

Pre-departure Guide

for International Students

**the
Gordon**
Institute of TAFE Australia



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Getting ready

Pre-departure checklist

Before you leave home to study in Australia, there are some important things you need to do. We've prepared this checklist to help you get started.

- Arrange your student visa.
- Make travel arrangements and book flights.
- Arrive at least ONE week before semester starts, so you don't miss orientation and enrolment.
- Book airport pickup (we offer a free airport pickup service for new commencing international students).
- Organise accommodation.
- Arrange some Australian currency to use on arrival.
- Check the baggage allowance of your airline and pack personal belongings.
- Check what you can and cannot bring into Australia.
- Prepare an important documents file, i.e. a copy of passport, visa, Confirmation of Enrolment and overseas Student Health Cover.
- Obtain medical records and any necessary medical prescriptions if you have a medical condition.
- Organise childcare and school for your children (if applicable).



Arriving in Australia

When you enter Australia, you need to go through passport control, baggage claim customs and biosecurity.

Passport control

Make sure you have your passport, visa and completed incoming passenger card ready. You'll receive an incoming passenger card on your flight to fill out with your personal information, details about your visit and biosecurity and customs requirements.

Baggage claim

Passengers will be escorted to collect their baggage. Follow the screens with your flight number to identify which carousel your luggage will arrive at. Certain foods cannot be taken through customs so this is your chance to discard any food from the plane.

Customs and biosecurity

After you have collected your bags, the last step before you exit the airport is passing through customs and biosecurity. Australia has strict rules about what you can bring into Australia. These include how much money you can carry, vitamins and medicines (pharmacy or natural/traditional), food items, pets and animal products. For more information on items you must declare and what items you cannot bring into Australia, [click here](#).

Student visa

The Department of Home Affairs [website](#) provides comprehensive information about student visa application processes, requirements and costs. Please allow enough time for visa processing as it can be a lengthy process; we recommend at least 2-3 months before your course commencement date. [Click here](#) for further information about student visas.

Your visa is subject to a number of conditions that you must comply with. Different visa conditions apply to you and your family members. Breaching a visa condition may result in the cancellation of your visa. These conditions include (but are not limited to):

- Maintaining satisfactory academic progress.
- Maintaining a minimum of 80% attendance at all times.
- Paying your fees on time.
- Meeting the written terms and conditions of The Gordon.
- From 1 July 2023, you must not work more than 48 hours per fortnight during teaching periods.
- Notify The Gordon each time you change your address or mobile number within 7 days.
- Maintain Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) for the duration of your visa.
- If dependent children accompany you to Australia, the school-age children must be enrolled in school.

To see your specific conditions, work and study entitlements, [check your visa grant letter or Visa Entitlement Verification Online \(VEVO\)](#).

Arranging travel

Please arrive at least one week prior to your start date as specified on the Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE). When traveling to Geelong, there are two airports you can arrive at Melbourne (Tullamarine) Airport and Avalon Airport in Geelong. The Gordon offers a free airport pick-up service for new commencing international students. To enquire about the airport pick-up service or shuttle bus, please [contact us](#).

Students with families

If you bring your family members to Australia as your dependents while you study, it is important to consider the following issues:

- Requirements and costs for student dependent visas.
- Cost of supporting a family in Australia, including childcare, schooling, food, clothing, accommodation and other necessities.
- Potential work restrictions for your spouse.
- Whether to come alone to Australia first and arrange things for your family or to all come at the same time.



Living in Australia

About Geelong and Werribee

Geelong is the second largest city in Victoria. It is only one hour from Melbourne and 30 minutes from the world-famous Great Ocean Road. Close to the city and the coast, Geelong offers an affordable cost of living and a wonderful sense of community.

The Gordon has two campuses in Geelong. The Geelong City Campus is conveniently located opposite the Geelong train station. East Geelong Campus is located just 10 minutes drive from the Geelong City Campus and is home to our on-campus accommodation.

Werribee is a suburb on the western edge of Melbourne that is easily accessible by public transport. It only takes 30 minutes by train to travel to the Melbourne city centre. Our Werribee Campus is located on Watton Street, right in the heart of the urban city centre and boasts new, state-of-the-art labs and classrooms.

For more information about Geelong, Werribee and our campuses, visit the following resources:

- [Geelong and Werribee](#)
- [Campuses](#)
- [Visit Geelong and The Bellarine](#)
- [Geelong and the Bellarine](#)
- [Werribee](#).

Weather

Geelong enjoys a warm and temperate climate, with cool, wet winters and warm, dry summers. In winter (June to August), the median day temperature is 10 °C but be prepared for cold mornings at 6 °C. In summer (December to February), the days are longer, with a median day temperature of 21 °C. However, you can expect a number of hot days when temperatures can be over 40 °C.

Find out more information about Australia's climate, including weather forecasts from the Bureau of Meteorology.





Living costs

Geelong has a lower cost of living compared to other capital cities like Melbourne or Sydney. The following table lists estimated expenses for one person. This is a guide only and will vary based on your accommodation type and individual needs. If you're bringing family with you, you need to allocate extra funds per year for each family member.

Accommodation type	
The Gordon Student Residence (including utilities)	\$155 per week
Private share accommodation	\$155 - \$200 per week
Private apartment, unit or house	\$250 or more per week
Homestay single (full board including meals)	\$315 per week

Other living expenses	
Utilities (gas, electricity, water and Internet) at private accommodation	\$20 - \$50 per week
Public transport in Geelong	\$20 - \$40 per week
Public transport between Geelong and Melbourne	\$90 per week
Food and groceries	\$50 - \$150 per week
Phone and Internet	\$15 - \$30 per week
Entertainment and leisure	\$50 - \$150 per week
Car (after purchase)	\$150 - \$260 per week

Additional costs	
Overseas student health cover - Allianz (single)	\$596 per annum

The Insider Guides 'Cost of Living Calculator' is also a useful, practical tool to help estimate your cost of living in Australia.

Accommodation

There are plenty of accommodation options for international students, including on-campus, off-campus and homestay.

The Gordon Student Residence is a friendly and welcoming place to live and a great way to make new Australian and international friends. It is located at our East Geelong Campus, only a 10 minute bus ride from the Geelong City Campus. On-campus accommodation rent is \$155 per week and includes a spacious and furnished private room, utility bills and wifi, shared kitchen, bathroom, laundry amenities and communal living areas. [Click here](#) to find out more details.

Renting a room in a share house with other tenants is a good way to live independently while sharing costs. Each tenant has their own bedroom but shares the other facilities such as the bathroom, kitchen and living areas. You can also choose to rent a private unit or house, where you will be required to sign a lease or contract with the real estate agent or property owner. Private rental usually requires a security bond and two weeks' rent in advance and often comes unfurnished.

We recommend that you arrive at least two weeks before semester starts to conduct your own research and make an informed decision on suitable accommodation. Do not sign any agreement before you have seen the property for yourself. Make sure you bring referee reports and documentation of any rental history with you.

You can book short-term accommodation online at a local hostel or motel while you search for private accommodation. The Gordon Student Residence also offers short-term accommodation. Contact international@gordontafe.edu.au for more information about price and availability.

For more information and resources on accommodation options, visit:

- [Study Melbourne - Living and accommodation](#)
- [Insider Guides - Student accommodation in Australia.](#)

Student residence in Geelong
 **YouTube**



Mobile phone and internet

If you are bringing a mobile phone to Australia, make sure that it's 'unlocked' - not restricted to your home network. You can purchase an Australian SIM card to insert into your phone. You can purchase a pre-paid SIM card from a mobile phone company (such as Telstra, Optus, Vodafone, Virgin Mobile) or most supermarkets. Alternatively, you can sign up to a post-pay longer-term contract.

Internet and wireless access is available at all campuses. Most private accommodation will also have arrangements in place to enable internet access for students, although these may incur a charge.



Banking

Banking in Australia is easy and we have a wide range of banks that offer discounts, internet banking and even free financial advice for international students. To open a bank account, you'll need your CoE, passport, Letter of Offer and photo identification (i.e. passport).

Student accounts normally have the benefit of "no bank fee charge". With a debit card, you can withdraw money from the Automatic Teller Machine (ATM) or make a purchase via Electronic Funds Transfer Point of Sale (EFTPOS) at most supermarkets and shopping places. Internet and mobile banking are widely used in Australia and you can utilise these facilities to check your account balance and make payment for tuition fees and rent.

Some major banks across Australia are:

- ANZ
- Commonwealth Bank
- National Australia Bank
- Westpac.



Commonwealth Bank



Voltage/electricity

The standard voltage for electrical items in Australia is 240V. If you bring your own electrical appliances, make sure that you are equipped with the appropriate transformer/adaptor. Alternatively, there are many discount electrical stores where you can buy appliances items (hair dryer, iron, rice cooker) at reasonable prices (i.e. JB Hi-Fi, The Good Guys, Big W, Target, Kmart and Harvey Norman).

Health and wellbeing

It is a condition of your student visa that you have Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) for the duration of your student visa. OSHC will help you pay for visits to the doctor, some hospital treatment, ambulance cover and limited pharmaceuticals (medicines). The basic OSHC usually does not cover dental and optical services. Many OSHC insurers can also provide OSHC Extras cover for these common services.

OSHC arranged through The Gordon will be with **Allianz Overseas Student Health Cover**. You can choose an alternate provider if you wish to organise OSHC by yourself. For a list of approved providers, visit https://www.privatehealth.gov.au/health_insurance/overseas/overseas_student_health_cover.htm.

A General Practitioner (GP) doctor is your first contact for all non-emergency health issues. For emergency medical treatment, it is best to go directly to the Emergency Department of a public hospital or call for emergency ambulance transport by dialling 000.

You can search for a GP on **Healthdirect Australia** or check with your OSHC provider for a GP who can submit your claim directly to your OSHC provider.

You must make an appointment to see a doctor and take your OSHC card to your appointment. If you have to pay upfront for the visit, remember to keep the receipt and claim a refund from your OSHC provider.

Mental health issues can also affect international student experience and success. Living in a new culture can be challenging. If you feel lonely or stressed, talk to friends, staff or a campus counsellor. For more serious issues, your GP can refer you to professionals who can help.





Safety

Australia is generally a very safe place to live and study, but it is still important to look after yourself and be aware of the risks.

The sun and surf are enjoyable for visitors and locals alike but can also be risky. The Australian sun can be very hot in summer and you should always be careful to protect your skin. Always choose a patrolled surf beach for swimming, where lifesavers are on duty.

Fire awareness is essential in Australia, whether you are in urban or rural areas. In the months between October and March, parts of Australia can experience extreme heat and, with that, bushfires.

Roads in Australia are generally well maintained and often shared between large and small vehicles, heavy and light rail, bicycles and even pedestrians. Road safety awareness is very important for international students who may not be familiar with Australian road conditions.

Scams can target people from any background. It's important to *educate yourself* on ways to spot scams and how to protect yourself against them.

If there's a life-threatening emergency, call the emergency services for ambulance, fire and police: 000.

For emergency assistance whilst on campus, contact a staff member or security on-campus.

For more information, visit the following resources:

- *Health and safety*
- *Beachsafe - Multilingual*
- *VIC Roads - Safety & Road Rules*
- *Scamwatch*.

Transport

Geelong has an extensive public transport network comprised of buses and trains. The main public transport for the Greater Geelong region is bus. Geelong's train service is operated by V/Line, with regular services between Geelong and Melbourne. To use public transport you will need to buy a Myki card and choose the amount of credit to put on it.

Public Transport Victoria (PTV) *website* is a 'one-stop-shop' for information regarding bus and train services. Here you can plan your journey and find out about bus and train fares and timetables for the Greater Geelong region.

Cycling is a fun and affordable way to travel. Geelong has bike lanes in the city, but you need to be aware of the road rules for bicycles. See the VicRoads *website* for information on cyclist safety.

If you prefer independence, then driving and exploring Australia's attractions by road is for you. If you have a valid driver's licence in your country, you could be eligible to apply for an international driver's licence when you arrive. Everything you need to know about roads, rules and licensing in Australia is available at the VicRoads *website*.



Working in Australia

You may choose to work in Australia while you are studying. This can help you to earn some extra spending money and gain valuable language and cultural experiences. The Gordon Career Services provides free and confidential counselling appointments to all students.

International students have the same rights and protections under the law as any Australian in the workplace. *For more information* about work rights in Australia, visit Fair Work Ombudsman

Before working in Australia, it is crucial to obtain a Tax File Number (TFN). Your TFN will ensure that you get taxed at the correct rate. Australia has a tax-free threshold of \$18,200, meaning you will pay no tax if you earn less than this amount in one year. If you have any tax taken from your earnings, you will need to complete a tax return at the end of the financial year. Visit the Australian Taxation Office *website* to find out more information.

Finding work in Australia



Australian culture

Australians are known for their relaxed lifestyle, particular slang and informality. Make sure you take the time to understand our proud Indigenous history.

Some important points about Australian culture:

- Men and women are treated equally in Australian society, as are people from all levels of wealth, authority and occupation.
- Australians enjoy watching and playing sport.
- In Victoria, Australian Rules football is very popular during the winter. You might like to choose a team to support.
- Punctuality is important. If you are going to be late or cannot make the appointment, it is polite to telephone and let the person know.
- People stand in queues when waiting at the bank or to get on a train or bus or to buy tickets.
- It is considered bad manners to spit, sniff and litter in public.
- Respect other people's privacy – don't go into other people's rooms or offices without getting permission.
- Turn off your mobile phone if you are in an appointment with someone or in class.

Welcome to country



Studying at The Gordon

Orientation and enrolment

It is compulsory for international students to attend the International Orientation to help you get familiar with study and life at The Gordon. International Orientation takes place the week before your course starts.

International Orientation includes activities that help new international students settle into Gordon life: information about facilities, student support, enrolment, your campus location, ID card, meeting fellow students and your program managers as well as information that will help make the most of your time here at The Gordon.

Your enrolment will be completed by the International Office before course commencement.



Key dates and timetables

Semester dates, study breaks and public holidays can be found on The Gordon website.

Timetables are available via The Gordon website.

International student rights and responsibilities

Australia provides the world's most rigorous protection for international students through the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act, ensuring you receive a quality education and protection as a consumer. The ESOS Act protects your rights as a student, outlines your responsibilities as an overseas student, and importantly, sets the standards Australian education providers must meet when offering education services to overseas students.

More information about international student rights and responsibilities can be found on The Gordon *website*.

The Gordon Student Conduct Policy applies to all Gordon students and aims to ensure the safety, comfort and well-being of everyone at The Gordon.

Success in your studies

You may find that studying in Australia is different in the following ways:

- You may call your teacher by their first name – usually they will prefer this to a more formal title.
- You will be invited and encouraged to be involved in class discussions.
- Teachers would like you to make comments based on your own experience. It is also important that you listen carefully when other students make comments and the teacher responds. Even if you are not directly involved, you can learn from the discussion going on around you.
- You will also be expected to undertake independent studies for your assignments. This means that you will develop independent learning skills – the ability to use the library, internet and other sources of information. If you are having trouble in these areas you must talk to your teacher as soon as possible.
- Plagiarism – taking someone else's work and presenting it as your own – and copying from other students is banned.

Study tips

- Get involved in Orientation
- Don't be afraid to ask for help
- Get to know your teachers
- Establish a weekly study routine and follow it
- Use different techniques to help you understand and learn
- Find a balance between work and study
- Take regular breaks.

Studying in another country can be exciting and challenging, however, you may experience culture shock. It may take time to adjust to life in Australia. The Gordon is here to support you, so please ask for help if you need it.

Student Support

Students can access a wide range of resources and support services at The Gordon. Support services are free and can help make your life easier! Balancing work, life and study can be tricky so it's great to know you'll be supported through your study journey.

- International Office
- Customer Services
- Study Support
- Personal Counselling
- Career Services
- Library
- Accommodation
- Free on-campus Wi-Fi and Office 365.

More information about our services can be found on the student portal.

Student Services at The Gordon



the Gordon
Student Services

The Gordon Institute of TAFE

2 Fenwick Street, Geelong

Victoria, Australia 3220

Contact Us

Phone: +61 3 5225 0920

Email: international@gordontafe.edu.au

Mail: Private Bag 1, Geelong Mail Centre

Victoria, Australia 3221



Accessibility enquiries phone +61 3 5225 0835 or email disabilitysupportservices@gordontafe.edu.au



Quality Training Guarantee

The Gordon's Vision

The Gordon's vision is to be the first choice in our markets and the leader in our field.

We are committed to complying with all our regulatory requirements as a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) in the vocational education and training (VET) sector.

The VET Quality Framework

As a quality assured RTO, The Gordon has a regulatory obligation to comply with the requirements of the VET Quality Framework. The framework includes the:

- Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015
- Australian Qualifications Framework
- Fit and Proper Person Requirements
- Financial Viability Risk Assessment Requirements
- Data Provision Requirements

A complete version of the VET Quality Framework is available at asqa.gov.au

thegordon.edu.au