



STUDENT HANDBOOK



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Living in Sydney

Sydney

Sydney is the state capital of New South Wales and the most populous city in Australia and Oceania. Located on Australia's east coast, the metropolis surrounds the world's largest natural harbour and sprawls towards the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Blue Mountains to the west. Sydney is the secondary official seat and secondary official residence of the Governor-General of Australia and the Prime Minister of Australia.

The Sydney area has been inhabited by indigenous Australians for 40,000-60,000 years. The first British settlers, led by Captain Arthur Phillip, arrived in 1788 to found Sydney as a penal colony, the first European settlement in Australia. Since convict transportation ended in the mid-19th century, the city has transformed from a colonial outpost into a major global cultural and economic centre.

Sydney is one of the most multicultural cities in the world with 58% of its population made up of first- or second-generation immigrants. It ranks number one for International Student destinations. Sydney accounts for 25% of Australia's total economy with 1 in 3 finance jobs in Australia located in Sydney.

The Study Sydney website is a useful source of information, established by the New South Wales government with information specifically on Sydney and regional cities in New South Wales. The website address is <http://www.study.sydney/>

Climate

Sydney enjoys a humid subtropical climate with four distinct seasons in the year - spring, summer, winter and autumn. Below is a guide to the average daily temperatures.

Spring September - November 11-23°C

Summer December to February 19-30°C

Autumn March to May 15 - 22°C

Winter June to August 9 - 17°C

Maximum temperatures can reach up to 45°C in summer and minimum temperatures as low as 2°C in winter.

Australia has a high average UV index rating and the second-highest rate of skin cancer caused by sun damage in the world. The UV index measures the danger of UV radiation on a particular day. A rating over 3 requires sun protection. A rating over 11 is considered extreme.

App	Function	Apple	Android	Cost
SunSmart	The SunSmart app is a free app developed by the Cancer Council of Victoria and will provide the UV rating for a given day.	✓	✓	Free

Festivals and Events.

Sydney's [Royal Easter Show](#) is Australia's largest annual event and there are numerous religious, artistic and cultural events held throughout the year. Sydney is also home to world-class museums and galleries such as the [Museum of Sydney](#) and the [Art Gallery of NSW](#). For music lovers, the UNESCO World Heritage-listed [Sydney Opera House](#) has events year-round and Sydney hosts multiple outdoor music festivals.

For a full list of festivals and events visit <http://www.sydney.com/events-festivals-and-celebrations>. Some Apps to help you explore the city are listed below.

App	Function	Apple	Android	Cost
Sydney Australia Official Guide	Guide to events in and around Sydney.	✓	✓	Free
Time Out Sydney	Guide to Sydney bars, shops and restaurants.	✓	✗	Free
Eventbrite	List of local free and paid events.	✓	✓	Free
Australian: Art Gallery of New South Wales	Behind the scenes information about collections in the Gallery.	✓	✗	Free
Australian Museum	Self-guided tour of the Long Gallery and extra information about artefacts.	✓	✓	Free
Sydney Opera House	Events at the Opera House and information for guided tours.	✓	✓	Free
Walking The Rocks	Self-guided tour of the historic Rocks district.	✓	✓	Free
Sydney Culture Walks	Self-guided tour walks across Sydney.	✓	✓	Free
NPWS Self-guided Tours	NSW parks and wildlife services self-guided tours to National Parks.	✓	✓	Free
Nature Near Me	Created by the NSW Government to help you explore natural areas around Sydney.	✓	✓	Free
Sydney Wildlife	A field guide to the wildlife that can be found in and around Sydney.	✓	✗	Free

Religion

Australia is traditionally a Christian country; however, all religions are represented in our multicultural society. Australians respect the freedom of people to practise their choice of religion. Churches, mosques, temples and synagogues are located in major cities.

Clean, safe, cosmopolitan

Students from all over the world come to Sydney to take advantage of our world-class education and enjoy our friendly hospitality and cultural diversity. Sydney has low crime rates and strict gun control laws providing a safe environment in which to learn and travel. With one of the highest standards of living in the world, Sydney offers modern transport systems, cosmopolitan shopping complexes and excellent health services.

Food

Sydney has a fantastic variety of food. Our quality meat, fish, fruits and vegetables are exported to markets all around the globe. There is a large range of fruit and vegetables available at produce markets. You should have no difficulty in finding the foods that you are used to at home.

You can sample almost every type of cuisine available throughout the world in our many restaurants. There are elegant restaurants or pubs. Ethnic restaurants offer cuisines from all around the world. Good food at reasonable prices can be found at bistros or cafes. And for those who like takeaway, most of the major global fast-food chains are well represented.

Some food apps to use around Sydney are:

App	Function	Apple	Android	Cost
EatClub	Shows restaurants in your area with flash deals.	✓	✓	Free

App	Function	Apple	Android	Cost
Groupon	Deals on food and goods in your area.	✓	✓	Free
UberEats	Food delivery service from local restaurants	✓	✓	Free
Deliveroo	Food delivery service from local restaurants	✓	✓	Free

Transport

With one of the highest standards of living in the world, Sydney offers modern transport systems. Sydney has an extensive public transport system that includes commuter rail, light rail, buses and ferries, four major national airlines and several regional airlines.

Transport for NSW public transport services use the Opal ticketing system. [Fares](#) are controlled by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal of New South Wales. An Opal card is required for use on public transport in Sydney and requires funds to be available on the card prior to travel. [Opal cards](#) can be purchased from most newsagents and at manned train stations and the domestic and international airports.

Metered taxicabs operate in all major cities and towns. You will find taxi ranks at transport terminals, main hotels or shopping centres or you can hail taxis in the street. A light and sign on the roof indicate if a cab is vacant. There is a minimum charge on hiring and then a charge per kilometre travelled. Taxi drivers do not have to be tipped. Uber cars are also available.

Some Sydney travel apps are listed below.

App	Function	Apple	Android	Cost
Opal Travel	Allows you to monitor and top up the balance on your opal card.	✓	✓	Free
Transit	Shows information for next departures for all stops in your area and allows booking of Uber drivers.	✓	✓	Free
TripGo	Shows door to door transit options as well as allows you to sort trips by time, cost and environmental impact.	✓	✓	Free
TripView Lite	Shows real-time data for departures including seats available on buses and allows you to plan routes from all stops in Sydney.	✓	✓	Free

Cost of Living and Money Matters

Money and banks

The Australian currency is the only legal tender in Australia. When you first arrive, money from other countries can be changed at the exchange facilities located at international airports, banks, major hotels and currency exchange kiosks in major shopping centres. Traveller's cheques are easier to use if already in Australian dollars; however, banks will cash traveller's cheques in virtually any currency. Major hotels and some shops, depending on individual store policy, will cash traveller's cheques.

It is a good idea to set up an Australian bank account. You will need to provide your visa and evidence of residency. All major banks have a branch in cities and regional centres. Most shopping centres have Automatic



Teller Machines (ATM) facilities. These machines can be used for withdrawals and, in many instances, deposits 24 hours a day.

Normal bank trading hours:

9.30 am – 4.00 pm Monday to Thursday

9.30 am – 5.00 pm Friday

Some banks are open Saturday mornings.

Credit cards

Credit cards are widely accepted around Australia. The most commonly accepted credit cards are Visa and Mastercard. Be aware that not all shops will accept American Express or Diners Club International cards. Some businesses will charge a surcharge for using credit cards to make payments.

Tipping

Tipping is not the general custom in Australia and service charges are not added to accounts by hotels and restaurants. In better-class restaurants, it is usual to tip food and drinks waiters up to 10% of the bill for good service. However, at any time, tipping is a matter of individual choice.

Student Discounts

While international students do not qualify for student discounts on Australian public transport the PIA student card can be used to qualify you for student discounts at some events and businesses around Sydney such as the Royal Easter Show and cinemas. This is often a significant discount so remember to take your student card when going to events.

Accommodation

The following types of accommodation are available for International students:

- **Hostels and Guesthouses** - \$90 to \$150 per week
- **Shared Rental** - \$95 to \$215 per week
- **Homestay** - \$235 to \$325 per week
- **Rental** - \$185 to \$440 per week

Other living expenses

- **Groceries and eating out** - \$140 to \$280 per week
- **Gas, electricity** - \$10 to \$20 per week
- **Phone and Internet** - \$15 to \$30 per week
- **Public transport** - \$30 to \$60 per week
- **Car (after purchase)** - \$150 to \$260 per week
- **Entertainment** - \$80 to \$150 per week

* Source: <https://www.studyaustralia.gov.au/english/live/living-costs>

This accommodation can be booked prior to arrival. Usually, two weeks' advance notice is required before you depart for Australia. Further details can be obtained from Student Services and Administration (info@pia.edu.au).

Some useful websites for housing are:

Site	Function	Link
Sydney Student Accommodation	A site to help people find shared accommodation with other students in Sydney.	Website

Site	Function	Link
Youth Central	Designed to help young people find accommodation of different types in Sydney.	Website
Student.com	Listing of available student-friendly accommodation in Sydney.	Website
Tenants NSW	Provides information on your rights and responsibilities as a tenant as well as where to find advice on renting in Australia.	Website

Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)

International students are required by the Government to join a private health insurance scheme. The OSHC premium cover must be paid before a student visa is issued. You will need to pay the OSHC premium at the same time as the tuition fees. The OSHC entitles you to free hospital cover and 85% of standard doctors' fees.

Annual Cost of Living

Sydney is a reasonably priced city providing a good quality affordable living. You should work out a budget covering accommodation, food, transport, clothing and entertainment. Childcare, or child schooling costs, if applicable, should also be taken into account. Up to date details can be found at studyaustralia.gov.au you can also use the cost of living calculator at [Insider Guides](#).

The average international student in Australia spends about \$440 per week on accommodation; food; clothing; entertainment; transport; international and domestic travel; telephone; incidental costs. While this is a realistic guide, it is important to remember that individual circumstances will vary by location, course and lifestyle and that Sydney is one of the more expensive places to live in Australia.

The cost of living depends on the kind of accommodation a student chooses. A married student with dependents will need approximately an additional AU\$3,152 per year for each dependent plus AU\$7,362 for their spouse or partner for housing costs.

Some apps to help you keep within your budget are:

App	Function	Apple	Android	Cost
PocketGuard: Money & Budgeting	Create a budget and keep track of saving and overspending.	✓	✓	Free (in-app purchases)
Splitwise	Helps you to keep track of shared expenses such as restaurant meals or household bills.	✓	✓	Free (in-app purchases)
Student Edge	Student discount app.	✓	✓	Free
UniDays	Student discount app.	✓	✓	Free
Gumtree	Trading post site for services and second-hand goods.	✓	✓	Free

Retail

PIA is only a 5 minutes walk to the heart of the Sydney CBD and its retail, cultural, dining and business districts, as well as the local retail, entertainment and dining facilities Sydney has to offer.

For more information on Life in Australia, please visit <http://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/Trav/Life/Aust/Life-in-Australia-book> (Translated copies are available).



Information for Students

Advanced Standing

Granting advanced standing ensures that students commence study at a level that appropriately recognises their prior learning experiences and they are not required to repeat equivalent learning successfully undertaken in another context. The [Advanced Standing Policy and Procedure](#) is designed to both maximise the credit students can gain for learning already undertaken and preserve the integrity of learning outcomes or discipline requirements of the award to which it applies.

Course assessment

A number of approaches to course assessment are used by Institute staff. Assessment approaches may include written exams, written assignments, seminars/presentations and practical assignments.

Students will be given advance warning of the time and form of any assessment and will not be expected to sit an assessment they have not prepared for. If students fail an assessment they will be required to repeat the unit and pay any fees associated with repeating the unit. For further information on the assessment policy and process please refer to the [Assessment Policy and Procedure](#).

Course delivery

A number of approaches to course delivery are used by Institute staff. Course delivery approaches may include teacher-led lecture delivery; workshops; seminars; tutorials and supervised study. During class time students will be expected to participate by, for example, answering questions, giving opinions, demonstrating tasks, working with others in groups, making presentations and role-playing situations.

Qualifications to be issued

Students completing all assessment requirements for a qualification will be awarded a testamur and an academic record. Students completing assessment requirements for part of a qualification will be awarded a record of results (at no cost) indicating which units of study they have successfully completed. Costs may be involved in the re-issuing of academic records or qualifications or for issuing an academic record before graduation.

Student orientation

This PIA program for all students is an exciting and important event that marks the beginning of students' academic lives and careers. Orientation is designed for new students to familiarise themselves with the campus and courses at PIA and help students transition into campus life.

All new students are expected to attend Orientation and International Students must comply with their student visas. Orientation is usually held the Thursday prior to classes starting for each trimester. Students should check their letter of offer for Orientation dates or contact student services on 02 8319 8202 or info@pia.edu.au.

Complaints and Appeals

All students have the right to:

- Appeal against certain academic and administrative decisions taken by PIA.
- lodge a complaint if they feel they have been wrongly treated by PIA or its staff members

International students should also be aware of the implications of PIA decisions for their enrolment and student visa status.

Students can enter a complaint at any time but should be aware that appeals need to be submitted within a set timeframe. For grade appeals, this needs to be within five working days of a student receiving the results of that assessment task. For appealing a grievance outcome, the student must appeal within ten working days of receipt of the decision. Appeals lodged outside of this timeframe may be dismissed.

International students should familiarise themselves with the relevant rights and responsibilities as international students. See the [International Students Factsheet](#).

If you wish to lodge an appeal or complaint, you can get advice on how to proceed from Student Services and Administration or by email support@pia.edu.au

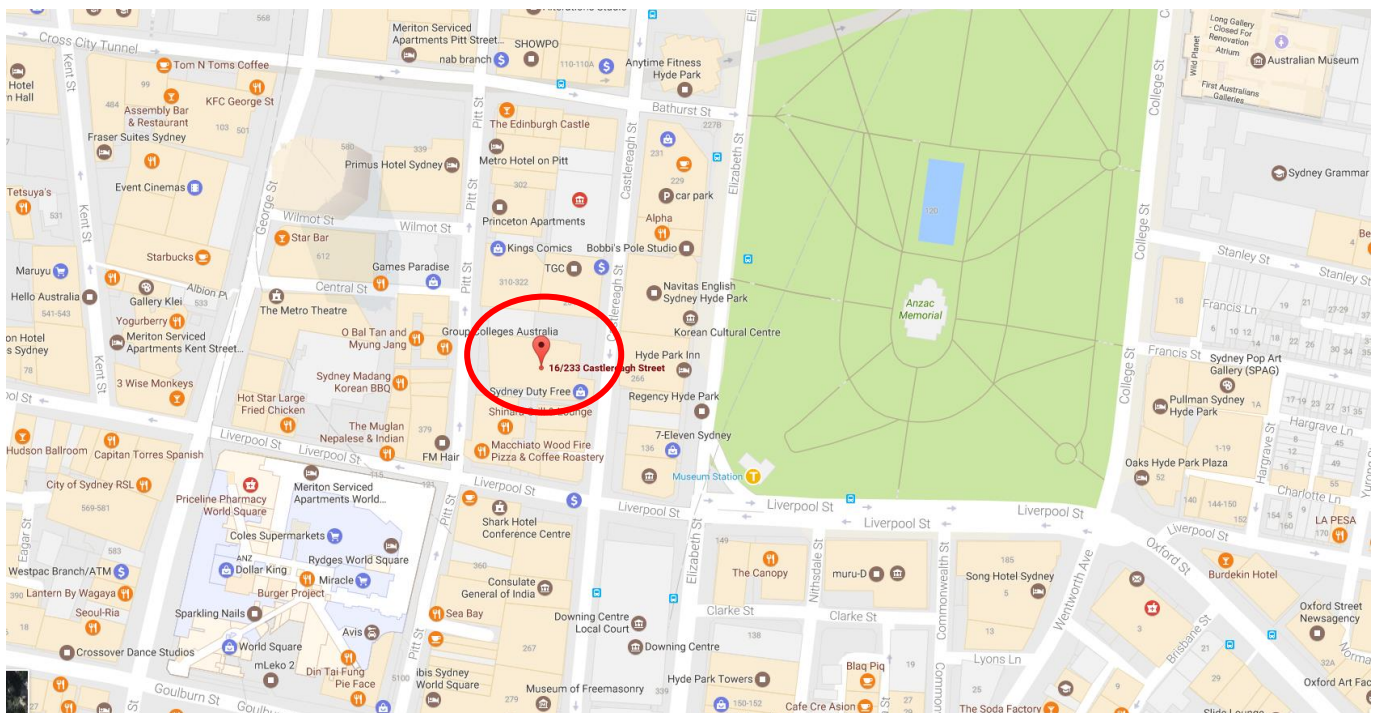
All formal complaints are to be directed to:

Registrar
Level 16, 233 Castlereagh Street
Sydney, NSW, 2000.
Or
registrar@pia.edu.au

For more information, see the full PIA [Student Grievance Handling Policy and Procedure](#).

Facilities and Resources

PIA offers its courses at a metropolitan location close to transport, retail shopping, entertainment and other colleges and universities. Check out the location on Google Maps.



Address: Level 16, 233 Castlereagh Street, Sydney NSW 2000

Public Transport to and from campus

PIA is located in the heart of the Sydney business district, near Museum Station and Town Hall Station and the George Street light rail (tram) routes.

Recognition and Accreditation

Australian Government Registration and Accreditation

Polytechnic Institute Australia is a registered Higher Education Provider and the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) in Australia (Provider Identification Number PRV14049) accredits the Institute's courses.

The courses offered by PIA:

- are accredited by TEQSA and have CRICOS registration (CRICOS Code: 03535M);
- are recognised as being at the same level as similar courses offered by Australian universities; and
- meet the requirements of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).

Professional Bodies and Industry Organisations

International students who study our courses are protected under the Australian Tuition Protection Scheme (TPS).

PIA's degree and diploma programs are of the highest standards, comply with the Commonwealth Government's requirements, and are accredited by the relevant professional bodies, including CPA Australia and the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia and New Zealand. PIA is also an Australian Computer Society Professional Partner.





Policies and Procedures

PIA's policies and procedures are located at: <https://docs.pia.edu.au/documents.html>

Student Support Services

All students at PIA are provided with access to a range of support services designed to assist students in achieving their expected learning outcomes and adjusting to life in Australia.

Studying can be a stressful time, particularly if you are away from your friends and family. Seventy-five per cent of Higher Education students experience depression or excessive stress at some stage throughout their studies.

Below are some tips to help you manage your physical and mental health while studying in Australia.

1. **Eat a balanced diet:** This can be particularly difficult on a student's budget or if rushing between study and work. Try to include more fruit, vegetables and nuts as snacks and limit take-away or fast food. Studies have linked processed food to the overgrowth of bacteria in the gut that has been known to cause fatigue, depression and sugar cravings so it is important to balance them out with less processed food.
2. **Get enough sleep:** This is an area students often struggle with. Good sleep hygiene can make a huge difference to your mental health, energy levels, resistance to infections and ability to study. Try to get up at the same time every day, regardless of the time you go to bed. Having a routine you follow before going to bed helps the mind to get into sleep mode. Avoiding using devices in bed or half an hour before bedtime should help you get to sleep but that is not always possible. [F.lux](#) is a useful tool for students who prefer to study at night. It changes the lighting on your computer at sunset to a red spectrum to promote good sleep.
3. **Take a daily 30-minute walk:** Exercise is essential for good academic performance. Walking gets the blood moving and activates the brain as well as the body. It is often useful to go for a walk if you are stuck on a particular assignment.
4. **Spend time talking with friends and family:** It is difficult to find time to get everything done but it is important not to neglect social and family time. Make sure you take time during your week to socialize with friends outside of the classroom and mention if you are struggling. Most likely, you will find you are not the only one.
5. **Develop assignment writing and time management skills:** A large proportion of stress felt by students is due to leaving assignments to the last minute or due to being unsure of what is required for an assignment. Our Academic Learning Support Officer provides seminars on time management and assignment writing and is available for one on one advice on academic skills for students to drop in or by appointment Monday-Wednesdays. PIA tutors are available by email or for face-to-face meetings to assist with any questions regarding lecture content or assignment requirements. Tutor availability is listed in the unit outline.

Referral to Counselling Services

For students who are struggling with balancing work, family and study requirements, having difficulty adjusting to a new culture, working through grief, dealing with family, financial or medical issues or another area that may negatively impact on mental health or ability to study, PIA can provide a referral to [Mindfit Psychology](#). Students can request a referral to counselling using the student request form sent to the Registrar (registrar@pia.edu.au). This service is provided free of charge and is confidential. It will not be mentioned to PIA staff, family members or other students if you chose to make use of this service.

Some apps to help deal with stress are listed below:

App	Function	Apple	Android	Cost
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MindShift	Mindshift is designed for young adults to help with anxiety, perfectionism, worry, social anxiety, performance anxiety or panic. By learning to think differently about your anxiety you can cope more effectively.	✓	✓	Free
The Check-in	Created by beyondblue to help young people help each other. The app guides how to start conversations about mental health with friends or family you think may be struggling, how best to respond to mental health issues and what you can do to offer support.	✓	✓	Free
Happify	The Happify app is a psychologist-approved mood-training program. It includes games, activity suggestions, gratitude prompts and more to train your brain to overcome negative thoughts.	✓	✓	Free (in-app purchases)
Worry Time by ReachOut	Schedule worrying into your day so your brain can move on to other matters. Also keeps a record of your worries so you can identify recurring problems and deal with them more effectively.	✓	✓	Free
Lifesum	Lifesum allows you to set personal goals, from eating healthier, to getting more exercise. You can also enter your own personal data and let Lifesum generate a “Life Score” to get a personalized roadmap to better health.	✓	✓	Free
Smiling Mind	Training in mindfulness is a technique shown to improve overall mental health, calmness and focus.	✓	✓	Free

Study Skills Workshops

PIA provides extra modules and workshops to help students achieve the best possible results.

Academic Study Skills Module: This workshop focuses on research skills, essay writing, communication skills, referencing and time management for study. It is run by PIA’s Academic Learning Support Officer.

Language Development Module: This workshop is useful for those wanting to improve their use of Academic English and communication skills. It is run by the Academic Learning Support Officer.

Critical Thinking Module: This new module is for students who want to improve their critical thinking and reasoning skills. It is run by the Dean.

Academic skills workshops are also held through the teaching period from 12-1 pm by the Academic Learning Support Officer for any student who wishes to attend.

Topics to be covered will include:

- Academic English
- Reading, research and study skills



- Essay writing skills
- Referencing skills
- Oral presentation skills
- Examination preparation and writing techniques

There will be ample opportunity to ask and answer specific questions.

Academic Learning Support

The Institute provides students with individual Academic Skills Consultations. Students are welcome to visit their lecturers and tutors to make appointments for additional consultations and assistance.

If you would like to discuss any concerns that you may have about your writing or any academic matter that is not limited to a specific unit, you can make an appointment with the Academic Learning Support Officer. The Officer will organise an individual consultation to help you with any specific study-related problem or issue.

Students can also drop in for consultations Monday to Wednesday on an individual basis with the Academic Learning Support Officer. A signup sheet to reserve a 15 min appointment is located outside the Academic Staff room 1 or can be done by email at acsupport@pia.edu.au.

Areas for which you might seek assistance include:

- Academic writing
- Assignment preparation
- Essay and report writing
- English language development
- Learning skills
- Academic integrity
- Presentation skills
- Referencing
- Stress
- Time management

Safety and Security

Polytechnic Institute Australia ensures that student safety remains paramount to its operations. To ensure that PIA can uphold its staff and student's safety the following measurements are active:

- Lift access is only available during campus operating and lecturing hours.
- The facility is monitored by CCTV cameras such that in the event of an incident there may be footage available with the footage deleted after 14 days.
- In the event of an incident, staff and students are encouraged to report it to the Registrar and/or the Dean within 7 days to ensure that the Critical Incident Team can follow up with an investigation.

PIA's 'Designated Officer' is The Registrar (registrar@pia.edu.au)

In the event of a critical incident, please notify the designated officer as soon as practically possible via email by completing the [critical incident report](#).

Some resources to help you stay safe are listed below:

App	Function	Apple	Android	Cost
Emergency Plus	This app has been developed by Australian Emergency services and the Australian government to assist emergency services to locate people calling from their mobile phone. It lists emergency phone numbers, gives GPS coordinates that can be given to Emergency services to help them locate you and allows you to call emergency services in-app.	✓	✓	Free
First Aid	Created by St John's Ambulance Australia this app presents step by step emergency first aid information. It is designed for use by medical professionals but is useful to have on hand for anyone in an emergency.	✓	✓	Free
Beachsafe app	Created by Surf Lifesaving Australia it gives a list of beaches near your location including if they are patrolled by lifeguards and what times they are patrolled, weather, tides information and water temperature at that beach, any beach closures due to dangerous conditions and tips on beach safety.	✓	✓	Free
Floods Near Me (NSW)	Particularly useful if you are travelling in the north of the state. This app will give alerts for floods in progress or areas on flood alert. Be aware there may be a lag in updated information so if in an area on flood watch do not rely solely on this app for information.	✓	✓	Free
Fires Near Me (NSW)	Is designed and maintained by the NSW Rural Fire Services and gives an update on fires as they occur around the state. This is particularly useful if you are travelling outside of Sydney in times of high fire danger. Be aware there may be a lag in updated information so if in a high fire danger area do not rely solely on this app for information.	✓	✓	Free
ABC listen	The Australian Broadcasting Corporation is responsible for emergency broadcasts. If travelling in a regional area with a flood or fire warning you can tune into the local ABC station for live emergency updates, road closures, watch and wait alerts and evacuation orders. This information can also be found on the ABC website. Be aware in a rapidly changing environment the information may be out of date so give precedence to any instructions given to you by local law enforcement or emergency personnel.	✓	✓	Free
bSafe	A personal safety app that can be used to notify friends if you are in an emergency including a function to allow you to notify your friends when you have arrived safely and an SOS button that will alert pre-selected 'guardians' with your location.	✓	✓	Free (in-app purchases)
My Safetipin	Personal safety app that provides safety scores for locations and will alert you if you enter an area with an unsafe rating.	✓	✓	Free



For further details on how to stay safe in Australia, please visit the [Study Australia website](#)

Relevant legislation

A range of legislation applies to all staff and students (see the list below).

It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure the requirements of relevant legislation are met at all times. Use the websites indicated or contact Student Services and Administration if you require further information.

There may be additional, course-specific, legislation that is relevant. Information about this legislation will be communicated during the course.

[Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000](#)

[The Education Services for Overseas Students \(ESOS\) Legislation Amendment Act 2011](#)

[The National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018](#)

[Higher Education Support Act 2003](#)

[Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011](#)

[Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021](#)

[The Copyright Act 1968](#)

[Racial Discrimination Act 1975](#)

[Sex Discrimination Act 1984](#)

[Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#)

[Privacy Act 1988](#)

[Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004](#)

Visa requirements

The Department of Home Affairs publishes a full list of mandatory and discretionary student visa requirements on its website. Follow the [Student Visa Eligibility link](#) for details.

Change of address

Upon arriving in Australia, you are required to advise PIA of your residential address and telephone number and any subsequent changes to your residential address. This is extremely important to ensure you receive correspondence whilst studying. PIA may also send warning notices to you which are aimed at helping prevent breaches of your visa conditions. It is your responsibility and in your own interests to ensure that you always update your address details at PIA to ensure you receive important information about your course, fees and possible breaches of your student visa. PIA will remind you to update any change to contact details every 6 months.



Department of Home Affairs

According to the Department of Home Affairs, you must provide evidence that satisfies the assessment factors applicable to you to be granted a student visa. Assessment factors include your “financial ability, English proficiency, likely compliance with the conditions of your visa and any other matters considered relevant to assessing your application”. Additional information on student visa issues is available on the [Department of Home Affairs website](#) and the [Study Australia](#) website.

Full-time study and attendance

Australian law requires international students to study at a full-time study load. A full-time study load at PIA is a minimum of 8 units per year.

PIA students are required to attend at least 80% of their classes in order to pass the unit (unless other arrangements are made for special circumstances). For students who have unsatisfactory academic progress PIA is required to review your involvement, counsel you, implement an intervention strategy and, if unsatisfactory progress persists, notify the Department of Education and Training. For more information, see PIA [Course Progression Policy and Procedure](#).

Overseas student health cover

Overseas student health cover (OSHC) is insurance that provides cover on the costs for medical and hospital care which international students may need while in Australia. OSHC will also pay for most prescription drugs and some vaccinations as well as emergency ambulance transport.

If you are an international student studying in Australia, you must purchase an approved OSHC policy from a registered health benefits organisation, commonly referred to as a health fund before applying for your visa. You will need to buy OSHC before you come to Australia, to cover you from when you arrive. You will also need to maintain OSHC throughout your stay in Australia. PIA can assist you in obtaining OSHC through our preferred provider Bupa or students can purchase their own through another insurance company. You can find out more about purchasing OSHC [here](#).

School-aged dependents

If you are bringing school-aged children with you when you study in Australia, you will need to arrange for them to attend school. The requirements for enrolling students and school fees vary across Australian states and territories, and schools. For more information about enrolling children in NSW, schools click [here](#). School [fees](#) apply to most dependents of temporary residents in New South Wales.

International student transfer

Under the revised National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers for Education and Training to Overseas (the National Code), registered providers are only able to enrol transferring students in the first six months from the commencement of the student's principal course of study in limited circumstances. For further information on Polytechnic Institute Australia Policy and Procedure on International student transfer click [here](#), and for an application form click [here](#).

Please note that transferring to another education provider may affect your visa.

If your new course is at a lower level, you may need to apply for a new student visa.

For further information, please refer to the Department of Home Affairs [website](#) or contact them on 131 881 to discuss your circumstances.

Under the ESOS Framework, PIA cannot enrol students seeking to transfer from another institute before that student has completed six months of their principal course of study, except in some circumstances. If you want to transfer from PIA before completing six months of your principal course, you need to ask PIA for a letter of release.



The six months are calculated as six calendar months from the first day of your **principal course**. Your principal course is usually the final course of study you will undertake. For example, if you are studying ELICOS followed by a degree program, the degree program is your principal course. If you are considering requesting a transfer before completing six months of your principal course of study, please contact PIA administration for a copy of the transfer procedure and the application form.

Letters of release will be issued to eligible students free of charge.

Students do not need a letter of release if:

- they have completed more than 6 months of your principal course
- they are a government-sponsored student, and their sponsor supports a transfer
- their current education provider or course has ceased to be registered or a sanction has been imposed that prevents your provider from continuing to deliver your principal course

Working in Australia

Like many international students, you may get a part-time or casual job to help pay your living expenses while you study in Australia. It is important that you know your rights in the workplace.

All people working in Australia have basic rights and protections in the workplace, including minimum pay and conditions. The Fair Work Ombudsman makes sure that these rights are protected and enforced fairly under Australia's workplace laws.

This [fact sheet](#) will help you understand your basic workplace rights, where to obtain further information, and how to seek assistance from the Fair Work Ombudsman. For more information, contact the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94 or visit www.fairwork.gov.au.

The above information is extracted directly from the Fair Work website. [Click here](#) for more information.

Under your visa requirements the Department of Home Affairs allows you to work whilst you study for up to 40 hours per fortnight. You cannot work until you have commenced your course in Australia. Once your course has commenced you are permitted to work a maximum of 40 hours per fortnight when your course is in session and unlimited hours when your course is not in session. Work that is a formal registered part of your course is not included in the limit of 40 hours per fortnight. Voluntary work is exempt from this limit with some [exceptions](#).

For additional information about work conditions for student visa holders please visit the [Department of Home Affairs website](#) for further information.

Australia has a minimum wage and it is against the law for an employer to pay you less than that wage even if you agree. The minimum wage varies depending on your age if you are a casual or permanent worker, your industry and the position. For more information about minimum wage visit the [Fair Work website](#).

Tax File Number

All workers in Australia need a Tax File Number (TFN). When starting a new job, you need to inform your employer of your TFN by completing a Tax File Number Declaration form. International students pay tax on their earnings. For further information please visit the [Australian Taxation Office website](#). At the end of each financial year, international students need to apply for their tax returns through an accountant.

Some sites to assist students in finding part-time work:

Site	Function	Link
Seek	Australia's largest job search site.	Website
CareerOne	A job search site.	Website
Jora	A job search site.	Website
Australia Jobsearch	A job search site run by the Australian government designed to help people on unemployment benefits find work. Contains advice on job	Website



Site	Function	Link
	searching, resume writing and interview skills along with job listings. Some of the functions, such as being matched with a job provider, can only be used by people on Centrelink benefits but there is a range of useful information available to everyone. Anyone can apply for jobs listed on this site.	
One Shift	Matches people with short term contract jobs.	Website
Gumtree	Classified ads are usually for one-off jobs, trade jobs or freelance jobs.	Website
Air Tasker	One-off job site where people post tasks they need help with and what they are willing to pay.	Website

Helpful contacts

Fire, ambulance and police emergency	Phone 000 or 112 (mobile only)
State Emergency Services (SES)	Emergency assistance with storm, flood or tsunami damage. Phone 132 500 Website: https://www.ses.nsw.gov.au/
ABC Emergency	List current alerts and warnings Australia wide. https://www.abc.net.au/news/emergency/
After-hours medical services hotline (non-emergency)	Phone: 1800 022 222 Website: https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/after-hours-gp-helpline
PIA Student Services	Phone: 02 8319 802
PIA 24hr Critical Incident line.	Phone: 0434 996 183
Translating and Interpreting Service	Phone: 131 450
Lifeline 24-hour Counselling, Advice and Referral Services	Phone: 131 114 Website: https://www.lifeline.org.au/
Police	Telephone: 131 444 (non-emergency number) Crimestoppers: 1800 333 000 (crime tip line)
Doctors near campus	Sydney CBD Medical Centre™ 242 Castlereagh St. Sydney 2000 P: (02) 9268 0133, F: (02) 9268 0177 https://www.sydneycbdmedicalcentre.com.au/ Sydney Premier Medical & Health Centre 309 Pitt Street Sydney NSW 2000 Phone: 8964 8677 http://www.spmh.com.au/
Pharmacies near campus	Castlereagh Pharmacy 242 Castlereagh Street Sydney CBD, NSW Phone: (02) 9261 3664 CBD Pharmacies 92 Pitt St Sydney NSW 2000 Phone: (02) 9221 0091
Dentist near campus	Dentistry @ Castlereagh Street Level 6, 64 Castlereagh Street, Sydney NSW 2000 Phone (02) 9221-2299 Fax (02) 9221-2366 A Better Smile Dental Centre Sydney CBD - Martin Place Suite 8, Level 2, 64-68 Castlereagh Street Sydney, NSW 2000 Phone: (02) 9427 3366, (02) 9418 6499, (02) 9427 5017
Community health centres	Juanita Nielsen Community Centre



	<p>Corner Nicholson Street and Dowling Street Woolloomooloo NSW 2011 Phone: 02 8374 6323 https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/community-centres/juanita-nielsen-community-centre</p> <p>KGV Recreation Centre 15 Cumberland Street The Rocks NSW 2000 Phone: 02 9244 3600 https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/community-centres/king-george-v-kgv-recreation-centre</p> <p>Redfern Community Centre Redfern Community Centre 29–53 Hugo Street Redfern NSW 2016 Phone: 02 9288 5713 https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/community-centres/redfern-community-centre</p> <p>Pymont Community Centre Corner John Street and Mount Street Pymont NSW 2009 Phone: 02 9298 3134 Phone: 02 9298 3130 https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/community-centres/pymont-community-centre</p> <p>Ultimo Community Centre 40 William Henry Street Corner Bulwara Road Ultimo NSW 2007 Phone: 02 9298 3111 https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/community-centres/ultimo-community-centre</p>
<p>Counsellors</p>	<p>Mindfit Psychology Phone: 1300 668 256 admin@mindfitpsychology.net</p> <p>Lifeline Phone 13 11 14 to access 24-hour crisis support and suicide prevention services. Visit the Lifeline website to find out more.</p> <p>Beyondblue Phone 1300 22 4636 to get 24-hour support for mental health issues including anxiety, depression and suicide. You can also get support through web chat, email and an online forum on the beyondblue website.</p>
<p>Legal assistance</p>	<p>Community Legal Centres NSW</p>

	<p>102/55 Holt Street, Surry Hills, NSW, 2010 Phone: 02 9212 7333 clcnsw@clc.net.au</p> <p>LawAccess NSW free legal helpline 1300 888 529</p>
Tenancy disputes	Fair Trading
Overseas Students Ombudsman	<p>Phone: 1300 362 072 https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/How-we-can-help/overseas-students</p>
Other Ombudsmen (It is required to go through the internal complaints resolution with the offending company prior to contacting the ombudsman).	Commonwealth Ombudsman (complaints against federal government departments)
	NSW Ombudsman (complaints against NSW state government departments)
	Australian Financial Complaints Authority (complaints against banks and lenders)
	Fair Work Ombudsman (complaints against employers)
	https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/How-we-can-help/private-health-insurance (complaints against private Health Insurance companies)
	Energy and Water Ombudsman (complaints regarding gas, water and electricity companies)
	Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman (complaints regarding phone or internet services)
Australian Competition and Consumer Commission	<p>Advise on making a consumer complaint against businesses and alert authorities to potential scams. https://www.accc.gov.au/consumers/complaints-problems/make-a-consumer-complaint</p>
Religious institutions near campus	<p>Anglican Anglican Church Sydney Diocese 507 Pitt St, Sydney NSW 2000 Phone: (02) 9211 0560</p> <p>Catholic Chapel of Our Lady venue for Mass for city workers Level 6 of Polding Centre, 133 Liverpool St (Corner of Castlereagh St) Sydney Phone: (02) 9390 5100</p> <p>Islamic Town Hall Musallah 167B Castlereagh St, Town Hall Pitt Street Musallah 379 Pitt St, Sydney NSW 2000, Australia</p> <p>Hindu Iskon Temple of Sydney 180 Falcon St, North Sydney NSW 2060</p>



Sikh

8 Meurants Lane, Glenwood, Sydney, NSW 2768. (in the Blacktown Council Area)

Phone: 61-2-96226994

www.asainc.org.au

[Gurdwara Sahib Glenwood](#)

Sikh Temple Guru Nanak

81 Kissing Point Rd Turramurra Sydney, NSW 2074

Phone: (02) 9449 8253

[Guru Nanak Gurudwara Turramurra Sikh Temple Sydney](#)

Buddhist

International Buddhist Association of Australia

Address: 2/382 Sussex Street, Sydney, NSW 2000 NSW

Tradition: Mahayana, Humanistic Buddhism

Affiliation: Fo Kuang Shan

Phone: 02 9267 6122

Jewish

166 Castlereagh St, Sydney, 2000

Phone: 61 2 9267 2477

Fax: 61 2 9264 8871

admin@greatsynagogue.org.au