation and welfare of the student have been approved by the College for the specified period of time, and advises the parent / visa holder to take this letter to DHA before departure date to also seek DHA approval. (See office addresses at: <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/about/contact/offices-locations/australia> (If DHA also approves, which will most likely be the case if the College is taking welfare over responsibility, a flag may be placed into the DHA database for the visa holder to confirm departure and re-entry within the dates given has been approved.)

If the College will not or cannot approve the proposed arrangements and cannot or will not approve alternative arrangements for any reason, the College advises the parent / visa holder the student must also depart the country. In this case it will be a College decision as to whether the period of time not attending classes will be treated as a College-initiated suspension of studies (see [Policy and procedures for deferring, suspending or cancelling a student's enrolment](#)) or will be recorded as an absence as per Standard 11 (see [Course progress and attendance policy](#))

ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Course Progress and Attendance Policy

Overseas students are required to meet and maintain satisfactory course progress and attendance requirements under visa condition 8202 and under Standard 8 of the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018.

1. Course Progress

- a) The College will monitor, record and assess the course progress of each student for the course in which the student is currently enrolled.
- b) The course progress of all students will be assessed the end of each study period /semester of enrolment according to Gold Coast Christian College's course assessment requirements.
- c) Students who have begun part way through a study period / semester will be assessed according to Gold Coast Christian College's course assessment requirements after completing one full study period.
- d) To demonstrate satisfactory course progress the College acknowledges that ESL students who do not meet age-related benchmarks when assessed against learning area achievement standards are not necessarily 'underperforming', but rather they are achieving at levels commensurate with their phase of English language learning. We honour the silent time as students observe and adapt to being immersed in the English-speaking environment. We respect the 3-5 year period it takes to become orally proficient in English as a Second Language and the 4-7 year period it takes to become academically proficient. While many of our applicants have been studying English in another country for a number of years before applying to our College, we need a graduated set of progress requirements to accommodate for a range of backgrounds, yet we need to ensure the students in the higher grades are equipped to study at a senior level.

At the end of the first full study period:

- i. Year P-6 students must achieve a satisfactory or above for effort.
 - ii. Year 7-8 students must achieve a C grade or above for Maths and be working at Level 3 in English (Bandscales).
 - iii. Year 9 students must achieve a C grade or above for Maths and be working at Level 4 in English (Bandscales).
 - iv. Year 10 students must achieve a C grade or above for Maths and be working at Level 5 in English (Bandscales). They must not fail more than 2 elective subjects to proceed to Year 11 and 12.
 - v. Year 11-12 students must achieve a satisfactory or above for at least 80% of their subjects and they must meet the senior attendance requirements.
- e) If at the end of a study period a student does not achieve satisfactory course progress as described above, the International Student Coordinator will formally contact the parent(s) to advise that the student is at risk of breaching the course progress requirement and that there will be a meeting with the student to develop an intervention strategy for academic improvement. This may include;
 - i. After hours tutorial support
 - ii. Subject tutorial support in class time
 - iii. Mentoring
 - iv. Additional ESL support
 - v. Change of subject selection, or reducing course load (without affecting course duration)
 - vi. Counselling – time management
 - vii. Counselling -academic skills
 - viii. Counselling - personal
 - ix. other intervention strategies as deemed necessary which may incur additional costs to the student
- f) A copy of the student's individual strategy for academic improvement and any relevant progress reports will be forwarded to parents.

- g) The student's individual strategy for academic improvement will be monitored over the following study period by Primary Coordinator or Secondary Coordinator or their nominee and records of student response to the strategy will be kept. Parents will be kept informed of the student's academic progress while the student is receiving formal intervention.
- h) The College may take into consideration a student's effort and behavior when assessing overall achievement, if the academic requirements are not met, based on working through a supported intervention plan as in point e) i. – ix. Effort may include:
 - i. Handing in assessments on time
 - ii. The use of extra tutorial support
 - iii. Timely completion of homework
 - iv. Communicating to the teacher when struggling with assessment tasks
- i) If the student does not achieve satisfactory course progress by the end of the next study period, Gold Coast Christian College will advise the student in writing of its intention to report the student for breach of visa condition 8202, and that he/she has 20 working days in which to access the school's internal complaints and appeals process. Student will be notified within 10 days of intention to report. The notification of intention to report will be issued to the student prior to the commencement of the next semester. Following the outcome of the internal process, if the student wishes to complain or lodge an external appeal about a decision made or action taken by Gold Coast Christian College, he/she may contact the Overseas Student Ombudsman at no cost. Please see Gold Coast Christian College's Complaints and Appeals Policy for further details.
- j) The College will notify THE NATIONAL ESOS AUTHORITY via PRISMS of the student not achieving satisfactory course progress as soon as practicable where:
 - i. the student does not access the complaints and appeals process within 20 days, or the student withdraws from the complaints and appeals process by notifying the Principal of Gold Coast Christian College in writing, or
 - ii. the complaints and appeals process results in a decision in favour of the College

2. Completion within expected duration of study

- a) As noted in 1.a., the College will monitor, record and assess the course progress of each student for the course in which the student is currently enrolled.
- b) Part of the assessment of course progress at the end of each semester will include an assessment of whether the student's progress is such that they are expected to complete their studies within the expected duration of the course.
- c) The College will only extend the duration of the student's study where it is clear that the student will not be able to complete their course by the expected date because of:
 - i. the student can provide evidence of compassionate or compelling circumstances
 - ii. the student has, or is, participating in an intervention strategy as outlined in 1.e.
 - iii. an approved deferment or suspension of study has been granted in accordance with Gold Coast Christian College's Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy (found in this handbook and on the College website).
- d) Where the College decides to extend the duration of the student's study, the College will report this change via PRISMS within 14 days and/or issue a new COE if required. In this case, the student will need to contact the Department of Home Affairs to seek advice on any potential impacts on their visa, including the need to obtain a new visa.

3. Monitoring Course attendance

- a) Satisfactory course attendance is attendance of 80% of scheduled course contact hours. *[NB the National Code St 8 specifies a minimum attendance requirement of 80%, or under certain conditions, of 70% as outlined in St 8.15. School policy can require a higher minimum attendance rate.]*
- b) Student attendance is:
 - i. checked and recorded daily

- ii. assessed regularly
- iii. recorded and calculated over each study period.
- c) **Late arrival at the College will be recorded and will be included in attendance calculations.**
- d) All absences from College will be included in absentee calculations and should be accompanied by a medical certificate, an explanatory communication from the student's carer or evidence that leave has been approved by the Principal/Head of College.
- e) Any absences longer than 3 consecutive days, and no longer than 5 days, without approval will be investigated.
- f) Student attendance will be monitored by the class teacher or home room teacher every week over a study period to assess student attendance using the following method:
 - i. Calculating the number of hours the student would have to be absent to fall below the attendance threshold for a semester e.g. number of study days x contact hours x 20%. For example, a 20 week study period with 5 contact hours a day would equal 500 contact hours. 20% of this is 100 hours. Gold Coast Christian College calculates attendance using a formula based on the number of days absent. For example, a 20 week study period with 5 days a week would equal 100 school days. 20% of this is 20 school days.]
 - ii. Attendance for any period of exclusion from class will be assessed under *Gold Coast Christian College's* Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy.
- g) Parents of students at risk of breaching Gold Coast Christian College's attendance requirements will be contacted by *email or phone* and students will be counselled and offered any necessary support when they have absences totaling 10% in any study period.
- h) If the calculation at 3.f. indicates that the student has passed the attendance threshold for the study period, Gold Coast Christian College will assess the student against the provisions of Item 3.i. (below). Where the student has failed to meet the minimum attendance requirement, and Item 3.i. does not apply, the school will promptly advise the student of its intention to report the student for breach of visa condition 8202, and that he/she has 20 working days in which to access the College's internal complaints and appeals process except in the circumstances outlined in 3.j.
- i) The College will notify THE NATIONAL ESOS AUTHORITY via PRISMS of the student not achieving satisfactory course attendance as soon as practicable where:
 - I. the student does not access the complaints and appeals process within 20 days
 - II. the student withdraws from the complaints and appeals process by notifying the Principal of Gold Coast Christian College in writing,
 - III. the complaints and appeals process results in a decision in favour of the College.

[If allowing a 70% attendance threshold for compelling or compassionate circumstances under NC St 8.15, include the following:]

- j) Students will not be reported for failing to meet the 80% attendance threshold for a study period where:
 - i. the student produces documentary evidence clearly demonstrating compassionate or compelling circumstances e.g., medical illness supported by a medical certificate or as per Definition, below, and
 - ii. the student has not fallen below 70% attendance for a study period.
- k) The method for calculating 70% attendance is the same as that outlined in 3.f. with the following change; or number of study days x number of days per week x 30%.
- l) If a student is assessed as having nearly reached the threshold of 70% attendance for a study period, the class teacher / home room teacher will assess whether a suspension of studies is in the interests of the student as per Gold Coast Christian College's Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy.
- m) If the student does not obtain a suspension of studies under the Gold Coast Christian College's Deferment, Suspension and Cancellation Policy, and falls below the 70% threshold for the study period, the process for reporting the student for unsatisfactory attendance (breach of visa condition 8202) will occur as outlined in 3.h – 3.i.

4. Definitions

- a. Compassionate or compelling circumstances - circumstances beyond the control of the student that are having an impact on the student's progress through a course. These could include:

- i. serious illness, where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend classes
- ii. bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents (with evidence of death a certificate if possible)
- iii. major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring their emergency travel that has impacted on their studies
- iv. a traumatic experience which has impacted on the student (these cases should be where possible supported by police or psychologists' reports)
- v. where the College was unable to offer a pre-requisite unit
- vi. inability to begin studying on the course commencement date due to delay in receiving a student visa.

For other circumstances to be considered as compassionate or compelling, evidence would need to be provided to show that these were having an impact on the student's progress through a course.

- b. Expected duration – the length of time it takes to complete the course studying full-time. This is the same as the registered course duration on CRICOS.
- c. College day – any day for which the College has scheduled course contact hours.
- d. Study period – a discrete period of study within a course which cannot exceed 24 weeks. Gold Coast Christian College defines a "study period" for the purposes of monitoring course attendance and progress as a *semester*.

Current Address Details

Students on an International Student Visa no longer need to keep DHA informed of their home address in Australia, as DHA will check these details with your education provider if required. Therefore, you **MUST** maintain a current residential address on your student file **AT ALL TIMES**.

Gold Coast Christian College requests that this be done through the following ways:

- Report to the office and request a "Change of Address" form
- Return the completed form to the office

STUDENT ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION



Textbooks

Textbooks will be issued by the College after commencement. Please see fee listing for all related fees and charges.

ID Cards

ID cards will be issued to the student after commencement of studies at Gold Coast Christian College.

Paying Fees

College fees are set by the College Council annually. Information on fees can be obtained from the Admissions Officer, the College Accounts Officer, or the GCCC website where you will find a detailed breakdown of fees for each academic year.

Overdue Accounts

Fees are payable 6 months in advance. Failure to pay fees on time can result in the student being deregistered from the College.

Refund Policy

A copy of this policy is provided to the student or parent(s)/legal guardian if the student is under 18 at a reasonable time prior to a written agreement being signed as well as comprising part of a student's written agreement.

- 1) This policy outlines refunds applicable to course fees paid to the College including any course fees paid to an education agent to be remitted to the College.
- 2) Any service fees a student (or parent(s)/legal guardian if the student is under 18) pays directly to a third party are not within the scope of this refund policy.
- 3) The enrolment application fee is non-refundable.
- 4) **Payment of Course Fees and Refunds**
 - a. Fees are payable according to the College's Fees Policy
 - b. An itemised list of College fees is provided in the College's written agreement (as per NC Standard 3.3.4)
 - c. All fees must be paid in Australian dollars.
 - d. If the student changes visa status (e.g. becomes a temporary or permanent resident) he/she will continue to pay full overseas student's fees for the duration of that year.
 - e. Refunds will be reimbursed in Australian dollars and the payment sent to the applicant's home country unless otherwise requested in writing.
 - f. Refunds will be paid to the person who enters into the written agreement unless the College receives written advice from the person who enters the written agreement to pay the refund to someone else.
- 5) All notification of withdrawal from a course, or applications for refunds, must be made in writing and submitted to the Principal.
- 6) **Student Default because of visa refusal:**
 - a) If a student produces evidence of visa refusal (or provides permission for the school to verify visa refusal with the Department of Immigration) and fails to start a course on, or withdraws from the course on or before the agreed starting day;
 - i. Gold Coast Christian College will refund within four weeks of receiving a written claim from the student the total amount of course fees received by the school before the student's default day, minus the lesser of
 - 5% of the amount of course fees received, or
 - AUD \$500
 - a) If a student whose visa has been refused withdraws from the course after it has commenced, the school will retain the amount of tuition fees proportionate to the amount of the course the student has undertaken and will refund of any unused tuition fees* received by the school with respect to the student within the period of four weeks after the day of student default.

**Calculation of the refund due in this case is prescribed by a legislative instrument (s.10 of Education Services for Overseas Students (Calculation of Refund) Specification 2014).*
- 7) **Student Default**

Any amount owing under this section will be paid within 4 weeks of receiving a written claim from the student (or parent(s) / legal guardian if the student is under 18).

 - a) Non-tuition fees: will be refunded on a pro rata basis proportional to the amount of time the student was studying in the course, except where a non-refundable payment on behalf of the student has been made.

- b) Non – commencement with no notification of withdrawal: If the student does not provide written notice of withdrawal and does not start the course on the agreed starting date a maximum of ten weeks tuition fees will be retained from prepaid tuition fees.
- c) Non – commencement with notification of withdrawal:
- 2) If the College receives written notification of withdrawal by the student (or parent(s) / legal guardian if the student is under 18) 4 or more weeks prior to commencement, the school will refund the amount of tuition fees received less an administration fee of \$1000.
 - 3) If the College receives written notification of withdrawal by the student (or parent(s) / legal guardian if the student is under 18) less than 4 weeks prior to commencement of the course, the school will refund 80% of the tuition fee.
- d) Refunds after commencement of a course:
- I. *If tuition fees for up to 1 study period have been received in advance:* Where the student (or parent(s) / legal guardian if the student is under 18) notifies the College in writing of withdrawal before completing the relevant study period, no tuition fees will be refunded.
 - II. *If tuition fees for more than 1 study period have been received in advance:* If fees for more than one study period have been received in advance and the College receives written notification of withdrawal by the student (or parent(s) legal guardian if the student is under 18), the school will refund the amount of unused tuition fees less one term's fees, provided that at least 10 weeks written notice of withdrawal has been received.
- NB: Where less than 10 weeks' notice of withdrawal is received, the College will retain a full terms fee in compensation for the lack of required notice.
- e) Refunds in the event of a provider initiated cancellation of enrolment:
- I. No refund of tuition fees will be made where a student's enrolment is cancelled for any of the following reasons:
 - Failure to maintain satisfactory course progress (visa condition 8202).
 - Failure to maintain satisfactory attendance (visa condition 8202).
 - Failure to maintain approved welfare and accommodation arrangements (visa condition 8532).
 - Failure to pay course fees.
 - Any behaviour identified as resulting in enrolment cancellation in Gold Coast Christian Colleges Student Code of Conduct.
 - II. Any refund in the case of cancellation of a student's enrolment for failure to maintain Gold Coast Christian Colleges' agreed conditions of enrolment as outlined in the student's written agreement, including failure to disclose a pre-existing condition requiring a high degree of specialised support or care, will be at the discretion of the school.

8.) **Provider Default**

- a) If for any reason the College is unable to offer a course on an agreed starting day for the course, and the student for some reason cannot be placed or refuses placement in an alternative course arranged by the College, a full refund of any unused tuition fees* received by the school with respect to the student will be made within 14 days of the agreed course starting day.
- b) If for any reason the College is unable to continue offering a course after the student commences a course, and the student for some reason cannot be placed or refuses placement in an alternative course arranged by the College, a full refund of any unused tuition fees*

received by the school with respect to the student will be made within 14 days of the course College's default day.

- c) In the event that the College is unable to fulfill its obligations of providing an agreeable alternative course for the student, or a refund, the student will receive assistance from the Australian Government's Tuition Protection Service. For information on the TPS, please see: <https://tps.gov.au/StaticContent/Get/StudentInformation>

**Calculation of the refund due in this case is prescribed by a legislative instrument (s.7 of Education Services for Overseas Students (Calculation of Refund) Specification 2014).*
<http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/F2014L00907>.

- 9.) The written agreement, and the right to make complaints and seek appeals of decisions and action under various processes, does not affect the rights of the student to take action under the Australian Consumer Law if the Australian Consumer Law applies

Definitions

- **Non-tuition fees** – fees not directly related to provision of the student's course, including; homestay, medical insurance and uniform costs.
- **Tuition fees** – fees directly related to the provision of the student's course, including; School fees, Consumables, Textbook bond, School camp, Tablet / PC levy, IDT levy, Home Economics levy & Parents Association levy.
- **Course fees** – the sum of tuition fees and non-tuition fees received by the school in respect of the student in order for the student to undertake the course.
- **Study period** - One Semester
- **Term** – A time period of generally ten weeks between holiday periods when students are engaged in timetabled academic subjects
- **Semester** – Is made up of two terms of generally nineteen to twenty weeks in length

If the student changes visa status (e.g. becomes a temporary or permanent resident) he/she will continue to pay full overseas student's fees for the duration of that year.

Deferment, Suspension & Cancellation Policy

1. Communicating with families about changes in enrolment status

- a) All communications regarding changes to enrolment status will be made directly with students and parents, in accordance with the latest contact details provided to the school.

- b) Parents must therefore keep Gold Coast Christian College informed of their current contact details, as per the conditions of the student visa.
- c) Where relevant and where approved by the parents, the school may also share copies of correspondence with the child's education agent to help facilitate communication about any changes in enrolment status. However, the parents with whom the school has a formal written agreement are the primary contact for the school in such matters. The school will not act on any decision affecting the student's enrolment that is not made by the parents.

STUDENT-INITIATED CHANGES IN ENROLMENT

2. Deferment of commencement of study requested by student

- a) Gold Coast Christian College will only grant a deferment of commencement of studies for compassionate and compelling circumstances. These include but are not limited to:
 - i) illness, where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend classes
 - ii) bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents (where possible a death certificate should be provided)
 - iii) major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel that has impacted on studies
 - iv) a traumatic experience which has impacted on the student (these cases should be where possible supported by police or psychologists' reports).
 - v) after undertaking ELICOS studies, the student has not/will not meet the English language benchmark required for entry into the desired course, and the school is willing to defer the student's commencement in the course until a later date when the required benchmark is achieved
- b) All applications for deferment will be considered within 10 working days.
- c) The final decision for assessing and granting a deferment of commencement of studies lies with the Principal. Where a student's request to defer his/her commencement of studies is refused, the student has a right of appeal (see *Gold Coast Christian College's* Complaints and Appeals policy).
- d) Deferment will be recorded on PRISMS within 14 days of being granted.

3. Suspension of study requested by student

- a) Once the student has commenced the course, Gold Coast Christian College will only grant a suspension of study for compassionate and compelling circumstances. These include but are not limited to:
 - i. illness, where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend classes
 - ii. major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel that has impacted on studies
 - iii. a traumatic experience which has impacted on the student (these cases should be where possible supported by police or psychologists' reports).
 - iv. Student return to their home country to sit a university exam (or similar assessment) which impacts upon their education

- b) Where there is a significant issue impacting upon a student's attendance or course progress, it is essential that the student or parents contact the school as soon as possible to discuss the concern so that appropriate support can be put in place. Where deemed necessary, this may involve temporarily suspending the student's enrolment so that matters can be resolved without having a negative impact on the student's ability to satisfy their visa conditions.
- c) Temporary suspensions of study cannot exceed 6 months duration.
- d) Suspensions will be recorded on PRISMS within 14 days of being granted.
- e) The period of suspension will not be included in attendance calculations.
- f) The final decision for assessing and granting a suspension of studies lies with the Principal.
- g) Some examples of circumstances that are not considered compassionate and compelling at Gold Coast Christian College include:
 - i. Requests for early departure or late return from vacation, including inability to secure cheap flights
 - ii. Leaving early or returning late from holidays in order to attend festivals in the student's home country
 - iii. Returning home to attend family gatherings that occur during term time.
- h) As part of any assessment of a request to defer or temporarily suspend studies, the impact of the request on the student's ability to complete their intended course of study in accordance with their CoE/s and student visa will be considered. Any implications will be communicated to students.
- i) All applications for suspension will be considered within 10 working days.
- j) The final decision for assessing and granting a suspension of studies lies with the Principal or their nominated delegate. Where a student's request to suspend studies is refused, the student has a right of appeal (see *Gold Coast Christian College's* Complaints and Appeals policy).

4. Student initiated cancellation of enrolment

- All notification of withdrawal from a course, or applications for refunds, must be made in writing and submitted to the Business Manager or their nominated delegate. Please see Gold Coast Christian College's Refund Policy for information regarding refunds and cancellation of fees.
- A student will be deemed to have inactively notified *Gold Coast Christian College* of cancellation of enrolment where:
 - i) the student has not yet finished his/her course/s of study with the school, and
 - ii) does not resume studies at the school within [14 days] after a holiday break, and
 - iii) the student has not previously provided the school with written notification of withdrawal
- Student-initiated cancellation of enrolment, including "inactive" cancellation of enrolment in 4.b), above, is not subject to Gold Coast Christian College's Complaints and Appeals Policy

COLLEGE-INITIATED CHANGES IN ENROLMENT

5. College-initiated exclusion from class

- a) *Gold Coast Christian College* may exclude a student from class studies on the grounds of misbehaviour by the student. Exclusion will occur as the result of any behaviour identified as resulting in exclusion in *Gold Coast Christian College's* Behaviour Policy/Code of Conduct.
- b) Students may also be excluded from class for failure to pay fees that he/she was required to pay in order to undertake or continue the course, as stated in the written agreement.
- c) Where *Gold Coast Christian College* intends to exclude a student from class it will first issue a letter which notifies the student and parents of this intention. The letter will provide details of the reason/s for the intended exclusion, as well as information about how to access Gold Coast Christian College's

internal appeals process. Further information about the appeals process in the event of a school-initiated exclusion from class is outlined below.

- d) Excluded students must abide by the conditions of their exclusion from studies and must adhere to any welfare and accommodation arrangements in place, as determined by the Principal or their nominated delegate.
- e) Where the student is provided with homework or other studies for the period of the exclusion, the student must continue to meet the academic requirements of the course.
- f) Exclusions from class will not be included in attendance calculations for the study period and will not be recorded on PRISMS.

6. College-initiated suspension of studies

- a) Gold Coast Christian College may initiate a suspension of studies for a student on the grounds of misbehaviour by the student. Suspension will occur as the result of any behaviour identified as resulting in suspension in Gold Coast Christian College's Behaviour Policy/Code of Conduct.
- b) Students may also be suspended for failure to pay fees that he/she was required to pay in order to undertake or continue the course, as stated in the student's written agreement.
- c) Where Gold Coast Christian College intends to suspend the enrolment of a student, it will first issue a letter that notifies the student and parents of this intention. The letter will provide details of the reason/s for the intended suspension, as well as information about how to access Gold Coast Christian College's internal appeals process. Further information about the appeals process in the event of a school-initiated suspension is outlined below.
- d) Suspended students must abide by the conditions of their suspension from studies and must adhere to any welfare and accommodation arrangements in place, as determined by the Principal or nominated delegate.

Students who have been suspended for more than 28 days may need to contact Department of Home Affairs

(Please see contact details at: <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/help-support/contact-us>)

- e) Suspensions will be recorded on PRISMS.
- f) The period of suspension will not be included in attendance calculations.

7. College-initiated cancellation of enrolment

- a) Gold Coast Christian College will cancel the enrolment of a student under the following conditions:
 - i) Any breach of an agreed condition of enrolment as outlined in the student's written agreement, including failure to disclose a pre-existing condition requiring a high degree of specialised support or care
 - ii) Failure to pay course fees
 - iii) Failure to maintain approved welfare and accommodation arrangements (visa condition 8532) [Alternatively schools may decide that they will not cancel enrolment for this reason]
 - iv) Any behaviour identified as resulting in cancellation in Gold Coast Christian College's Behaviour Policy/Code of Conduct
- b) Where Gold Coast Christian College intends to cancel the enrolment of a student it will first issue a letter which notifies the student and parents of this intention. The letter will also provide details of the reason/s for the intended cancellation, as well as information about how to access Gold Coast Christian College's internal appeals process. Further information about the appeals process in the event of a school-initiated cancellation is outlined below.
- c) Gold Coast Christian College is required to report any confirmed breach of course progress and attendance requirements to the Department of Home Affairs. Where a student is reported for breach of visa condition, his/her enrolment at Gold Coast Christian College will be cancelled and this may impact on the student's visa. Further information can be found in Gold Coast Christian College's Course Progress and Attendance Policy.

- d) For the duration of the internal appeals process, Gold Coast Christian College will maintain the student's enrolment and the student will attend classes as normal. The Principal or nominated delegate will determine if participation in studies will be in class or under a supervised arrangement outside of classes.
- e) If a student decides to access Gold Coast Christian Colleges' complaints and appeals process because they have been notified of a school-initiated suspension or cancellation of enrolment under Standard 9, the change in enrolment status will not be reported in PRISMS until the internal complaints and appeals process is finalised, unless extenuating circumstances relating to the welfare of the student apply (see Definitions below).
- f) Where extenuating circumstances are deemed to exist, a student may still access the complaints and appeals process, but Gold Coast Christian College need not await the outcome of this process before changing the student's enrolment status in PRISMS. If the school has issued a CAAW for such a student, welfare provisions under Standard 5.6 are applicable.
- g) The use of extenuating circumstances by Gold Coast Christian College to suspend or cancel a student's enrolment prior to the completion of any complaints and appeals process will be supported by appropriate evidence.
- h) The final decision for evaluating extenuating circumstances lies with the Principal or their nominated delegate.

8. Student to seek information from Department of Home Affairs

- a) Deferment, suspension and cancellation of enrolment can have an effect on a student's visa as a result of changes to enrolment status. Students can visit the Department of Home Affairs website <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-listing/student-500> for further information about their visa conditions and obligations.

9. Definitions

- a) Day – any day including weekends and public holidays in or out of term time
- b) Extenuating circumstances - if the student's health or wellbeing, or the wellbeing of others, is likely to be at risk.
Examples include:
 - the student refuses to maintain approved welfare and accommodation arrangements (for students under 18 years of age)
 - the student is missing
 - the student has medical concerns or severe depression or psychological issues which lead the school to fear for the student's wellbeing
 - the student has engaged or threatened to engage in behaviour that is reasonably believed to endanger the student or others
 - is at risk of committing a criminal offence, or
 - the student is the subject of investigation relating to criminal matters.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES



GCCC Student Contact Information

The following Staff member(s) is the designated official point of contact for overseas students:

Cara Berkeley

These staff members undertake the following roles and responsibilities in relation to overseas students:

Staff Member in this Role	Area of Responsibility for Overseas Students	Method to Contact / Make Appointment
Cara Berkeley	Orientation on arrival	international@goldcoastcc.qld.edu.au
Leanne Edward	ESL Support	leanne.edward@goldcoastcc.qld.edu.au
Matthew Ace	Other tutorial support	Matthew.ace@goldcoastcc.qld.edu.au
Matthew Ace	Academic and Careers Counselling	Matthew.ace@goldcoastcc.qld.edu.au
Sean Berkeley	Personal Counselling	Sean.berkeley@goldcoastcc.qld.edu.au
Guy Lawson Cara Berkeley	Monitoring of homestay / accommodation /care arrangements	principal@goldcoastcc.qld.edu.au international@goldcoastcc.qld.edu.au
Guy Lawson	Complaints and appeals	principal@goldcoastcc.qld.edu.au
Cara Berkeley	Visa / Passport issues	international@goldcoastcc.qld.edu.au
Cara Berkeley	OSHC	international@goldcoastcc.qld.edu.au

QUICK GUIDE TO KEY PERSONNEL



WHO TO SEE

ISSUES

ACADEMIC	
Teacher	Questions concerning content of units, teaching procedures or assessment
Academic Co-ordinator	Questions regarding the program as a whole, academic regulations, difficulties with study, decisions to defer from study (International Student Co-ordinator must also be notified)
Academic Co-ordinator	Needing assistance with reading, writing, note taking, preparation for exams and assignments.
Secondary Coordinator	Timetable, registration in subject units
ADMINISTRATIVE	
International Student Coordinator	Visa problems, financial problems, enrolment issues.

International Student Coordinator	Health care / insurance problems, accommodation, change of address, understanding of how to utilise institution processes effectively.
PERSONAL	
College Chaplain	Spiritual / religious issues, personal problems
Primary or Secondary Coordinator	Sexual harassment, discrimination issues
Secondary Coordinator	Examination / study adjustments
International Student Co-ordinator	Accommodation issues

CAMPUS & FACILITIES



The School facilities include:

- Seven permanent buildings
- Primary and Secondary School classrooms
- 2 computer labs
- State of the art library / resource centre
- Science lab
- Home Economics facilities (sewing and cooking)
- Art lab
- Industrial technology building
- Music room
- Office
- 2 staffrooms
- 2 toilet blocks
- Canteen / tuckshop
- Before and After School Care Facilities as well as Vacation Care for under 13 years of age

Each classroom has access to audio-visual equipment, a large variety of fiction and non-fiction books and DVD/videos, computers and sports equipment, which cater to the various ages of the students. Each teacher has access to the internet and computers and a variety of learning resources in their classroom and in the staffroom from which they can prepare their lessons.

SUBJECT SELECTION



High School Students will be provided with a subject selection booklet at the start of the year which will enable them to choose their elective subjects. The following is a list of Core subjects as well as elective subjects available at the College:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- SOSE
- Health & Physical Education
- Encounter – Bible Studies
- Visual Arts
- Drama
- Graphics
- Home Economics
- Industrial Technology and Design
- Music
- Multimedia Studies
- Japanese
- Business Education
- Circuitry and Computing Technology

TIMETABLES



Secondary School Students will be issued with a timetable at the commencement of their schooling.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT & EXPECTATIONS



Learning in Australia

Learning in Australia may be different to learning in your home country. You will be asked to read, view and listen to text and then respond in different ways. While you will do examinations that test your knowledge, you will also be asked to write essays and reports or speeches that you will present to the entire class.

Keys to Academic Success

To achieve academic success in Australia, you will need to:

1. Listen carefully to your classroom teacher and ask questions (do not be afraid to speak up) if you do not understand something
2. Revise your work and any new vocabulary you have encountered each night. Memorise this new vocabulary

3. Go to your ESL teacher or the international student contact officer if you are unsure about what to do for an assignment. It may save you a lot of time!
4. Always start your assignments and study *as soon as you find out* about them. You will need all of the time you can get to read, write, learn and practice.
5. Always get your assignment drafts checked by the ESL teacher and subject teacher well ahead of the date they are due so that you can make any necessary changes
6. Check with your classmates to make sure that you are doing what the teacher requires you to do.

Study Skills

1. Memorise new vocabulary and meanings from each subject area
2. Read and then summarise new ideas so that you learn to understand them. 'Teach' someone else the ideas or try to say them aloud from memory
3. Make sure you know how to accurately write each new genre (newspaper article, report, essay, play etc). If you are unsure, check with your teachers
4. Always copy the source of your information if you are researching on the internet or in books or other texts. You must always include this information at the end of your work
5. If you have study periods at school make full use of these by planning what work you need to do and being fully prepared
6. When you are at home, complete homework first and then plan your study for each topic. Time short, 20-40 minute sessions, go get a drink and walk around for 2 minutes and then do another 20-40-minute session. Studying in small bursts like this is very healthy for your mind.
7. Listen to your teachers for other new study skills and advice
8. Make sure you stay healthy. Get regular exercise outside, eat healthy food, drink plenty of water and sleep at least 8 hours per night.

Plagiarism

This is one of the hardest issues that students face when they do assignments at school. Many students fail because they plagiarise; which is using someone else's words or ideas from texts such as a book, movie, video, article, website, or documentary in ways that makes people think they are your own ideas and words. You can still use other people's words and ideas, but you must *reference* them properly.

When you are reading and researching about a topic, you must record where you get all of your information and ideas from. You will need the name of the author, the title, the production company, the page number (if a written text) and date that it was published or released. For websites, it is as simple as copying the URL and pasting it near the information you are using.

To learn how to reference your work correctly, please refer to your student diary and check with your ESL teacher.

Resources

GCCC has a learning resource centre; including libraries of reference books and computer internet access. Students also are given textbooks for most of their classes.

If students would like to look further afield for resources, there are various council libraries on the Gold Coast.

Teachers will give you guidance on which websites are best to use on the internet.

Tutoring

Hiring a private tutor is often a very good idea for students who have English as their second language. However, you must make sure that the tutor *teaches you how* to do the work, not does the work for you!

To find a reputable tutor, look in the yellow pages or ask other international students who they would recommend.

English Language Support

GCCC provides English as a Second Language support to our international students. This will include increasing your academic and formal language vocabulary, improving your grammar, helping you to master your assignments and increasing your skills generally in reading, writing, speaking and listening.

ASSESSMENT & REPORTS



You will receive an interim report at the end of Term 1, and a full report at the end of Semester 1 and Semester 2. During the year students receive at least one assignment per subject per term (that is 4 assignments per subject in one year).

LIBRARY SERVICES



Both Primary and Secondary students have access to a State of the Art Learning Resource Centre.

COMPUTER LABS



There are computer labs on both Primary and Secondary campuses. Every High School student is also issued with a laptop.

How to Access Internet on Arrival

You will receive a username and password upon commencement of your studies at GCCC. This will enable you access to the internet while at school.

HEALTH & SAFETY ON CAMPUS



Gold Coast Christian College complies with health and safety standards of schools in Queensland. Students must remain on the school grounds at all times, and report to their form teacher each morning and afternoon to be marked as present at the school. They must also sign in at the office if they are late or sign out if they need to leave early. International students must comply with their visa conditions and not be absent for more than 80% per term. All absences must have a written explanation from a parent or carer.

My Student Survival Page

EMERGENCY: **000** or 112 from my mobile (to override key locks)

Government Departments: **DIAC – Department of Immigration & Citizenship**

131 881 or www.immi.gov.au

ATP – Australian Taxation Office

Tax File Number: 132 861 or www.ato.gov.au

Health Cover: Medibank Private - **Ph: 1 300 798 227**

Gold Coast Christian College **(07) 5593 4571**

Outside school hours

Emergency Contact

Mrs Cara Berkely: **Ph: 0432 270 364**

My Important People & Places (please list)

SECTION 5



Social and Cultural

SECTION 5: SOCIAL AND CULTURAL

Adjusting To Life in Australia

Culture Shock

- Overcoming Culture Shock
 - Recognition
 - Be Objective
 - Set Goals
 - Share Your Feelings

Australian Culture

- Social Customs
 - Greeting People*
 - Clothing Customs*
 - Polite Behaviour*
 - Australian Slang*
 - Responding to an Invitation*
- Tipping

Public Holidays & Special Celebrations

- New Year
- Australia Day
- Easter
 - Easter Traditions
- Anzac Day
- Labour Day
- Queen's Birthday
- Melbourne Cup Day
- Christmas

Sports & Recreation

Clubs & Organisations

Entertainment

Eating Out

Religion & Faith

Where to Find Out What's Going On

Home Fire Safety

- Smoke Alarms
- Electricity
- Heaters
- Candles, Oil Burners & Cigarettes
- Cooking
- Plan Your Escape

Sun Safety

- Sun Protection

Beach Safety

- Remember the F-L-A-G-S
- The Surf Environment
 - Rips
- Surf Skills
 - Escaping From a Rip
 - Negotiating the Surf

Bush & Outback Safety

- In the Bush
 - Advice for Motorists Caught in
 - Bushfires
- In the Outback

Storm Safety

Dangerous Animals & Plants

- Bites and Stings
- Anaphylaxis – allergic reactions
- General First Aid for Bites & Stings

ADJUSTING TO LIFE IN AUSTRALIA



While living and studying abroad may be an exciting adventure, it can also present a range of challenges. Having decided to study and live in Australia you will be undertaking adjustments in many areas of your life including cultural, social and academic. It is also important to remember that while these changes are occurring you will be embarking upon a new semester of study (for many of you in a different language) and be away from your usual supports, networks and resources. Adjustment to a new country and culture is a process that occurs gradually and takes time. The values, beliefs, traditions and customs of your home country may vary greatly from those in Australia and adapting to the Australian way of life may take some time. This advice may help:

➤ **Listen, observe and ask questions**

Adjustment to a new culture and way of life takes time. Allow yourself time to observe those around you and patterns of both verbal and non-verbal communication. Don't be afraid to ask questions if there are things you do not understand as this will reduce the chance of confusion or misunderstandings.

➤ **Become involved**

Make an effort to meet people and become involved in groups both on campus and in the wider community. Maintain an attitude of openness to new situations and experiences. Establishing friendships and joining groups is the best way to experience and learn about Australian culture and will certainly mean you have a richer and more enjoyable time here.

➤ **Try to maintain a sense of perspective**

When confronted with difficulties remind yourself that living and studying abroad is a challenge and it is normal to feel stressed, overwhelmed and out of your depth at times. Try to recall or make a list of the reasons you initially wanted to study abroad in the first place. Also, listing positive events or changes within yourself that have occurred since you arrived may also assist with getting things in perspective.

➤ **Maintain some of the routines and rituals you may have had in your home country.**

This can include small things such as continuing to drink a certain type of coffee or tea or eating specific foods. It may also include maintaining involvement in bigger events such as celebrating a national day in your country of origin with a group of friends.

➤ **Keep lines of communication open with those at home.**

Communicating with those at home regularly about your experiences of study and life in Australia, through emails, telephones and letters, is vital. Not only does it help to keep you connected with important social supports, it also assists your friends and family to understand your experiences which will smooth the transition when you return home.

➤ **Sense of humour**

Importantly, remember that living in a different culture means you will inevitably find yourself in a range of unusual and often confusing situations. Being able to laugh in these situations will remind you that it takes time to understand different cultures and that it is ok to make mistakes.

➤ **Ask for help**

Don't be afraid to ask for assistance or support if you need it. In addition to the Counselling Service there are many organisations set up on campus to ensure you have a successful and enjoyable time in Australia.

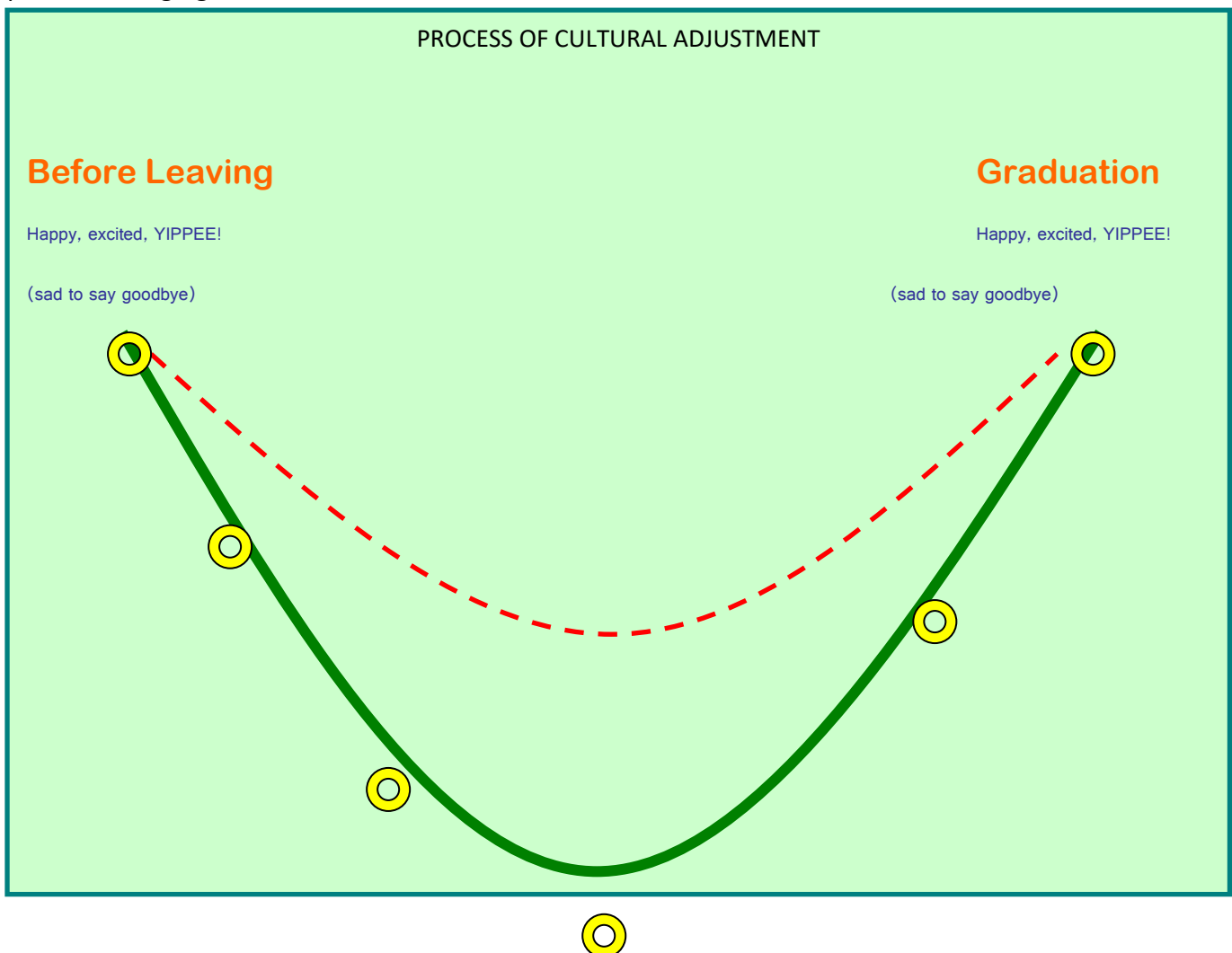
➤ **Finally, relax and enjoy the journey!**

(Source: Macquarie University)

CULTURE SHOCK



Culture shock is the feeling of being out of place in an unfamiliar environment. The initial excitement of moving to a new country often subsides when different cultural expectations challenge you to attend to daily responses and behaviours previously taken for granted. The potential stress of dealing with these persistent challenges can result in feelings of hostility and frustration with your host country as well as a profound longing for home.



Overcoming Culture Shock

Once you realise you have culture shock, getting over it and moving on to better adjustment with the host culture will depend on you. It is you who must take some positive steps to feel better, and the sooner you take them, the better!

1. **Recognition:** First, you should remember that culture shock is a normal part of your adjustment and that you may have some of the symptoms. Some of your reactions may not be normal for you; you may be more emotional or more sensitive, or lose your sense of humour. Recognising your culture shock symptoms will help you learn about yourself as you work your way through it.
2. **Be objective:** Second, try to analyse objectively the differences you are finding between your home and your host country. Look for the reasons your host country does things differently. Remember that host customs and norms are (mostly) logical to them, just as your customs and norms at home are logical to you!
3. **Set goals:** Third, set some goals for yourself to redevelop your feeling of control in your life. These should be small tasks that you can accomplish each day. For example, if you do not feel like leaving your room, plan a short activity each day that will get you out. Go to a post office or store to buy something, ride a bus or go to a sports event. If you feel that language is your problem, set daily goals to learn more: study fifteen minutes a day; learn five new words a day; learn one new expression each day; watch a TV program in your new language for 30 minutes. Each goal that you achieve will give you more and more self-confidence that you can cope.
4. **Share your feelings:** Fourth, find local friends who are sympathetic and understanding. Talk to them about your feelings and specific situations. They can help you understand ideas from their cultural point of view.

(Source: Rotary International Youth Exchange)

AUSTRALIAN CULTURE



Social Customs

Greeting People

When meeting someone for the first time, it is usual to shake the person's right hand with your right hand, look at their eyes and say hello. People who do not know each other generally do not kiss or hug when meeting. When you first meet someone, it is polite not to talk about personal matters.

Many Australians **look at the eyes of the people** they are talking with. They consider this a sign of respect, and an indication that they are listening. Do not stare at the person for a long time.



You can address a new acquaintance using their title and family name. You may use their first name when they ask you to or use it in the introduction. In the workplace and among friends, most Australians tend to be informal and call each other by their first names.

Clothing Customs

The types of clothing that people wear reflect the diversity in our society just as much as the variation in climate. There are no laws or rules on clothing, but you must wear certain clothing for work situations. Most workplaces have dress standards.

Outside of the work situation, clothing is an individual choice; many people dress for comfort, for the social situation or the weather. Clubs, movie theatres and other places require patrons to be in neat, clean clothes and appropriate footwear.

Many Australians live close to the beach and the sea. On hot days, they may wear little clothing on the beach and surrounds. This does not mean that people who dress to go to the beach or swimming have low moral standards. It means that this is what we accept on and near our beaches.

People from other countries can choose to wear their national dress. They may be religious or customary items and include monks' robe, a burqa, a hijab or a turban. As a tolerant society with people from many different cultures, clothing is a part of cultural beliefs and practices that is encouraged.



Polite Behaviour

'Please' and 'thank you' are words that are very helpful when dealing with other people, and buying goods or services. When asked if you would like something, like a cup of tea, it is polite to say, 'Yes please', or just 'please' if you would like it, or 'no, thank you' if you do not. When you receive something, it is polite to thank the person by saying 'thank you'. Australians tend to think that people who do not say 'please' or 'thank you' are being rude. Using these words will help in building a good relationship.

Sometimes a sensitive issue may come up in conversation. Not to talk may seem rude. It is more polite to say 'sorry, it is too hard to explain' than to ignore a question.

Australians often say, 'Excuse me' to get a person's attention and 'sorry' if we bump into them. We also say, 'Excuse me' or 'pardon me' if we burp or belch in public or a person's home.

You should always try to **be on time** for meetings and other visits. If you realise you are going to be late, try to contact the person to let them know. This is very important for visits to professionals as you may be charged money for being late or if you miss the appointment without notifying them before the appointment time.

Most Australians blow their noses into a handkerchief or tissue, not onto the footpath. This is also true for spitting. Many people will also say, 'Bless you' when you sneeze. This phrase has no religious intent.

Australian Slang

Much common word usage or 'slang' may seem strange to people new to Australia. Slang words start from many different sources. Some words are shortened versions of longer words. Many were expressions

already used by migrants who came from the north of England. If you are unsure what an expression means, it is all right to ask the person who said it to explain. Some common expressions are:

Bring a plate - when you are invited to a party and asked to 'bring a plate', this means to bring a dish of food to share with your host and other guests. Take the food to the party in any type of dish, not just a plate, and it is usually ready to serve. This is common for communal gatherings such as for school, work or a club. If you are unsure what to bring, you can ask the host.

BYO - when an invitation to a party says 'BYO', this means 'bring your own' drink. If you do not drink alcohol, it is acceptable to bring juice, soft drink or soda, or water. Some restaurants are BYO. You can bring your own wine to these, although there is usually a charge for providing and cleaning glasses called 'corkage'.

Arvo - This is short for afternoon. 'Drop by this arvo,' means please come and visit this afternoon.

Fortnight - This term describes a period of two weeks.

Barbeque, BBQ, barbie - outdoor cooking, usually of meat or seafood over a grill or hotplate using gas or coals. The host serves the meat with salads and bread rolls. It is common for a guest, when invited to a BBQ, to ask if they should bring anything.

Snag - The raw type sausages usually cooked at a BBQ. They can be made of pork, beef or chicken.



Chook - The term chook means a chicken, usually a hen.

Cuppa - a cup of tea or coffee 'Drop by this arvo for a cuppa' means please come and visit this afternoon for a cup of tea or coffee.

Loo or dunny - These are slang terms for toilet. If you are a guest in someone's house for the first time, it is usually polite to ask permission to use his or her toilet. 'May I use your toilet please?' Some people ask, 'Where's the loo?'

Fair dinkum - honest, the truth. 'Fair dinkum?' when used as a question means, 'is it really true?'

To be crook - to be sick or ill.

Flat out - busy.

Shout - to buy someone a drink. At a bar or a pub when a group of friends meet, it is usual for each person to 'shout a round', meaning buy everybody a drink. Each person takes a turn at buying a 'round'. It is also acceptable to say that you do not drink (alcohol) by saying that you are a 'teetotaler'. This also means you are not obliged to shout.

Bloke - a man. Sometimes if you ask for help, you may get an answer to 'see that bloke over there'.

How ya goin? 'How are you going?' means how are you, or how do you do? It does not mean what form of transport you are taking. Sometimes it can sound like 'ow-ya-goin-mate'.

For more information on Australian slang visit: www.cultureandrecreation.gov.au/articles/slang

Responding to an Invitation

What could I be invited to? If you get an invitation to lunch, dinner, barbeque, party, wedding, birthday, or any type of event you will usually respond with a letter or phone call. The midday meal is called lunch,

and the evening meal is called dinner or 'tea'. 'Tea' can also mean a cup of tea or 'cuppa'. If invited for tea, the time of the event is a good sign of whether your host means dinner or just a cup of tea. An invitation to tea, for any time after 6pm (1800 hours) usually means dinner.

How are invitations made? Invitations can be written or spoken. Written ones usually ask for RSVP, (which is *repondez s'il vous plait* in French) and means please reply. You should reply whether you intend to go or not. The invitation will tell you how to reply and when the reply is expected. Your host may be specific about how many people are invited. If your host invites the whole family, you should tell your host how many people would go. Usually a family is the parents and their children.

What if I do accept an invitation? When you accept an invitation to a meal, it is also usual to tell the host what you cannot eat. It is perfectly okay to say that you are a vegetarian and do not eat meat or that you are Muslim or Jewish and do not eat pork. **It is not polite to arrive late** and you should make a telephone call to your host to explain if you are going to be late.

What if I cannot accept an invitation? You may not always be able to accept an invitation. The best way to refuse is to say, 'thank you, unfortunately I/we have other plans at that time'. To say that you are too busy may seem extremely rude, even if it is true. Once you accept an invitation, you should only cancel if something arises where you cannot go. You should also explain the reason to your host. To cancel because you got a better invitation from somewhere else can seem very rude, and can affect new friendships. Sometimes it is best not to accept an invitation right away and to ask your host whether they would mind if you check your plans and reply to them later.

(Source: Department of Immigration & Citizenship)

Tipping

Tipping is not generally expected or practiced in Australia. This is because throughout Australia, service industry staff are covered by minimum wage laws and therefore do not rely on tips for their income. However, it is acceptable to leave a small amount (perhaps 10%) should you feel you have received exceptional service.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS AND SPECIAL CELEBRATIONS



Australians hold certain days each year as special days of national meaning. We may recognise the day with a holiday for everyone or we can celebrate the day as a nation with special events. Most States and Territories observe some of the public holidays on the same date. They have others on different dates or have some days that only their State or Territory celebrates. In larger cities, most shops, restaurants and public transport continue to operate on public holidays. In smaller towns, most shops and restaurants close.

New Year

Australians love to celebrate New Year. There are festivals, celebrations and parties all over the country to welcome in the New Year. Sydney Harbour and Sydney Harbour Bridge have become synonymous with New Year celebrations in Australia the fireworks display is considered to be one of the best in the world. **January 1** is a public holiday.

Australia Day

Australia Day, **January 26**, is the day we as a people and place celebrate our nationhood. The day is a public holiday. The day marks the founding of the first settlement in our nation by European people.



Easter

Easter commemorates the resurrection (return to life) of Jesus Christ following his death by crucifixion. It is the most significant event of the Christian calendar.

In addition to its religious significance, Easter in Australia is enjoyed as a four-day holiday weekend starting on Good Friday and ending on Easter Monday. This extra-long weekend is an opportunity for Australians to take a mini-holiday, or get together with family and friends. Easter often coincides with school holidays, so many people with school aged children incorporate Easter into a longer family holiday. Easter is the busiest time for domestic air travel in Australia, and a very popular time for gatherings such as weddings and christenings.

Easter Traditions

- **Shrove Tuesday or Pancake Day:** Shrove Tuesday is the last day before Lent. In earlier days there were many foods that observant Christians would not eat during Lent such as meat and fish, eggs, and milky foods. So that no food was wasted, families would have a feast on the shroving Tuesday, and eat up all the foods that wouldn't last the forty days of Lent without going off.

Pancakes became associated with Shrove Tuesday because they were a dish that could use up perishable foodstuffs such as eggs, fats and milk, with just the addition of flour.



Many Australian groups and communities make and share pancakes on Shrove Tuesday. Selling pancakes to raise money for charity is also a popular activity.

- **Hot Cross Buns:** Hot cross buns are sweet, spiced buns made with dried fruit and leavened with yeast. A cross, the symbol of Christ, is placed on top of the buns, either with pastry or a simple mixture of flour and water. The buns are traditionally eaten on Good Friday; however in Australia they are available in bakeries and stores many weeks before Easter.



A recent variation on the traditional fruit bun has become popular in Australia. A chocolate version is made with the same spiced mixture, but cocoa is added to the dough and chocolate chips replace the dried fruit.

- **Easter Eggs:** Eggs, symbolising new life, have long been associated with the Easter festival. Chocolate Easter eggs are a favourite part of Easter in Australia. Some families and community groups organise Easter egg hunts for children in parks and recreational areas. Easter eggs are traditionally eaten on Easter Sunday, however stores start stocking Easter treats well before the Easter holiday period.

- **The Easter Bunny:** Early on Easter Sunday morning, the Easter Bunny 'delivers' chocolate Easter eggs to children in Australia, as he does in many parts of the world.

The rabbit and the hare have long been associated with fertility, and have therefore been associated with spring and spring festivals. The rabbit as a symbol of Easter seems to have originated in Germany where it was first recorded in writings in the 16th century. The first edible Easter bunnies, made from sugared pastry, were made in Germany in the 19th century.

Anzac Day

Anzac Day is on **April 25** the day the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) landed at Gallipoli in Turkey in 1915 during World War 1. This day is set apart to hold dear the memory of those who fought for our nation and those who lost their life to war. The day is a public holiday. We remember with ceremonies, wreath laying and military parades. You will find that many towns have an ANZAC Day parade and ceremony culminating in the laying of memorial wreaths at a monument or war memorial. These services can be very moving and a wonderful way of experiencing some Australian National pride, as the memories of our fallen soldiers are commemorated. Many Australians attend the National War Memorial in Canberra, or a War Memorial in one of the Capital Cities around Australia for either the traditional “Dawn Service”, which commemorates the landing of the ANZACS at Gallipoli in the dark and dawning of that day, or another service usually commencing around mid-morning with a parade of returned armed forces representing all Australians who have fought in war. As Australia is such a multi-cultural country, these days it is common to see many other countries also represented in these parades.



ANZAC Day is the only day of the year where it may also be possible to attend an RSL (Returned Servicemen's League) Club to experience a traditional game of “**TWO-UP**”. A game of chance played by the ANZACS where money is waged on the toss of three coins for a resulting combination of 2 out of 3 being either heads or tails. RSL clubs are crammed with returned soldiers and their families and friends on this day, the atmosphere is one of “mate-ship” and friendliness to all and the experience of a game of two-up is a memorable one.

Labour Day

Labour Day is celebrated on different dates throughout Australia. As elsewhere in the world, Labour Day originated in Australia as a means of giving ‘working people’ a day off and recognising the roots of trade unionist movements and workers’ rights.

Queen's Birthday

The Queen's Birthday holiday celebrates the birthday of Queen Elizabeth II who is not only Queen of the United Kingdom but also Queen of Australia, where the Queen's Birthday is a public holiday celebrated on a Monday but on different dates. Having the Queen's Birthday on a Monday, results in a three-day long weekend.

Melbourne Cup Day

The Melbourne Cup is a 2 mile international horse race run on the **first Tuesday of November each year** attracting the finest racehorses from around the world. Known as the “race that stops a Nation” due to a Public Holiday being declared in metropolitan Melbourne in its home State of Victoria, and most of the

nation whether at work, school or home, stopping to watch the race broadcast on television. In other places, and mainly in the workplace, many people have a celebratory “Cup Day Breakfast”, lunch, party or barbeque to celebrate Melbourne Cup. It is traditional to run a “Cup Sweep” where everyone wagers an amount per horse to create a total prize pool. The names of the horses entering the race are drawn and matched one by one to the list of people wagering money. After the race is won, the prize pool is divided into amounts for 1st, 2nd, & 3rd, and usually a small amount for last place, or horses scratched due to injury just before the race. The Melbourne Cup forms part of the “Spring Racing Carnival” which attracts celebrities from around the world. Women dress in their best outfits; hats are definitely the order of any day, gentlemen in suits of all sorts, and assorted other costumes. It’s a very colourful time to be in Melbourne.



Christmas

Christmas is celebrated in Australia on 25 December. Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. Christians believe that Jesus is 'the son of God', the Messiah sent from Heaven to save the world.

The heat of early summer in Australia has an impact on the way that Australians celebrate Christmas and our English heritage also has an impact on some northern hemisphere Christmas traditions which are followed.

In the weeks leading up to Christmas houses are decorated; greetings cards sent out; carols sung; Christmas trees installed in homes, schools and public places; and children delight in anticipating a visit from Santa Claus. On Christmas Day family and friends gather to exchange gifts and enjoy special Christmas food. Australians are as likely to eat freshly caught seafood outdoors at a barbeque, as to have a traditional roast dinner around a dining table.

Many Australians spend Christmas out of doors, going to the beach for the day, or heading to camping grounds for a longer break over the Christmas holiday period. There are often places which have developed an international reputation for overseas visitors to spend Christmas Day in Australia. One such example is for visitors who are in Sydney at Christmas time to go to Bondi Beach where up to 40,000 people visit on Christmas Day.



Carols by Candlelight have become a huge Christmas tradition in Australia. Carols by Candlelight events today range from huge gatherings, which are televised live throughout the country, to smaller local community and church events.

Christmas in Australia is also associated with two major sporting events:

- **The Boxing Day Test:** December 26 is the opening day of the traditional 'Boxing Day Test' at the MCG (Melbourne Cricket Ground) between the Australian Cricket Team and an international touring side. It is the most anticipated cricket match each year in world cricket, and tickets are usually sold out months in advance.
- **The Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race:** the “Sydney-to-Hobart” is Australia’s most prestigious yachting race and on the calendar of international yacht racing, and begins 26 December in beautiful Sydney Harbour.



SPORTS & RECREATION



GCCC runs sporting competitions with local schools in the Gold Coast area as well as sport between sister schools from the Seventh-day Adventist group of schools in South Queensland and northern New South Wales. With some of the school sports, there is the opportunity to compete at district, regional, state and national levels. These events are announced in the school newsletter, on noticeboards, in morning roll mark, and at school assemblies throughout the year.

GCCC has a sport afternoon every week in which students participate in a chosen sport.

There are also community-run sports and clubs in the local area where you live. Usually sports have a season; for instance, cricket is usually played in summer, whereas soccer is often played in winter. To find out more about community sports please call your local council for times and options.

CLUBS & ORGANISATIONS



GCCC also offers clubs for activities that are more academic in nature. These often operate around competition or performance dates:

- Chess Club
- Drama and Musical productions

- Praise and Worship teams
- Musical Ensemble groups.

RELIGION & FAITH



While GCCC is operated by the Seventh-day Adventist Church, it has students from many different faiths and recognises the need for every human being to have an active spiritual life. Each week, students from Primary School and Secondary School attend a Chapel program that highlights praise and worship. This often includes singing, drama and a speaker who talks about an issue that is relevant to Primary or Secondary students and their spiritual development.

Throughout the week, students also attend Religious Studies classes where they explore the Bible and have a chance to ask questions about topics that arise.

WHERE TO FIND OUT WHAT'S GOING ON



Check out the fortnightly newsletter and student announcements in the morning at form class and at Chapel to find out what's going on. If you are still unsure, ask your teacher or check at student reception.

HOME FIRE SAFETY



International students are increasingly appearing in statistics related to fire incidents and deaths in Australia. Sadly, most of these fires are preventable. You can take some simple steps to reduce the risk of fire in your accommodation.

Follow the fire safety tips below to help you reduce the chance of fire in your accommodation:

Smoke Alarms

When you are sleeping you cannot smell smoke. Smoke alarms save lives. They wake you and alert you to the danger from smoke and fire. You **MUST** have a smoke alarm where you live, it is the law. All homes must have a smoke alarm on each level. Landlords are legally responsible for installation of alarms in rental properties. Tenants are responsible for testing and maintaining alarms. If you live on campus there will be a smoke alarm in your room. If you live off campus in a house or flat there must be a smoke alarm outside your bedroom.



Look after your smoke alarm, it can save your life.

- Test your smoke alarm monthly by pressing the test button.
- DON'T remove the battery
- DON'T take the smoke alarm down
- DON'T cover the smoke alarm
- Replace the battery in your smoke alarm yearly.
- Regularly vacuum over and around your smoke alarm to remove dust and debris to keep it clean.
- If there is no smoke alarm or it does not work report it to your landlord.



Electricity

The safe use of electricity assists in preventing house fires.

Improper use of power boards and double adaptors can lead to fires.

A double adaptor or a powerboard plugged into another double adaptor or powerboard creates a danger of overloading the system. For safety, use a single extension cord rather than joining shorter cords. Leaving an extension cord coiled while in use or placing a cord under floor coverings can cause overheating.



Be careful to keep electrical appliances away from water.

A hair dryer takes time to cool down. For safety, allow this to happen on an inflammable surface before storing it.



Computers, monitors and TVs can overheat and cause fires even when not in use.

They should be turned off after each session. Good air circulation is necessary around TVs and videos. TVs should be turned off at the set, not only with the remote control.



Light globes can become very hot.

It is dangerous to cover a lamp with any type of fabric. To dim a lamp it is recommended that a lower wattage globe is used.



Heaters

It's nice to keep yourself warm in the cooler weather, but remember heaters are a major cause of house fires.

- Read and follow the operating instructions for your heater.
- All clothes and curtains should be at least one metre from the heater.
- Turn off all heaters before you leave your room or go to bed.
- Before you go to bed at night or leave your home, ensure heaters are turned off at their power source and fires are extinguished.



Candles, Oil Burners and Cigarettes

Candles, oil burners and cigarettes can all be dangerous fire hazards.

- Do not smoke in bed.
- Dampen cigarette butts before putting them in the rubbish.
- Make sure your candles are on properly designed candle holders.
- Don't leave your room when a candle or oil burner is alight.
- Don't go to sleep when a candle or oil burner is alight.
- Do not put candles or oil burners near windows; be careful, curtains can catch fire easily.



Plan Your Escape

In a Fire:

1. Get down on the floor. Crawl to the door.
2. Get out of your room.
3. Close the door. This prevents smoke and fire from spreading
4. Alert others.
5. When outside stay out.
6. Call **000**.



(Source: Metropolitan Fire Brigade, Melbourne. www.mfb.vic.gov.au)

SUN SAFETY



Australia has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world. In fact, one in every two Australians will be diagnosed with skin cancer at some point during their lifetime. The good news is, it can be prevented. By minimising your exposure to the sun's damaging ultraviolet radiation (UVR), you can protect your skin and prevent the development of skin cancer.

Sun Protection

Skin cancer and skin damage are caused by being exposed to the sun's harmful ultraviolet radiation (UVR). The key to preventing skin cancer is to protect your skin from the sun by practising sun safe behaviours.

There are **six simple steps** you can follow to reduce your risk of skin cancer and protect your skin:

1. Minimise your time in the sun between 10am and 3pm
2. Seek shade
3. Wear suitable clothing that provides good sun protection
4. Choose a broad brim, legionnaire-style or bucket-style hat that will protect your face, neck and ears
5. Wear UV protective sunglasses
6. Apply SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before you go out into the sun.



BEACH SAFETY



Understanding the ocean is very important - the more you know about how waves, wind and tides affect conditions in the water, the better able you are to keep yourself safe, or even rescue others, from danger. Recognising danger signs and awareness of surf conditions is an essential part of lifesaving.



Remember the F-L-A-G-S and Stay Safe

F Find the flags and swim between them - the red and yellow flags mark the safest place to swim at the beach.

L Look at the safety signs - they help you identify potential dangers and daily conditions at the beach.

A Ask a surf lifesaver for some good advice - surf conditions can change quickly so talk to a surf lifesaver or lifeguard before entering the water.

G Get a friend to swim with you - so you can look out for each other's safety and get help if needed. Children should always be supervised by an adult.

S Stick your hand up for help - if you get into trouble in the water, stay calm, and raise your arm to signal for help. Float with a current or rip - don't try and swim against it.



And remember – **NEVER**

Never swim at unpatrolled beaches

Never swim at night

Never swim under the influence of alcohol

Never run and dive in to the water

Never swim directly after a meal



The Surf Environment

Rips

A rip is a strong current running out to sea. Rips are the cause of most rescues performed at beaches. A rip usually occurs when a channel forms between the shore and a sandbar, and large waves have built up water which then returns to sea, causing a drag effect. **The larger the surf the stronger the rip.** Rips are dangerous as they can carry a weak or tired swimmer out into deep water.

Identifying a Rip

The following features will alert you to the presence of a rip:

- darker colour, indicating deeper water
- murky brown water caused by sand stirred up off the bottom
- smoother surface with much smaller waves, alongside white water (broken waves)
- waves breaking further out to sea on both sides of the rip
- debris floating out to sea
- a rippled look, when the water around is generally calm



Surf Skills

Escaping From a Rip

If you are caught in a rip:

- Don't Panic - stay calm
- If you are a strong swimmer, swim at a 45 degree angle across the rip and in the same direction as the current until you reach the breaking wave zone, then return to shore

- If you are a weak or tired swimmer, float with the current, don't fight it. Swim parallel to the shore for about 30 - 40m until you reach the breaking wave zone, then swim back to shore or signal for help.
- Remember to stay calm and conserve your energy.

Negotiating the Surf

Before entering the surf, always make note of a landmark such as a building or headland that can be seen from the water and used as a guide for maintaining a fixed position. Also check the depth of any gutter and the height of any sandbank before diving under waves – this will help prevent spinal injury.

When going out through the surf, negotiate the shallows by a high hurdle type of stride until the breakers reach your waist or until your progress is slowed.

Waves of any size and force should not be fought against and should be negotiated by diving underneath, giving you time to reach the bottom and lie as flat as possible on the sand while the wave passes over.

Your hands can be dug into the sand in front at arm's length for stability and as a pull forward when ready to surface.

If the water is deep enough, bring your knees up under your body so you can get a good push off the bottom, like an uncoiling spring. This gives added force to your next dive. Repeat this process until in chest-deep water, then start swimming.



If a broken wave approaches when the water is not too deep, dive down and run or crawl along the bottom. In deep water, do not use extra energy trying to reach the bottom; instead duckdive to just below the turbulence. Wait for the wash to pass and then push or kick to the surface (off the bottom, if possible).

Stick to your predetermined path on the swim out.

Check your position by occasionally raising your head for a quick look when swimming on top of a swell.



(Source: Surf Lifesaving Australia)

BUSH AND OUTBACK SAFETY



Australia has many extraordinary and beautiful places to explore. If you are going on a trip, travel with other people, make sure someone knows where you are at all times and stay on a road or a walking track.

In the Bush

Be prepared if you plan some time in our bushland. Plan your hike. Always tell someone where you are going and what time you expect to return. Let them know when you return safely.

- Check the weather forecast and be prepared for unexpected changes in weather.
- Check the length and degree of difficulty of your planned walk. Consider using a local guide when taking long or difficult walks.
- When walking or exploring outdoors drink plenty of water (allow at least one litre of water per hour of walking). Wear sturdy shoes and socks, a hat, sunscreen lotion, comfortable clothing and insect repellent. Other handy items for long bushwalks include food, warm clothing, first aid supplies, a torch and a map.
- **Never walk alone.** Read maps and signs carefully. Stay on the track and stay behind safety barriers.
- **Never dive** into a rock-pool, creek, lake or river. Stay away from cliff edges and waterfalls.
- Do not feed or play with native animals. You might get bitten or scratched.
- Limit your use of fire. Use a fuel stove for cooking and wear thermal clothing to keep warm. Never leave fires unattended or unconfined.
- Visit the ranger station or park information centre to obtain details on the best places to visit and any additional safety tips for that park.

Advice for motorists caught in bushfires



Bush fires are common occurrences in Australia during our often long hot summers. If you are in smoke and fire-affected areas, you should stay off the roads. If you must get in the car, put your headlights on, dress in protective clothing and footwear and make sure you take food and water - you could be stuck for long periods if your journey is blocked by road closures. Turn the car radio on and keep it tuned to local stations for bush fire updates

- If you are caught in the middle of a bush fire, park the car immediately and remain calm
- Look for a clear area, preferably off the road. Areas clear of grass or bush are safest - they will not sustain fires of high intensity
- Do not leave the vehicle. Many people have lost their lives by exiting the vehicle only to be trapped on foot in the open. Your vehicle will help protect you from radiant heat, the chief danger
- Switch the ignition off. It is unlikely that a vehicle's fuel tank will explode from the heat of a passing bush or grass fire
- Close all windows and vents or turn vents to recycle
- Put the headlights on so that the car is as visible as possible, especially to fire tankers
- Everyone must get down on the floor, below window height and cover all exposed skin with a wool or cotton blanket. Do not use synthetics, which may give off toxic vapours or melt
- Stay in the vehicle until the fire front has passed. Generally this will take between 30 seconds and one minute. During this time it will be hot, noisy and frightening. It will last a short time even though it may seem longer
- If you have water, drink it
- Never attempt to drive through smoke or flame. Crashes can occur when drivers run off the road, striking trees or other cars
- Once the fire front has passed, exit the vehicle and inspect it for damage before proceeding

- Do not proceed until you are satisfied that the fire has passed and that you are not likely to be trapped a second time
- Falling trees and branches are a hazard during and after intense fires. Do not park or drive under trees
- Exit the area as quickly as possible. Remember fire vehicles may be trying to enter the area and your presence may hinder fire fighting operations.

(Source: NRMA)

In the Outback



Australia's outback is vast. Our remote wilderness areas have few towns and facilities, often with large distances between them, so be aware and plan your trip.

- When planning each day of travel spend some time to calculate how long it will take to drive between destinations. Be realistic about how far you can drive in a day.
- Inform family and friends or the local police of your travel plans. The local police can also provide helpful advice on facilities and road conditions.
- Always carry a current road map.
- Make sure your vehicle is in good working order and has been serviced recently.
- Use a four-wheel drive vehicle on unsealed roads in remote areas. Take extra care when driving these vehicles. For example, drive at reduced speeds on unsealed roads.
- Always carry a spare tyre, tools and water. If travelling to remote areas off major highways take extra food, water, fuel and tyres. Do not overload your vehicle and never carry spare fuel inside an enclosed vehicle.



- **If you have trouble with your vehicle, don't leave your vehicle because it will provide you with shade and protection from the heat. Wait for help to come to you.**
- Hire appropriate emergency communication equipment, such as a satellite phone or an Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon device (EPIRB).
- Obey road closure signs and stay on recognised routes.
- Fires in desert and bush areas can spread very quickly. If required,

be prepared to evacuate the area immediately.

- Australian wildlife and livestock often graze on the roadside and can stray onto the road. Be very careful when driving at sunrise, sunset and at night, when animals are most active. If an animal crosses in front of you brake gently, do not swerve wildly to avoid it.

- During daylight hours always drive with your headlights on low beam, as outback conditions can make it difficult to see oncoming vehicles.

(Source: Visit Victoria. com)

STORM SAFETY



Storms can happen anywhere and at any time of the year. Storms are more common during storm season – from October to the end of April, but it is important to be aware all year round.



Severe storms can cause major damage. They may be accompanied by torrential rain, strong winds, large hailstones, loud thunder and lightning. Storms can cause flash flooding, unroof buildings, and damage trees and powerlines.

You can also be indirectly affected by storms even if your property is not damaged; such as losing power, or access roads being cut.



The SES is responsible for managing the clean-up and helping people during and after a storm.

During a storm, there are some things you can do to stay safe:

- Stay indoors and away from windows.
- Unplug sensitive electrical devices like computers, televisions and video recorders.
- Listen to your radio for weather updates.
- Don't use a landline telephone during an electrical storm

If you are caught outside during storm

- Get inside a vehicle or building if possible.
- If no shelter is available, crouch down, with your feet close together and head tucked in.
- If in a group – spread out, keeping people several metres apart.

DANGEROUS ANIMALS & PLANTS



Australia is home to a variety of native animals. Even if they seem friendly to you, do not touch or feed them - they are not used to close contact with humans and may hurt you

If you are visiting any of Australia's beautiful parks or forests:

Be wary of animals in their natural habitat. Stay well back from goannas, crocodiles, snakes, dingoes, cassowaries, and also wild pigs, cattle, horses and buffaloes. People have been seriously injured or killed by wild

animals. Be very careful about approaching any injured animal, such as kangaroos or possums. They are likely to bite and scratch if you attempt to touch or move them.

- **Never feed or play with wildlife.** Native animals are by nature timid, however, having been provided food from people, may become aggressive in pursuit of food. You may get bitten or scratched. In addition, human foods may be harmful to native animals.

In the warm waters of Tropical Queensland:

- **Take care to avoid marine stingers.**
- **Do not enter water where crocodiles may live.**

Bites and Stings

The majority of insects in Australia are not harmful to humans. Some insects bite and sting if they are threatened so it is best to avoid touching them if you want to avoid being stung or bitten.

The Australia-wide **Poisons Information Centres** have a common telephone number:

131 126.

Some people are allergic to certain insect bites or venom. In the case of an allergic reaction to bites or stings, medical attention should be sought immediately. Call a doctor or hospital for guidance, or **000**.

Anaphylaxis – allergic reactions

Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction that can occur in sensitive individuals from exposure to any chemicals foreign to the body, including bites and stings, plants, or medications. Parts of the body, for example the face or throat swell up so much that the patient can't breathe. In severe cases the patient may go into shock within a few minutes and the heart can stop. **For any patient who shows signs of anaphylaxis, call 000 for an ambulance, and have the patient taken immediately to the emergency department of the nearest hospital.**

General First Aid for Bites and Stings

For bites or stings from these creatures seek first aid assistance straight away, stay calm, and as immobile as possible.

- all species of Australian snakes, including sea snakes
- funnel web spiders
- blue ringed octopus
- cone shell stings

For all other bites and stings: Seek or apply basic first aid.

1. Wash with soap and water and apply an antiseptic if available
2. Ensure that the patient's tetanus vaccination is up to date
3. Apply an ice-pack to reduce local pain and swelling
4. Pain relief may be required eg. paracetamol or an antihistamine (to reduce swelling, redness and itch)
5. The patient should seek medical advice if they develop any other symptoms or signs of infection.
6. www.health.qld.gov.au/poisonsinformationcentre/bits_stings

(Source Queensland Health)

Appendices

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[La Trobe University](#)

[Macquarie University](#)

[Monash University](#)

[Education Queensland International](#)

[Queensland University of Technology](#)

[Southbank Institute of Technology](#)

[Study Queensland](#)

[Study Victoria](#)

[TAFE NSW](#)

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