



ELICOS & EAP HANDBOOK

RTO Number: 45992

CRICOS Number: 04115A



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WELCOME

Congratulations! You have received your offer, signed your acceptance and received your Confirmation of Enrolment (eCoE) - now it's time to prepare for your journey to Melbourne.

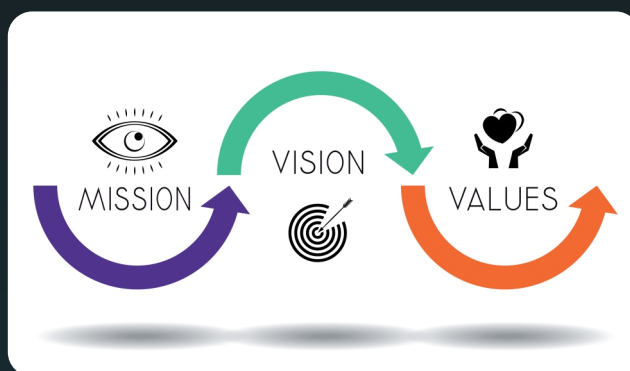
We hope this *Student Handbook* will help you prepare for your arrival in Melbourne and finding your way through your experience at YCA. When you arrive, you will take a level check, and participate in orientation. We will show you everything you need to know.

COLLEGE OVERVIEW

Mission Statement

Our mission is to help people learn English in a fun, friendly and professional environment. We want students to achieve a very high level of English proficiency, and always aim to be as close to a native level as possible. We achieve this by hiring the very best teachers and staff and by focussing all of our energies on the wellbeing of our students and the quality of their education, always remembering that students come first.

We support our students and staff by creating a vibrant, positive and professional environment, rich with opportunity for all. We will ensure the sustainability of our business by operating in accordance with sound business principles and by always adhering to the highest ethical standards.



Key Values and Attributes

We will recruit and promote people who are aligned with our company culture, which places a high value on such things as:

- Integrity / Honesty / Loyalty
- Positive attitude / "Can Do" approach to life
- Sense of fun / Sense of adventure
- Friendliness / Courtesy / Empathy
- Commitment / Hard work
- Proactivity
- Sense of urgency (Do it NOW)
- Teamwork
- Accountability for outcomes / Performance culture
- A commitment to a Students First approach

//// The People & the Vision

Yarra College Australia was formed in Melbourne in 2023 with the objective of being Australia's premier VET & English language college. The founding members of Yarra College Australia have a long and distinguished history in Education, and over 40 years' combined experience in the teaching of English as a second language. This broad experience within the international education industry in teaching, marketing, administration and management, equips the team with a wide and varied skill set so support the success of YCA.



What We Do

Yarra College Australia offers a variety of English language courses and services to international students to assist in their career development and further education in English speaking countries. YCA continually evaluates its services and facilities, making changes to ensure continuous improvement of its courses, campus, staff performance and service offerings.



YCA STAFF

Management and Administration Staff
Chief Executive Officer – Adeel Khan
RTO Manager – Komal Naik
Student Support Coordinator –Linh Pham
Admissions & Student Support Officers–
Mehnaz Fatima, Neha Mewari, and Arwee J.

Mid-Town Medical Clinic

Level 4, 250 Collins Street
Melbourne 3000
Ph: 03 9650 4284
Opening hours: 7.30am - 6.00pm

Police, Fire, Ambulance

Ph: 000 (from any Australian mobile,
landline or public phone)

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Yarra College Australia
Level 6, 190 Queen St
Melbourne VIC 3000
0466 106256
0390 175256
info@yarracollege.vic.edu.au
yarracollege.vic.edu.au

Department of Immigration and Border Patrol (DIBP)

Ground Floor
Casselden Place
2 Lonsdale Street
Melbourne VIC 3000
Ph: 131 881

Public Emergency Department @The Royal Melbourne Hospital

Ph: 9342 7666 / 9342 7006

STUDYING AT YCA

Application Process

1. Complete Application Form (online or with a staff member or education agent)
2. Submit all supporting documents including a copy of current passport
3. YCA issues a Letter of Offer, Invoices, Enrolment Terms and Conditions and Acceptance Agreement
4. Sign and return Acceptance Agreement
5. Pay fees as per invoices and send proof of payment.
6. YCA issues electronic Confirmation of Enrolment (eCoE)
7. Complete visa application through Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP)
8. Make travel and accommodation arrangements
9. Arrive in Australia
10. Complete placement test and attend orientation prior to commencing
11. Commence and Start class at YCA

Facilities

Computers and Internet Access

Students have access to computers with the internet on campus. Students can login to the wifi on campus by checking the wifi login and password posted up around the school.

Courses

General English

CRICOS Code: 114979D

The General English program develops students' English language communication skills with a focus on building confidence and fluency. Through a communicative approach, students practice listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in a variety of 'real life' situations whilst integrating grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation.

The General English program is available at a variety of levels. Students undertake

placement testing to determine their entry point and undertake weekly unit assessments based on the material covered. Based on assessment results and class performance, students may level up any week. There is no minimum entry level requirement.

English for Academic Purposes

CRICOS Code: 114980M

The English for Academic Purposes course prepares students for entry into either vocational courses (certificates and diplomas) or higher education courses (bachelors and masters). The course develops students across the four macro skills of Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing with a focus on tasks and situations common to further study. For example, speaking includes tutorial style discussions and powerpoint presentations.

Pre Entry and Placement Testing

All students must sit a Placement test on arrival to Melbourne. So even if you have taken a Pre-Entry Test, you will be required to sit a Placement Test on site at YCA either prior to commencement or on your commencement day. This is unless you have certified proof of the prerequisite English language proficiency. The results of your placement test will determine the class level into which you will be placed.

We strongly encourage students to schedule an appointment with the Student Support Officers for the Placement test prior to the commencement date, at least one week in advance.

Prior to the commencement of classes in the EAP course, students need to have either completed Intermediate in the General English course or be able to otherwise prove a B1 proficiency in English. If students have not completed Intermediate, they can present a recognised test score to gain direct entry into a course. If they have a B1 level equivalent in any English test, including PTE Academic, TOEFL, or Cambridge, they will also be able to enter the course.

CEFR Exit Level	General English	English for Academic Purposes (EAP)
C1	-	EAP Advanced
B2	Upper Intermediate	EAP Foundation
B1	Intermediate	-
A2	Pre Intermediate	-
A1+	Elementary	-

There a placement test which has been developed by YCA. Students who take the placement test offshore with an agent will be monitored closely in the first week and may need to change level if their proficiency as demonstrated in class diverges significantly from their performance in an offshore placement tests. Any agent who regularly sends students who have significant disparities in test scores and proficiency will be investigated until a satisfactory outcome is reached.

Fees

For details of current fees, please refer to our website or contact us directly via phone or email.

When you apply for a course of study, details of your fees will be included in the invoices sent with your Letter of Offer and also within your Acceptance Agreement.

Your fees will include an Application Fee, Tuition Fees, and a Material Fee. OSHC is not included in this.

You must submit proof that you have arranged your OSHC prior to enrolment or if you are entering Australia on other non-student visas that OSHC is not mandatory (eg visitor, or working holiday) there is no need to provide us with OSHC.

Airport transfer fees are charged if you request the use of these services.

For the payment of tuition fees, onshore students with weekly instalment payments must pay for the learning in advance within the Monday of each week.

Class Schedules

For the schedule of General English & English for Advanced Purposes, please check with our Student Support Staff for the most updated schedule.

Commencement and Orientation

Orientation will take place 3-7 business days prior to commencement, or on the commencement day. Please refer to your Letter of Offer for your specific commencement time and orientation.

What to Bring

- your passport
- visa (printed copy if electronic visa)
- CoE (if you hold a student visa)
- your current Melbourne address, telephone number and email contact details
- a black or blue ink pen

First Day

On your first day you must attend registration, as well as placement testing and orientation (if not yet completed prior to the first day). Your offer letter will tell you what time registration takes place

Assessment

Ongoing assessment procedures are utilised to enable our academic staff to assess your skill development throughout the duration of your studies and to ensure you are always in a class best suited to your current competencies.

You will undertake placement testing prior to being placed in a class suitable to your demonstrated proficiency. You then undertake weekly assessments and review assessments based on the course content you have studied. These assessments, in conjunction with class work, homework, presentations and participation form the basis of determining eligibility for all level changes.

You may be eligible to level up in any given week but the level change will be dependent upon receipt of a written recommendation by your teacher. Teachers make level up recommendations taking into consideration:

- Your ability across all language skill areas
- Overall attendance of 80% or above
- At least 80% in three progress/review tests OR
- At average of 60% on the last five progress review tests if you have completed all ten weeks of the course

After being recommended to level up you may be required to have an interview with the Director of Studies.

Student progress is monitored through summative and formative assessment tasks which are linked directly to the learning outcomes. These assessment tasks take the form of test scores, writing and feedback from the teachers. All test scores are entered into the Student Management System. The student management system sends an automated email to the Director of Studies informing him/her of any student who is not making satisfactory progress.

Summative Assessment

Students take two forms of summative assessment:

- Progress tests - Grammar, Vocabulary, Listening, Reading, Writing (Weeks 5 and 10)
- Speaking Interview (Weeks 5 and 10)

Progress Test

Students take a progress test on the final day(s) of the week in weeks 5 and 10. The test covers Grammar, Vocabulary, Pronunciation, Reading, Listening and Writing over the previous 5 weeks of content. These tests come with the teacher's book assessment resource for each level of the course and are available in the Progress Test folder. While those two enabling skills are only tested specifically on a weekly basis as formative assessments, they do influence student's performance on the four macro skills at the summative level.

This test is marked in class and the percentage scores are calculated and then recorded on the class roll.

Speaking Interview

In weeks 5 and 10, students are given a 4-6 minute interview. These tests are taken one on one. Students are encouraged to spend time speaking with their classmates to prepare for the speaking test and reviewing the content covered in the previous five weeks of the course. Teachers use the questions in the Speaking section of the progress tests and mark students based on the summative marking criteria.

Formative Assessment

Formative Assessment takes three forms:

- Speaking Grade (weekly)
- Writing Folio (weekly)
- Weekly Test - Multiple skills

Graduation Certificates

Upon completion of your course, you will receive a Graduation Certificate showing the duration of your course, start and end date and the level of proficiency attained. If you

require a duplicate or replacement certificate it can be attained with an extra fee (please refer to the Student Offer Letter – Other fees). If you require your certificate to be posted to you, you will need to supply a stamped, self-addressed envelope or pay for local/international shipping for this service.

Teaching and Administration Staff

All our teachers are fully qualified and have been selected based on their level of experience teaching in the ESL industry. Our teachers have a breadth of experience teaching in Australia and overseas and offer a range of teaching styles and methodologies.

Our academic team is involved in regular professional development workshops to ensure we use the most up-to-date teaching methodology, techniques and practices in the classrooms.

The team of staff at YCA is available to help you with any questions you may have about accommodation, visas, further studies, travel in Australia or personal matters. Our staff members are aware of the challenges that international students may face with many having lived, worked and studied abroad. Whilst YCA is an English Only environment, support in your own language can be arranged if necessary.

Student Support Services

YCA provides an enriching and supportive environment. Our Student Support Services will help you adjust to study life and provide you with the continuing support to enhance your learning experience. Our Reception is your first point of contact for advice regarding courses, accommodation, and activities, our student services staff can assist you with queries

For academic counselling including meeting course requirements, course progress, attendance issues please make an appointment to talk with the Director of Studies.

For welfare counselling, accommodation and employment assistance, support adjusting to life in Australia or other non-academic matters, please make an appointment with Student Support Services.

Additional Information: For students who require translation services, contact the Free Translating Service Helpdesk at Call: 131 450 or visit <https://translating.homeaffairs.gov.au/en>

Non-Compulsory Breaks

For every 10 weeks of ELICOS enrolment, students have the option to take 2 weeks of Non-Compulsory Choice Breaks.

Please note that:

- Students must inform YCA at least 2 weeks in advance of taking the break in writing via contacting our Student Support Officer to fill out the Non-Compulsory Choice Break Request Form.
- Choice breaks can be applied during the time that the course is running, except the first week of enrolment.
- Students that have long enrolments with the College are eligible to apply for study breaks. For every 10 weeks that a student is enrolled in the course, they are able to apply for 2 weeks of study break (maximum 8). There is also a 2-week mandatory holiday period between the courses and over the Christmas/New Year period.
- Students can take from 1- 8 weeks of non-compulsory break at a time

Weeks of Enrolment

- Students can enter any of the levels from any course in Week 1 or Week 6 of the level. These weeks come after the Summative Assessments in Week 5 and Week 10.
- Students who are on tourist visas and study tours are able to study for a minimum of 2 weeks, however for other students the minimum enrolment period is 5 weeks. These students can join the class when they arrive on a rolling basis subject to approval from the Director of Studies. However, it is still preferred if they join in Weeks 1 or 6.

Student with Different Learning Capabilities

Yarra College recognises that students have different learning capabilities and that not all students learn at the same speed. Certain students will struggle in some areas of their development of English proficiency, but may excel in others. Teachers are instructed to inform the Director of Studies of any students who have either generally low learning capabilities in a specific area.

Students who progress slowly are allowed to repeat any level of the General English course once. That would mean instead of studying the level for 10 weeks, they would be in that course for 20 weeks. Students are equally able to self select a lower course than the one the placement tests have indicated would be most appropriate. Students can, in effect, go down a level if they feel the content is too difficult for them.

Students who struggle with a specific area of English, for example grammar or pronunciation, can request extra homework or resources to try to bring their proficiency in that area up to a similar level to their other skills. For example, a student who is very weak in grammar but strong in speaking, reading, listening, writing, pronunciation and vocabulary may request extra grammar homework for each week's class. This extra homework can be set by the classroom teacher or the Director of Studies.

Students who struggle to master the content at any of the levels can spend longer at the level until they are ready to move up. If a student has completed 20 weeks at a level and is still not ready to move up, then the school will offer to release the student and refund the remaining weeks of their enrolment.

Policies

Privacy Policy

'We disclose students' information to relevant Government departments when students are

in breach of their obligations as student visa holders. We disclose staff and students' information to the police when we suspect that either staff or students may have broken the law. In all other instances, we will not disclose any information that we gather about our staff or students to any third party. We use the information collected only for the services we provide. No staff or student's information is shared with another organisation. If staff or client information is required by a third party we will obtain written consent from the relevant staff or client prior to release of any information'

For more information please refer to our Privacy Policy which is available on our website.

Monitoring Attendance

- YCA records the attendance and absences of each student for all scheduled course hours in which they are enrolled
- You are expected to attend a minimum of 20 hours per week face to face
- Attendance is recorded by the teacher for every class session
- The minimum satisfactory attendance requirement is 80%
- If you are more than 15 minutes late for the commencement of a class or if you leave early, this will be recorded and the time deducted from your total attendance percentage (please refer to our Monitoring Attendance policy for more details)
- If you are sick, please notify YCA. If you are sick, it is important you get a doctor's certificate to support your absence. Please note that medical certificates do not increase your attendance percentage, they are only used as supporting documentation in the decision to report students to immigration for breach of attendance while on a student visa
- All absences, regardless of the reason, will

affect your attendance percentage

- If you are studying on a student visa and are absent for more than 3 consecutive days without prior approval, you will be contacted in relation to your absence to discuss the reasons preventing you from attending
- If you are studying on a student visa and your overall attendance falls below 88%, we will send you an Attendance Warning Letter reminding you of your attendance requirements and you will have to attend a counselling session with the Student Support Services
- If you are studying on a student visa and your attendance falls below 80%, we will send you a letter advising of intention to report you to the Department of Immigration and Border Patrol (DIBP). You must continue to attend classes but have the opportunity to provide evidence to appeal against YCA reporting you. If you choose to appeal, you will have 20 working days to appeal from the date you received the intent to report letter (please refer to YCA's Complaints and Appeals procedure on the website)
- If your appeal is successful, you must continue to attend all your remaining classes
- If your appeal is not successful after following all the steps in the Complaints and Appeals Procedure, you will be reported to DIBP
- YCA can only decide not to report a student for breach of the 80% requirement where:
 - the student produces documentary evidence clearly demonstrating compassionate or compelling circumstances preventing them from attending (eg: a medical certificate)

AND

- the student has attended at least 70% of the scheduled course contact hours for the



course in which they are enrolled

- If your attendance is below 80% at the end of your course, you may not be eligible to extend your course at YCA

Monitoring Course Progress

- Your progress will be monitored informally by your class teacher on a daily basis and assessed formally on a weekly basis
- Informal assessment includes class participation in class tasks and completion of homework activities
- Formal assessments include weekly progress assessments, written essays, oral presentations and spoken assessments
- Your progress and test results are recorded in the student management system throughout the duration of your course and feedback is provided by your teacher on a regular basis
- In addition, you may make an appointment to meet with the Director of Studies to discuss your progress at any time
- If your teacher has concerns about your progress or if you achieve a result of 50% or less on two consecutive review assessments, you will be referred to meet with the Director of Studies to implement a strategy to assist you in progressing

- Some examples of strategies that might be used to help you to progress include:
 - additional homework
 - supervised individual study sessions before or after class in student library
 - follow up counselling sessions with the Director of Studies
 - pairing with a class buddy for peer support

Deferring, Suspending or Cancelling Enrolment

- A student's enrolment may only be deferred or temporarily suspended on the grounds of:

- Compassionate or compelling circumstances
- Student misbehaviour

- Compassionate or compelling circumstances include but are not limited to:

- serious illness or injury (where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend classes)
- bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents (where possible a death certificate should be provided)
- major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring emergency travel and this has impacted on the student's studies
- involvement in, or witnessing of a serious accident
- witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime

- Student misbehaviour includes but is not limited to:

- acts of discrimination
- sexual harassment
- vilification or bullying
- violence
- vandalism
- cheating or plagiarism

- A student's enrolment may be cancelled as a result of:

- student completed course early
- student transferred to another provider

- student notifies of cessation of study
- non-payment of fees
- disciplinary reasons
- student has died
- student no longer holds a student visa
- YCA is unable to deliver the course
- non-compliance with student visa conditions

- In cases where the suspension or cancellation is not initiated by the student, YCA will inform the student of its intention to suspend or cancel their enrolment and allow 20 working days for the student to access the Complaints and Appeals process

- Where a student accesses the Complaints and Appeals process, the suspension or cancellation will not take effect until the internal process is complete, except in cases where extenuating circumstances relating to the welfare of the student apply

- Students who apply to defer, suspend or cancel their enrolment or who have been informed of YCA's intent to suspend or cancel their enrolment will be informed that deferring, suspending or cancelling their enrolment may affect their student visa

- YCA will inform the Department of Immigration and Border Patrol (DIBP) of any deferment, suspension or cancellation of a student's enrolment

Refunds

Refund Policy Conditions and Processes

YCA reserves the right to cancel or postpone any courses prior to their scheduled commencement dates, should it be necessary. In such circumstances, if the course is postponed by more than four weeks, and if a student is unable to enrol in a similar course at YCA, all fees will be refunded. If the course is cancelled and if a student is unable to enrol in a similar course at YCA, all unused fees will be refunded within 14 days, in accordance with the requirements of the ESOS Act. A refund of

the fees will only be granted in accordance with the refund policy set out below.

Airport Transfer Fees

- If written notification of cancellation is received 7 days prior to airport transfer, a full refund is available.
- If a student fails to advise YCA or the airport pickup company about the change of flight at least an hour before an original arrival time in Melbourne, there is no refund.

Tuition Fees and Materials Fees

- If the application for a student visa is unsuccessful, YCA will refund full prepaid Course fees, less the enrolment fee. A request for refund in writing and proof of visa refusal from the Australian Government must be sent to YCA upon visa refusal. In this case, the refund will be made within 14 days.
- In the event that an extension to the student visa is not granted and the course has commenced, YCA will refund the unused portion of the prepaid tuition fees less enrolment fee.
- If for any reason YCA is unable to start delivery of the course on the agreed starting date or ceases to deliver the course before it is completed the full refund of unused prepaid Course fees applies. In this case, if materials have already been issued and used the materials fees will not be refunded.

Payment of the refund will be made within 14 days of the specified starting date or from the time the course ceases to be delivered in accordance with the refund requirements of the ESOS Act 2000.

- If students cancel their enrolment more than 30 days before commencement, then they will receive a full refund of tuition less any enrolment fees.
- YCA will refund 60% of the tuition fee if a student decides to cancel the enrolment providing written notice is given more than 20 working days before the commencement date.
- 50% of the tuition fee will be refunded if YCA receives the written notice less than 20 working days before the commencement date.
- The tuition fee will not be refunded after the commencement date.
- Except as required under the ESOS Act or the National Code, where the student transfers from a more expensive course to a less expensive course, no refund of the difference is payable.
- In the event of YCA's decision to cancel or suspend student's enrolment due to: student breaching visa conditions, failure to pay agreed amount to undertake the course or student' misconduct, no refund of tuition fees is payable.

Situation	Refund
Student Visa is refused/rejected	Full refund less 5% of pre-paid tuition fees
Student cancels more than 30 calendar days before their first day	Full refund less 5% of pre-paid tuition fees
Student cancels more than 30 calendar days before their first day	60% refund of pre-paid tuition fees
Student cancels 1-20 calendar days before their first day	50% refund of pre-paid tuition fees
Student cancels after their proposed start date	0% refund of pre-paid tuition fees
Enrolment Fees	Enrolment fees are non-refundable
Materials Fees	Materials Fees are non-refundable

- Refunds of any monies received by YCA on behalf of the student for services other than tuition fees must be requested from the company delivering the service and will be subject to the respective company's refund policies.
- Except for the situation of visa rejection or provider default where the tuition fees are refunded within 14 days, all refunds due to student default will be made within 28 days.
- Course fees are not transferable to another person.

Requests for Refund of Tuition Fees

Application for a refund of tuition fees in accordance with this Refund Policy must be made in writing, using the request for refund proforma, stating reasons and relevant details. This must be submitted by email, with attached supporting documents.

Approvals

All refunds must be approved by the Principal Executive Officer. Exemptions to any of the above mentioned cases may only occur where the student has extenuating or compassionate grounds as determined by the Principal Executive Officer.

Payment of Refund

All refunds for which a student is eligible will be forwarded to the person who paid the fees in his or her home country, unless the student is transferring to another institution in Australia (subject to visa conditions), in which case, any refund may be remitted to that institution. YCA will provide the student with a statement detailing the calculation of the refund.

Public Holidays

A full week's tuition is payable in weeks comprising public holidays. There is no refund of course fees for days on which public holidays fall.

Specials

Any specials applied to the original enrolment will take place at the end of the course. If a student's enrolment includes free weeks, the free weeks will take place at the end of the course.

Complaints and Appeals

Where a complaint cannot be resolved informally, or a student wishes to appeal against the decision of YCA decision to report them to DIBP for breach of visa conditions, students may lodge a formal complaint or appeal. All complaints/appeals should be addressed in writing to the Student Support Coordinator. A formal complaints/appeals pro-forma is available from staff at Reception. Students' enrolment will be maintained throughout the complaints and appeals process until the matter is resolved.

In cases where the student is not satisfied with the result or the conduct of the complaint/appeal they can seek external arbitration by contacting Overseas Students Ombudsman.

The full Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure can be obtained at Reception or on the YCA website.

YCA dispute resolution processes do not circumscribe a student's right to pursue other legal remedies. Students can be represented by a nominee if you so choose. This agreement does not remove the right to take further action under Australian Consumer Protection laws.

Computer Use

Student computers are available for use by YCA students only and should only be used for education related communication and directly related to studies.

Username and passwords to access the student network are issued to all students during their orientation program on their first day.

Inappropriate Content

Content containing any of the following is deemed inappropriate for viewing or sending via college computers:

- Pornography
- Racial Vilification
- Cruelty
- Violence
- Defamation

Inappropriate Use of Email

If a student is found to be using YCA computers to send sexually explicit, sexist, racist or harassing emails the sender will be reprimanded or formally warned in the first instance. Further breaches could result in formal warnings and/or dismissal/cancellation of enrolment.

Inappropriate Use of Internet

Students found utilising the internet to search for inappropriate materials will be reprimanded or formally warned in the first instance. Further breaches could result in formal warnings and/or cancellation of enrolment.

Changes to Enrolment

Course cancellation/withdrawal

- Fill in Amendment to Enrolment Request - a minimum of one week notice must be given
- If you are on a student visa, the Department of Immigration and Border Patrol (DIBP) will be notified
- It is your responsibility to contact DIBP regarding your visa status
- Your certificate and attendance statement will reflect your new course finishing date

Course Deferment Request

- Fill in Amendment to Enrolment Request - a minimum of one week notice must be given

- The period of deferment must be compliant with your visa conditions and will only be granted under compassionate or compelling circumstances

- Documented supporting evidence must be attached to this form.

- The period of your deferment will be credited to your course duration if requested and therefore extend your course end date

- If your new course end date is after the with expiry date of your current visa, it is your responsibility to contact DIBP to renew or extend your visa. You must hold a valid visa with study rights to continue your course

Transfer Provider Request

- You must allow a minimum of 1 week for assessment of this Transfer Provider Request

- Your attendance must be above 80%

- It is your responsibility to contact the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP) for advice as to whether you require a new student visa if a Letter of Release is granted

- You must confirm you have read and understand YCA refund policy prior to making this Transfer Provider Request

- You must attach a letter from your intended new provider indicating a valid enrolment offer or written support from any government sponsor who considers the transfer to be in your best interests

Change of Course Request

- A minimum of one week notice must be given when applying to change course

- Request approval will be dependent upon:

- availability of classes
- course commencement dates
- course minimum enrolment durations
- English language proficiency

Course Extension Request

- Extensions to enrolment will not be confirmed until payment is received
- Payment must be received prior to the commencement of the course, otherwise you will not be entitled to attend class
- Extensions may not be granted if your attendance of below 80% for any previous courses
- Extensions are subject to visa restrictions

Request Responses

If requests are not granted, YCA will notify the student in writing of the reasons for refusing the application.

If the student is unhappy and would like to appeal the decision made by YCA, they should refer to the Complaints and Appeals procedure.

The ESOS Framework

Please refer to the Australian Government explanation of how the Education Services to Overseas Students Act 2000 works:
http://aei.dest.gov.au/AEI/ESOS/QuickInfo/ESOS_Framework_pdf.pdf

STUDYING IN MELBOURNE CHECKLIST

Pre-Departure Preparations

- Apply for passport
- Apply for intended course of study
- Apply for student/working holiday/tourist visa
- Arrange for pre travel immunisations and medications
- Apply for a credit card and/or arrange sufficient funds
- Confirm overseas access to your funds with your bank
- Make travel arrangements (book flights etc)
- Arrange travel insurance

- Advise institution of travel details
- Arrange accommodation
- Arrange transport from airport to accommodation

Important Documents to Bring

- Name and contact details of college and accommodation
- Enough cash for taxis/buses/phone calls/food for first 1-2 days
- Travel documents (plane tickets etc)
- Passport
- Letter of Offer from college
- eCoE
- Certified copies of qualifications & certificates
- Travel insurance policy
- ID cards, driving license

Upon Arrival in Australia

- Call/email home to let family know you've arrived safely
- Commence at college
- Attend international student orientation
- Collect textbook(s) and class timetable
- Start classes
- Purchase household items
- Advise health insurance provider of address and telephone details in Australia
- Open a bank account
- Apply for tax file number if seeking work

PRE-DEPARTURE INFORMATION

About Melbourne

Melbourne is Australia's second largest city, famous for its parks and gardens, historic buildings, excellent food and sporting events such as the Formula One Grand Prix, the Australian Open Tennis and Australian Rules Football. Melbourne is a vibrant multicultural city and is often referred to as the cultural capital of Australia and there is always a wide range of festivals, major art exhibitions, music and comedy shows on offer.

Applying for a visa

Prior to visiting Australia, you must ensure you hold a valid visa. You can apply for a visa online via the Australian Diplomatic Mission in your country however many students find that the process can be quicker and easier with the assistance of an accredited agent. YCA can provide you with the contact details of accredited agents in your country if you require.

In order to apply for a student visa you will need a valid passport, an electronic Confirmation of Enrolment (eCoE) and any other documentation required by the Australian diplomatic post where you lodge your application. You must ensure you allow enough time for processing between lodging your application and the start of your academic program as it can be a lengthy process depending on your country of origin.

Visa Conditions

If you are granted a visa, you must abide by its conditions. Failure to comply with these conditions could result in the cancellation of your visa.

Depending on the type of visa you are granted (student, working holiday, tourist, spouse or other), the conditions including the amount of time you may study or work will vary. It is your responsibility to ensure that you are aware of the particular conditions of the visa you have been granted.

Visa conditions may include the following:

- Completing the course within the duration specified in the CoE
- Maintaining satisfactory academic progress
- Maintaining satisfactory attendance
- Maintaining approved Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) while in Australia
- Remaining with the principal education provider for a set period of time
- Notifying YCA of any changes to address or contact details
- Restrictions to hours or permission to work

For a full list of visa conditions pertaining to various visas please visit www.immi.gov.au

Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP)

The Australian Government Department of Immigration and Border Protection provides comprehensive information about visa requirements and visa application processes, as well as application document checklists to assist you with your application. Visit www.immi.gov.au for current information.

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)

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

Migration Agents

A migration agent can assist you in submitting your visa application and communicate with DIBP on your behalf, but please note that you do not need to use a migration agent to lodge any kind of visa application.

Education Agents

Education agents promote various Australian education programs and institutions internationally and can assist with applying to study in Australia. Most speak English in addition to their native language which can help to make the application process a lot simpler for students and parents with limited English skills. Most do not charge students for their services as they collect a commission from the institutions they send students to. However, some agents do charge small amounts for additional services so be sure to ask them about their charges.

You can access a list of agent counsellors who have undertaken the Formal Assessment of the Education Agent Training Course by visiting:
<http://www.pieronline.org/qeac/default.aspx>

Although able to assist in completing education and visa applications, Education Agents are NOT licensed to provide migration advice.

MONEY

Funds required

You will need to make sure you have enough funds to support yourself when you first arrive – around AU\$1500 to AU\$2000 is recommended to pay for transport, food and initial accommodation for the first two to three weeks. Do not bring this as cash as lost cash cannot be replaced. You should obtain traveller's cheques and/or an international credit card with access to your funds. Lost credit cards or traveller's cheques can be replaced if you have travel insurance.

Cost of living in Melbourne

Knowing the average living costs in Australia is an important part of your financial preparation. For your reference, here are some of the costs associated with living and studying in Australia (all costs are in Australian dollars).

The following website provides details of a wide range of living costs in Melbourne:
<http://www.liveinvictoria.vic.gov.au/living-in-victoria/cost-of-living>
Some basic approximate costs are listed below:

Daily train/tram/bus ticket - \$7.00
Coffee - \$3.50
Lunch - \$6.00~\$15.00
Share accommodation - \$160~\$300 per week
Local telephone calls – 50c

The costs below are an approximate guide only. Students should be aware that these costs can vary depending on your study location in Australia.

Accommodation costs

- Hostels and Guesthouses - \$90 to \$150 per week
- Shared Rental - \$85 to \$215 per week
- On campus - \$90 to \$280 per week
- Homestay - \$235 to \$325 per week
- Rental - \$165 to \$440 per week
- Boarding schools - \$11,000 to \$22,000 a year

Other living expenses

- Groceries and eating out - \$80 to \$280 per week
- Gas, electricity - \$35 to \$140 per week
- Phone and Internet - \$20 to \$55 per week
- Public transport - \$15 to \$55 per week
- Car (after purchase) - \$150 to \$260 per week
- Entertainment - \$80 to \$150 per week

Minimum cost of living

The Department of Home Affairs has financial requirements you must meet in order to receive a student visa for Australia.

From 1st February 2018 the 12 month living cost is:

- You - \$20,290
- Partner or spouse - \$7,100
- Child - \$3,040

All costs are per year in Australian dollars. To convert to your own currency, visit <http://www.xe.com/>.

The Australian Government provides information and guidance on managing your finances. You can read more at www.moneysmart.gov.au.

The 'Insider Guides Cost of Living Calculator' is also a useful tool to help estimate your cost of living in Australia www.insiderguides.com.au/cost-of-living-calculator/. If you experience financial trouble while in Australia, talk to student support staff for assistance.

Currency

Only Australian dollars can be used as currency in Australia. If you have not brought some with you, you will need to exchange money as soon as possible after your arrival. You can do this at the airport or you can change money at any bank or at currency exchanges in the city and large shopping centres in the suburbs.

Electronic Transfers

You can transfer money into Australia by electronic telegraph or telegraphic transfer at anytime. This is a fast option and will take approximately 48 hours, but the bank will charge a fee one each transaction.

ATMs – Automatic Teller Machines

Automatic Teller Machines are located outside banks and in many convenience stores. If your bank card has international access, you can withdraw cash from your home account at any ATM displaying the Cirrus Logo. Check your level of access with your bank before leaving home.

Credit Cards

All major international credit cards are accepted in Australia but you must remember that repayments to many of these cards can only be made in the country where they were issued. Do not rely on being able to get a credit card once you arrive in Australia because this can be very difficult due to credit and identification laws.

Bringing your family with you

Most student visas allow you to bring your family members to Australia as your dependents. Check your individual circumstances with the Department of Immigration and Border Patrol. Members include your spouse, and you and your spouse's dependent children.

Before bringing your spouse or children to Australia, you will have to prove that you can support them financially. The cost of supporting a family in Australia is very high. You may have to consider and discuss many issues with your family before deciding to bring them with you. Some students may find it easier to travel to Australia first before bringing their family, settle into studies, find appropriate accommodation, adjust to living in Australia and then arrange for their family to join them.

Before making a decision to bring your family to Australia it is important to consider the following issues:

- The cost of airfares for your family to and from Australia;
- The cost of rental properties in Australia; Limited employment opportunities for your spouse;
- Extra costs for food, clothing and other necessities;
- The effect on you and your studies if your family is not happy in Australia;
- Whether your children will adjust to school in Australia;
- Waiting lists for child care centres; and

More information about bringing your family can be found on the Department of Immigration and Border Patrol website: www.immi.gov.au

School Aged Dependents

If you have school aged dependents traveling with you to Australia, it is law that they attend school in Australia. There will be tuition fees and charges which apply for them to attend, whether they enrol at a government funded or a private school.

Clothing

The standard of dress in Australia is quite casual. Jeans, casual skirts and dresses are all suitable attire for coming to school or most social places such as cafes, restaurant, bars and pubs. Jackets, ties, suits and formal dresses are not necessary unless attending formal functions or more expensive restaurants and bars where a dress code may apply. Summer months (December to February) can be warm with an average temperature of 25°C and a number of days of 30°C plus. We recommend lightweight clothing for summer along with sunglasses, hat and sunscreen and at least one lightweight jacket and jumper as the weather can be variable. In winter (June to August) a jacket, a sweater and an umbrella are recommended the average temperature is around 14°C with some mornings being under 5°C so a hat, scarf and gloves can be useful though it only rains and never snows (except in the hills outside of the city centre).

Electrical Appliances

Electricity supply throughout Australia is 240 volts using a standard three pin plug, which is fitted to domestic appliances. Some visitors may need an adaptor socket and 110-volt appliances such as hairdryers and electric shavers cannot be used without a transformer.

Customs and Quarantine

Being an island, Australia is isolated and is relatively free from pests, harmful insects and diseases. There are very strict quarantine laws controlling the importation of food and plants and other items that may impact the Australian environment.

Travellers coming into Australia's international airports will have their luggage screened – by sniffer dogs, x-ray machines and/or inspection of their bags. You must declare food, wooden items or items of plant or animal origin that you are carrying with you. Make sure you complete the customs

form honestly and accurately – you are better to declare all items if you unsure rather than risk a fine for not declaring an item. Many Asian and European food products are readily available in Australia so you do not need to bring these with you.

Please refer to the relevant government authority for further information.

LIFE IN MELBOURNE

Airports to the City

Melbourne Airport, Tullamarine, <http://www.melbourneairport.com.au> is located 20km North-West of the city centre and is Melbourne's main international and domestic airport. Avalon Airport <http://www.avalonairport.com.au> is located about 60km South-West from the city and mainly services domestic low fare flights.

Hire cars and taxis are available at both airports and shuttle bus services operate regularly between the airports and the city centre. Transfer time from Melbourne airport to the city is around 30 minutes.

YCA can arrange an airport pickup service upon request to transfer you from the airport to your chosen destination. The driver will greet you at the airport and take you to your homestay or other accommodation. For current fees in relation to this service, please refer to the Student Offer Letter (other fees) for details.

Rental

You can rent or 'lease' a property by yourself or with friends. This can be done through a real estate agent or privately. When renting a property you will need to pay a security deposit or 'bond' (which is usually four weeks rent), as well as rent in advance (also usually four weeks). The bond is held to repair any

damage that you, your house mates or house guests cause to the property while renting. Some, or all, of this amount may be refunded to you once your tenancy agreement has terminated.

For more information on your rights and obligations when renting in Australia you should visit the relevant government Fair Trading agency in your state/territory.

Renting a small house or apartment with other students can help you to share costs and can also be a great way to make new friends. You can find more information about share accommodation from:

- Real Estate websites:
<http://www.domain.com.au>/<http://www.realestate.com.au/>
- Onlinestudentaccommodationwebsite:
<http://www.findstudentaccommodation.com/>
- General Share house website:
www.flatmates.com.au
- Student Support Services
info@yarracollege.vic.edu.au

Accommodation Legal Advice

You have certain responsibilities to meet when it comes to paying accommodation expenses on time, cleaning and maintenance. You also have the right by law to feel secure in your property, maintained with working facilities. If there are any problems with your accommodation, talk to your agent or landlord (if renting), your international student support staff for on-campus living or the service where you found your homestay.

There are also organisations such as tenants unions and consumer advocates that can provide assistance. To find out more visit the relevant government Fair Trading agency in your state/territory.

If you require any legal advice in relation to your accommodation whilst in Melbourne, contact:

Estate Agents Resolution Service (EARS)
www.consumer.vic.gov.au (Helpline: 1300 73 70 30)



SUPPORT SERVICES

There are many consumer protection and support services available for international students. This includes services provided directly by institutions as well as those provided by a range of state, territory and federal government departments.

Consumer Protection

Australia has a strong consumer protection framework to protect the rights of Australian consumers, including international students in Australia. The Australian Consumer Law includes a national law guaranteeing consumer rights when buying goods and services. You should contact the relevant government trade and consumer agency in your state or territory, if you:

- Would like information about your consumer rights.
- Have a problem with a consumer good or service that you have bought or are considering buying.
- Would like to know how a business should behave under the law.
- Would like to make a complaint about a business.

Visit australia.gov.au or www.consumerlaw.gov.au to find the relevant government agency for where you are living and studying.

Overseas Students Ombudsman

The Overseas Students Ombudsman (OSO) investigates complaints about problems that overseas students have with private education and training institutions in Australia. The Ombudsman's services are free, independent and impartial. You can find out more about this service on their website: www.ombudsman.gov.au. A number of OSO publications, including newsletters, can be found on the OSO website.

Tuition Protection Service

The Tuition Protection Service (TPS) is an initiative of the Australian Government to assist you if your institution (referred to as 'Education Provider' under the TPS) is unable to fully deliver your course of study. The TPS may also assist you if you have withdrawn from, or not started, your course and are eligible for a refund of tuition fees and the institution has not paid them.

The TPS will ensure that you are able to either:

- Complete your studies in another course or with another institution, or
- Receive a refund of your unspent tuition fees.

Under the Tuition Protection Service international students have a number of rights and obligations. For more information visit the Tuition Protection Service website.

Support services

Student support forms a large part of Australia's education system. We have staff to help provide guidance to international students adjust to life and study in Australia, and to achieve their goals. This includes student services or information on services such as:

- Language and academic support.
- Designated international student advisers.
- On-arrival reception and orientation programs.
- Childcare, health and counselling.
- Student accommodation.
- Employment services.
- Prayer and worships rooms.
- Banking, shopping and food outlets.
- Clubs, societies, sport and fitness facilities.

Student associations

Australia has a number of student associations representing and assisting students from Australian institutions. National associations include:

- Council of International Students Australia (CISA)- national peak student representative body for international students studying at the postgraduate, undergraduate, private college, TAFE, ELICOS and foundation level.
- Australian Federation of International Students (AFIS) - assisting international students in maximizing the scope and potential of their experience living and studying in Australia.

Disability support

Australia has laws that protect individuals from discrimination in many areas of public life, including education. A person with a disability has just as much right to study as any other student. This means that institutions cannot:

- Refuse admission on the basis of disability.
- Accept a student with a disability on less favourable terms than other students (for example, asking for higher fees).
- Deny or limit access to a student with a disability (for example, not allowing access to excursions, or having inaccessible student common rooms or lecture facilities).

YCA will make every effort to accommodate a student with a disability. Though, YCA is not legally required to make modifications if the changes involve major difficulties or unreasonable cost. YCA shall let the student know before and refer to expert in case YCA is unable to facilitate the changes.

If you have any questions, you should contact the student support officer via email. If informal discussions do not resolve the problem, you have the option of lodging a formal complaint. Please refer to YCA Complaints and Appeals Policy for details on how to lodge a formal complaints. If you feel you have a legitimate complaint that is not being recognised by MIC, you can approach the Australian Human Rights Commission.

Confidential enquiries can be made by telephone but a formal complaint must be lodged in writing before the commission can take action. Find out more about disability rights in Australia at the Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission.

Childcare

A wide variety of private and not-for-profit childcare centres are available around Australia. The Australian government provides financial assistance to help parents with childcare costs. International students who receive direct financial assistance from the government, through a government scholarship, may be eligible to receive the child care benefit. To find out if you are eligible for child care financial assistance, read more at the Australia.gov.au.

Other support services

Some other support services that may be useful to know while you are studying in Australia are:

1.1. Emergency matters

- Contact details - 000
- Service details - Life threatening situations, such as a car crash or a fire.

1.2. Local police – non urgent matters

- Contact details - Call 131 444 (everywhere except Victoria). In Victoria you need to call your local police station (consult your local Telephone Directory)
- Service details - Police attendance for non-urgent matters.

1.3. Lifeline

- Contact details - 13 11 14
- Service details - Lifeline provides crisis support, suicide prevention and mental health support services across Australia. These can include stresses from work, family or society and physical and mental wellbeing. Lifeline offers support services by phone or through their online chat available on their website.
<https://www.lifeline.org.au/Home>

1.4. Kids Helpline

- Contact details - 1800 551 800
- Service details - If you're between 5 and 25 and you're feeling depressed, worried, sad, angry or confused about things like your studies, personal relationships, Kids Helpline offers free 24 hour, 7 day telephone counselling support (anonymous if you prefer).

1.5. Poison Information Centre

- Contact details - 131 126
- Service details - Provides advice on the management, assessment and treatment of poisonous products including non-prescription pharmaceuticals, household and industrial chemicals, and plant and animal venom.

1.6. Sexual Assault counselling service

- Contact details - Search online for 'rape crisis centre' in your home state
- Service details - If you, or anyone you know, has experienced or is at risk of sexual assault, call one of the state-based sexual assault counselling services. These provide a free 24 hour, 7 day a week telephone counselling service (anonymous if you prefer). Many are connected to hospitals or government health departments to help you if the assault has left you with injuries.

Source:

<https://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au/english/live-in-australia/support-services>

VISA COMPLIANCE

Once you have received your visa, there are requirements you must meet in order for it to remain valid, including:

- You must remain enrolled and maintain satisfactory course progress and attendance.
- If you wish to change your qualification level you will need to apply for a new student visa.
- Provide us your Australian address so we can contact you, and let us know if you change address.

- You must continue to be able to support yourself financially while you're in Australia.
- Do not breach the working conditions applicable to your visa.

Visa help and assistance

- The Department of Home Affairs website provides all information in relation to visa requirements, responsibilities and compliance.
(<https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-finder/study>)
- Student Support staff can provide you with assistance about the visa you'll need for your course
- Education agents can also help with your visa application and paperwork (as well as your course application).

Source:

<https://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au/english/live-in-australia/visa-compliance>

WORKING WHILE YOU STUDY

Working while you study in Australia can help complement your study and living experience. There are a number of reasons you might want to undertake part time work while studying in Australia, including assisting with living expenses and gaining work experience in your study area.

Most student visas allow you to work for up to 40 hours every two weeks while your course is in session, and unrestricted hours during any scheduled course break, but before you undertake any paid work you need to make sure your visa allows you to work. Find out more at the Department of Home Affairs website (<https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/>)

Paid work

Australia has a wide range of industries and many have part time employment opportunities, including:

- Retail - supermarkets, department and clothing stores.
- Hospitality - cafes, bars and restaurants.
- Tourism - hotels and motels.
- Agricultural - farming and fruit-picking.
- Sales and telemarketing.
- Administration or Clerical roles.
- Tutoring.

If you have existing qualifications and/or professional work experience, you may be able to secure casual or part time work in your field.

Internships

Paid or unpaid internships can be a great way to get exposure to the professional, financial and creative industries. Learn more about getting an internship on the Internships page in the Education System section of this website.

Volunteering

There are many charities and non-government organisations (NGOs) in Australia and they always need volunteers to help out. It can be a great way to meet friends, get some hands on work experience and give back to the community. To find out more about volunteering, start your search at: <http://www.govolunteer.com.au/>

Your rights

Everyone working in Australia, including international students or those on working holiday visas, have basic rights at work. These rights protect entitlement to:

- A minimum wage and superannuation.
- Challenge of unfair dismissal from the job
- Leave, breaks and rest periods.
- A healthy and safe work environment.

To find out more about your work rights visit the Australian Government's Fair Work

Ombudsman's website or call them on 13 13 94. You can also read about some common myths about being paid and working in Australia as an international student.

<https://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/840/Common%20myths%20about%20Australian%20workplaces.pdf.aspx>

If you're a temporary resident working in Australia your employer has to pay super for you if you are eligible.

When you leave Australia, you can claim your super as a departing Australia superannuation payment (DASP) if you meet all the requirements. To find out more about super for temporary residents visit the Australian Taxation Office website (<https://www.ato.gov.au/Individuals/Super/>).

In Australia, employers (your boss) must also do all they can to make sure your job does not hurt you or make you sick. This law is called work health and safety (WHS) or occupational health and safety (OHS).

The law also says your boss must have insurance for you in case you are hurt at work. This is called workers' compensation. If you are hurt or get sick at work, the insurance may pay for your medical treatment and for your wages until you can work again.

You will also need to get a tax file number to work in Australia. Visit the Australian Taxation Office (<https://www.ato.gov.au/>) website to find out more information on getting a tax file number, as well as information about paying taxes in Australia.

Finding Work

There are plenty of ways to find work that suits you, including:

Newspapers and online job sites. Register your details at a recruitment firm; many of them help place people in casual or short-term work.

Source:

<https://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au/english/live-in-australia/working>



Banking

Opening an Australian Bank Account

The staff at YCA can provide students with assistance in opening a bank account in Australia. You can choose any one of the big four banks: (ANZ, The Commonwealth Bank, Westpac or NAB).

Branch opening hours

General banking hours are Monday to Friday from 9.30am to 4.30pm however, some banks also open on Saturday mornings. A number of international banks have branches in the Melbourne CBD. It is best to check with bank for their branch opening hours.

Currency Exchange

Foreign currency can be exchanged at many larger bank branches in the CBD or larger suburban shopping centres or at foreign currency exchange tellers.

ATMs

Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs) are located across the CBD and throughout shopping centres and suburban shopping strips. Most enable withdrawals using international cards such as Visa and Cirrus however there may be fees applied (usually \$2-\$3 for using the ATM not associated with your own bank).

EFTPOS

EFTPOS (Electronic Funds Transfer at Point of Sale), is widely accepted at most supermarkets, cafes, restaurants and shops. EFTPOS can be used to pay for goods and services and to withdraw small amounts of cash. Check with your bank if a fee applies to the use of this service.

Credit Cards

Visa and MasterCard are accepted widely throughout Australia. Diners Club and American Express (Amex) are accepted at many places but may incur additional charges.

If your card is lost or stolen, call your bank or credit card provider immediately to cancel or put a stop on it. Most banks have a 24-hour number you can call in such a situation. You may wish to record your credit card numbers and keep them in a safe place so it is easier to cancel your account if your card is lost.

VISA Hotline Ph: 1800 224 004

Mastercard Hotline Ph: 1800 120 113

Post Offices

Post offices are open between 9:00am – 5:00pm from Monday to Friday. Some also open on weekends but check with your local office for their operating hours. Post office boxes are located both outside post office and in multiple other locations; items posted before 6pm are generally delivered within Australia by the next business day. The nearest post office to YCA is located on Elizabeth street on the corner of Little Bourke Street. For general enquiries ph: 131 318 or visit the website: <http://www.auspost.com.au/>

Mobile Phones

Both prepaid and contract mobile phones can be purchased in Australia. A prepaid mobile phone is an inexpensive way to purchase a mobile if you will only be staying in the country for a short time. You can also purchase prepaid SIM cards to use in your own mobile phone if it is compatible and is unlocked.

If you are staying for 12 months or longer in Australia you can take out a contract with a mobile phone provider and pay for the phone over the course of the contract rather than upfront. Make sure that you understand what deal you are accepting before signing a contract with a provider. For a comparison of mobile phone plans in Australia see: <http://www.mobiles.com.au/mobile-phone-plans/>

Public Transport

Melbourne's public transport includes a network of trains, trams and buses providing access around the CBD and suburbs. The electronic Myki system is the only ticket option in Melbourne. It allows you to use any of Melbourne's buses, trains or trams within your ticket zone. Myki cards must be pre purchased and credit added to them online or at Myki outlets and then your travel costs are electronically deducted when you swipe on and off various modes of transport.

For more detailed information in relation to fares visit:

<http://ptv.vic.gov.au/tickets/myki/>

Please note that international students are not entitled to student concession fares. When using public transport, you should always have a valid ticket and ensure to follow the rules displayed as fines do apply.

For more information in relation to Melbourne's public transport: Public transport information line: 131638 Website:

<http://ptv.vic.gov.au/>

For a free tour of the Melbourne CBD, anyone can travel free of charge on the historic City Circle Trams, which leave from stops around the city every 20 minutes. This has a tour guide commentary as you pass the sights of Melbourne. The new Free Tram Zone in Melbourne includes the area from iconic Queen Victoria Market, across to Victoria Harbour in Docklands and over to Flinders Street Station and Federation Square – YCA is just in the centre of it.

Shopping

Most shops in the CBD and suburban shopping streets and malls are generally open on Monday to Friday 9:00am to 5:30pm. Many larger retail stores have extended trading hours on Thursday and/or Friday evenings until 9:00pm and are also open 10:00am to 5:00pm on Saturdays and some 10:00am to 1:00pm on Sundays. It is best to check with individual stores as to their specific opening hours so as not to be disappointed.

Melbourne is a great place to go shopping; some great places to shop include: Chapel Street South Yarra, Brunswick Street Fitzroy, Sydney Road Brunswick and Bridge Road Richmond.

Local markets are great for buying fresh produce, second hand clothing, arts and crafts. Regular markets include the Queen Victoria, South Melbourne, Prahran and Camberwell Markets.

For more information about shopping in Melbourne visit:
http://www.studymelbourne.vic.gov.au/living_in_melbourne/shopping

Smoking

In Australia it is illegal to smoke in public buildings, this includes YCA, restaurants, bars and hotels. If you are smoking outside the building, please stay away from the steps and use the bins provided. Any cigarette butts thrown on the ground will wash down the drain and end up in our beautiful bays and beaches. If you are caught throwing your cigarettes on the ground, heavy fines may be incurred.

Bicycles

Melbourne is a bicycle friendly city with many bicycle paths and lanes to get about on. Cycling is a cheap and efficient alternative form of transport, a great way to keep fit and is also a good social activity on the weekend. Bicycles can be purchased second hand for as little as \$50 to \$100. For more information about buying a bike, maps and caring for your bicycle visit:
<http://www.bicyclenetwork.com.au/general/bikes-and-riding/>

Please be aware that in Victoria, helmets are compulsory when riding a bike. If caught riding without a helmet, fines do apply.

Driving

Driving licences

If you have a driving licence from your country, you can only use it for the first 3 months you are in Victoria. International driving licences can generally be used for up to 12 months, but make sure you familiarise yourself with Victorian road rules as they will likely be different from your country and may be different in some way from other Australian states and territories. A copy of The Victorian Traffic Handbook is available from most newsagents. While driving with either a licence from your country or an international driver's licence, you must also carry your passport with you at all times.

If you are planning to stay for more than a few months and plan to drive regularly, we suggest you get a Victorian Driving Licence as soon as possible after your arrival. For more information about obtaining a Victorian Driving Licence, please visit:
<http://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/>

Car Insurance

If you are planning to buying a car, new or second hand, you must at a minimum purchase third party property car insurance. For higher cover you can purchase comprehensive car insurance. Without insurance, if you hit another car, you must pay to have the other car fixed as well as your own. Third party property car insurance cover will cover you for damages to someone else's vehicle or property if you have an accident, but not the repair costs of your own car. Comprehensive insurance will cover you for both damages to your own and someone else's vehicle.

Checking a car before purchase

If you do plan to buy a car, particularly second hand, you should have it checked to ensure it is roadworthy and safe. For a nominal fee, the RACV (Royal Automobile Company of Victoria) can check a car for you

before you buy it, please refer to:
<http://www.racv.com.au/>.

Second hand cars

If you are looking to buy a second hand car you can get an idea of prices and research different makes and models on:
<http://www.carsales.com.au/> . Make sure you check the location of the car is in or close to Melbourne.

Eating and Drinking

Melbourne boasts a wide range cafes, bistros, bars and restaurants offering all types of cuisine including Modern Australian, Chinese, Japanese, Indian, Italian, Greek, Vietnamese and Thai, just to name a few. There are also many markets and specialty grocery stores where ingredients from your home country can be purchased, enabling you to cook your favourite meals at home.

For more information in relation to eating in Melbourne and regional Victoria, visit:
http://www.studymelbourne.vic.gov.au/living_in_melbourne/eating

In Australia the legal age for drinking alcohol is 18 years. If you order alcohol at a restaurant, bar, pub or bottle shop you will likely be asked to show proof of age identification before being allowed to complete the purchase. There are also strict laws applied to the responsible service of alcohol so you will not be sold alcohol, be refused entry or be asked to leave a venue if you are already intoxicated.

Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)

Australia's Medicare system does not cover international visitors, except where a reciprocal agreement exists, as such, you will require private health insurance to cover you for any medical expenses whilst in Australia or you will have to pay all costs up-front yourself.

If you are coming to Australia on a Student Visa you are required to buy OSHC to cover you for the full duration of your stay. Unless you show proof of having purchased OSHC prior, you will be invoiced for OSHC along with your enrolment and tuition and your authorised agency will arrange the OSHC for you.

If you are visiting Australia on a Working Holiday or Tourist Visa it is recommended that you buy insurance to cover you for the duration of your stay prior to departing your home country.

Legal Services

For free legal advice contact Legal Aid: 350 Queen Street, Melbourne (03) 9269 0120
<http://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/>

AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY AND CULTURE

Adjusting to life in Australia

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

Social Customs

When meeting someone for the first time, it is usual to shake the person's right hand with

your right hand. People who do not know each other generally do not kiss or hug when meeting. When you first meet someone, it is polite not to talk about personal matters.

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

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

Polite Behaviour

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

Sometimes a sensitive issue may come up in conversation. Not to talk may seem rude. It is more polite to say 'sorry, it is too hard to explain' than to ignore a question. Australians often say, 'Excuse me' to get a person's attention and 'sorry' if we bump into them. We also say, 'Excuse me' or 'pardon me' if we burp or belch in public or a person's home.

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

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

From the team at YCA, we welcome any suggestions you have to help us improve our services. Please help us help you and contact us.





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