



Eynesbury and SAIBT/CELUSA

Essential Accommodation Information for
Students

Contents

Tips for arrival day	
When relatives arrive with you	
Orientation	
Transport / travelling to campus	
A new way of life	
Cultural differences in Australia	
Change of address	
Overseas student health cover	
Pharmaceutical goods	
Money	
Visa information	
Working/ tax file number	
Student residence	
Homestay	
Being a member of the family	
The homestay fee	
Homestay changes	
Food and meals	
Your room	
Bathroom	
Laundry	
Telephone	
Computer and internet access	
Lights, heating and cooling	
Household waste	
Punctuality and absences	
Having friends or visitors around	
Pets	
Communication	
Smoking	
Alcohol	
Going out	
Personal safety	
Finding help	
Important contact information	

Tips for arrival day

If you are arriving by plane into Adelaide you will be met at the airport by an Accommodation Office staff member. Airports can be very busy and it may take some time to find the staff member who has come to meet you. The staff member will be holding a sign with your name on it. Do not leave the airport. If your flight is late or if you are delayed in customs you will have the phone number of a staff member in the confirmation letter which was sent to you with your host family or student residence details.

Call the staff member if you are delayed and the staff member will wait for you.

When relatives arrive with you

Host families will be happy to meet your family or friends if they come to Australia with you. The Accommodation Office should be notified in advance that others are arriving with you so accommodation arrangements can be made. It is a policy of this institution that parents do not stay in the homestay with the student. There will not be room for any extra people. Parents, friends or relatives who accompany you can book into a hotel close to your homestay or school. The Accommodation Office will be happy to help find suitable accommodation for anyone traveling with you.

Orientation

Orientation day will be held during the first 1 or 2 days of your course and includes:

- Testing
- Issue of student cards
- Overseas student health cover explanation and card allocation
- Advice for settling into a new environment

Transport/ travelling to campus

You will probably get to your campus by public transport. Your host family or student residence will assist you with travel to and from the city. It is very rare to live within walking distance of your campus because Australian cities are very spread out. Host families are usually within 30 minutes travel time from the city.

Information regarding public transport timetables is available on an information line 7 days a week from 7.00 am - 8.00 pm. The phone number for information is 8210 1000 or the website www.adelaidemetro.com.au. In some areas transport to and from your campus may be limited outside peak hours (7.30 to 9am and 4 to 6pm).

A new way of life

Coming to a new country means that you are exposed to many new experiences. These include a change in the physical environment, the type of food available, the way people look, speak and act and the fact that you must speak in a language that is not your first language.

The process of settling into your new way of life can often lead to wanting to be alone, a lack of enthusiasm, not being able to concentrate, tiredness and physical illness. This process is very normal and every student is affected to a different extent. Overcoming the impact of living in a new city is sometimes hard however, it is important to remember that you are not alone. Most people in their first few weeks and months in a new country experience similar feelings. This is a normal reaction to such a complete change in your physical, social and cultural environment.

If you find yourself experiencing difficulty in overcoming these feelings, there are people who you can talk to. Other students who have experienced or are experiencing the same thing are good to talk to. Teachers, Accommodation Office staff, the Student Counsellor and your host family are available for support. Remember the situation is temporary and common to many overseas students.

Cultural differences in Australia

It takes time to learn the customs of another culture. Fortunately, Australian etiquette is fairly simple and relaxed. Most students will find that aspects of the new culture are not too different from their own culture. Look for similarities not differences. Be willing to learn and understand a new culture.

- **Being Polite:** Australians say "please" when asking for something and "thank you" (with a smile) when receiving something or if someone does something for you. This is considered extremely important. 'I'm sorry' if you make a mistake, and "excuse me" if you wish to walk past someone or need to interrupt their conversation or activity are also good phrases to use.
- **Bargaining:** Bargaining is generally not used in Australian shops. You should shop around if you want to get items at the best price. Bargaining is acceptable at markets and garage sales.
- **Code of Dress:** Australians are relaxed in their style of dress and wear neat casual dress on most occasions. Students rarely wear suits or ties and shirts. Women in Australia may dress differently from those in your home country. It is acceptable in Australia for women to wear jeans, shorts and t-shirts.
- **Equality:** In Australia men and women are considered equal. Australian women are very independent and expect to be treated as equal to men. Wealth or position also does not mean people are treated differently in Australia.
- **Servants:** Australia does not have servants. Even if your host family has a cleaner, they are treated with respect. All members of a household in Australia help around the house. Husbands, wives and children are all expected to help clean, shop and tidy up after themselves. Students will be expected to do the same.

Change of address

It is extremely important to inform your educational institution and the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) if you change address.

DIAC requires that you notify them of a change of address within 7 days and failure to do this can result in the cancellation of your visa.

Your educational institution must also keep an up to date record of your residential address. The Accommodation Office has forms available for you to complete. In some circumstances you will be able to change your details online via your student portal.

Overseas student health cover (OSHC)

Health cover is compulsory for all students on a student visa. Students on a visitor visa are also required to have health insurance cover. This is arranged from your country of origin. Your host family or residence manager will be able to help you if you need to make an appointment or if you need advice on any medical issues. You will be given advice on how to make claims during your orientation.

Pharmaceutical goods

You will receive some benefit for medicines through OSHC. Medicines can be expensive so, if you have an existing condition that requires medication you will need to consider the cost involved when planning your budget.

You can only bring three months worth of personal medication (with your name on the label) into the country and you must declare them at the airport on arrival in Australia. Failure to declare may result in the medications being taken from you. Further information can be obtained from the Therapeutic Goods Administration website www.tga.gov.au.

Money

Some banks have international representatives. Your host family or student residence manager can assist you in locating a branch near your home address. However, you should also consider a bank which is close to your campus as banks are not open on weekends and money will need to be withdrawn from an Automatic Teller Machine (ATM) after banking hours.

If you are over 16 you can open a bank account in Australia. As it may be the first time you have experience with budgeting and money management we suggest that you have smaller amounts of money transferred to your account as you require it. Speak to your host family or student counsellors if you need any advice on budgeting.

Visa information

Make sure that your visa allows you to work. If not, you will need to contact the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) for permission.

A student visa must be cancelled by an educational institution if a student does not:

- Remain enrolled in a registered course.
- Attend at least 80% of their course or, where attendance records are not available a student must achieve academic results which the provider considers satisfactory.
- Pay the tuition fees as required by the education provider.

You must remain with your original education provider for at least the first 6 months (or the duration of the course if that is less than 12 months). You will only be allowed to change education provider in exceptional circumstances.

Further information is available on the Immigration Inquiry line 131 881, or online at www.immi.gov.au.

Working / Tax File Number

Your visa in most cases will allow you to work for up to 20 hours per week during the school semester. Seek advice from your host family or your educational institution regarding your work rights. You have come to Australia to study and any work you undertake should not interfere with your course.

When you open a bank account you may be required to apply for a Tax File Number (TFN). While it is not essential that you have a TFN, if you do not have a TFN, interest on your account will be taxed at the highest tax rate. Further information can be found at the Australian Taxation Department's website www.ato.gov.au.

Student residence

Only students who are over 18 may stay in student residences. Most student residences will require you to sign an agreement to stay at the residence for a given length of time. Each residence will advise you of their particular expectations.

Homestay

Homestay life involves living closely with others in a new and challenging environment. Qualities such as tolerance and flexibility, sensitivity to others will be learnt and will be of great benefit to you throughout your life. Host families registered with our institution have all undergone a formal application process.

Australia is a multicultural country. There are many variations on family composition. Keep an open mind and get to know the people you are living with. A person with Australian citizenship may have been born in Australia, China, Lebanon, Indonesia or Finland. All are Australian.

There are many benefits of homestay accommodation. An Australian host family will provide you with an Australian cultural experience in a safe family environment. You will have the opportunity to improve your English skills by using English in everyday situations. Your host family will look after you and make sure that you are safe. Students who come to Australia and stay in homestay often make friends for life.

Being a member of the family

In homestay you are welcomed into a home and accepted as a member of the family. Your host family should help you settle in and make sure you are comfortable, serve you nutritious meals (if included in your homestay fee), involve you in family activities, take the time to talk to you and generally make you feel at home. Both student and host family members should care about and respect each other.

All members of an Australian family, including you have the responsibility to help ensure the smooth running of the household. This simply means following the household rules and participating actively in keeping the house neat and clean. Along with other members of the household you may be asked to help out with light tasks such as washing up, washing your own clothes, or setting the table. All students will be required to keep their room tidy and leave common areas of the house clean and tidy after using them. This applies to male and female students equally, and to all students regardless of their family background. Your hosts will expect this of their own sons and daughters.

Treat your hosts with respect, the same way you would treat your own parents. Even though you pay them money they are the boss in their own home.

The homestay fee

On arrival in your homestay accommodation you are required to pay homestay fees and a bond. Details of payment will be included in your Confirmation of Enrollment (COE) letter.

Establish a payment system with your host. In Australia it is usually expected that students in homestay will pay their fees two weeks in advance on a due date agreed by both host and student. Host families do not like to have to ask students to pay fees and if this occurs regularly it can create tension between host parents and the students.

The host family will issue you with a receipt to show the amount paid and the date your next payment is due.

The bond money is refundable within two weeks of you leaving your homestay providing there have been no breakages, damage or outstanding accounts. The bond money should not be used to pay for the last two weeks of homestay. You may need to pay extra money if you do not give two weeks notice to your host family.

Homestay changes

Occasionally problems will occur in a homestay placement. It is important to seek assistance as soon as a difficulty occurs as problems can often be resolved with communication between staff, students and host families.

Although it may be difficult, please let the Accommodation Office staff know if you have any difficulties in the homestay. Accommodation staff will only speak to the homestay if you agree to this and we may be able to offer some advice on ways to solve any issues.

You are required to remain at least 5 weeks in any homestay and changes cannot be made without consulting the Accommodation Office. After 5 weeks, a student over 18 years may prefer to move to independent accommodation. Students under 18 year of age must live in fully supervised accommodation and can not move unless the move is agreed to by the Accommodation Office.

If you intend to return home for a short holiday, travel in Australia, or for any other reason you are absent from the homestay for more than one week a holding fee will apply. It is important that you keep the host family notified of your intentions.

Food and meals

Be on time for all meals. It is essential that you inform your host family at breakfast time if you will be late for dinner or do not require an evening meal.

The biggest adjustment to life in Australia for most students is getting used to Australian food. Our food reflects our multicultural society. You may be served 7 different national styles in a week. Be positive and optimistic about your new food adventure. Try everything at least once. You may be pleasantly surprised. Try to help at meal times by setting the table, helping prepare the food, clearing the table or washing the dishes.

Breakfast

Breakfast is usually a meal where everyone helps themselves. Breakfast usually includes cereals, toast and tea or coffee. Your host will show you where the breakfast foods are kept. When you have finished breakfast, put cereals and bread back into the kitchen cupboard and milk, butter or margarine back into the refrigerator. Put your dishes in the dishwasher or sink and make sure that the bench top and table are clean after you have finished your meal.

Lunch

Lunch is not included on Monday to Friday of a normal semester week. Even if you do not have scheduled classes on a particular day during the week lunch is **not** included. Lunch will be provided on weekends, public holidays and school holidays. If you would prefer to take lunch, you may be able to negotiate with the host family to pack lunch. This will incur an extra charge.

Dinner

Dinner should be eaten with the family whenever possible. Sharing a meal and discussing the day's events is an excellent way of improving your English and learning about Australian culture. Your host family will also be happy to include foods that you like. You may want to suggest special sauces and spices for everyone to try. You may wish to offer to cook your host family a meal from your own country. The Adelaide Central Market has many international food stalls and you are likely to find some favourites from home.

Your Room

You will be provided with a furnished room containing a bed, somewhere to store your clothes, a desk, a chair and desk light. Keep your room tidy. Your host family may vacuum your room but you are responsible for keeping it clean. Turn off electrical appliances when you leave the room (lights, heaters, electric blankets etc).

Don't make any changes to your room without asking your host family. You may be allowed to put pictures or ornaments in your room to make it feel like 'home'. It is very rare to have locks on bedroom doors in Australian homes. However, you are entitled to privacy.

Other members of the household should always knock before entering and your hosts should make your room is not accessible by young children and pets. Most families won't mind if you want to buy a small TV or stereo for your room, but keep the volume down and turn these appliances off before you go to sleep.

Do not store food in your room. This may attract pests and even with the best intentions it is very easy to spill food in the bed or on the floor.

Wet clothes should not be dried in your room or draped over heaters to dry because this could easily start a fire. See **laundry** for more information about washing and drying clothes.

Bathroom

Most Australian bathrooms have a shower, a bath and a toilet (some toilets are in a separate room). There will be a shower curtain or screen which is used to keep the water inside the shower bay. The hand basin is used by family members for cleaning their teeth or for washing their face, not for washing their bodies. The bathmat, which looks like a small towel is used to stand on after stepping out of the bath or shower to avoid getting the floor wet. The hand towel is usually on a rail near the hand basin; this is for drying your hands after washing them. If there is a ceiling fan, switch it on while you have your shower. Some homes will have a ceiling heater, which is used in cold weather. Rubbish is placed in the rubbish basket and used toilet paper is put straight into the toilet bowl and flushed.

Bathroom Etiquette

In most homes you will share the bathroom with other members of the family. Australians usually shower once a day, before or after work, and do not have baths very often. Australians use the bathroom to get clean as quickly as possible, using as little water as possible. After a 5-10 minute shower, dry your hair, get dressed and apply any makeup back in your bedroom. In some households five family members may be getting ready for school and work in the morning. Hot water is usually stored in a tank, and one 25 minute hot shower can mean the rest of the family gets cold showers.

- Australians are very conscious of the cost of power - and long showers mean big heating bills.
- Australia is a very dry country and water is a precious commodity. In Adelaide households pay for the water that is used. Australians are encouraged from a young age not to waste it.
- Australian bathrooms are not built for splashing water around. Australians wash inside the bath and don't stand outside it to splash water over themselves.
- All family members are expected to leave the bathroom tidy, clean and reasonably dry after using it.
- Wet towels are usually hung on a rail in the bathroom after use so that they can dry. Australians use the same towel for several days.
- Male household members are expected to lift the toilet seat when going to the toilet, to prevent urinating on it. The seat should be returned to the original position afterwards.
- Students who come from countries with squat toilets may be tempted to stand on the toilet seat. Australian toilets are built for sitting on. Australians are very conscious of leaving the toilet clean for the next person so make sure that you have not splashed urine on the seat or floor before leaving the toilet.
- Female household members are expected to wrap tampons and sanitary pads in a paper bag and place the bag in the rubbish bin. These items don't go into the toilet as there is a strong chance they will cause a blockage to the sewer.

Laundry

For students under 18 years of age, the host family will usually wash the students clothing. Other students will be expected to wash their own clothes. You will always need to do your own ironing. Your hosts will explain the system to you when you move in.

If your host does all your washing for you, leave your dirty clothes in the basket provided so that they can pick it up anytime. Offer to hang the clothes on the line or to bring them in when they are dry.

Your hosts will understand if you want to hand-wash your own underwear, but ask where you can do this. Do not wash underwear in the bathroom hand basin. Ask your hosts for advice on how to hand wash items in the laundry. If your host does not do your washing for you, they will allow you to use the washing machine and will show you how to use it. Australians use the washing machine once or twice a week when they have reasonable quantities of washing, not every day.

Clothes are usually dried outside on a clothesline, not inside or in clothes drier. Driers are used sparingly. If it's wet outside and there is no dryer, ask your host what to do. Do not hang wet clothes on furniture, heaters or anywhere in your room.

Telephone

You will be allowed to use the homestay phone, but will be expected to pay for your calls. Discuss the rules for using the phone with your host when you arrive. Australian telephone bills are itemised, showing the phone numbers called and the cost of each call. Most students will be expected to pay for calls as they go along. Some options for paying for your telephone calls are:

Phone cards

You can buy phone cards which can be used from private home phones. You enter your card's PIN number on the telephone keypad, and then dial the number you want. The cost of your call is debited from your card's account and your hosts don't get billed for your call. You will have to pay for a local call. Phone cards can be bought from various stores around Adelaide. Speak to students who have been in Adelaide for a while for the best and cheapest place to buy cards.

Reverse charges (collect call)

When you make a collect call you are connected through an operator and the call charges plus a connection fee are billed automatically to the person you are calling. The connection fee can be very expensive so this service should be used only in an emergency. Speak to your host family for help if you want to make a collect call.

Phone etiquette

- Try to finish any call at the homestay in less than 15 minutes as other family members may be expecting calls or waiting to use the phone.
- Ask your family and friends not to ring you before 7.00am (later on weekends) or after 10pm Australian time as household members may be sleeping during these hours.
- Do not use the homestay phone to call a mobile unless you have permission from your host. It is expensive to call mobile phones from a landline home telephone.
- If someone rings for a family member while they are out, offer to take a message. Write down the name and number of the caller and make sure you pass the message onto your host family.

Computer and Internet Access

Internet access is not included in the homestay fee or student residence fee and students should be prepared to pay for this service. Your host family or residence manager will advise you about how to access the internet.

There are many internet companies and you should 'shop' around to get prices and plans that suit you. If you are able to use the host family internet services please make sure that you respect this privilege. Do not use the host family internet to download music or movies. Do not access unsuitable or offensive websites on the computer.

If you are under 18 you will not be able to sign a contract for internet provision.

Lights, heating and cooling

Lights

Light bulbs are turned off when a room is not in use as this will reduce the consumption and cost of electricity. Australians usually sleep with the lights out however, talk to your host family if this is difficult for you.

Heating/ cooling

International students often find Australian homes cold, especially in the winter. Australians homes don't have a central heating system and host families don't like their houses hot. They are also conscious of the cost of power. Australians generally put on more clothes or blankets before turning on the heating.

If you feel cold, make sure you are dressed for the cold. If you still feel cold, tell your host and see what they suggest. They will probably turn the heater on for a while, or may give you a heater for your room. Room heaters should be used only when necessary and should be turned off before you get into bed. Sleep between the sheets and under the doona or blankets, not on top of them. If you are still cold, speak to your host family again.

Heaters are never left unattended as a fire can easily start. Never buy an electrical item (heaters, fans, etc) to use in the homestay without consent from your host family.

Household waste

Most local councils recycle certain waste items. In these areas householders may be required to separate the rubbish into various categories, usually glass and plastic bottles, newspapers and papers (recyclable) and food scraps, metals and some plastics (non-recyclable). Some hosts will put food waste into the garden as compost. Your hosts will show you the different containers for different kinds of rubbish. Some student residences have a recycle system - you can help the environment if you separate your waste.

Punctuality and absences

Australian people do not like to be late for appointments and people are expected to be punctual at all times. Students must be on time for classes.

There are attendance requirements attached to the issue of your visa and absences are viewed seriously both by the educational institution and the Department of Immigration. In the event of illness, please ask your host family to let your educational institution know that you will not be attending classes on that day. If you are in residence accommodation, please telephone yourself.

You must organise appointments and other commitments outside school hours. If you are unable to do so please see your teacher to let them know in advance the reason for the absence.

Having friends or visitors around

Your hosts will be happy for your friends to visit, but ask first before inviting a friend. It is important that you don't invite anyone into the house in your hosts' absence, especially people your hosts have never met. There should not be too many visitors at a time, and they should leave at a reasonable hour (before 10 pm).

It should be okay for you to have a friend stay overnight once in a while if there is room. Always ask your hosts in advance so they can arrange to accommodate your friend. If this friend is of the opposite sex, your hosts will most likely feel uncomfortable with you sharing the same room. Generally, you should avoid entertaining a friend of the opposite sex in your bedroom.

If you are under 18 you may only stay away from the homestay if you have permission from your host family or Accommodation Office and you can not stay in share houses or student residences.

Pets

The majority of Australian homes have pets, usually a dog or cat. The family animal can be a very important member of the family. Many students who haven't had much contact with dogs or cats are surprised to find how much they end up liking the homestay pet. Your host family will advise you on how to handle and care for any family pets.

The Accommodation Officer will try to find you a homestay without pets if this is what you have requested, especially if you have religious or health reasons for your decision.

Communication

Relax, smile, don't worry and have fun. Your host family will be patient. You might be able to spell a word but not be able to pronounce it well, write it down and work it out with your host family. It may take a short time for you to understand the Australian accent. If you feel that you have not been understood, ask for help from a teacher on your next school day or access the interpreting service.

Smoking

In Australia you cannot purchase cigarettes unless you are 18 years or over. Student residences do not allow smoking inside and the government has actually banned smoking inside buildings because of health risks. Some educational institutions have a rule that smoking is not acceptable within a hundred metres of the grounds.

Most Australians do not smoke and non-smoking host families do not allow smoking inside their home. If you are allowed to smoke in a homestay, it will only be outside of the house. Please discuss this with your host family and remember to dispose of cigarette butts in the appropriate place.

If you intend to smoke in Australia you should be honest about this on your application as people who do not smoke are often sensitive to cigarette smoke on other people's clothing and hair.

Alcohol

Like cigarettes no one in Australia under 18 years of age is permitted to buy alcohol. It is common for Australians over 18 years of age to enjoy an alcoholic drink and you may be offered a drink of beer, wine or spirits during your stay. You do not have to accept the drink and your guests will not be offended if you refuse the drink or ask for a non-alcoholic drink instead.

It is definitely **not** acceptable to bring alcohol into your homestay or student residence without permission.

Going out and staying with friends

If you are going out and expect to be late home, ensure that you leave the name, address and telephone number of the people you will be with and tell your hosts where you plan to go. Always give them an estimate of the time you expect to be home and if you are delayed, send a text message or telephone to let your host know.

Your host family will be concerned if you do not arrive home at the stated time. If you are at a student residence, always let someone know what time you expect to be home.

Keep money aside for a taxi fare every time you go out because you might miss the last bus or train home and your hosts will not be able to collect you. If you come home late, after 10pm, enter the house quietly.

Let your hosts know in advance if you wish to stay at a friend's place overnight or for a few days. Leave your friend's address and contact details. If you are under 18 years old you may only stay with another host family if you have permission from the Accommodation Office or your homestay. You can not stay in share houses or at student residences with friends.

Personal safety

While Adelaide is a safe city there are some basic safety rules to remember.

On the Street

- Try not to walk alone on the street. Always tell your host family where you are going and what time you will return
- Carry your bag securely and do not carry more cash than you need
- If you feel unsafe head for the nearest well lit or populated area

On Public Transport

- Check timetables, avoid lengthy waiting periods and try to stand with other people in a well lit area
- If possible have someone collect you at your bus stop
- Sit near the driver or other people and if you feel unsafe alert the driver

Party Safe

- Plan how you are going to get home. Book a taxi or find out about Night Moves bus service which provides transport from the City after midnight. Contact the Passenger Transport Board on 8210 1000 between 7am – 8pm, 7 days a week
- Help friends to stay safe. Take it in turns to not drink and keep a eye on the rest of the group
- Never put your drink down or take your eyes off it. Drink spiking can happen and you would not be able to taste it. Do not accept drinks from strangers
- Do not get into the car with a person who has been drinking

ATM and Banking Safety

- Avoid using Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs) in isolated or dark areas
- Be aware of any one around you who may be watching you
- Keep your Personal Identification Number (PIN) a secret
- Put your money away quickly trying to avoid others seeing how much you have

Emergency phone numbers

Life Threatening Emergency	000
From Mobile Phones (even if locked)	112
Police Attendance	131 444

Report all crime and threatening incidents to the Police. Police can only act if they have information from the public. You may be able to prevent someone else from becoming a victim of crime.

Finding help

From time to time students experience problems or difficulties in their accommodation, with a bank, with friends or with study workloads. It is important that you seek help as early as you can so problems and difficulties can be resolved. The smallest of problems can become very big if not dealt with early.

Rather than spending time worrying or becoming angry at a situation, find someone to talk to. The Accommodation Office staff can talk to your host family and negotiate a resolution, help you find suitable independent accommodation, make appointments for you to see the student counsellor or give advice on any aspect of your stay in Australia.

Teaching staff at your education institution are also very happy to help you find a solution to any problems you are facing. Don't worry that you will offend your host family or anyone with whom you may be having difficulties. Australians are usually willing to listen to your side of the story and work though any problems with you.

Important contact information

Office	Telephone	Address
SAIBT/ CELUSA Accommodation Office	8302 1027	Level 5 Brookman Building University of South Australia – City East campus Corner North Terrace and Frome Road ADELAIDE SA 5000
Eynesbury Accommodation Office	8216 9141	16-20 Coglein Street ADELAIDE SA 5000
Department of Immigration Citizenship (DIAC)	131 881	55 Currie Street ADELAIDE SA 5000