



DU *Abroad*

# AUSTRALIA STUDY ABROAD GUIDE

2020-21



*Please use this booklet in conjunction with the DU Study Abroad Handbook*

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## INTRODUCTION

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This handbook will provide you with a general overview of issues involved in traveling to Australia. We thank the U.S. State Department for sharing with us the Australia safety and travel information in this handbook. Please use this guide in conjunction with the DU Study Abroad Handbook.

We hope this information will assist you and your family in preparing for your time abroad. It is important that you review all the information – as well as the information sent by the Australian university – before you depart the U.S. and that you take these materials with you to Australia.

Studying abroad is an exciting opportunity. Nothing during your college years is likely to change you more. You will learn about another country and another culture. You will also learn to look at your own country from a different perspective and most important, you will learn more about yourself. So, we encourage you to invest yourself fully into this experience.

How much you gain from this opportunity will depend on your preparedness, flexibility and responsibility. Review the general pre-departure information the OIE provides you. Complete the administrative and academic matters that need to be taken care of before you leave. Research the country and city you will study in. Review some of the suggested readings in Study Abroad Handbook about what it means to go abroad. Be respectful of other cultures; things are not better, they are not worse, they are just different. Learn to accept, not expect. Remember, you are there to complete an academic program successfully, just as if you were at DU. Good time management and goal setting are keys to handling a challenging academic program and becoming familiar with life outside the classroom.

Most of all, we want you to have a great experience and to make the most out of this opportunity. And when you return, be ready to share your stories with others. Your personal experience will be the best source of inspiration for others.

Safe Travels,  
*The OIE Team*

## IMMIGRATION

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### Australia Student Visa

Immigration requirements for students studying abroad in Australia are available in the [Apply for Immigration](#) section of your DU Passport checklist.

### Tourists to Australia

Tourists traveling to or transiting through Australia – such as family or friends – who are ***not studying at an Australian university*** may be required to apply for a visa well in advance of their trip to Australia. Anyone who arrives in Australia without a valid travel document, visa or authority can be refused entry to or delayed until their identity and claims to enter Australia have been confirmed.

- **US Citizens:** All US citizens who are traveling to or transiting through Australia for tourism purposes for less than 90 days must have an approved [Electronic Travel Authority \(ETA\)](#) before the start of their trip. This label-free visa can be obtained at the [ETA website](#) for a small service fee.
- **Non-US Citizens:** Please consult the [Australian Department of Home Affairs](#) for specific immigration requirements and related fees.

## PREPARING FOR YOUR PROGRAM

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### Passport

You must have a valid passport for traveling to Australia and to obtain a student visa. If you do not already have a passport, apply for one immediately. New passport processing can take several weeks, especially during the holidays. If your passport will expire while you are abroad, renew your passport right away.

**US Citizens:** Consult the [US State Department's website](#) for guidance on how and where to apply. Your passport must be valid for the duration of your time abroad and **up to six months after your program ends**. If an emergency passport is needed prior to departure, please contact your local US passport office for assistance.

**US Passport Office - Denver**  
**\*for emergency passports only\***

Call (877) 487-2778 to schedule an appointment  
3151 S. Vaughn Way, Suite 600  
Aurora, CO 80014

**Non-US Citizens:** Consult your country's consulate as well as your country's corresponding [Australian Consulate](#) for pertinent passport information.

All students should make photocopies of your passport before going abroad. In case your passport is lost, a copy can help to replace it:

- *Leave one with a trusted friend or relative in your home country.*
- *Keep one copy with you in a separate place from your original passport.*

### Travel Arrangements

Cherrington Global Scholars should refer to the [Study Abroad Handbook](#) for instructions on booking flights. All CGS-eligible students must book their flights via STA Travel. Non-CGS students should book flights after receiving acceptance from their Australian host university.

### STOPOVERS

When you make your travel arrangements, you may want to ask the travel agent about stopovers. Stopovers are different from layovers in that they are over 24 hours long and are a "perk." Stopovers have restrictions and their prices vary on length of stay and how many you wish to have. Some common

stopovers include Fiji, Hawaii, or New Zealand. **If you are a Cherrington Global Scholar and you choose to include a stopover in your plans, you will be responsible for any costs above the stipend limit to and from Australia.**

## FLIGHT TIME

When you review your ticket, it may seem as if your flight takes two days. In actuality, your trans-Pacific flight should take approximately 14 hours (Los Angeles to Melbourne or Sydney) plus the final leg to your destination. This is because when traveling to Australia, you will cross the International Dateline. This crossing results in the loss of a day. Don't worry, you will "get the day back" on your return flight.

## Customs Regulations

Australian Customs is very strict about what you can bring into the country. Because it is an island country, Australia wants to keep out many of the diseases that affect humans, animals and plants in other parts of the world. In general, it is not possible to bring fresh food, plants or plant products, animal products, wildlife or wildlife products, drugs, firearms or other weapons into the country.

If you plan to bring used camping gear – including hiking boots – into Australia, please make sure the items are as clean as possible (i.e. not caked in mud). You must declare these items when you arrive in Australia because they may need to be treated/fumigated before you can use them in Australia's protected ecosystem. If you try to bring in these items without declaring them, you will be prosecuted and fined. Please closely review Australia's [biosecurity guide for students](#) prior to arriving in country.

## Prescription Medicines

If you are taking regular medication, you should contact [International SOS](#) (use DU membership #11BSGC000067) well before departure to confirm that the medicine and the quantities you will be carrying are allowed into the country. You should also find out what documentation you need to provide to the customs agents. You **CANNOT** mail medicines to Australia.

**IMPORTANT! In order to purchase controlled medications while in Australia, you are required to bring a current (less than one year old) specialist report that includes a letter from your doctor, on letterhead, that describes the qualifications of the specialist, diagnosis, medication and dose.**

Bring this letter in your carry-on. Having only a written prescription will not suffice in Australia for controlled medications.

The maximum allowable amount of medicine you can bring with you is usually a three-month supply. **Keep all medications in the container in which they were dispensed.** Alternatively, you may also secure controlled medications by being referred to a local Australian psychiatrist or medical doctor.

**IMPORTANT! Certain ADHD medicines (such as Adderall) and certain anxiety medicines (such as benzodiazepines) are NOT allowed to be imported into Australia. If you are taking any psychotropic medicines, please discuss this with an International SOS agent BEFORE your program starts.**

To find out more details about Australian Customs regulations, please visit the following websites:

- *Australian Border Force*  
[www.abf.gov.au/entering-and-leaving-australia/can-you-bring-it-in](http://www.abf.gov.au/entering-and-leaving-australia/can-you-bring-it-in)
- *Australian Office of Drug Control*  
[www.odc.gov.au/travellers](http://www.odc.gov.au/travellers)

## Mental Health

Though mental health counseling and related wellness services are available at our partner universities in Australia, such services may be different in scope than what you're used to in the U.S. Additionally, your university abroad may refer you to an off-campus specialist or pharmacy ("chemist shop") in the wider community depending on your personal needs. Be aware that certain services might not be covered under your Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) and therefore may result in additional expenses. Please review your Australian university's OSHC policy for more details on coverage exclusions.

If you have any mental health concerns prior to starting your program abroad, the OIE encourages you to take the following steps early in the study abroad process:

1. **Contact International SOS.** See the [ISOS Services](#) section in our Study Abroad Handbook.
2. **Contact your doctor.** We recommend for you to ask your doctor these questions as conversation starters:
  - a. What strategies should I be using to handle my existing mental health needs abroad?
  - b. What should I be aware of that might signal I need help with my existing mental health needs?
  - c. Can you write prescriptions or a specialist report for my entire length of stay?
  - d. Should I identify a certain type of doctor now that I'll need to visit while abroad?
3. **Research services at your university abroad.** Links to your program's Health & Wellbeing websites are included in the "Resources" section of your program's brochure in DU Passport. However, we advise you to spend time researching additional details such as any available on-



campus support groups, counseling hours, and the locations of campus health facilities.

4. ***Self-disclose any mental health needs in your university application.*** Your university abroad may be able to provide you with beneficial resources, staff contacts, and health/learning arrangements before your program begins.
  
5. ***Use ISOS's Emotional Support Coverage.*** See the [Psychological & Emotional Wellness Considerations](#) section in our Study Abroad Handbook.

# AUSTRALIAN ACADEMIC SYSTEM

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## Academic Culture

There are major differences between the Australian and U.S. academic systems. As a former British colony and a member of the British Commonwealth, Australia's higher education system is based on the British model. There is no educational institution equivalent to the American liberal arts college. The first Australian university was established in 1850, and today there are 40 universities in Australia.

The typical undergraduate program lasts three years (except for some technical degrees or those which require additional certification like nursing, medicine, education, or law) and includes much more academic specialization than is usual in American colleges and universities. Australian students generally concentrate on their major in the first year since there is not a "general studies" requirement as found at most U.S. four-year institutions. Therefore, introductory subjects may be more difficult than at DU. In general, you should be prepared for some differences between the Australian and the U.S. academic systems and be aware that you will experience a period of adjustment.

## Teaching Style

In Australia, a student's academic schedule fluctuates between lectures, tutorials (small group sessions), laboratory work, seminars, and library study. You may find that you have fewer class hours than in the U.S. but you are expected to do a lot more private study and spend much more time in the library.

### LECTURES

The core material of the subject is nearly always given in lectures. In popular subjects, a hundred or more students may attend a lecture. In less popular subjects the lecture may have only a small number of students present. During a lecture there is little – if any – interaction between student and lecturer. The material is usually presented in the form of a monologue from the lecturer, perhaps supported by slides and videos.

### TUTORIALS & LABS

Your opportunity for discussion will occur during the tutorial which has a smaller number of students and where the tutor and the students engage in a dialogue relating to the content of the course. Whereas you are not expected to speak in lectures, you are instead expected to speak in tutorials. Your participation is very important. Science, psychology and technology subjects also have lab sessions. Language subjects usually require time in the language lab.

## Basic Academic Terminology

As you discovered while filling out your study abroad application, the academic terminology used in Australia differs from that used in the U.S. Below are some general terms used in Australia. To find out about other Australian terminology used by your overseas university, refer to your university-specific guide:

### AUSTRALIA

Unit or Subject

Course

Weighting

College

Faculty

Mark

### UNITED STATES

Course or Class

Degree Program or Major

Credits

Student residence on or near campus

Department or Academic Division

Grade

## Assessment (Grading)

For your class grade, you may be expected to concentrate your academic efforts in library research and writing. It is common to have a large percentage of your grade based upon only one or two exams. The tutorials may require you to prepare material, present a paper, read articles or participate in group discussions.

Though many subjects are assessed by written assignments only (essays, papers, presentations), some also require you to pass final exams. Exams can last up to three hours in length. Some may be “open book” exams. In other cases, you may be given a topic or questions beforehand. For the most part, however, the exam will be closed book. In Australia the final exam may count for a larger portion of your grade than in the U.S.

The credits and grades earned on this DU program will appear on your DU transcript. They will not count as “pass/fail.” In order for the credit to apply to your general degree, you must pass with a “D” or better. However, in order for the credit to apply to your major or minor, you must generally pass with a “C-” or better. While the credit earned is considered DU credit and the grades you receive will appear on your DU transcript, these grades will not be figured into your DU cumulative GPA.

To figure out how your Australian grades translate to DU grades, please refer to the [Global Grading and Credit Scales](#).

## Course Load & Credits

You will take 3 to 4 courses per semester. The number of credits you register for must be above the minimum required to maintain your student visa status (full-time student). The number required at your university will be discussed at the overseas orientation. Dropping below this number will put you in violation of your visa status and may result in your deportation. To figure out how your Australian credits will translate to DU credits, please refer to the [Global Grading and Credit Scales](#).

## Learning Differences and Accommodations

If you have certain needs regarding assessment, such as reading assistance, or note taking assistance, please inform your OIE advisor and DU's Disabilities Services Program. Accommodations are called "reasonable adjustments" in Australia. **You also must disclose this information in your application to your Australian university after nomination if you desire disability adjustments abroad.**

Disability services are available in Australia; however, you must give your documentation to the Australian university's disabilities services office so it may determine which accommodations you are eligible for in Australia. Please be aware that any extended time granted for assessments in Australia may be less than what you are accustomed to at DU. For example, "time and a half" for assessments is usually not granted in New Zealand. Any disability or learning adjustments you receive will not be documented on your Australian university transcript.

**Waiting until after your program begins to disclose your service needs may result in you NOT receiving the accommodations you requested!**

## LIVING IN AUSTRALIA

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### Housing (“Accommodation”)

If you participate in a DU Partner Program, DU will help you secure your accommodation. In addition, DU will charge you the DU Study Abroad Housing fee and in turn pay for your rent abroad. You must live in DU-arranged student housing during your program. Please note that, in most cases, students are responsible for paying for their refundable security/damage deposit (bond money) directly to their housing in Australia. Pay very close attention to the bond rules listed in your university’s accommodation contract.

### Flatting

Many of you will be living independently for the first time when you go abroad. This means you will have to deal with issues you’ve never had to deal with when you lived at home or on campus at DU as well as the issues arising from living in an entirely different country.

During your first week with your new flatmates, you should meet as a group and discuss preferences, responsibilities, and arrangements for paying any shared expenses. Some questions to ask each other are the following:

1. *Will there be quiet hours in the flat?*
2. *What are the meal arrangements for the flat? Who will cook group meals? Who will pay for group meals? Who will shop for group meals or shared flat food?*
3. *What is the level of cleanliness acceptable to all flatmates? How will you handle cleaning the flat? Which are group chores and which are individual chores?*
4. *Will there be a policy on visitors to the flat (duration of stay, extra costs incurred)?*
5. *How will you handle flat bills, such as telephone, cable, electricity, and internet? (if applicable)*
6. *How will you sort out flat disputes? If the flat cannot sort out a dispute, to whom will you turn to help resolve it?*

### BILL PAYING

Your flat may have shared bills or expenses. If you are expected to contribute to any flat expenses, you should review all invoices or bills before paying. If your flatmate(s) ask you to pay but do not

automatically give you the invoice or bill, just ask to see it before paying. This is simply a matter of good financial management. If you are unsure about the fairness of what you are asked to pay or if your flatmate(s) won't show you the invoice or bill, talk to the International Office at your host university for guidance on how to proceed.

## **MAINTAINING YOUR FLAT**

On the day you move into your flat, you may complete an Entry Condition Report, which reports on the general state of the flat. Take care when completing this form, noting any damages or items missing prior to you moving in (such as glassware and furniture items). At any time during your tenancy, the flat management may enter, with notice, the common areas of your flat or your bedroom. Generally the flat management will run another Condition Report partway through your tenancy to report on the state in which you keep your flat. Use that report to prepare for your Exit Condition Report, through which you may be assessed damage charges. To avoid paying damage charges, you should thoroughly clean your flat before moving out.

**HINT:** *You cannot wait until the end of your tenancy to tell the management about items that were already damaged or missing when you moved in.*

If any damage is made to your premises either by you or your visitors, whether it is accidental or not, make sure you tell the flat management about it. Remember, you are required to leave the place in the same state it was when you moved in. You will have to pay for any damage that is not considered to be reasonable 'fair wear and tear'.

## **DAMAGE & UNPAID BILLS**

If there are any damages to your flat, the cost for that damage will be taken from the bond money (security deposit). If the damages exceed your bond amount, then your Australian university will bill you directly for those costs and delay issuing your overseas transcript to DU until the amount is paid in full.

## **FALSE FIRE ALARMS**

False fire alarms are a serious matter in Australia. Even if you accidentally set off the alarm by burning a piece of toast, you will be charged upwards of AUS\$400 for each false alarm. Trying to dismantle your fire alarm will also set it off and result in the AUS\$400 fine plus damage costs to the fire alarm.

## **BEHAVIOR**

You need to respect quiet hours, guest policies, and other rules of the flat complex. Your mature behavior ensures that DU can continue sending its study abroad students to Australia.

Have respect for the flat management team. They are not RA's, which means they will not "write you up" for violations. Instead, they will ask you to move out if your behavior is not suitable. If you do not agree

with the flat management about certain issues, please let the OIE know the details of the disagreement so it may intercede.

**HINT:** *If you do not agree with the stated charges for certain services provided by the flat complex, do not use those services. Please do not use those services and then refuse to pay saying the cost is too high.*

## Fitness Center Membership

The Australian government heavily subsidizes university education for its citizens. This means that some on-campus facilities, such as the fitness center, charge for student usage. Therefore, when budgeting for study abroad, consider whether you plan to use the fitness center. You can generally find usage rates on the overseas university's website by searching for "sport" or "fitness."

## Internet

As with the fitness center, you may have to pay for internet usage at your program location. Some universities have unlimited internet usage when you are in the university computer lab. Some universities give you a certain amount of downloads on your account for free.

If there is internet available in your housing, you will most likely pay for your internet usage. Because many other DU study abroad students will be in homestay or other accommodation situations without internet access, DU decided it would not be fair to pay the internet bill for some students but not others.

**HINT:** *While email is a great way to keep in touch with family and friends back here, too much time spent on social media or email will prevent you from having a full study abroad experience.*

## Meeting Aussies

A major goal of study abroad is to develop cross-cultural understanding. In addition to achieving academic success, you should strive to meet Aussies and get to know their culture. Successful strategies for meeting the locals include the following:

1. **Make an effort.** Because the universities host new study abroad students each semester (some of who promise to keep in touch with the locals but never do), the Australian students may not immediately try to befriend you. As the "outsider" you must show that you want to meet the locals and get to know their culture. Be friendly and genuine.

2. **Join an organization.** Each of the universities has a student union or student guild that oversees clubs and societies on campus. The university's sport center should also have a listing of social sport clubs that you can join.
3. **Stick around.** While you may be tempted to head out every weekend to travel around the country, doing so will greatly impede your chances of making friendships with local students. Constantly talking about your travel, particularly about expensive excursions, will also turn off the local students, who typically will not have much spending money as an American study abroad student.
4. **Be respectful.** Compare and contrast gets old fast. Talking non-stop about your personal belongings, including cars and other expensive items in the U.S., will merely reinforce stereotypes about Americans and prevent you from getting to know Australians.
5. **Know your politics.** Most likely you will be asked by Aussies about your political stance. Questions about your political views generally will be well-intentioned and made by people genuinely interested in hearing your perspective. Be careful not to get offended or defensive when these questions arise. Also, try not to compare and contrast governments. Your best move is to remain open-minded in political discussions.

Keep in mind that you are only there for a short time so you want to make the most of your time in Australia.

## Tipping

Tipping is not customary in Australia and service charges are not added to hotel or restaurant bills. However, tipping in restaurants is becoming more common, especially in high-end restaurants and bars, where you may want to tip up to 10% for good service. You are not required to tip taxi drivers although they accept rounded-up tips.

## Water

Australia is a very dry country and water is a precious commodity. Many Australian cities and towns experience droughts and may enforce water use restrictions. Do not waste water unnecessarily. Tap water in Australia is clean and safe to drink.

## Weather

As you may already know, the seasons are reverse of those in the Northern Hemisphere:



- *Autumn:* March to May
- *Winter:* June to August
- *Spring:* September to November
- *Summer:* December to February

Pack according to the seasonal conditions of your host city. This means bringing warm clothing, including hats, gloves, and scarves. Your warmest sweaters and trousers will also be necessary. Fleece is a practical accessory as is an umbrella. Even within your flat, you may find the temperature colder than you're accustomed to in the U.S. A good sleeping bag and a pair of thermal underwear will help combat the cold. Libraries are popular havens in colder weather because they are generally well heated.

While your host city may not have as many days of sunshine as Denver, you must wear sun block and sunglasses whenever you are outside because there is a hole in the ozone layer above New Zealand. UV levels are high, too, because there is relatively little pollution overhead.

For information about weather conditions, refer to the Australian Government Bureau of Meteorology's website: [www.bom.gov.au](http://www.bom.gov.au). To convert from Fahrenheit to Celsius, subtract 32 then multiply by 5/9. To convert from Celsius to Fahrenheit, multiply by 9/5 then add 32.

To help you remember approximate temperatures in Celsius, consider that:

- *Water freezes at 0° Celsius: 32° Fahrenheit*
- *Water boils at 100° Celsius: 212° Fahrenheit*
- *Normal body temperature: 37° Celsius/98.6° Fahrenheit*

## Electricity

Electricity in Australia is 220-240 volts. In the U.S. it is 110 volts. This means that if you plug your 110 hair dryer directly into an Australian plug **it will BURN OUT!** Transformers are therefore required and these are probably best bought in the U.S. Make sure however, that your transformer is configured for the three pin Australian plug. If you cannot get one of these in the U.S., consider buying one upon arrival in Australia. However, some hairdryers and curling irons will get dangerously hot, even when using adaptors. Consider purchasing these items upon arrival.

If you buy appliances in Australia, you will almost certainly have trouble running them when you get back to the U.S.

## Religion

As one of the most multicultural countries in the world, Australia is accepting of all religions and your right to practice your faith without persecution or discrimination is protected by law. To find out where you can

practice your faith in your community and/or on your campus, talk to the Australian university's international office or the university's chaplain.

## Aussie Slang

Even though Australia is an English-speaking country, when you first arrive, you may have to listen carefully to understand the Australian accent. Below you'll find a helpful list of Aussie slang.

**ACE:** Great, the best

**BANANA-BENDER:** someone from Queensland

**BEAUT/BEAUTY:** expression of approval

**BERKO:** crazy or extremely angry

**BITE YOUR BUM:** go away or be quiet

**BLOKE:** average fellow

**BOTTLE SHOP:** liquor store

**BREKKIE:** breakfast

**BUCKLEY'S:** no chance

**CAR PARK:** a parking lot

**CHOCK-A-BLOCK/CHOCKERS:** completely full

**CLICK:** kilometer

**COBBER:** friend

**COP SHOP:** police station

**CRISPS:** potato chips

**DAG:** a tacky or clueless person

**DODGY:** of questionable character, shady

**DUNNY:** toilet (usually outside)

**FLAT:** apartment

**FOOTPATH:** sidewalk

**FULL ON:** intense

**GOB:** mouth

**GOOD ON YOU:** expression of congratulations

**GROUSE:** great, fantastic

**AMBER FLUID:** beer

**BANGER:** a sausage

**BEG YOURS?:** could you repeat that

**BICKIE/BISCUIT:** cookie

**BLIND:** extremely intoxicated

**BLOODY:** the great Aussie adjective

**BONZA:** great

**BRING A PLATE:** instruction to bring food

**C'ARN:** abbreviation of come on

**CHIPS:** French fries

**CIGI:** cigarette

**CLUEY:** intelligent, smart

**COLDIE:** a beer

**CRACK ONTO SOMEONE:** to hit on someone

**CUPPA:** cup of tea or coffee

**DAKS:** trousers

**DRONGO:** idiot

**EARBASHER:** a talkative person

**FLATMATES:** roommates

**FOOTY:** football/rugby game

**GALAH:** fool, silly person

**GOOD-OH:** expression of satisfaction

**GROG:** booze

**HARD YAKKA:** hard work

**HEAPS:** a lot, many

**I'LL BE BLOWED:** expression of surprise

**KIWI:** New Zealander

**MATE:** common form of address, usually males

**NICK OFF:** leave, depart

**ON YA:** expression of encouragement

**POSTIE:** postman, mailman

**ROCK UP:** to show up, to arrive

**SANGER:** sandwich

**SHEILA:** chick, woman

**SPUNK:** sexy or good-looking person

**TA:** thank you

**TRACKIES/TRACKIE DAKS:** sweat pants

**WACKER:** crazy or funny person

**ZONKED:** extremely tired

**HOOROO:** goodbye

**JUMPER:** sweater or jacket

**LOLLIES:** sweets, candy

**MILK BAR:** convenience store

**NICKED:** stolen

**PASH:** a long passionate kiss

**RIPPER:** terrific! Great!

**ROPEABLE:** angry

**SERVO:** gas station

**SKIVVY:** a turtleneck

**SUNNIES:** sunglasses

**THONGS:** flip flops

**UNI:** university

**WALKABOUT:** to describe something that's lost

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

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### Mandatory Australian Health Insurance: Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)

DU has purchased mandatory Australian health insurance for you called Overseas Student Health Cover. The OSHC helps you pay for any medical and/or hospital care you may need while in Australia and most prescription drugs and emergency ambulance transportation. The OSHC also entitles you to use the on-campus health facilities at your university and other general practitioners. Each of the Australian universities uses different OSHC providers; the specific information is provided with the Offer of Admission to the program. The OSHC **does not begin until you arrive in Australia** and **does not apply to travel outside of Australia**. You will receive more details on OSHC during your on-site orientation upon arrival to your host university.

### ADDITIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE

Even though you will have insurance in Australia through your study abroad program, we require that you **DO NOT** cancel your U.S. insurance policy while away from school because if you have to come home mid-term for any health reasons, you will need U.S. insurance to continue your coverage.

If you waived DU health insurance in the past, we recommend that you contact your current health policy provider to find out what type of coverage it offers while abroad (especially if you plan to travel outside of Australia). If your current policy does not cover you while abroad, you should consider additional insurance options. For specific details about DU's health insurance and its international coverage, please check with DU Health Services.

### Vaccinations

No vaccinations are currently required for travel to Australia. However, travelers can check the latest health information with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, Georgia. A hotline at 877-FYI-TRIP (877-394-8747) and a website at [www.cdc.gov/travel/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/travel/index.html) give the most recent health advisories, immunization recommendations or requirements, and advice on food and drinking water safety for regions and countries.

If you plan to visit other countries while you are abroad, check with the CDC to find out what vaccinations may be required. If you require a vaccination, you can make an appointment with your physician or contact the [DU Health and Counseling Center](#).

## Emergency Number

The standard emergency phone number in Australia is **000**.

## Medical Facilities

Excellent medical care is available in Australia. Serious medical problems requiring hospitalization and/or medical evacuation to the United States can cost thousands of dollars. Most doctors and hospitals expect immediate cash/credit card payment for health services.

## Air Pollution

Air pollution has become a significant problem during certain months in Australia due to large bush fires. Consider the impact seasonal bush fire season pollution may have on you, and consult your doctor before traveling if necessary.

## Adventure Sports

Many students studying abroad in Australia plan to participate in adventure sports, such as bungee jumping, hiking, rappelling, climbing, and kayaking. Injuries and death can result from participating in such activities. You should **use caution and common sense** when engaging in adventure sports. Also, please closely review your Overseas Student Health Cover and your personal insurance policies to understand if your activities are covered prior to going abroad.

**Never participate in adventure sports alone.** Always carry identification and let someone else know where you are at all times. Before kayaking, check the river conditions and wear a life jacket. When hiking, rappelling, or climbing, carry a first aid kit and know the location of the nearest rescue center. Visit the [US Centers for Disease Control](#) website for additional outdoor safety advice.

## Traffic Safety & Road Conditions

Visitors are reminded that all traffic operates on the left side of the road, and that all vehicles use right-hand drive. Visitors should use caution when crossing streets and when driving. When crossing roads, pedestrians are reminded to look carefully in all directions. Seat belts are mandatory. Speed limits and laws regarding driving while intoxicated are rigorously enforced. Roads and streets are frequently narrower and less graded than U.S. highways. Outside the major metropolitan areas, most highways are two-lane roads with significant distances between destinations.

As a reminder, according to the Association for Safe International Road Travel (ASIRT), the single greatest cause of death and serious injury abroad is road accidents. These far exceed deaths resulting from disease, violence or terrorism, so use your best judgment if you choose to drive and know the risk you are taking. **DU does not encourage students to drive while abroad because driving abroad can be difficult, dangerous, and expensive.**

## Other Safety Issues in Australia

### AUSTRALIAN FAUNA

Visitors are cautioned that Australian fauna can be as dangerous as they are inspiring. From jellyfish off the Great Barrier Reef to crocodiles and sharks, poisonous insects and snakes, the continent and its waters host wildlife that merit awe and respect in equal doses.

Further information on Australian wildlife may be obtained from:

- *Australian Institute of Marine Science*  
[www.aims.gov.au](http://www.aims.gov.au)
- *Wet Tropics Management Authority on Marine Life*  
[www.wettropics.gov.au/aquatic-ecosystems](http://www.wettropics.gov.au/aquatic-ecosystems)
- *Wet Tropics Management Authority on Plants & Animals*  
[www.wettropics.gov.au/plants-animals](http://www.wettropics.gov.au/plants-animals)

### BEACH

Swimmers should use safety precautions, swim between the flags only where a lifeguard is present, and never swim alone. Scuba diving can be a treacherous sport. Over the past few years there have been numerous deaths related to diving incidents. Divers are urged to follow recommended precautions and never dive alone.

### SUN

With little ozone layer, the sun can have harmful effects. Take particular care between 10am and 3pm, when UV levels are at their highest. Be sure to wear sunscreen, cover exposed skin when possible, wear close-fitting sunglasses to protect your eyes, and seek shade whenever possible.

### LEARNING TO BE AN AUSTRALIAN PEDESTRIAN

Though it seems simple and silly, you must re-train yourself to look **FIRST RIGHT, THEN LEFT** when crossing the street since traffic drives on the left side of the road in Australia. Every year DU students come home with stories of getting hit by bicycles or even cars when crossing the street.

## COMMUNICATION IN AUSTRALIA

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### How to Call Home

First, call home as soon as you can after arrival because your family is anxious to hear from you. Give your family your abroad phone number, email address and mailing address so they know how to reach you in the event of an emergency.

To make a direct call to the U.S. using a phone that provides the direct dialing option, dial: **0011+ 1 + area code + phone number**

### CALLING CARDS

Pre-paid calling cards in Australia are inexpensive, while calling rates with cards from the U.S. are much higher. Therefore, we recommend you get a calling card when you arrive in Australia. Cards can be purchased almost anywhere: at the airport, newspaper shops and markets.

### TIME DIFFERENCES

Whatever calling method you use, consider the time difference before you call home. To calculate the time difference between your home and host city, check out [www.timeanddate.com/worldclock](http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock).

### Mobile Phones

The OIE recommends for you to connect with [recent returnees](#) about their experiences with using mobile phones in Australia. Many Australian universities are also now including information on mobile phones during Orientation Week. However, since your communication needs may vary, most students pursue one of the following options:

### INTERNATIONAL CALLING PLAN

This involves keeping your phone and arranging an International Calling Plan with your current carrier (Verizon, Sprint, AT&T, T-Mobile, etc.) that goes into effect when you depart the US. If you do this, make sure your phone is compatible with the kinds of network frequencies available in Australia (i.e. CDMA technology vs. GSM technology). Also, International Calling Plans can be fairly expensive depending on your carrier.

**TIP:** Contact your current carrier about available International Calling Plans, minutes, data costs, network compatibility, your phone's frequency compatibility, etc. **before** leaving the US.

## AUSTRALIA SIM CARD

This involves keeping your current phone and purchasing a SIM card that's compatible with the mobile carriers in Australia: [Optus](#), [Vodafone](#), [Telstra](#), and [Virgin](#). You have the option of purchasing a SIM card and a mobile voice/data plan either online ahead of time before leaving the US, or after clearing Passport Control in Australia. The OIE recommends for you to research those mobile carriers in advance to determine:

1. If their plans meet your needs...
2. If their network coverage meets your needs...
3. If their plans will work in other countries you'd want to travel to nearby...
4. If their plans are compatible with your current phone...
5. If their plans will allow you to "Top Up" if your SIM card package expires while abroad.

**TIP:** *Make sure your phone is unlocked before you go abroad! If it's not unlocked, you will not be able to activate your new SIM card. Ask your current mobile carrier about how to unlock phones.*

## WIFI ONLY

This involves keeping your phone in Airplane Mode the entire time you're abroad and use FaceTime/WhatsApp/Skype/etc. for data calls over WiFi. This is not recommended if you plan on traveling to areas that do not have reliable WiFi access. Also, public WiFi may be slower in Australia than what you're used to in the US.

**TIP:** *Keeping your phone in airplane mode might interfere with apps that require an active phone number to work properly, such as some local Australia apps or text messaging apps.*

## RENT A PHONE

This involves renting a mobile phone through a major Australia carrier after arriving in country. You can also do this at a major Australian airport after clearing customs, or reserve one online in advance.

**TIP:** *Visit the Australia mobile carrier websites ahead of time to see if it's possible to reserve your phone before arrival. Some carriers may require you to have an Australia address.*

Whichever option you choose, make sure to **avoid roaming** with your US mobile plan while abroad because it can become very expensive very quickly!



## Email

The Australian university may provide you with a local email account. Please make sure that you continue to check your DU email regularly (or forward it), as this is how the OIE will maintain communication with you. Keep in mind, however, that you may or may not have internet access in your housing, and you may have to pay for internet use both on- and off-campus. Check your housing and host university's websites to find out about internet access where you'll be studying.

## MONEY IN AUSTRALIA

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### Bank Account

You have the option of opening a bank account while in Australia. A bank account will allow you to keep your money in a safe place and avoid ATM charge fees. Information about how to open an account at a local bank will be provided by your host university upon arrival during Orientation Week.

### ATM Cards & Credit Cards

Make sure you know how to contact your bank from overseas. Find out if they offer a 24-hour customer service help line and **what their emergency phone number is for calls from outside of the U.S.** If your bankcard is lost or stolen, you should notify your bank immediately. Also, be sure to confirm with your bank that your card has an international 4-digit pin (this is usually the case, unless you have a small hometown bank).

Most credit cards, such as MasterCard, VISA or American Express, can be used in Australia as well as worldwide.

If your credit card is lost or stolen, you must contact the financial institution that issued your card **immediately** and report it lost or stolen. You should keep a copy of your financial institution's name, its customer service phone number and your card account number in a convenient place separate from your card.

### Traveler's Checks, Cashier's Checks, Money Orders & Personal Checks

We **DO NOT** recommend taking traveler's checks, cashier checks, money orders or personal checks. Although banks will accept your checks, they will not give you cash for them until they have cleared through the whole banking network, which usually takes 6-8 weeks or longer.

**We recommend that you keep a copy of your passport, credit card numbers, insurance contact numbers, and airline tickets in a separate place from the originals. You should also leave a set of copies at home with your family.**

## Australian Currency

The Australian currency follows a decimal system. The Australian Dollar (AUD\$) is divided into 100 cents. Notes come in denominations of \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50 and \$100 and differ in color and size. Coins come in \$1 and \$2 dollars and 50c, 20c, 10c and 5c and differ in color and size. Start to familiarize yourself with the currency, both notes and coins, as well as exchange rates. Check out the [XE Currency Converter](#) or the [Oanda Currency Converter](#) to figure out conversion rates. Remember that exchange rates change daily. Please continue to check rates while you travel.

You may want to carry a small amount of local currency before you leave, \$80 to \$120 Australian dollars, for the first few days, and especially if you plan to arrive on a weekend. You can exchange money at a U.S. bank or airport before departure or at an Australian airport upon arrival. ATMs are also widely available.

## Cost of Living

Certain costs of living may be more expensive in Australia than what you are used to in your home country. Groceries, dining out, and entertainment in particular tend to be relatively high depending on your location, your lifestyle, and your personal needs. The OIE therefore encourages you to closely research the cost of living in Australia and develop a budget for the duration of your program. If your program does not include a meal plan, it is highly advised for you to create a food budget ahead of time.

Though the OIE does not provide specific budget numbers to students, we recommend for students to take the following actions prior to going abroad:

1. **Contact returnees** who participated in your program within the last few years. The latest returnee list will be linked in your DU Passport Checklist.
2. **Contact your study abroad program directly** for estimated expenses or budgeting tips.
3. **Use a cost comparison tool** to evaluate common expenses. For example:
  - [Numbeo Cost of Living Comparison Tool](#)
  - [Insider Guides Cost of Living Calculator](#)
4. **Explore local supermarket websites** to compare the costs of specific foods you might buy abroad. Some grocery chains may also post their weekly mailers online, such as:
  - [Aldi](#)
  - [Coles](#)
  - [FoodWorks](#)
  - [IGA](#)
  - [Woolworths](#)

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Please visit the [U.S. Bureau of Public Affairs](#) and the [U.S. Bureau of Consular Affairs](#) websites for more information on Australia.