

Studying at UWS

A Guide for International Students

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Welcome to UWS

Thank you for choosing to study at the University of Western Sydney (UWS). UWS has been successfully welcoming international students since 1989 and has a reputation for academic excellence. All courses offered by the University are fully accredited by the Australian Government and are recognised both nationally and internationally. We have many successful graduates now working around the world. International students are highly regarded by the UWS community because students from abroad bring their own culture and experiences that enrich the learning environment in the classroom.

While you will generally have a very positive experience we should warn you that you need to be prepared for a cultural shift. Australians have their own culture and peculiarities. In some ways, you may be quite surprised by the level of difference. Many of you are also travelling for the first time and you will find the initial experience disorienting and possibly even anxiety producing. This is quite natural and normal, but it can be quite disconcerting if you are not expecting it!

The purpose of this booklet is to sincerely welcome you to the UWS community and also to prepare you well for your experience at UWS. If you follow a few simple procedures and take the time to read this booklet and access the UWS International website at www.uws.edu.au/international, this will be time well spent. After nearly 20 years of experience in welcoming international students to our campuses we have a fairly good idea of the sorts of things that tend to surprise, annoy, and sometimes dismay our international students. This booklet provides you with a wealth of information and availability of services that will facilitate your adjustments to UWS and Australia.

Have a wonderful stay, enjoy your learning but don't forget to experience the many delights of Sydney and Australia. And remember that we are always available to provide help and support at any time that you may require it. Don't be afraid to ask!

**The International Student Advisor team
UWS International**

Introduction

Studying At UWS: A Guide For International Students

is designed to help you find the information you need as a new international student at the University of Western Sydney and help you adjust to living and studying in Australia.

The time you take to adjust will vary from student to student. There are two important things to remember - firstly, you will not be alone in finding University life new, difficult and challenging as Australian students go through this experience too. Secondly, there are plenty of places and people who can help you get through this period of adjustment.

The Guide is designed to work together with other University information to provide you with detailed information about:

- ◆ UWS Policies and Processes
- ◆ DIAC (Immigration) Requirements
- ◆ Support Services and Key Contacts

If you have any questions or difficulties, please refer to www.uws.edu.au/students to access information or determine whom you should contact. If you are in doubt or confused, contact the UWS International staff on your campus and in particular the campus International Student Advisor (ISA).

We welcome your suggestions and feedback about this guide.

UWS International

Section 1: Preparing to Start at UWS

You may find your first few weeks in Sydney challenging and at times frustrating. The purpose of this section is to help you through the initial processes of adjusting to life and study in Australia.

International Orientation Mentor (IOM) Program

ALL new international students seeking the assistance of an IOM should email:

isa@uws.edu.au

with details of your name, contact details and local campus.

The International Orientation Mentor (IOM) Program is available at all UWS campuses to assist new international students. All new students who arrive via the University's airport pickup service and choose to live on or near the campus will be allocated a mentor. However, all new international students are entitled to use this service, and can apply for it via isa@uws.edu.au.

A mentor is a continuing student who has volunteered and been trained to help new students settle into campus life. Your mentor will meet you on campus, help you settle into your accommodation and familiarise you with the campus and its surrounds. He or she will be available to assist you in the initial period and may suggest social activities during the first few weeks of the semester to provide you with opportunities to meet other new and continuing students on campus.

Living Arrangements

One of the important decisions you need to make is the kind of accommodation in which you wish to live while you are studying at UWS. There are three different options to consider:

- University-managed student residences (including some temporary accommodation)
- Private off-campus accommodation
- Homestay with an Australian family

What type of accommodation you choose will depend on your budget, life-style and personal preferences as well as current availability.

Student Residences:

Phone: 02 4570 1248

Fax: 02 4570 1348

e-mail: residentialcolleges@uws.edu.au

UWS Student Residences

UWS International recommends that new international students live on campus for their first session (not available at Parramatta). With the high demand for on-campus accommodation it is allocated on a "first-in-first-served" basis by Student Residences. When you received your offer of admission to the university, you should have received information outlining the options for university-managed accommodation. For further information regarding accommodation at any UWS campus please contact the Student Residences office or go to www.uws.edu.au/students/accom.

Temporary Accommodation

Temporary accommodation is also available on certain campuses (NOT Bankstown or Parramatta) and if you require a place to stay while to look for other accommodation, please contact Student Residences. They can also provide you with a detailed list of temporary accommodation in Sydney.

Hostels and motel style accommodation:

www.yha.com.au

www.itchy-feet.com.au/nsw/sydneycity.php

www.australianexplorer.com

www.yellowpages.com.au

Sydney Central YHA located at 11 Rawson Place, Central (opposite Central Railway Station) offers reasonably priced, clean accommodation in the heart of the Sydney. Phone: 9281 9111 or e-mail: sydcentral@yhansw.org.au

Rental accommodation:

www.domain.com.au
www.realestate.com.au
www.sydneyproperty.com.au
www.rent-a-home.com.au
www.tradingpost.com.au

Furnished Apartments:

www.apartmentservice.com.au

Share Accommodation:

www.flatmates.com.au
www.flatmatefinders.com.au

Know your rights as a tenant.**Check out the renting guide at**

www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au

For tenancy advice contact:

Fair Trading Centres:	133220
Tenancy Advice and Advocacy Services:	
Western Sydney:	02 9891 6377
South Western Sydney:	02 4628 1678
Renting & Strata Services:	02 9377 9100 or 1800 451 301
Rental Bond Board:	02 9377 9000 or 1800 422 021

Homestay information and options:

www.uws.edu.au/international/accommodation/homestay.html

The NSW Photo Card is the only locally produced card that can prove age and identity as its only purpose.

<http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/licensing/photo-card.html>

Private Off-Campus Accommodation

If this is your preferred option, you will need to find suitable off-campus accommodation by accessing various lists of accommodation advertised on campus, in the local newspapers, on the internet or through real estate agents.

The University does not provide off-campus accommodation listings through a centralised service. You can access information on local off-campus accommodation through noticeboards on campus, local newspapers and local real estate agents. If you wish to live in city centre and commute to campus, you will need to search accommodation listings for the suburb you choose.

In order to rent private accommodation, you will be expected to pay a rental bond (usually four weeks rent) as well as two weeks rent in advance (if your rent is more than \$300 per week, you will have to pay 1 month's rent in advance). Most houses and apartments are not furnished except for a stove and hot water heater. You will need to provide all furniture and utensils and budget for your share of electricity and telephone costs. If you are sharing, you should have a very clear agreement about who is responsible for the rent payments and how the telephone costs will be managed. Make sure you carefully read and understand your rental agreement, before you sign it. If you need tenancy advice contact the **Office of Fair Trading** or **Tenancy Advice and Advocacy Services (TAAS)**.

Homestay with an Australian Family

Homestay is a single or shared room in a private home, usually 'full board', which means that all meals are provided, and perhaps furniture as well. The minimum stay is four weeks and is a great opportunity to live with an Australian family.

Proof of Identity and Age

While your passport provides evidence of your identity and age, it is not always convenient or appropriate to carry it with you everywhere. The NSW photo card is a great solution. To apply for it, you will need to provide your passport and either, proof of residential address or a statement from a full NSW driver's licence holder who has known you for 12 months or more.

Money and Banking

Websites of major banks

www.national.com.au

www.commbank.com.au

www.westpac.com.au

www.anz.com.au

www.stgeorge.com.au

Automatic Teller Machine (ATM)

locations on campus are:

Bankstown in Building 1 (near the cafeteria)

Blacktown in Building C21

Campbelltown in Mac Rock Café.

Hawkesbury in Stable Square

Parramatta in the Library foyer

Penrith (Kingswood site) at Building K

PIN means

‘Personal Identification Number’

BPay means ‘Bill Pay Service’

Australian Tax Office (ATO):

Phone: 135 861

<https://iar.ato.gov.au/IARWeb/default.aspx>

One of the first things you will need after you arrive in Sydney is to open an Australian bank account. Banks are generally open Monday to Thursday 9.30am-4.00pm and Friday 9.30am-5.00pm. There are branches of all major banks in Bankstown, Blacktown, Campbelltown, Hawkesbury, Parramatta and Penrith. However, you will only find National Australia Bank Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs) on campus.

Opening a Bank Account

If you open a bank account in Australia within the first six weeks of your arrival, you will only need to present your passport to the bank to fulfil identification requirements. After six weeks, you will have to supply further identification. Some banks offer accounts especially for students with fee-free facilities where no account fees are charged. You will need to present your student card to open this type of account. Overseas bank drafts can take 2-3 weeks to clear, so make sure you have alternative means of obtaining cash in the first few weeks.

Once you have opened an account, you can access your money through an **ATM** at any time. To access your account through an ATM you need to have a plastic access card and your **PIN**. Follow the instructions at the ATM to withdraw cash. ATMs are located at banks and other locations, including supermarkets, shopping centres and on campus. You will be charged an additional fee when you use an ATM that does not belong to your bank.

Phone Banking allows you to access your bank account by phone. You will need to apply for access to this service from your bank, and you will be provided with a secure password and instructions on how to use phone banking. Phone banking is a convenient way to pay bills and transfer money between your accounts.

Internet Banking also needs to be arranged through your bank and allows you to access your account details via the internet (password secured) and perform basic transactions online. You can check your account balance, pay bills, transfer funds or view account statements. You can even instruct the bank to change to your account details (eg. change of address).

BPay is provided on application by your bank and allows you to pay bills (eg. telephone, electricity, credit cards, university fees) by phone or by internet. The bill/invoice you want to pay will provide you with the service provider’s B-pay biller code and an account reference number. This is a convenient and secure way to pay bills from home. You will have to register with your bank to have B-pay activated.

Electronic Funds Transfer at Point of Sale (EFTPOS) is available in many places. Instead of paying cash for goods and services, you swipe your plastic access card, enter your PIN and the amount of your purchase is automatically deducted from your bank account. Some outlets will also let you withdraw cash with purchases. There is often a \$10 minimum on EFTPOS transactions.

Tax File Number (TFN)

If you intend to work in Australia, you will need to apply for a Tax File Number. Your bank will also ask you for a TFN as this will reduce the amount of tax you pay on any interest earned on your bank account. TFN application forms are available from the Australian Tax Office or the Campus International Office. You can also apply online. You will need to have a permanent address before you apply for a TFN.

Financial Difficulties

If you are experiencing financial difficulties please see your campus International Student Advisor as early as possible. Please note the University is not a financial institution and does not offer any loan schemes to international students. However, your ISA might be able to assist you in other ways.

Food

Online Directory of Restaurants in Sydney:

www.sydneyeats.net.au

Also check newspapers for food festivals and markets.

There is a wide range of food available from the campus food outlets (including vegetarian and halal options in most cases). Sydney offers a wide variety of multicultural food. In most suburbs you find a variety of restaurants and fast food places that offer food from different cultures. There are also various grocery shops that cater for different ethnic groups and halal butchers scattered throughout Sydney. Ask your ISA if you are having trouble finding a grocery store that offers that right kind of food options for you.

Transport and Travel

Hard Copy Street Directories are published by:

Gregorys, UBD, Sydway

Online Street Directory:

www.whereis.com

www.street-directory.com.au

Finding Your Way Around Sydney

A Sydney street directory can help you find your way around Sydney quite easily as it provides detailed maps of the City of Sydney and suburbs. It not only provides extensive indexes of suburbs, localities and streets but also offers indexes of beaches, churches and other places of worship, hospitals, hotels, motels, parks, reserves, swimming pools, sporting venues, tertiary institutions, theatres and other places of interest. The Transport Infoline is also a good planning tool when you want to get about Sydney using public transport. Call 131 500.

Travel Concession

Important: the majority of international students are NOT permitted to hold daily travel concession - only Exchange and Australian Government sponsored students are eligible for the NSW government Travel Concession. Contact your local UWS International office for advice if you believe you are eligible.

Public Transport

Bus, train, ferry, and taxi are the main forms of public transport. The Transport Infoline provides detailed information about availability and timetables of all Sydney public transport.

The following train stations service the University's six campuses:

- ◆ Bankstown Campus: East Hills Station
- ◆ Blacktown Campus: Quakers Hill Station
- ◆ Campbelltown Campus: Macarthur Station
- ◆ Hawkesbury Campus: East Richmond Station
- ◆ Parramatta Campus: Parramatta and Rydalmere Stations
- ◆ Penrith Campus: Kingswood Station

Transport Infoline:

Phone: 131 500

www.131500.com.au

Types of Train Fares:

- **Single fare** is to go to a destination on the day of purchase.
- **Return fare** is to go to your destination and return on the day of purchase.
- **Weekly fare** is to travel 7 days of the week to your destination and return.
- **CityHopper** is for unlimited all day CityRail travel around 11 stations within the city area.
- **Day Tripper** is an all-in-one day ticket for CityRail trains, Sydney Buses and Sydney Ferries for use within the Sydney suburban network - limitations apply.

Train tickets are sold at railway stations either at ticket booths or by automatic ticket dispensing machines. Weekly or multiple trip tickets are usually cheaper. You may be fined if you travel on a train without a valid ticket.

Remember: in almost all cases, international students are not eligible for government travel concession so **do NOT select the 'Student Concession' button on the ticket machine.** You must purchase a full-fare ticket or you could be fined.

Some bus services that operate from University campuses are run by private bus companies. Bus fares are paid when boarding the bus, but if you are intending to use the bus on a regular basis, multiple fare tickets/cards can be purchased from newsagencies or the bus driver.

There is an extensive ferry service covering Sydney 's waterways. The River Cat service goes to Parramatta, from the main city ferry terminal, Circular Quay, near the Central Business District (CBD).

Taxis operate all over Sydney. Taxi ranks are usually located outside railway stations and shopping centres. It is quite acceptable to hail or flag down a vacant taxi (indicated by an amber light) anywhere. Although they are convenient, taxis can be expensive. The taxi fare is fixed and is automatically calculated by the computer. Tipping is optional and not generally expected.

Private Transport: car, motorcycle, bicycle

Heavy fines are levied for breaking speed limits, dangerous driving, and for driving under the influence of alcohol. There are three basic safety measures for both drivers and pedestrians:

- ◆ Drivers must always keep to the left hand side of the road.
- ◆ Pedestrians should always look right first before crossing the road
- ◆ Seat belts and child restraints must be worn by all vehicle occupants.

Bicycle riders are expected to comply with normal traffic rules and the wearing of helmets is compulsory for both bicycle and motorcycle riders. Cycling is popular among students as a cheap and healthy form of transportation.

Parking is available on all campuses. To park on campus you must purchase a parking permit as directed at <http://parking.uws.edu.au>.

Getting a parking permit for UWS campuses:

<http://parking.uws.edu.au>

Road Safety Information and Licence Requirements:

Phone: 132213

www.rta.nsw.gov.au

Drivers/ Motorcycle Riders Licence

If you intend to drive a car or ride a motorcycle you must have a valid licence. Your licence must be carried with you at all times. You may drive on your home country licence for the first three months or on an international licence for the period of its validity. An Australian licence has your photo on it and can also serve as a useful form of identification. To obtain an Australian licence you must pass a driving/riding test. Before you start driving, check with the Road and Traffic Authority (RTA) to make sure you have a valid licence. As a visiting driver, you are not required to get a NSW Drivers Licence. However, while driving or riding, you must carry and hold a current overseas drivers licence. If the licence is not written in English, a translation or International Driving Permit must also be carried.

Roads and Traffic Authority

<http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au>

Best place to start looking for a CTP greenslip:

www.greenslips.com.au

Register of Encumbered Vehicles (REVS):

Phone: 9633 6333 or

1800 424 988

www.revs.nsw.gov.au

NRMA

Phone: 132 132

www.nrma.com.au

Buying a Car or Motorcycle

If you are considering buying a new or secondhand car or motorcycle please note that this can be expensive - you need to consider the costs of buying the vehicle, maintenance, running costs, insurance and warranty periods.

The law requires all vehicles to have Compulsory Third Party insurance (known as CTP or Green Slip) as part of the vehicle registration process. Every vehicle must be registered - it is against the law to drive an unregistered vehicle. Most secondhand cars are already registered, but the registration needs to be renewed each year. A sticker on the left hand side of the vehicle shows the date the vehicle needs its registration renewed.

You need to be aware of how to avoid buying a stolen vehicle and the various inspections, checks and other processes you'll have to go through to register the vehicle. The RTA Website offers comprehensive information on this. You should also make sure the vehicle you purchase does not have any money owing by calling the *Register of Encumbered Vehicles (REVS)*.

Motor Vehicle Insurance

Compulsory Third Party Insurance (CTP) is mandatory. A 'Greenslip' must be produced before registration of the vehicle is approved. CTP Insurance can be obtained from all major insurance companies.

Third Party Property Damage Insurance is advisable as a minimum insurance protection. This insures you, in case of an accident, against the cost of damages to another vehicle.

Comprehensive Insurance protects you against damage to both other people's property and your own.

Home Contents Insurance provides cover for your personal belongings against damage or theft.

Roadside Assistance Service

The National Roads and Motorists Association (NRMA) is one provider of roadside assistance service, and many other services such as legal advice, loan advice, maps etc to members. If you do not know how to fix a car (as most students don't!), you should consider joining the NRMA to ensure you can get assistance if you break down.

Student Health Insurance, known as Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)

Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) is insurance that provides cover for much of the costs of medical and hospital care for student visa holders while in Australia. OSHC will also pay for most prescription drugs and emergency ambulance transport. If you are an international student studying in Australia and have a student visa, you must purchase an approved OSHC policy from a registered health insurance company - commonly referred to as health funds. You will need to buy OSHC before you come to Australia, to cover you from the day you arrive. You will also need to maintain OSHC throughout your stay in Australia.

OSHC Worldcare is the preferred provider for UWS. Be aware that while OSHC represents excellent value in health insurance, it does not cover every medical circumstance or cost. You should note the exclusions given in the policy document.

As students commencing at UWS, you will be asked to pay for OSHC for a period of one year, or for longer if your course is longer than one year and you wish to pay for the entire period. Only if you already hold OSHC for this period are you not expected to purchase OSHC through UWS. When your cover expires you should immediately renew it because having current OSHC is a student visa requirement. You are encouraged to renew it for the remaining period of your visa as it remains a requirement for the life of your visa.

Special Arrangements:

www.health.gov.au/internet/wcms/Publishing.nsf/Content/Overseas+Student+Health+Cover+FAQ-1#eligible

Special Arrangements for Norwegian Students

As a result of an agreement between the Australian and Norwegian governments, all Norwegian students are provided with adequate health insurance by the Norwegian government and are waived the compulsory OSHC visa requirement.

Special Arrangements for Swedish Students

Swedish students may be waived the compulsory OSHC visa requirements. Swedish students whose insurance is provided by CSN International (the Swedish National Board of Student Aid) will not need to take out OSHC. If you are a Swedish student who is not covered by CSN, you will need to take out OSHC.

Register for your OSHC and order your card online at:

www.oshcworldcare.com.au

Collecting Your OSHC Card

During Orientation, we recommend that you visit the OSHC Worldcare booth if you have any questions about OSHC. To collect your OSHC card, you should register at the OSHC Worldcare website and your card should arrive at your Australian home address within a week or so. At Orientation there is most likely an opportunity for you to register at the Worldcare site online.

To register for your card, you'll need:

- ◆ your full name
- ◆ your date of birth, and
- ◆ your UWS student ID number (this is the Policy Number)

You should receive your OSHC card to the address you supply within a week or so.

OSHC Worldcare Claims:

Phone: 1800 651 349

oshc@oshcworldcare.com.au

Postal Address:

OSHC Worldcare

Locked Bag 3001

Toowong QLD 4066

24 hour Emergency Assistance:

Phone: 1800 814 781

Accessing Services and Making A Claim

Should you require medical attention you will have to pay for your medical treatment up front unless your medical provider direct bills OSHC Worldcare. The OSHC Worldcare website lists medical providers that bill directly to Worldcare. The website also allows you to nominate medical providers for direct billing. If you have to pay, retain receipts for reimbursement. OSHC Worldcare staff visit some campuses each week to process claims or you can claim online via their website.

OSHC Worldcare:

Phone: 13 14 84

www.oshcworldcare.com.au

Visit the website to get full policy information.

Learn more about OSHC from the Department of Health and Ageing:

www.health.gov.au

The nearest public hospital to campus can be found at

www.sswahs.nsw.gov.au

for Bankstown and Campbelltown:

Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital

Campbelltown Hospital

and

www.wsahs.nsw.gov.au/hospitals/index.htm

for Blacktown, Hawkesbury, Parramatta and Penrith:

Blacktown Hospital

Hawkesbury District Health Service

Westmead Hospital

Nepean Hospital

Medical Emergency

In case of a medical emergency, go to your local hospital. There are Public Hospitals which are operated by State/Territory Governments and Private Hospitals, which operate on a commercial basis.

Public Hospitals: OSHC provides full cover in a shared ward in any Public Hospital, including treatment by your own doctor. The only amount you will have to pay is the difference (if any) between the OSHC benefit for medical services, and the actual fee charged. OSHC will cover all charges for outpatient medical treatment at a Public Hospital.

Private Hospitals: OSHC provides benefits towards treatment and accommodation in a Private Hospital. However, some Private Hospitals charges are more than the benefit payable from OSHC. You will be responsible for paying the difference.

Student Visa conditions

Explanation of all visa conditions:

www.immi.gov.au/students/index.htm

International Student Advisor (ISA) :

e-mail: isa@uws.edu.au

or phone:

Bankstown Campus: 9772 6548

Blacktown Campus: 9852 4110

Campbelltown Campus: 4620 3313

Hawkesbury Campus: 4570 1612

Parramatta Campus: 9685 9491

Penrith Campus: 4736 0925

DIAC Enquiries

Phone: 131881

www.immi.gov.au

DIAC Office Locations

9 Wentworth Street
Parramatta

Ground Floor
26 Lee Street
Sydney

[www.immi.gov.au/students/students/
working_while_studying/index.htm](http://www.immi.gov.au/students/students/working_while_studying/index.htm)

Laws and legal processes in Australia:

www.law.gov.au

Visa conditions are the rules of your visa. They are set by Australian law and cannot be changed or disregarded to suit your circumstances. It is important that you understand these conditions, as the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) may cancel your visa if you break them.

If your visa is cancelled, you will be sent a letter asking you to go to the DIAC office in person within 28 days. If you do not go, your visa will be cancelled and you will become an illegal resident. You can be deported if this happens.

Looking After Your Student Visa

For many international students, obtaining a student visa is a long and difficult process. UWS wants to help you keep your student visa and has provided details of some of the mandatory visa conditions to assist you.

The International Office is not an immigration office. International Student Advisors are here to assist students to successfully complete their studies. We are available to advise and support you during the course of your studies. However, we also have legal obligations to provide information to DIAC in some circumstances, especially if you withdraw from your course of study, and/or seek to transfer to another education provider. Make sure you meet your student visa conditions by asking your International Student Advisor whenever you have questions or need help.

Work Limitation (Visa Condition 8101)

You will only be able work up to 20 hours a week during teaching sessions, but there is no restriction during teaching breaks. (Work that is a registered part of your course is not included in the 20 hours.) Your visa can be cancelled if you work more than 20 hours a week during teaching sessions.

People granted student visas after 26 April 2008 will receive permission to work with their visa grant. This will apply to both the student and any family members travelling with them. Students and family members are not allowed to work until they have started their course. If your visa was granted before 26 April 2008 the ISA office on your campus will advise you how to obtain permission to work.

Attendance & Academic Requirements (Visa Condition 8202)

You MUST remain enrolled in a registered course (unless you are an AusAID student in which case you must maintain full-time enrolment in your course.) You MUST maintain satisfactory attendance in your course and course progress for each study period. If you do not maintain this enrolment and progression, you will need to see an International Student Advisor to discuss any problems you may have. If poor results continue, the University must inform DIAC, and your visa is at risk of being cancelled. So, if you are having problems, make an appointment to see an International Student Advisor straight away.

**Remain at UWS for 6 months
(Standard 7, National Code)**

You must study with your primary education provider for 6 months. If you have come to do English or a foundation course (eg. UWS College) as a package, you must complete this course and then study at UWS for 6 months. If you need to change to another university before this because of exceptional circumstances, you will need to see an International Student Advisor to see if you can get a **Release Letter**. If you decide to change to another university or college after 6 months, you must inform a UWS International Student Advisor. You will also need to organise an appointment with DIAC by calling 131 881 and provide them with details such as the new offer of study and confirmation of enrolment and obtain permission from DIAC before you transfer.

If you fail to inform UWS of your transfer to another education provider, you can be reported for ceasing your studies and your visa may be cancelled.

**Overseas Student Health Cover
(Visa Condition 8501)**

When you accept your offer of admission, UWS will offer to arrange purchase of OSHC for you and give you access to a membership card, which lasts for a year or more. If this cover expires and you are still holding a student visa, you must renew it yourself. If you do not do this, your visa may be cancelled and if you have an accident or illness, you and your family will be liable to cover the medical bills. Medical expenses are very high in Australia, the health cover premium is approximately the cost of one day's stay in hospital.

**Notify UWS of Your Address
(Visa Condition 8533)**

Within 7 days of arriving in Australia, you must notify UWS of your new address. If you move house during your stay, you must again, notify UWS of your new address. If you do not do this, and there is a problem with your visa, you will not receive communication from DIAC and your visa may be cancelled without your knowledge. If this happens, you may be deported from Australia and prevented from completing your studies.

To notify UWS of your new address log on to myuws.uws.edu.au click on the "My Student Records" link and update your Profile.

Understanding Australian Language and Colloquialisms

Useful Lists of Australian Colloquialisms:

www.cultureandrecreation.gov.au/articles/slang/

http://goaustralia.about.com/od/language/Australian_Language_and_Colloquialisms.htm

The national telephone number for all emergency services in Australia including AMBULANCE, FIRE, and POLICE is “000”

Overcoming Difficulties in Personal and Social Adjustment

International Student Advisor (ISA) :

email: isa@uws.edu.au

phone:

Bankstown Campus:	02 9772 6548
Blacktown Campus:	02 9852 4110
Campbelltown Campus:	02 4620 3313
Hawkesbury Campus:	02 4570 1612
Parramatta Campus:	02 9685 9491
Penrith Campus:	02 4736 0925

Just as in any country, Australian language has a character which reflects the culture of the people using the language. The language of the Australian people varies according to age, socioeconomic status, education and residential community and other factors.

It can be hard for an international student to adjust to the number of unfamiliar terms used by their student peers. These often include **colloquialisms**; common words that often don't make it into the dictionary, but everyone knows. It includes slang and other words only found in the local dialect.

A number of people have tried to compile lists of these kinds of colloquialisms, and some of the best places to start tracking down these colloquialisms are via books or online resources.

The online introductions can be great and really amusing, but they don't always answer your queries about Australian terms. This can be because many of the lists focus on terms used by older speakers, and many of these words are not used by younger speakers. Instead, younger speakers tend to mix terms that are of non-Australian origin, especially from US and UK TV and film, and local terms. So you may hear an Australian version on a non-Australian colloquialism, which can be quite confusing.

It is not unusual for there to be a big range of accents and terms used among your local student peers. Similarly, there can be big differences between speakers on the basis of age, residential area and educational level.

Finally, don't be afraid to ask your lecturers and tutors what they mean if they use a term that you do not understand, especially if you hear it more than once. It is quite reasonable for you to have these words explained and it is also valuable for the lecturer to be aware of the effects of their language usage for students.

The decision to study in a foreign country involves many changes which can be unexpectedly difficult to adjust to, for example, finding accommodation and suitable flat-mates, adjusting to new learning and social environments and dealing with the impact of missing family and friends. These social and practical adjustments can impede your ability to study effectively and have a negative impact on your life as an international student.

It is important that you acknowledge any difficulties as early as possible and take action. Contact the various support services that are there for you, and in particular, talk to your campus International Student Advisor (ISA).

Section 2: Commencing your study

All students beginning at UWS will undergo a period of adjustment. As an international student you will have to not only adjust to new learning and teaching methods, but to a new country as well.

This section will provide information about the general academic system at UWS and help to prepare you for what you will experience during your study at UWS.

Student Number and Card

Activate your MyUWS Account to access student e-mail, PlatformWeb and computer labs:

<https://myuws.uws.edu.au/>

When you complete your enrolment process at UWS you can get a student ID card with your student ID which will consist of eight digits. You are required to carry your student ID card with you while on campus. You will need to use this card to borrow books from the library and access IT facilities.

Learning Style

University students in Australia are expected to be independent and self-reliant. From your previous studies, you may be used to small classes with teachers who give you a lot of guidance and individual attention in terms of giving assignments, setting deadlines and organising study timetables. At University you will be expected to do a lot of this for yourself. If you are having difficulty adjusting to the different learning situation at University be sure to contact your campus International Student Advisor or register for an Academic Skills Workshop (see contact details on page 22).

UWS student e-mail account

Important: UWS will only send e-mails to you through your UWS e-mail account.

The University provides each student with an e-mail address on the University server. Important information will be sent to students via e-mail and it is the responsibility of students to ensure that they check their e-mail at least twice weekly during the teaching session to ensure they are aware of information sent by the University. Students must use their UWS student e-mail for all communications with the University.

Enrolment

In order to participate in classes and other educational activities of the University, and to receive credit (a final grade) for the work done, a student must be formally enrolled.

Critical Dates

Continuing students are required to re-enrol each session. The last day to enrol/add units is the end of the second week of each session. The last day to drop/delete units without academic or financial penalty is the census date of each session which is the end of the first month of session: ie. 31 August for Spring session; and 31 March for Autumn session. (Check the census date applicable to your course - especially if it has an irregular timetable). If you decide not to continue with a unit and don't officially delete it by the census date, you will have to pay for that unit and a 'fail, discontinued grade' will be awarded to you.

Census dates for

Standard Sessions, Quarters and Terms:

www.uws.edu.au/fees

National Code

<http://aei.dest.gov.au/AEI/ESOS/NationalCode-OfPractice2007/default.htm>

MyStudentRecords (MySR)

<http://myuws.uws.edu.au>

Teaching Timetable:

www.uws.edu.au/students/timetables

Unit Selection

Students are encouraged to seek academic advice from their Course Advisors or Course Coordinators who can assist in decisions about unit selection. Use MySR to make changes to your enrolment within critical dates. For more information about changing units, go to: <http://www.uws.edu.au/students/stuadmin/enrolments/quicktips>

Completion within the expected duration of the course (Standard 9, National Code)

There is flexibility for UWS to vary a student's enrolment load throughout the course. Students may take a normal, reduced or increased study load in each study period, and UWS will monitor the workload to ensure the student completes the course within the duration specified in the CoE. You may study up to 25% of your total course through online or distance learning.

It is your personal responsibility to ensure that you are correctly enrolled each session. You can review your enrolment details on MySR at any time. In addition, enrolled students receive written confirmation of their enrolment each session. Remember, it is your responsibility to check that the written confirmation is accurate.

Course Duration

Course duration is governed by the registered duration of the course on CRICOS, which translates as the duration given on the Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) and therefore on the student visa.

The duration can be made shorter by completing the course earlier than scheduled, but cannot be made longer, except by generating a new CoE where the grounds for extending the course duration have been met. Paragraphs 9.2 and 9.5 of Standard 9 of the National Code prescribe the circumstances that duration can be extended.

Any change to the duration of a course should be discussed with an International Student Advisor to make sure that the proposed change is compliant with the National Code, student visa regulations and conditions, and the rules and regulations of UWS.

International Student Fees

Tuition fees are due each session. The term 'tuition fees' refers to course fees paid by students for each unit in which they are enrolled. Please note that tuition fees do not include other expenses associated with university study such as books, equipment, accommodation and living expenses. Fees are charged according to the approved fees schedule. In order to be properly enrolled in your program of study, you must pay your fees by the advertised due date.

Important points to remember about fees:

- ◆ Your tuition fees must be paid by the first day of each session, at the latest.
- ◆ You can pay fees electronically using the University's secure iPay system online at <http://ipay.uws.edu.au>, by BPay, by phone, at a Post Office or by mail (using a bank cheque). Refer to your Student Fees Account for details.
- ◆ If you require a letter from the University to have your fees released from your home country, please make this request to the International Student Advisor well in advance of the due date of your fees.
- ◆ If you do not pay your fees by the due date, you are at risk of being charged an additional late fee, or even having your enrolment cancelled. If you are facing any difficulties regarding your payment of fees, you should consult your campus International Student Advisor as early as possible to discuss the options you have to best preserve your enrolled status.
- ◆ Fee refunds are granted in accordance with the Refund Policy once a Refund Request Form has been lodged.

You must keep the University informed of your current address at all times. You can update address details using the 'Profile' link in MySR.

You must also advise DIAC using Form 929 available at
<http://www.immi.gov.au/>

International Fee Information:

www.uws.edu.au/students/stuadmin/fees/intfees

International Student Refund Policy:

www.uws.edu.au/policies
then follow the links to Enrolment Part B: Fees

Enquiring about tuition fees

Enquiries about fees can be made by calling Enrolments on 02 9852 5155, e-mailing your enquiry to enrolments@uws.edu.au, or call in at any Student Centre.

Student Fees Account

As an international student commencing in 2008, you would have already paid fees when you accepted your offer of admission to UWS. You will receive a Student Fees Account confirming your fees and your enrolment status after the census date of each session. (See <http://www.uws.edu.au/fees> for census dates).

Your next session's account will be sent to you about two months prior to commencing that session. Please ensure your address is correct in MySR and mark the payment due date in your calendar to assist you in planning and organising for funds from overseas to be made available in time.

If You Do Not Receive A Fee Notice:

If you do not receive a Student Fees Account on time, please contact Enrolments on 02 9852 5155, e-mail your enquiry to enrolments@uws.edu.au, or call in at any Student Centre.

International Student Advisors (ISAs):

Bankstown Campus: 9772 6548
Blacktown Campus: 9852 4110
Campbelltown Campus: 4620 3313
Hawkesbury Campus: 4570 1612
Parramatta Campus: 9685 9491
Penrith Campus: 4736 0925

Leave of Absence

Leave of absence means suspending studies for one session and resuming studies in the same course at the end of that period. It is only granted by submitting a successful application. The rules for the granting of leave of absence for student visa holders are governed by UWS and DEEWR via the National Code.

Consult www.uws.edu.au/students/stuadmin/enrolments/quicktips#5 to learn about applying for leave, and students should be aware that UWS "may only enable students to defer or temporarily suspend their studies, including granting a leave of absence, during the course through formal agreement in certain limited circumstances" Standard 13, National Code. Therefore, students should consult an International Student Advisor to seek advice on applying for leave to make sure that their application is valid and compliant with relevant regulations.

Academic Requirements

To be successful at university, it is important that you:

- ◆ Understand what is required of you in terms of study and assessment tasks at your university.
- ◆ Attend all of your lectures, tutorials and examinations.
- ◆ Do not plagiarise.

Assessment tasks

There are many forms of assessments; written assignments, oral presentations and exams.

Assignments are your academic tasks that you have to hand in to your teachers to show your understanding and engagement with your subject.

To produce good assignments you should

- ◆ Know your course outline, course objectives, important dates, and read the recommended readings (Always seek clarification if you do not understand what you've been asked to do)
- ◆ Read the set readings (eg. text book chapters) as well as the recommended readings
- ◆ Write academically
- ◆ Manage your time well

Lectures

Lectures will form a large part of your study at University. Some lectures will be held in large lecture theatres with a large number of students, others will be in smaller, more intimate surroundings.

You should try to take clear and concise notes rather than writing every word that the lecturer says. You can always compare notes with other students in your lecture, or ask the lecturers themselves if you feel unsure or confused about anything. Don't be afraid to approach your lecturers for assistance - that is what they are there for.

You may have trouble understanding a lecturer's accent or may find that some speak too quickly. Be patient, as you get used to the accent, things will become easier. If you have any difficulties, contact the Student Learning Unit (see p. 22 for contact details).

Tutorials

Tutorials, or "tutes" as they are called, are another important part of academic life. You must attend your tutorials and you will have to **register** for them. (Note: some units have no tutorials.)

A tutorial is usually a period of class time that is in addition to the lecture. Sometimes it can be a laboratory or practical session. It consists of a tutor, who is a teacher and a small number of students (from 15 up to 35 students).

The tutorial time is spent in **discussion** or some **problem solving** activities.

Your **active participation** shows that you are keen and interested in your subject, and it gives you great opportunities to discuss and debate issues and ask questions.

Tutorial Registration:

www.uws.edu.au/students/tut_reg

Make sure you are registered in a tutorial for each unit that has tutorials and if you have difficulty, ask for assistance.

Policy on Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism:

www.uws.edu.au/policies
then follow the links to Misconduct

Workshops on Referencing and How to Avoid Plagiarism are offered on your campus by the Student Learning Unit

<http://currentstudents.uws.edu.au/students/ods/lisu/workshops>

Get help from the Counselling Unit if your performance in an exam or assessment is impaired due to personal or health reasons

- see page 24 for details

Develop Academic Skills such as note taking and researching:

You must attend your tutorials because:

- ◆ They provide you with the opportunity to speak to a tutor or lecturer, which can be a good time to ask about course outlines and assignments.
- ◆ In tutorials you will practise communicating your ideas by giving presentations.
- ◆ Tutorials provide very valuable training in the purposes and dynamics of formal discussion groups.

How to avoid plagiarism

The act of using the words or ideas of another person without acknowledgment is called plagiarism. Plagiarism is a kind of cheating and is considered a crime. If you hand in an assignment without acknowledging your sources, you are likely to fail and be asked to rewrite it. You may fail that unit or even be suspended from university.

Each College/School handbook also contains rules, policies and processes.

You can avoid plagiarism by using the accepted referencing technique. Referencing means acknowledging/citing in your writing the sources of your information and ideas. These sources may include books, journal or magazine articles, newspapers, company, government or institutional reports, websites or personal communication amongst others.

Why referencing is essential

Referencing is a way of showing recognition and respect for intellectual property

- ◆ Your references show how widely you have read.
- ◆ They also indicate the type of research you have done and the sources that have influenced your thinking.

Academic Support Programs

To help and guide you in your understanding of your academic requirements there are Student Learning Unit staff who provide academic preparation courses and literacy workshops. These services are free to all students.

Register for Academic Skills Workshops:

Register online at

currentstudents.uws.edu.au/students/ods/lisu/workshops/workshopregistration

The site also provides information on how to search for a workshop session or view all workshops available.

Academic Skills Workshops

The Student Learning Unit offers a number of workshops on each campus throughout the year, covering topics such as:

- ◆ Essay writing
- ◆ Academic writing style
- ◆ Referencing
- ◆ Developing your writing
- ◆ Essay Structure
- ◆ Critical thinking
- ◆ Mathematics and statistics
- ◆ Assignment Preparation
- ◆ Nursing maths

Assessment and Progressions

Check your obligations regarding progression

www.uws.edu.au/students/stuadmin/prog

The Progression Policy and Procedures can be found under 'progression' at

www.uws.edu.au/policies

Student Guide to Exams:

www.uws.edu.au/students/stuadmin/exam_info

All Student Administration forms can be found at

www.uws.edu.au/forms/

Special Consideration Policy & Process:

can be found under 'Assessment and Examinations' at www.uws.edu.au/policies

Progression Requirements

At UWS you are required to maintain a **satisfactory progression** rate in your course.

At the end of Autumn and Spring session each year the University will review academic performance and alert students who may be performing unsatisfactorily. A student who passes less than 50% of the credit points attempted in any 6 month period will be identified as being 'at risk' so that these students can receive advice and counselling on their options.

At the end of each teaching session, a report is generated to assess those students who will be placed on '**Conditional Enrolment**'.

A student who passes less than 50% of credit points attempted in the assessment period will be placed on 'Conditional Enrolment' for the following 12 months and must enrol in a compulsory **reduced academic load** during this time. For an international student a reduced academic load is considered to be 30 credit points to comply with DIAC regulations.

A student who passes less than 50% of the enrolled credit points while on 'Conditional Enrolment' will be **excluded** from study at the University for a 12 month period. International students must return to their home country during this period and reapply for admission to the University if wishing to resume their studies.

Failure to pass the same unit on 3 occasions will result in **exclusion** from the University based on **unsatisfactory academic performance**. A student who is placed on Conditional Enrolment or is excluded from the University for unsatisfactory performance has the right to appeal to the Appeals Committee of Academic Senate.

Formal Examinations

Formal examination periods and exam timetables are published online. If you plan to go on holidays soon after the exam period, please ensure all your exams are over and also take into consideration the dates for deferred exams in case you need to defer an exam due to illness (refer to Special Consideration below).

Students can request a **Review of Grade** in accordance with the UWS policy. We recommend that you read the information online at <http://www.uws.edu.au/students/stuadmin/results/rog> before applying.

Bilingual Dictionary Use in Exams

Students from language backgrounds other than English can apply to use a Bilingual Dictionary during formal examinations. Application forms need to be lodged at your campus Student Centre as per the instructions on the form.

Special Consideration

The University recognises that there will be circumstances beyond a student's control which may impact adversely on their performance. Under such circumstances, a student may request **Special Consideration** be given to the assessment task (or tasks) affected.

Counselling Service

www.uws.edu.au/ods/counsellingservice

Talk to a Counsellor if you experience difficulties which impede your ability to study effectively:

Bankstown Campus
Building 12

Blacktown Campus
Building U8

Campbelltown Campus
Building 16

Hawkesbury Campus
Building P2

Parramatta Campus
Room Ejd 51

Penrith Campus
Room P1.04

For all campuses phone 9852 5199

Students seeking Special Consideration should complete a 'Final Examination Deferred/Special Consideration Application'. Please read the 'Important information' on page 2 of the form before you apply. You may also seek assistance from your campus International Student Advisor or Counsellor. All applications must be lodged at the Student Centre together with supporting documentation and any request for confidentiality. If medical information is provided, it should be on the certificate which is part of the Application for Special Consideration form or must contain the same information as would be provided in that certificate.

Counselling Workshops

The Counselling Service offers a number of workshops covering such topics as:

- Public Speaking Anxiety
- Re-Discover Your Motivation
- Do Presentations & Stress Less
- Master Your Memory
- Be Your Best - Manage Anxiety in Exams
- Time Management
- Assertive Communication
- Forming a 'supergroup'. Getting the most out of group work.
- Thinking of dropping out?
- Mature Age Students 'Drop-In Group'

For workshop details and registration advice please go to www.uws.edu.au/students/ods/counsellingservice/counselling_section3#1

Seeking Work

Many students like to find part time work while they are studying. The following are some basic principles to give you a head start:

Careers and Employment for students

www.uws.edu.au/community/in_the_community/careers

Start by registering with the CareerHub and check the listings for casual and part-time jobs regularly. Check also the graduate positions, although these employers are more likely seeking people to work full time.

CareerHub registration

<https://careerhub.uws.edu.au/RegisterCurrent.chpx>

Disclose your visa status to employers and be prepared to show evidence of this.

DIAC reference for working while studying

www.immi.gov.au/students/students/working_while_studying/index.htm

A student visa with permission to work allows you to work only 20 hours per week during the semester and full time during study breaks. Your visa only allows you to work whilst you are still a student – this finishes when you cease studying.

The employment situation in Australia is very competitive – you may be competing with people who have existing, relevant, local experience.

The most likely prospects for work for students are hospitality, labouring and sales. These industries tend to have a high turn over of staff and don't require a lot of training for people who have little experience. You can expect rates of pay of between \$10 - \$20 per hour.

Consider unpaid work experience as way to gain useful experience relevant to your field. Employers may be more inclined to allow you to become involved at a professional level that would otherwise be beyond your actual experience. Look also on the Careers Website listed above.

Work Experience Guide

www.uws.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/18746/DIY_Work_Experience_Guide_new_layout2.pdf

UWS has a student insurance policy that can provide cover if you are engaged in unpaid work experience that is relevant to your field of study. You can obtain a letter of indemnity from your course coordinator or Careers & Cooperative Education.

Employment is more difficult for international students to find in professional areas since you are only able to work 20 hours per week. Professional positions of a part time nature are not very common and if available are often highly competitive, requiring very specific skills and experience.

Those with technical skills may have less difficulty finding part time work eg computing skills, clerical skills, engineering, scientific. A labour supply firm may be interested in receiving your resume, however you will need to be very flexible in your availability and transport arrangements – much of this work will be on a contract basis.

Seeking work in your home country after completing your degree

Register online with UWS Careers & Cooperative Education to ensure that updates on employment and careers information is delivered to your email direct. Use this site to access overseas job sites and other relevant information. Determine the date of your return and location of where you will be based.

Careers and Employment for students

Start researching about the employment market in your chosen industry area in your home country at least six months before your departure date by:

- ◆ using the internet to keep track of newspaper advertisements in your home country
- ◆ using the internet to contact home country employment agencies
- ◆ searching the internet to identify employers, or find industry information (search using keywords such as 'Taiwan', 'employment', or an organisation or discipline)

Make use of some of the following resources:

- ◆ your consulate or embassy for graduate employment information
- ◆ employer details in telephone directory for your home country (Internet)
- ◆ international journals of professional associations – often these contain vacancies
- ◆ professional and business associations in your home country
- ◆ alumni in your home country
- ◆ current affairs and business magazine articles on your home country – read regularly in the library eg Business Review Weekly

Get names and contact details for as many individuals as possible back home who might be able to assist you with your research. Networking is one of the major ways that people find employment. Think about the ways your peers who are working in your home country found work.

Prepare a resume suited to the needs of your profession and home country.

Start applying for jobs in your home country before you leave Australia – make sure you supply contact details where you can be reached

Attend Careers and Cooperative Education seminars and workshops on interview techniques.

Familiarise yourself with business protocol and etiquette in your home country. For example, do you need business cards? Can you approach prospective employers via the internet?

Course Completion and Graduation

The University conducts Graduation ceremonies in Autumn and Spring Sessions of each year as follows:

- ◆ Autumn Graduation Ceremonies:
April/May
- ◆ Spring Graduation Ceremonies:
September/October

Application to Graduate:

www.uws.edu.au/forms

Applying to Graduate

To graduate from UWS you must **apply to graduate** at the appropriate time.

Those students in their final session of study and expecting to complete their course must submit an Application to Graduate form which is available from your campus Student Centre and online.

There are specified deadlines for the lodgement of these forms, please check the form for dates or ask at your campus Student Centre.

Even though a student may have met all requirements of the course and completed their studies they will **NOT** formally graduate from the University unless this form is submitted.

The **Graduation Certificate** or **Testamur** will be presented to the student at the formal Graduation ceremony or posted overseas if the student is graduating in absentia.

Staying for Graduation

If you wish to stay in Australia for your formal graduation ceremony or wish to invite your relatives to this ceremony, please contact your campus International Student Advisor for a supporting letter. International Students will need to apply for some form of non-student visa (usually visitor's visa) to stay for graduation.

As an international student, the timing of these Graduation Ceremonies may not be so convenient for you because you may:

- ◆ need to apply to DIAC for another visa in Australia
- ◆ need to apply for membership of a Professional Body
- ◆ need to have your qualifications assessed for Skilled Migration Points Test
- ◆ need to apply for another course
- ◆ need final confirmation for your peace of mind that you have completed your course.

In these situations, you may apply for a course completion letter from the International Office.

Confirmation of Completion Prior to Graduation

Course Completion Letter

A course completion letter is a multipurpose document designed to meet a number of specific needs of graduating international students. This course completion letter provides a summary of academic records and includes key data such as name and title of the course; course commencement and completion date; duration of the course; English as the language of instruction; and your eligibility to graduate with your degree.

Where do I obtain a course completion letter?

From your campus International Student Advisor's Office.

How do I apply for a course completion letter?

To apply for a completion letter you must have completed, or nearly completed your studies. This means that you will have completed or are about to complete all the required units for your course. You need to:

- ◆ Complete an Application for a Completion Letter from your campus International Office
- ◆ Take this form to your Head of Program for approval, and
- ◆ Lodge the form at your campus International office

What happens next?

The International Office can only process your application once all of your final results have been declared. If you have passed all your units and have the approval of your Head of Program, the International Office will process your course completion letter. This may take up to five working days or more.

You may wish to collect your letter personally from your campus International Student Advisor's Office on your campus. The International Office can also post this letter to your address.

Application for an Academic Transcript: *Do I need any other documents to evidence completion of my course?* **Apply online at iPay:**

ipay.uws.edu.au

Yes, you need your official Academic Transcript. Please only apply for this after your results have been declared. You apply online at iPay. This academic transcript will cost you around \$25.00 per copy.

Your course completion letter, together with an Academic Transcript, will meet most circumstances where course completion evidence is required. If you need any additional documents, please talk to your campus International Student Advisor.