

# Southbank Institute International Student Handbook

A guide to living and studying in Brisbane



**TAFE Queensland**  
Queensland Government  
Department of  
Employment and Training

Phone **+617 3244 5100**  
[www.sbi.net.au](http://www.sbi.net.au)

**Southbank**  
INSTITUTE  
epicentre of education

CRICOS Provider No. 02010D

# Contents

## Section 1: Welcome

### From the Institute Director

From the international team

### Important information

### Study cycle of an international student

### Checklist

Before you leave home  
Upon arrival in Australia

## Section 2: Pre-arrival information

### Introduction to Australia

Introducing Brisbane  
Introducing Southbank Institute

### Arranging Visas

*Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade*  
*Department of Immigration and Multicultural and  
Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA)*  
*Migration agents*  
*Educational agents*

Visa conditions  
Permanent residency/migration

### Arranging travel

Documents  
On your flight  
Entry into Australia

### Arriving in Australia

Getting from Brisbane Airport to your accommodation  
*Airtrain*  
*Shuttle buses*  
*Taxi*

Keeping in contact

Arranging your finances

*Currency exchange*  
*Personal funds*  
*Electronic telegraph (telegraphic transfer)*  
*Bank draft*  
*Australian bank account*  
*Credit cards*

Arranging accommodation

Temporary accommodation

*Share a house with other international students*  
*Hotels, motels or backpacker accommodation*  
*Staying with friends or family*  
*Homestay*

Permanent accommodation

Choosing where to live

Where can I get more help?

*Residential Tenancies Authority*  
*Tenants' Union of Queensland*  
*Tenancy Advice*

Bringing your family

Childcare

Schooling

*State schools*  
*Private schools*

## Section 3: Settling in

### Living in Brisbane

The weather and seasons

Time zones

Electricity

Telephones

Support groups

Getting around

*Public transport*  
*Fares and zones*  
*Tickets*  
*Saving money on tickets*  
*Taxis*  
*Driving*  
*Bicycles*

### Health

Emergencies

*Police*  
*Ambulance*  
*Medical assistance*  
*Fire*

Overseas health cover (OSHC)

*How to get a health insurance card*  
*How to use your health insurance card*  
*How to make a claim from OSHC*

Medical needs

*What happens if you become sick*  
*Interpreters*  
*Migrant services*  
*Community health care*  
*Medicines*

General health

*Mental wellbeing*  
*Homesickness and cultural adjustment*  
*Physical wellbeing*  
*Sexual health*  
*Dental, optical and alternative therapies*

# Contents

<b>Managing your finances</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>General student information</b>	<b>40</b>
Banking		<i>Paying fees</i>	
<i>Exchanging money</i>		<i>Enrolling in classes</i>	
<i>Banks and ATMs</i>		<i>Blackboard</i>	
<i>How to open a bank account</i>		<i>Refunds</i>	
Budgeting		<i>Graduation</i>	
<i>Initial expenses</i>			
<i>Ongoing expenses</i>			
<b>Working in Australia</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>Student support services</b>	<b>41</b>
<i>Are you entitled to work in Australia?</i>		<i>International Student Support Officer (ISSO)</i>	
<i>Applying for a work permit</i>		<i>Faculty International Contact Officer (FICO)</i>	
<i>Work experience</i>		<i>Student employment</i>	
Finding work		<i>Counselling</i>	
<i>Recognising your skills</i>		<i>Disability services</i>	
<i>Working conditions</i>		<i>Learning support</i>	
Your pay			
<i>Taxes</i>		<b>Campuses and facilities</b>	<b>43</b>
<i>Tax returns</i>		<i>Southbank campus</i>	
<i>Superannuation</i>		<i>Kangaroo Point campus</i>	
		<i>Morningside campus</i>	
<b>Leisure time</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>Additional information about studying</b>	<b>44</b>
<i>Outdoor activities</i>		<i>Recognition of prior academic qualifications</i>	
<i>Culture</i>		<i>Recognition of prior learning</i>	
<i>Television and radio</i>		<i>Credit transfers</i>	
<i>Internet</i>		<i>Trades Recognition Australia</i>	
		<i>Competency-based training</i>	
<b>Laws and safety in Australia</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>Section 5: AusAID</b>	
<i>Your safety</i>		AusAID students	<b>46</b>
<i>Obeying the law</i>		<i>What is AusAID?</i>	
<i>Violence</i>		<i>When AusAID students arrive in Australia</i>	
<i>Noise and pollution</i>		<i>Conditions of your scholarship</i>	
<i>The environment</i>		<i>Academic monitoring</i>	
<i>Smoking, drinking and drugs</i>		<i>Tutorial assistance</i>	
<i>Religion</i>		<i>Academic failure</i>	
<i>Relationships</i>		<i>AusAID living allowance</i>	
<i>Pets and animals</i>		<i>Permanent residency</i>	
		<i>Completing your studies</i>	
<b>Section 4: Studying at Southbank</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>Appendices</b>	<b>48</b>
<i>Arrive early</i>		Map of Brisbane city	
<i>What to do first</i>		Southbank campus map	
<i>International orientation</i>		Kangaroo Point campus map	
<i>Faculty orientation</i>		Morningside campus map	
<i>Student rules</i>		International student refund policy	
<i>Complaints and grievances</i>		International student terms and conditions	
<i>International student visa conditions</i>		My study buddies signature page	

## From the Institute Director



On behalf of Southbank Institute, I would like to congratulate you on being accepted into your program of study.

It takes great strength of character to live and study in another culture in pursuit of your goals. Studying in a new country can be both exciting and daunting. If you have never been to Australia before, there will be many things to learn and adjustments to make. It is natural for you to feel a little nervous about those changes, but remember that you are not alone. You will find Southbank Institute staff are always willing to support and assist you in any way they can.

This handbook aims to give the information you will need to help you quickly adjust to life and studies at Southbank Institute. It is filled with useful information you will need to know, from the time you apply for your visa, until your graduation.

Throughout your studies, I encourage you to study hard, and always ask for help if you ever feel unsure. I wish you every success in your studies and a rewarding experience in Australia.

I look forward to welcoming you to Southbank Institute.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Craig Sherrin'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

*Craig Sherrin (B.S.C., B.Ed St., M.Ed St.)*

## From the international team

The international team warmly welcomes you to our institute. We are here to support you, help you to achieve your study goals and enjoy the experience as much as possible.

We aim to provide you with professional, efficient and friendly service in:

- sales – advice on programs and pathways to university
- administration – applications, confirmation of enrolment (eCOE) and other documents
- student support – general help for settling in, health care (OSHC), visas, wellbeing and activities
- AusAID – support for students with Australian Government-funded scholarships from certain countries.

We wish you all the best and look forward to meeting you very soon.

# Important Information and Emergency Contacts

## Emergency telephone numbers:

Police, Fire, Ambulance – 000

**Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA)** 13 18 81

Level 13, 313 Adelaide Street Brisbane

Opening hours: Mon–Fri 9:00 am–4:00 pm  
(Wed 9:00 am–1:30 pm)

## Medical centres:

### Travellers Medical Service

Specialising in overseas students – Japanese, Korean and German-speaking doctors

Level 1, 245 Albert Street, Brisbane City

Phone: 3211 3611

### Gladstone Road Medical Centre

38 Gladstone Road, Highgate Hill

Phone: 3844 9599

### Mater Hill Family Medical Centre

40 Annerley Road, Woolloongabba

Phone: 3844 3239

### Main Street Medical Centre

470 Main Street, Kangaroo Point

Phone: 3393 1877

## Transport:

### TransInfo

Information regarding all Brisbane public transport  
13 12 30 or visit [www.transinfo.com.au](http://www.transinfo.com.au)

**Yellow Cabs** 13 19 24

**Black and White Cabs** 13 10 08

## Public facilities:

### Location of Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs)

South Bank Parklands

Southbank Cinema, Grey Street

Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre, Grey Street

### Public telephones

1st floor M Block – Southbank campus

Merivale Street outside D Block

H Block (Cotah) – Southbank campus

### Post office

Russell Street, West End

### Post boxes

Merivale Street outside C Block – Southbank campus

### Text books

Purchase your text books from Text Traders Campus Supply Store:

- **Southbank branch**

Level 1 A Block – Southbank campus

(hours Tuesdays 3–6 pm, Thursdays 12–1 pm)

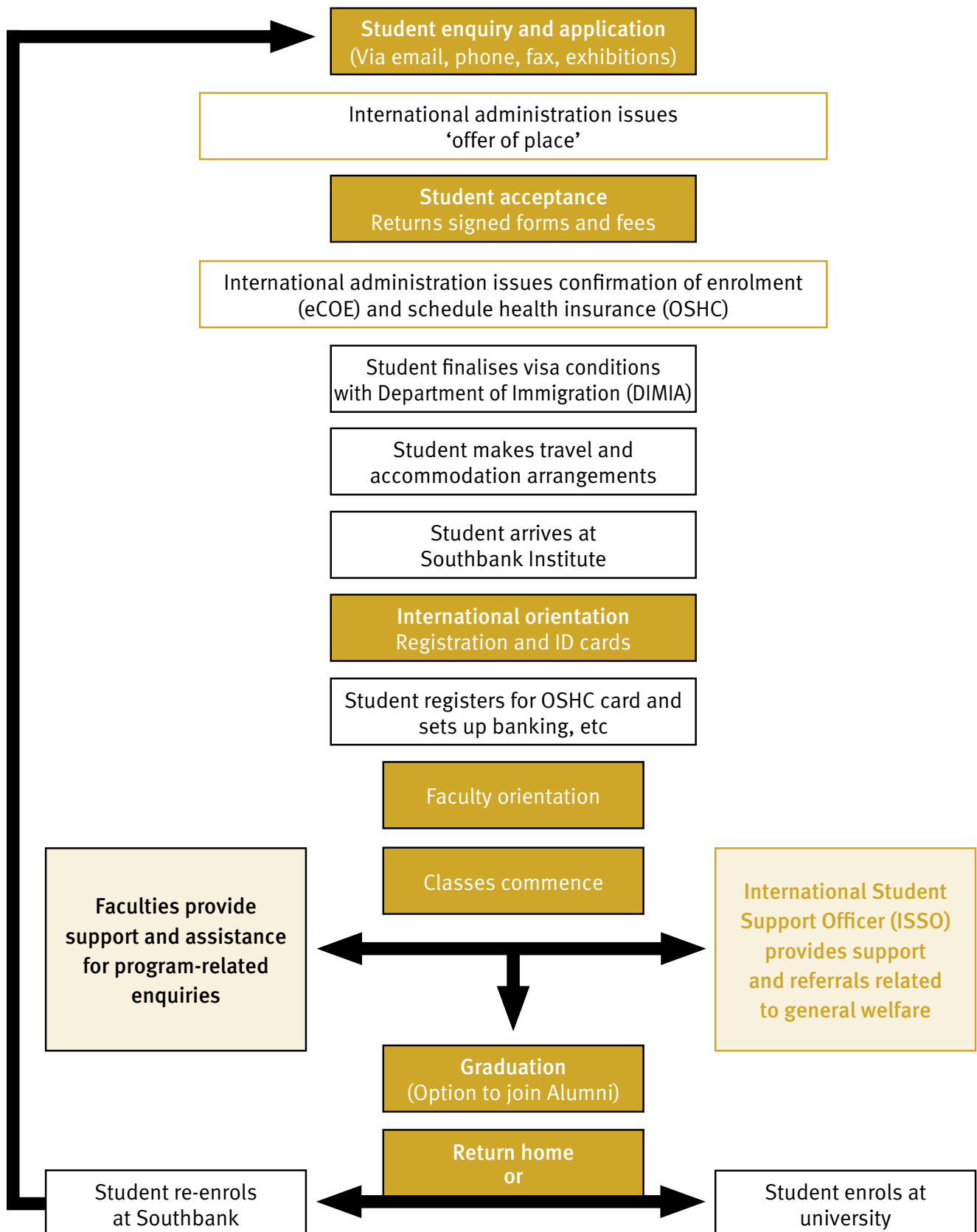
Phone: 3244 5121

- **Brisbane city branch**

197 Elizabeth Street, Brisbane

Phone: 3229 4677

# Study Cycle of an International Student



# Checklist

These handy checklists will help you organise your trip and ensure you complete all the things necessary to make your stay in Australia a happy one.

## Before you leave home

- Arrange student visa
- Arrange travel
- Arrange accommodation
- Arrange transport from Brisbane Airport to your accommodation
- Pack your bags for the trip. Make sure you put your documents (passport, letter of offer, eCOE, certified copies of your qualifications and other important papers) and this handbook in a bag to carry with you on the flight. Don't forget to complete the information on the inside cover of this handbook **before** you pack. It could help you if you are having problems communicating when you first arrive.

## Upon arrival in Australia

- Settle into your accommodation
- Contact Southbank Institute
- Enrol your children at school (if applicable)
- Attend Southbank Institute's international student orientation
- Get your student identification (ID) card at orientation
- Advise your health insurance company of your Australian address and get card
- Open a bank account (within six weeks of arrival)
- Attend your Southbank Institute faculty orientation
- Start classes (after your faculty orientation)
- Apply for a work permit and tax file number (optional)

# Introduction to Australia

Australia is the world's sixth largest country, measuring 4000 kilometres (2500 miles) from east to west and 3200 kilometres (2000 miles) from north to south. It has a population of more than 20 million people who have settled mainly around the coastal strip.

Because of the size of the country, the climate varies depending on location. In the northern parts of Australia (e.g. Darwin in the Northern Territory), the weather is tropical – generally hot and humid for most of the year. In the southern parts of Australia (e.g. Melbourne in Victoria), the weather is cold in winter and hot in summer.

Australia is a tolerant, multicultural society with people from many different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Nearly a quarter of Australia's population was born overseas. Almost one in every five Australians come from a non-English speaking background and more than 200 different languages are spoken. The official language is English.

Australia is broken into six states (Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria and Western Australia) and two territories (the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory [ACT]). The country has three levels of government. The Federal government (the Commonwealth) looks after matters concerning the whole of Australia (e.g. immigration, foreign affairs, taxation). The eight state and territory governments look after the affairs of each state or territory (e.g. health, industry regulations and development). Numerous local councils look after the day-to-day running of smaller local areas within the states.



*Brisbane city skyline at dusk*

# Introduction to Australia

## Introducing Brisbane

Brisbane is the capital city of Queensland—known nationally as the “Sunshine State”. It is located in the south-eastern corner of the state on the coastal strip between the Pacific Ocean and the Great Dividing Range.

Brisbane’s sub-tropical climate is perfect for an outdoor lifestyle, with daytime temperatures ranging from an average of 30 degrees Celsius in summer to 14 degrees Celsius in winter.

The city has open parklands and public spaces, world-class sporting facilities, cafés and the great Brisbane River at its centre.

Less than half an hour from the city centre is Moreton Bay and its islands. In its calm waters, you can enjoy a variety of water sports. If you prefer the surf, the famous beaches and resorts of the Sunshine and Gold Coasts are just over an hour’s drive from the city.

For more information about Brisbane visit the *Our Brisbane* website at [www.ourbrisbane.com](http://www.ourbrisbane.com)

## Introducing Southbank Institute

Southbank Institute is Queensland’s largest government-funded provider of vocational education and training. More than 27,000 people study on its three campuses—Southbank, Morningside and Kangaroo Point.

Many international students have chosen to come and study the wide variety of programs available at Southbank Institute, from science and technology to creative industries and the arts.

The Southbank campus is just a short walk to the South Bank Parklands, retail shops and restaurants, as well as open spaces for relaxation and taking in views of the Brisbane River. It is also just a 20-minute walk to the Central Business District (CBD) and inner-city areas.

Public transport is available in this area with bus, ferry and train stations or stops all located within the South Bank precinct. Students and staff can also use the inter-campus shuttle bus to reach both the Morningside and Kangaroo Point campuses.

# Arranging Visas

Each student's visa situation is unique and requires individual attention by professional staff. You can get more information about visas and conditions by contacting:

- **Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**

The Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has information on foreign embassies and consulates in Australia. It's a good idea to know these details before you leave home. Your consulate can help you with legal advice on your rights and advise on health concerns and travel warnings.

Contact them at [www.dfat.gov.au/missions](http://www.dfat.gov.au/missions) or telephone: +612 6261 1111 (02 6261 1111 within Australia).

- **Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA)**

The Australian Government's Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) can assist you with visa and entry requirement questions. DIMIA is commonly called Immigration.

Find information on their website at [www.immi.gov.au](http://www.immi.gov.au)

- **Migration agents**

Most countries have immigration agents to help with your visa arrangements and also advise on permanent migration to another country.

- **Educational agents**

Southbank Institute has agents contracted to assist you with your transition from home to studying in Brisbane. Many agents have exhibitions or websites to raise their profile in the local community. Ask around your local community to find an agent near you.

## Visa conditions

Each of the many different visa types and subclasses has its own rules and conditions. Make sure you know the conditions of your visa type well. It would also be helpful to know your country classification level.

DIMIA makes and enforces the rules for students living and studying in Brisbane. If you break the rules, you are breaking Australian law and may be imprisoned or sent home and be unable to come back to Australia.

# Arranging Visas

## Permanent residency/migration

If you are applying to live permanently in Australia, there are two different names for the process, depending on where you are living at the time of application.

If you are living in Australia when you make the application, it is called a permanent residence application. If you are living outside Australia when you make the application, it is called a migration application.

You can apply for permanent residency or migration in one of four different ways:

- skilled migration – this is for people who have particular occupation skills, outstanding talents or business skills which would contribute to the Australian economy. Australia has a number of areas of skill shortage and is looking to migrants to fill these gaps.
- family migration – people can be sponsored by a relative who is an Australian citizen or permanent resident
- special eligibility migrants – former citizens or residents wanting to return to Australia
- refugee, humanitarian, special humanitarian and special assistance programs.

There are significant costs associated with migration including:

- the relevant migration application charge when you apply. Whatever the outcome of your application, this money is non-refundable.
- a medical examination for each family member included in an application, along with other costs such as obtaining a character clearance, or the cost of a certified translation of some documents.

Strict requirements also apply in each migration category. Migration regulations are complex and change often, so it is best to contact DIMIA for information on your individual situation. You should consider appointing a migration agent to help you with your application and questions. Further information can also be found at [www.immi.gov.au](http://www.immi.gov.au)

# Arranging Travel

The cost of traveling to Brisbane to begin your study is not included in the price you have paid for your program. You will need to contact a travel agent or airline to arrange your travel.

You should plan to arrive in Brisbane at least two weeks before international student orientation (listed on your orientation letter) to get yourself settled before your studies begin.

To make your travelling simpler, you should try to arrange a flight which will bring you directly to Brisbane from your home. If this is not possible and you have to land in another city, Qantas and Virgin are major airlines in Australia. You could also consider train travel or hiring a car but these would take much longer because of the large distances between major Australian cities (e.g. it would take up to two days to drive from Sydney to Brisbane or 15 hours on a train, but you can fly in just one hour and 15 minutes).

## Documents

As well as this handbook and your travel tickets, you should bring originals or certified copies of all your essential documents, including:

- a valid passport with a valid student visa
- your letter of offer, confirmation of enrolment (eCOE) and orientation letter from Southbank Institute
- birth certificate
- medical records for yourself and any family members travelling with you
- educational qualifications
- work references and/or trade qualifications (if applicable)
- children's school reports (if bringing children with you).

Remember to pack your passport and tickets in your hand luggage that you will take with you on the flight for easy access. Don't pack them in your suitcases.

## On your flight

The normal allowable weight for an economy class passenger on international flights is 20 kilograms, so you will have to think carefully about what to pack.

Wear comfortable layered clothing, which is easy to change as temperatures vary. Wear practical flat shoes.

Keep your passport with your student visa and a pen in your cabin bag, as well as your other essential documents.

The airline staff will give you an *Australian Immigration and Customs Declaration* form as your flight nears your destination. Complete the form on the plane and don't be afraid to ask for help if you are unsure of the answers to any questions.

If you are carrying more than A\$10,000 in cash, you will also need to complete a cash transaction form. It is strongly recommended that you do not carry large sums of cash but arrange for wire transfers of funds or deposits into Australian bank accounts.

If you are getting off your flight in another country before you arrive in Australia, you will have to comply with their customs regulations. If you do not do so, you may face fines or imprisonment. For more information visit [www.customs.gov.au](http://www.customs.gov.au)

# Arranging Travel

## Entry into Australia

When you arrive in Australia, you will be stopped at an immigration checkpoint and asked to hand in your passport and forms. You may be asked questions about your stay before your passport is stamped and handed back to you. (Note: It is illegal to use a camera or phone in this area of the airport.)

Once you have passed through the immigration checks, you should collect your baggage and check that nothing is missing or damaged. If something is missing or you notice damage, you should go to the baggage counter and advise them of your problem. Staff at the baggage counter will help you to find missing baggage or lodge a claim for damage to your belongings.

You will then need to go to the customs checkpoint, where an officer will check your forms and may inspect your luggage. What you can bring into Australia is restricted. Strict quarantine laws are in place to stop people bringing in food and plant items which might be dangerous to our native wildlife. If you have any food or plant items with you or in your luggage when you arrive in Australia, you should have put this on the form you filled out on the plane. The customs officers at the airport will decide if the material is safe to bring into Australia. If they decide it is not safe, the materials will be confiscated and destroyed. For information visit the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) website at [www.aqis.gov.au](http://www.aqis.gov.au)

Once you have been cleared by customs, you will enter the arrivals lounge and have officially arrived in Australia.

You can find out more about the Brisbane Airport, its services and terminal map by visiting the Brisbane Airport website at [www.bne.com.au](http://www.bne.com.au)

# Arriving in Australia

## Getting from Brisbane Airport to your accommodation

Brisbane International and Domestic airports are located next to each other, 16 kilometres from the Brisbane city centre.

If you are not being met by someone you know at the airport, your transport options from the airport to the city include:

- **Airtrain** – This train service runs to the Brisbane Airport from city stations every 30 minutes from 6 am to 7.30 pm each day. It is a 22-minute trip to Central Station in the middle of the city where you can connect to other trains on the Brisbane suburban lines. This is a great option for single travellers who do not have a lot of luggage. A one-way, adult ticket costs just \$11 and there is no need to book. To find out more about Airtrain, go to [www.airtrain.com.au](http://www.airtrain.com.au).
- **Shuttle buses** – Privately-owned shuttle buses leave Brisbane Airport every 30 minutes from 5.30 am to 11 pm. All bus services meet flight departure and arrival times. If you miss one, just wait half an hour for the next service. The cost of travel to the main city hotels is \$11 per person. For information call Coachtrans on +617 3238 4700 (or 07 3238 4700 from within Australia).
- **Taxi** – Whether you are staying in the city or in the suburbs, a taxi will take you to the door. The taxi rank at the International Terminal is on Arrivals level 2. At Brisbane's Domestic Terminal, taxi ranks are located at both the Qantas and Virgin Blue ends of the terminal. During busy times, you may have to queue for a taxi, so waiting times can vary. You can also telephone from the terminal for a taxi but this will cost you a little more. Brisbane taxi companies are Black and White Taxi Cabs (local telephone number 13 10 08) and Yellow Cabs (local telephone number 13 19 24). All Brisbane taxis have standard taxi meters so you won't be charged an inflated fare. A fare to the Brisbane CBD from the airport is approximately \$28 which includes a \$2 fee imposed on taxis leaving the airport.

## Keeping in contact

Before you leave home, you should provide family and friends with details of your flights to Australia and where you will be staying when you arrive. Once you have arrived in Brisbane, you should then let those same people know you have arrived safely. It is important that you always let people know where you are for safety. Let people know how to contact you by phone or post.

You should also contact the Southbank Institute international team on the first working day (Monday to Friday) after you arrive, to let them know you have arrived and where you can be contacted. Take your passport, so they can photocopy the entry stamp on your visa and keep it on file.

## Arranging your finances

### Currency exchange

Only Australian currency can be used in Australia. If you have not arranged to change your money into Australian currency before you leave home, you will need to change some of your money as soon as you arrive. Most Australian international airports have money changing booths where you can change money into Australian currency.

Once you have arrived in Brisbane, you can also change further funds into Australian currency at any bank or at currency exchanges in the Queen Street Mall in Brisbane city.

You should not carry large sums of money with you. It is best to carry only the funds you will need to get you through the first few days after your arrival and arrange to have the rest of your funds transferred to Australia. You might also consider having some funds in travellers' cheques which can be cashed at the bank.

# Arriving in Australia

If you are arriving in Australia on the weekend (Saturday and Sunday), you will need to ensure you have enough money in Australian currency to pay for your expenses, as most banks are not open for money changing. The money changers at the airport are always open but it is expensive and generally not convenient to make a special trip to the airport just to change money.

## Personal funds

You will need to make sure you have enough funds to support you when you first arrive. It is recommended that you have approximately \$A1500 to \$2000 available for the first two to three weeks to pay for temporary accommodation and transport. You should bring most of this money as either travellers' cheques or on an international credit card. It is not recommended that you carry large sums of cash with you.

## Electronic telegraph (telegraphic transfer)

You can transfer money into Australia by electronic telegraph or telegraphic transfer. This is the fastest option and takes about 48 hours, but the bank will charge you a fee on every transaction.

## Bank draft

One of the safer ways to transfer funds into Australia is by a bank draft which is payable to an Australian bank. It may take up to one week for your funds to be available. However, if you have an international bank draft, you may have to wait between two and six weeks for the money.

You do not need to have an Australian bank account to collect the money. You will need to complete an application form and present proof of your identity. If you do not have a bank account in Australia, you will also be charged fees for the transaction.

## Australian bank account

The safest and easiest option for managing your funds is to have an Australian bank account. It can take up to one week to transfer funds from overseas.

If you want to establish an account before you leave home, speak to the banks in your home country to see which ones deal with banks in Australia and can help you to establish an account.

Once you are here in Australia, you will be able to open a bank account. You will require identification such as a passport, driver's licence and evidence of your current (Brisbane) home address. The bank will be able to give you a list of the types of identification which can be used. This should be done within the first six weeks of arrival.

## Credit cards

All major international credit cards can be used in Australia but you must remember that repayments to most of those cards can only be made in the country where they were issued.

It is very difficult to get a credit card once you are in Australia because of our current credit and identification laws.

# Arriving in Australia

## Arranging accommodation

Southbank Institute does not have campus accommodation so you will have to arrange your own accommodation before you arrive in Brisbane.

It is recommended that you arrange temporary accommodation for the first few months to enable you to get to know the areas which will suit your needs and budget. It is a good idea to know the area before you arrange permanent accommodation, so you can be sure you are moving somewhere that suits your needs and budget. You will also find it easier to make permanent arrangements once you have established yourself in Australia and have proof of an Australian bank account and other details.

## Temporary accommodation

Your temporary accommodation arrangements may be:

- **Share a house with other international students with basic furniture supplied.**
- **Hotels, motels or backpacker accommodation** – Generally, the price you pay for accommodation will determine its quality. However, it can be expensive to live in a good quality hotel or motel for a long period of time. Backpacker accommodation is relatively inexpensive but you should consider bringing your own sleeping bag and pillow if you opt for this kind of temporary accommodation.
- **Staying with friends or family** – Staying with friends or family is a great way for you to get used to life in Brisbane, and you will at least be with familiar faces. If you are under 18 years of age, you must provide Southbank Institute and Immigration with a signed form showing that you will be properly cared for. Your accommodation must be approved by Southbank Institute (SBIT) and Immigration before a visa will be granted.
- **Homestay** – This accommodation alternative offers you the chance to live with an Australian family, either for a few weeks or for the length of your stay in Brisbane. If you are under 18 years of age and do not have a legally appointed guardian to care for you while you are in Australia, this is the option you must use.

All homestay accommodation is inspected for quality of service and amenities. The advantage for you is that you can move into an established home with all your basic needs (meals, furniture, bedding and amenities bills) taken care of by the host family. Most homes are within walking distance of public transport or the family will arrange for you to be taken to transport. Living with a family will also give you a chance to practise your English conversation skills.

All homestay families agree to provide their guests with:

- their own room with a bed, study desk and lamp
- two meals and a lunch box each working day (Monday to Friday) and three meals each day on weekends (Saturday and Sunday)
- help with finding your way around the city and interesting places to visit.

To arrange homestay, you should advise the international team at Southbank Institute that you would like to use this accommodation type and provide them with details including your name, contact details in your home country, dates of travel and intended length of stay. Brisbane Educational Consultants and Brokers (BECAB) will then make all the arrangements and advise you of your host family, the accommodation and other necessary details before you leave home so that you can also give them to your family and friends.

Placement and rental fees apply and you will be required to pay four weeks' homestay rent before you arrive to secure your booking. Payments can be made by credit card (fees will apply), bank draft or direct credit to the bank. Contact BECAB for more information on telephone +617 3217 1274 (or 07 3217 1274 within Australia), by email [becab@becab.com.au](mailto:becab@becab.com.au) or visit their website at [www.becab.com.au](http://www.becab.com.au)

# Arriving in Australia

## Permanent accommodation

Once you have established a routine in Brisbane, you may want to move from your temporary accommodation into something more permanent. You could continue with homestay or perhaps find somewhere else to live – either sharing with other students or renting a place of your own.

## Choosing where to live

Most students want to live within walking distance of the campus, but that's not always possible and is greatly determined by availability and cost. Often it's more convenient to live further from the campus but be closer to shopping centres and frequent transport.

The price of renting accommodation can vary greatly, depending on its location and facilities and whether furniture is provided or not. The best idea is to find something you like and compare with other accommodation in the same area.

The weekly rental you pay does not cover the cost of electricity, gas or telephone charges. Rent is generally paid two to four weeks in advance with the agent or landlord asking you to pay a bond or security deposit equal to an additional four weeks' rent before you move in. This bond is refunded to you when you leave, provided you have not caused damage to the property and have paid your rent.

One way to cut the cost of renting a place to live is to share with other students. This is the most common type of accommodation chosen by international students and you each pay for your own room. It is less expensive than renting by yourself because you share the expenses.

Properties for rent are advertised in the *To Let* section of newspapers, through the Southbank student noticeboard and real estate agencies. The papers will use many abbreviations. The Tenants' Union of Queensland website ([www.tuq.org.au](http://www.tuq.org.au)) has a section for explanations of what these mean.

You should arrange to inspect the property before deciding to move in.

To secure a property, you will need a security bond plus a payment of several weeks' rent which has to be paid in advance. In most cases you will also be required to provide two references. If these are difficult for you to obtain, contact Brisbane's Migrant Resource Centre on 3871 3141 for advice and assistance.

As a tenant, you have rights and obligations – make sure you know these before you sign any document. Make sure you know all of the costs and that you understand the documents you are about to sign. If you need help, you should contact the Residential Tenancies Authority at [www.rta.qld.gov.au](http://www.rta.qld.gov.au) before you sign.

As well as paying rent, you will need to arrange to have utilities connected and pay the bills for them direct to the companies. Utilities you will have to pay for are:

- telephone – there are many companies to choose from, such as Telstra ([www.telstra.com.au](http://www.telstra.com.au)) or Optus ([www.optus.com.au](http://www.optus.com.au))
- gas – call 13 1253 or 13 1046
- electricity – call 1800 808 526

# Arriving in Australia

## Where can I get more help?

The Residential Tenancies Authority (RTA) is a government-established body which helps tenants with general advice. If you have problems with your landlord or real estate agent which you cannot solve, you could lodge a dispute with the RTA who will then help to resolve the problem through a formal process.

### **Residential Tenancies Authority**

33 Herschel Street, Brisbane

**Post:** GPO Box 390, Brisbane, Qld, 4001

**Phone:** 1300 366 311, Fax (07) 3361 3666

**International calls:** +61 7 3013 7400

**Website:** [www.rta.qld.gov.au](http://www.rta.qld.gov.au)

The Tenants' Union of Queensland is a statewide community organisation that provides services for residential tenants in Queensland and represents their interests. The union aims to improve and protect the rights of all Queensland tenants. Their pocket-sized guide *Renting a Home—Information for Tenants in Queensland* is available in several languages including English, Arabic, Chinese, Bosnian, Serbian, Samoan, Somali, Tagalog and Japanese. These translated booklets are also available on their website: [www.tuq.org.au](http://www.tuq.org.au)

### **Tenants' Union of Queensland**

28 Robertson Street

Fortitude Valley 4006

### **Tenancy Advice**

**Phone:** +617 3257 1108 (or 1800 177 761 within Australia)

**Fax:** +617 3257 1135

**Email:** [mail@tuq.org.au](mailto:mail@tuq.org.au)

**Website:** [www.tuq.org.au](http://www.tuq.org.au)

# Arriving in Australia

## Bringing your family

If you intend to bring your family into the country to live with you, they will have to also apply for a visa and be covered by health insurance.

Under Australian law, people who are considered members of your family are:

- your spouse – a person to whom you are legally married (your husband or wife) or someone of the opposite sex with whom you have been living for at least 12 months and with whom you have a genuine exclusive relationship (your defacto)
- children under 18 years of age who are not married and are dependant on you or your spouse.

You will need to provide proof of your family relationships with officially issued birth and marriage certificates to Immigration.

You will need to consider what your family will do in Brisbane. If any children will need day care or schooling, you will need to know how to arrange this.

## Childcare

Finding suitable carers takes planning, patience and persistence. Many day care centres have long waiting periods before children can be accepted.

The Bub Hub ([www.bubhub.com.au/serviceschildcare.shtml](http://www.bubhub.com.au/serviceschildcare.shtml)) provides an excellent overview of the different care arrangements available in Brisbane and explains the differences between long day care centres, family day care and occasional care. The website also has a good listing of the nanny and babysitting agencies in Brisbane, plus links to other organisations involved in the childcare industry.

## Schooling

To arrange education for school age children, you will need to locate a local school and contact them directly about how to enrol your children.

There are two types of schools in Australia: state schools and private schools.

### State schools

A public or state school is a government-funded school for students aged between 5 and 17 years of age. These are divided into primary school (grades 1–7, for ages 5–12) and secondary school (grades 8–12, ages 13–17). It is free for students to attend.

There are 1300 state schools in Queensland attended by more than 490 000 students.

All state schools are co-educational (this means that boys and girls attend the same school together). Children may begin their education in preschool, which provides a year of non-compulsory education for children in the year of their fifth birthday.

The school year usually runs from late January to mid-December. It is divided into two semesters, with two terms in each and vacation breaks for Easter, winter, spring and summer.

### Private schools

Private schools are different from state schools as they are not free and students are charged fees to attend.

There are two main categories of private (or non-government) schools in Australia: Catholic schools and independent schools.

Catholic schools form the next largest sector after state schools, with around 21 per cent of secondary enrolments. Independent schools make up the last sector and is the most popular one for boarders. Independent schools are non-government institutions that are generally not part of a system.

It is the decision of the individual which type of school to attend.



*Kodak Beach, South Bank Parklands*

# Living in Brisbane

Beginning a new life in a foreign country can be confusing but the information in this section can help you with ideas about what to expect and where to go for help.

## The weather and seasons

Brisbane's seasons and weather may be very different from those in your home country.

Brisbane has four seasons:

- Summer – from December to February. This is the hottest time of the year and is often very humid. Afternoon storms are common in summer as are long periods of very hot weather. At this time of the year, you need to be sure that you drink plenty of water to avoid heat exhaustion, wear a 30+ sunscreen to keep you from getting sunburnt and possibly developing skin cancer, and wear a hat when outdoors. Temperatures range from an average of 22 degrees Celsius at night to 35 degrees Celsius during the day.
- Autumn – from March to May. The weather begins to cool down but it is often still warm during the day. Temperatures range from 16 degrees Celsius at night to 28 degrees Celsius during the day.
- Winter – from June to August. Winter in Brisbane is usually cool and dry. Temperatures are mild, ranging from 12 degrees Celsius at night to 24 degrees Celsius during the day.
- Spring – from September to November. The weather quickly grows warmer during spring. At night, temperatures range from 14 degrees Celsius to 20 degrees Celsius. Days are much warmer, averaging 26 degrees Celsius in September to 30 degrees Celsius in November.

You can check the Brisbane's weather forecast at [www.ourbrisbane.com](http://www.ourbrisbane.com)

## Time zones

Brisbane is 10 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT+10).

Unlike much of Australia, Queensland does not have daylight saving time. This means from October to March, Brisbane is one hour behind Sydney. It is important to remember this if you are making phone calls to other parts of Australia or other countries during this time.

To see the time zones in Australia, visit [www.worldtimezone.com](http://www.worldtimezone.com)

## Electricity

In Australia, electricity is 220–240 Volts AC. Electrical sockets require three-pin plugs. Most large hotels feature universal outlets for 240V or 100V shavers, but for any other electrical device you will probably need to use an adaptor. You can buy an adaptor from many department stores and luggage shops.

## Telephones

If you come to Australia to study, it may be a good idea to have a mobile (or cell) phone, which makes it easy for you to be contacted.

# Living in Brisbane

Before bringing your mobile phone to Australia, check to make sure it can be used here. Some countries, such as Japan and the USA, operate their mobile phones on networks that are not available in Australia.

Another option is to buy a phone in Australia. Brisbane has a wide range of mobile phone companies, so shop around to find the right phone and price for you. Once you have a phone, it is a good idea to include an emergency contact in your phone book. Enter ICE (In Case of Emergency) and the number of a person who should be contacted in case anything happens to you.

You might also want to buy a phone card to make international calls. These are available at newsagencies throughout Brisbane.

To ring Brisbane from overseas, you must first dial Australia's country code (61) followed by Brisbane's area code (7) and the rest of the phone number.

To ring Brisbane from within Australia (but not in Queensland), you need to put a zero in front of Brisbane's area code (07) before dialling the rest of the phone number.

## Support groups

Brisbane is a multicultural city, with many clubs and organisations for people of different cultures. If you need help, or if you just want to meet people of your own or other cultures, you can try contacting:

- the Multicultural Development Association Inc (MDA), which has multilingual staff to give you advice and help when you first arrive in Brisbane. The MDA can also refer you to other organisations if you need help.

Tel: +617 3394 9300 (or 07 3394 9300 within Australia)

Email: [mailbox@mdabne.org.au](mailto:mailbox@mdabne.org.au)

Office: Level 2, 57 Old Cleveland Road, Stones Corner Queensland 4120

- Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland (ECCQ), which may be able to refer you to clubs and associations for different religions or cultures, or other services if you need help.

Tel: +617 3844 9166 (or 07 3844 9166 within Australia)

Email: [administration@eccq.com.au](mailto:administration@eccq.com.au)

Office: 253 Boundary Street, West End Queensland 4101

## Getting around

You can get around Brisbane by ferry, car, bus, train or bicycle.

### Public transport

Brisbane offers three kinds of public transport: train, bus and ferry.

### Fares and zones

The city and surrounding areas are assigned zones (areas). Public transport fares are calculated on how many zones you travel in. The more zones you travel in, the more expensive your ticket will be. There are 23 zones across south-east Queensland. To see a map of these zones and chart of fare prices, go to [www.transinfo.com.au](http://www.transinfo.com.au)

# Living in Brisbane

You can buy a ticket as you are boarding a bus or ferry. For trains, you must purchase a ticket from a ticket machine or ticket office. You must have a valid ticket when you use public transport, or you could be fined. Brisbane's public transport is integrated, so you can use the same ticket on the train, bus or ferry – as long as you are only travelling within the zone shown on your ticket.

## Tickets

Five kinds of tickets are available to use on public transport:

*Single* – a one-way ticket

*Daily* – allows unlimited travel on the day of purchase

*Off-peak daily* – discounted unlimited travel on the day of purchase between 9 am to 3.30 pm and after 7 pm on weekdays, or all day on weekends and public holidays

*Weekly* – unlimited travel for one week from the date of purchase

*Monthly* – unlimited travel for one calendar month from the date of purchase.

## Saving money on tickets

If you are studying full-time and for more than 12 weeks, you might be eligible for a discount (or concession) on public transportation.

Show your student ID card to receive the concession when you are buying tickets. You can also save money by buying weekly or monthly tickets.

For more information about public transport fares, tickets and routes phone 13 12 30 or go to [www.transinfo.com.au](http://www.transinfo.com.au)

## Taxis

A taxi will take you directly to the front door of wherever you want to go. All taxis in Brisbane have a standard taxi meter, so you don't have to worry about being overcharged. Taxis can be slightly faster than public transportation, but they usually cost more too. For example, travelling from the airport to the centre of Brisbane costs about \$28.

Brisbane's main taxi companies are:

*Black and White Taxi Cabs* – tel 13 10 08 or [www.blackandwhitecabs.com.au](http://www.blackandwhitecabs.com.au)

*Yellow Cabs* – tel 13 19 24 or [www.yellowcab.com.au](http://www.yellowcab.com.au)

If you want to take a taxi in the city or from the airport, look for a taxi rank along the roadside. This is a stopping point for taxis to pick up customers and is often the easiest way to find a taxi.

# Living in Brisbane

## Driving

Australians drive on the left hand side of the road, similar to England. This is important to remember, whether you are driving or just trying to cross the road!

If you are planning to drive in Queensland, you must have an English translated international driver's licence or a valid Queensland driver's licence. To apply for an international licence, visit [www.idlicense.com](http://www.idlicense.com). To apply for a Queensland driver's licence, phone Queensland Transport on 13 23 80 or visit [www.transport.qld.gov.au](http://www.transport.qld.gov.au)

It is a good idea to learn Australian road rules before driving in Queensland. Go to [www.transport.qld.gov.au](http://www.transport.qld.gov.au) for information about road rules and traffic laws. Make sure you drive and park safely. Penalties for breaking traffic laws (speeding, illegal parking) range from expensive fines to losing your driver's licence, or even going to jail.

There is no student parking on campus at Southbank Institute. If you want to drive to your classes, you will need to use on-street parking, which can be hard to find, or a car park, which can be expensive.

## Bicycles

Cycling can be a convenient and inexpensive way to travel around Brisbane. Brisbane has many beautiful and well-maintained bicycle tracks, as well as bicycle lanes on main roads.

Before cycling in Brisbane, you may want to learn the Australian road rules. Go to [www.transport.qld.gov.au](http://www.transport.qld.gov.au) for more information.

You must be careful when cycling, especially on main roads. Australian drivers may not be as aware of cyclists as drivers are in other countries. By law, cyclists must wear a helmet at all times. At night, you must use reflectors and lights so drivers and other cyclists can see you.

## Emergencies

For emergency fire, ambulance or police, phone 000.

When you dial 000, the operator will ask you what service you want (fire, ambulance or police), your name, address and telephone number, and what you need help with. If your English is not good, say “Fire/Police/Ambulance” and your language as clearly as possible. You will be put through to a translator.

### Police

In Australia, police protect people and property, detect and prevent crime and preserve peace for everyone. They are not connected to the military or politics. The police can help you if you feel unsafe.

### Ambulance

Ambulances provide immediate medical attention and emergency transportation to hospitals. Use them wisely as you will not be covered by OSHC and be charged money if it is not an emergency.

### Medical assistance

Emergency medical treatment is available 24 hours a day at the emergency or casualty department of a public hospital, or at some medical centres. Public and private hospitals are listed in the White Pages telephone directory under ‘Hospitals’. If you need to go to hospital, remember to bring your health insurance card and any medicines you are currently taking.

For anything other than an emergency, seek medical help from a general practitioner (GP) or local medical centre.

### Fire

The fire brigade extinguishes fires, rescues people from fires in cars and buildings, and helps in situations when gas or chemicals become a danger. A fire does not need to be large for you to call the fire brigade.

## Overseas health cover (OSHC)

The Australian government requires all international students to be covered by health insurance. You must have paid for Overseas health cover (OSHC) in order to be granted a visa into Australia.

This will cover you for some of the costs of medical treatment during your stay. It covers you for:

- emergency medical advice and assistance
- legal advice and interpreting services
- some of the fees you pay to a general practitioner or doctor
- some of the fees you pay to a public hospital
- some of the costs of prescription medicines
- some of the costs of emergency ambulance services.

This health cover must remain in force during your whole stay. You can arrange to pay for this health cover through Southbank Institute or Worldcare or make your own arrangements. The Worldcare website is [www.oshcworldcare.com.au](http://www.oshcworldcare.com.au)

# Health

Your OSHC Worldcare cover provides you with similar insurance to that which all Australians enjoy through the Australian National Health System. OSHC Worldcare provides medical insurance (doctors, x-rays, pathology services and hospital services), additional benefits for prescription medicines and conditional emergency ambulance cover. OSHC Worldcare provides extra services specifically tailored for international students which include 24-hour medical advice, interpreter services and legal advice.

**Note:** OSHC does not cover dental, physiotherapy, optometry, podiatry, chiropractic or private hospital services.

If you have any questions about OSHC, you can talk to your on-site health representative through the international team, or go to [www.oshcworldcare.com.au](http://www.oshcworldcare.com.au)

## How to get a health insurance card

Before you come to Southbank Institute, you are required to pay for OSHC. After you have found accommodation in Brisbane, phone OSHC on 13 14 84 or visit the OSHC website and provide your Australian address details. Your card will be sent to that address.

## How to use your health insurance card

If you need to visit a doctor or medical centre, show your health insurance card at the end of the visit. You will be charged the doctor's fee and government fee may be processed by the medical centre.

Sometimes the medical centre will not be able to process the fees using your health insurance card and you will need to pay all the fees. In that case, you should keep your receipt and proof of payment and claim the money back through your OSHC.

## How to make a claim from OSHC

To claim back money from your health insurance, you will need to fill out a claim form and mail it, along with your proof of payment to Worldcare. You can obtain claim forms from the Client Service Centre at Southbank Institute or online at [www.oshcworld.com.au](http://www.oshcworld.com.au)

If you aren't sure how to fill out the forms, visit the Client Service Centre and the on-site OSHC representative will help you. You can also make a claim directly with the OSHC representative, who will process your claim immediately and give you a voucher. You take the voucher to the post office to receive your money.

## Medical needs

If you are sick and it is not an emergency, you should visit a doctor (known as a GP – general practitioner) or family medical centre. GPs can take care of your non-emergency medical needs or refer you to a specialist doctor or hospital for further treatment. GPs and medical centres are listed in the *Yellow Pages* telephone directory under 'Medical Practitioners' or visit [www.oshcworldcare.com.au](http://www.oshcworldcare.com.au) for OSHC GPs. You can choose which GP or medical centre you want to visit.

## What happens if you become sick

- 1 Choose a doctor. You can look for a doctor on the Worldcare website, in the *Yellow Pages* or on page 2 of this booklet.
- 2 Phone the doctor or medical centre and make an appointment. If you can't attend your appointment, phone to cancel your appointment.
- 3 Go to your appointment. Your doctor will ask questions about your health. Your doctor may give you a prescription for medicine. Some medicines are paid for by OSHC, but not all – check the website if you have any questions.
- 4 Get a medical certificate. If you are away from your classes, you will need to prove you were sick. A medical certificate from your doctor will show that you were unable to attend class. There is no extra charge for this certificate.
- 5 Pay your bill. At the end of each appointment, show your health insurance card and pay the bill.

# Health

If your doctor or medical centre can't process the fees using your health insurance card, you will need to pay all the fees and claim back the government fees from OSHC.

## Interpreters

If you need an interpreter during your medical visit, your doctor may be able to provide one on the telephone from the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) – 131 450 (costs may apply).

## Migrant services

Many hospitals and large health centres employ health professionals called multicultural health workers who specialise in working with migrant communities. Their services include counselling, advice and referrals. Phone your local hospital or community health centre to see if there is a multicultural health worker for your language group.

## Community health care

Community health centres provide health services at low cost. Not all centres provide the same services, but these can include medical care, nursing, health education, physiotherapy, dental care, counselling and social welfare. Look in the *White Pages* telephone directory under 'Community Health Centres' or 'Health' to find one near you.

## Medicines

If you are sick, your doctor or GP might prescribe medicine such as antibiotics. Prescription medicines are available at chemists and pharmacies. To purchase prescription medicines, you must provide your doctor's prescription to the chemist.

Your OSHC will only pay for prescription medicines above a certain dollar value. Make sure you show your health insurance card when you are paying for prescription medicines at the chemist.

If you normally take any prescription medicines, you should have a letter from your regular doctor with details about your condition and the medicine you are taking. This will help if you need treatment or medicine for your medical condition.

If you have any questions about medicine, speak to the chemist or phone the Medicine Line on 1300 888 763 from 9 am to 6 pm, Monday to Friday.

## General health

When your health declines, so does your happiness, your social life and your studies. Take time to look after yourself to get the most out of your time in Australia and ensure you don't miss classes.

## Mental wellbeing

Living in a new culture can be stressful and difficult. If you feel lonely or stressed, talk to friends, staff or a campus counsellor.

For more serious issues, your GP or medical health centre are able to refer you to professionals who can help. You can also contact Queensland Transcultural Mental Health Centre on 3240 2833 or 1800 188 189.

# Health

## Homesickness and cultural adjustment

It is very normal to feel homesick – most people who travel experience it at some stage. It can be triggered by different things, such as food, smells, music, lifestyle or just missing family and friends.

Homesickness can be experienced at different periods and for different lengths of time. It can make you frustrated, depressed or angry. This can affect your studies and how you react with your classmates.

If you feel homesick, talk to somebody about your feelings. Make sure you keep in contact with family and friends. You might even join a multicultural club or visit an ethnic supermarket. Southbank Institute has free counselling services to help you with your needs. You can contact these counselling services on 3244 5100.

Remember, you are here to experience and enjoy a new and different culture!

## Physical wellbeing

While you are studying, make sure you eat and drink well. Drink plenty of water through the day and eat a balanced diet of fruit and vegetables. Students can spend a lot of time indoors studying, so you might want to find a sport or hobby to help you get lots of exercise.

## Sexual health

If you have any concerns during your stay about sexual matters, talk to a campus counsellor or your GP for advice.

## Dental, optical and alternative therapies

Dental, optical and alternative therapies are not covered by your OSHC and may be expensive compared to your home country. Look in the *Yellow Pages* telephone directory or online to find one convenient to you.

## Banking

### Exchanging money

Australian currency is dollars and cents (AUD). Money exchanges can change your country's currency into Australian currency. You can exchange your money at dedicated money exchanges at the airport, in the Queen Street Mall (in the city centre), or at any bank. Rates can vary between different banks and exchanges, so check before you exchange money to get the best rate possible.

### Banks and ATMs

Banking services are provided by banks, building societies and credit unions.

There are five major banks in Australia: ANZ, National Australia Bank, Commonwealth Bank, Suncorp and Westpac. All five of these banks have automatic teller machines throughout Brisbane. Bank opening hours are generally Monday to Thursday from 9.30 am to 4 pm and Friday from 9.30 am to 5 pm.

### How to open a bank account

Once you are settled in Brisbane, it is a good idea to open a bank account. If you open your account within six weeks after you arrive, you will only need to show your passport as identification. After six weeks, you must show additional identification to open an account.

You can choose any bank or building society you want to open your account. You will need to show your passport, student ID (which will help you avoid higher bank fees) and some money to deposit. Your first deposit can be any amount from as little as \$5.

To withdraw money, you can go into any branch of your bank, or just use your bank card at an ATM. You may need to set up a personal identification number (PIN) in order to use an ATM. Ask at your bank if you need help doing this.

If your bank card is lost or stolen you **MUST** phone your bank immediately!

# Managing Your Finances

## Budgeting

When you live and study away from home, it can be easy to spend lots of money quickly. It is a good idea to set up a budget to help you manage your expenses.

### Initial expenses

Below is an example of the initial expenses you might incur when you arrive:

Temporary accommodation	\$400
Rental bond (four weeks rent @ \$200/week)	\$800
Advance rent (two weeks @ \$200/week)	\$400
Electricity connection	\$ 80
Telephone connection	\$ 60
Gas connection	\$ 80
Household items – furniture, crockery, etc	\$400
Transportation	\$ 50
Educational expenses	\$250
Other expenses	\$200
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,720</b>

*Note: These figures are approximate only.*

### Ongoing expenses

Once you have established your accommodation and extras, such as your telephone and electricity, you will need to budget for ongoing costs. Usually, your ongoing expenses will fall into four categories:

- utilities (telephone, electricity and gas – every three months)
- living (rent, food, transportation, entertainment – weekly)
- education (photocopying, printing, etc – as needed)
- unexpected (return home, family visits, health costs not covered by OSHC)

The cost of living in Brisbane varies greatly, depending on your personal needs and tastes. While the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) suggests that you will need \$1000 or more per month, you may need more, especially if you are renting a house or apartment on your own.

Below is an example of weekly expenses you might need to budget for (amounts vary on individual needs):

Electricity/gas	\$ 15
Telephone	\$ 25
Rent (share accommodation)	\$100
Food	\$ 60
Transportation	\$ 20
Entertainment	\$ 25
Educational	\$ 25
Unexpected	\$ 20
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$290 per week</b>

# Working in Australia

## Are you entitled to work in Australia?

If you are on a student visa, you are not allowed to work without permission. You must apply for a work permit through your International Student Support Officer (ISSO) and then through the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) before you begin working. If you try to work without a work permit, your visa will be cancelled, you will be deported and you may not be allowed back into Australia.

## Applying for a work permit

You may not apply for a work permit until after your Southbank Institute study program starts. Work permits can take from two weeks to six weeks to approve, so apply early. On a student visa with permission to work, you may work up to 20 hours at a paying job during the semester. During semester holidays, you can work as many hours as you like. Other types of visas have other rules and conditions about working. Phone Immigration on 131 881 or visit [www.immi.gov.au](http://www.immi.gov.au) for more information about working and your visa.

### *Applying online*

- 1 Gain permission to apply for a work permit from DIMIA through your ISSO.
- 2 Log onto [www.immi.gov.au](http://www.immi.gov.au)
- 3 Click the 'Online Services' button.
- 4 Select 'Students'.
- 5 Under 'Student Visa Services', select 'permission to work'.
- 6 Next to 'I am the primary holder' click 'yes'.
- 7 Click the 'Apply online here' button.
- 8 Click on the button to agree to terms and conditions.
- 9 Fill out the online form to apply. Applications cost \$60, payable by credit card or BPay only.
- 10 At the end of the process, a screen will appear with a number. Print out this page for your reference.

### *Applying by mail*

- 1 Pick up a DIMIA application form (form 157P) from your ISSO and get the paperwork permission.
- 2 Complete the form, including payment (credit card, bank cheque or money order).
- 3 Post the form to DIMIA to the address on the form, or drop your application off to DIMIA at Level 13, 313 Adelaide Street, Brisbane.

DIMIA will send a receipt when they have received your application and payment. DIMIA will contact you when your visa with permission to work is ready to pick up. You will need to bring your passport to DIMIA's Brisbane office. If you have any questions about your visa or the process, call 131 881.

# Working in Australia

## Work experience

Some of Southbank Institute's programs feature in-the-field work experience as part of the program. If work experience is required and assessed as part of your program, you are allowed to work more than 20 hours a week. However, you cannot be paid for more than 20 hours a week at any time. Contact your ISSO for more information.

## Finding work

After you have permission to work, you will want to find a job. You can start by talking to the employment officers in Employment Services at Southbank Institute's Client Service Centre. They can help you write a resume or application, prepare for job interviews and find a job. You must make an appointment and register with Employment Services to use their help.

There are many different ways to start your job search:

- 1 Look in the newspaper in the 'job vacancies' or 'positions vacant' section, especially on Saturday.
- 2 Check out websites such as [www.seek.com.au](http://www.seek.com.au) and [www.careerone.com.au](http://www.careerone.com.au)
- 3 Contact an employment agency. You can find employment agencies listed in the *Yellow Pages* telephone directory.
- 4 Visit the website for the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations at [www.workplace.gov.au](http://www.workplace.gov.au). You can find links and advice on jobs and careers, training, government assistance and work conditions.

## Recognising your skills

Specialist qualifications you may have already gained from your home country in areas such as engineering, construction, metalwork, electrical or catering can be recognised in Australia. Having your qualifications recognised will allow you to look for work in these areas.

To find out how to have your skills, phone the Trades Recognition Australia (TRA) in Queensland on 07 3223 1423 (within Australia). If you are enquiring from overseas, phone the TRA's Canberra number on +612 6121 7456.

## Working conditions

If you work in Australia, your job will have certain conditions associated with it. Most jobs and working conditions are covered by Commonwealth or State awards. Awards cover areas such as minimum wages, allowances, overtime, penalty rates, working hours and days off for holidays/vacations, long service or sickness.

Some workplaces are covered by Certified Agreements. These are agreements made about wages and employment conditions (such as overtime and days off) made directly between an employer and a group of employees or employee unions. (For more information about unions, phone the Australian Council of Trade Unions on 1300 362 223 or go to [www.actu.asn.au](http://www.actu.asn.au))

Other workplaces require an Australian Workplace Agreement (AWA), an individual agreement between an employer and a single employee about the employee's wages and conditions.

Your job should be covered by one of the above agreements or awards. If you need more information about working conditions, phone the Office of the Employment Advocate on 1300 366 632 or Wageline on 1300 369 945.

For the latest information on legislative changes to working conditions, visit [www.workchoices.gov.au](http://www.workchoices.gov.au)

## Your pay

### Taxes

All Australians pay tax on their earnings. The amount of tax they pay varies from person to person. The government takes out tax before workers receive their pay.

If you intend to work while living in Australia, you must apply for a Tax File Number (TFN). This is a unique number issued to you which helps the government identify you in the tax system.

You should apply for your TFN as soon as possible when you arrive in Australia. You can apply quickly and easily online at [www.ato.gov.au/individuals](http://www.ato.gov.au/individuals) – make sure you have your passport details available. It can take up to one month to get your TFN.

Once you have a TFN, you don't ever have to apply again while working in Australia. Applying for a TFN is free.

### Tax returns

The Australian tax year runs from 1 July to 30 June of the following year. Under Australian law, anyone who earns an income during the tax year must file a tax return by 31 October. To find out if you are required to file a tax return, contact the Australian Tax Office on 13 28 61 or go to [www.ato.gov.au](http://www.ato.gov.au)

Tax Help is a free service available to people on low incomes, such as students, who need help with tax questions and tax returns. Phone 13 28 61 to find out your nearest Tax Help Centre.

### Superannuation

Superannuation (or 'super') is a government-sponsored savings program. You add money to it from your earnings while you are young to make sure you have enough money to live on when you retire (around age 65). Most employed people are members of a super fund.

Employers must put an amount equal to nine per cent of your salary into your super fund. You can put additional money from your pay into your super fund, if you wish, but you will not be able to access that money until you are 65.

Your employer should give you the name of your super fund. To check that your employer is paying the right amount into your super fund, phone the super fund. If you have questions about super, phone the Australian Taxation Office Superannuation Infoline on 13 10 20. You can receive your super after you have left Australia and your visa has expired. You can lodge an application to do this by visiting [www.ato.gov.au](http://www.ato.gov.au)

# Leisure Time

Mild to warm weather for most of the year means that some of Queensland's best features are found outdoors. Brisbane residents enjoy socialising outdoors (known as 'al fresco') at cafes, restaurants and pubs around the city and suburbs.

In the past, Southbank Institute's international students have enjoyed organised activities such as Brisbane bus tours, visits to Australian Woolshed and Australian Zoo, barbecues and playing volleyball and basketball. Contact your campus staff, ISSO or look at campus noticeboards to find out if any activities have been organised.

## Outdoor activities

Brisbane residents love spending time outdoors, participating in activities such as camping, bushwalking, swimming and playing sports. You can find all sorts of outdoor activities and events around Brisbane at [www.ourbrisbane.com](http://www.ourbrisbane.com) or [www.lonelyplanet.com](http://www.lonelyplanet.com)

South Bank Parklands is just a block away from Southbank Institute's Southbank campus. This large parkland features shopping, dining, open spaces and a swimming beach, all within sight of Brisbane city.

If you enjoy outdoor activities, make sure you stay safe:

- Swim only at those beaches that are patrolled by lifesavers. Not all Queensland beaches have lifesavers patrolling them. Remember to swim only between the flags.
- Never fish or swim alone.
- Queensland's sun is harsh – make sure you wear a hat and 30+ sunscreen when you are outdoors.

## Culture

Southbank Institute's Southbank campus is situated within a short walking distance of many of Brisbane's museums, including the Queensland Art Gallery, Queensland Museum and the interactive ScienceCentre. There are often special exhibits, events and free activities – check their websites for specific times and events.

Brisbane is also home to cultural activities such as theatre, concerts, movies and events. Check [www.ourbrisbane.com](http://www.ourbrisbane.com) or go to [www.brisbane.qld.gov.au](http://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au) to see what's on.

## Television and radio

Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) television and radio stations have programs in many languages. Weekly programs are listed in newspapers such as *The Courier-Mail*.

A list of ethnic radio stations can be found at the National Ethnic and Multicultural Broadcasters' Council (NEMBC) website at [www.nembc.org.au](http://www.nembc.org.au)

Some multilingual radio stations in Queensland include Community Radio 4CCR FM (89.1 Mhz), Radio 4EB FM (98.1 MHz) and SBS Brisbane FM (93.3 Mhz).

## Internet

There are several ways for you to access the internet at little or no cost. As a student at Southbank Institute, you can use our internet access computers in the eLearn centres or libraries. Go to [www.southbank.tafe.net](http://www.southbank.tafe.net) for the opening times of the four eLearn centres.

## Leisure Time

Each enrolled student is allowed 150 MB per semester for course-related materials and downloads. You can pay \$25 for each additional 100 MB you would like to use. This can be paid at the Client Service Centre. If you are over your 150 MB limit and have not yet paid for additional space, you will be locked out of your account until you pay for additional space.

### *Logging in for the first time*

To use the internet you must first be enrolled in your class. When you log in the first time, you need to enter your username (student ID number) and your password (which is your date of birth dd/mm/yyyy. For example, if your date of birth is May 5, 1970, your password will be 05051970). Once you have successfully logged in, you should change your password.

### *Other internet locations*

Brisbane City Council libraries feature computers with free internet access in most of their public libraries. Go to [www.ourbrisbane.com](http://www.ourbrisbane.com) for a list of library locations and services.

Picabeen Community Centre (Brisbane) offers free computer and internet access, as well as tutors and classes. Phone 3354 2555 or go to [www.picabeen.org.au](http://www.picabeen.org.au) for information.

For information about the best ways to access the internet, phone NetSpots on 1800 222 797.



*Business students working with one of our Southbank lecturers*

# Laws and Safety in Australia

Brisbane is generally a safe city. By following the laws and taking a few extra precautions, your stay here should be safe and worry-free.

## Your safety

Carry a mobile phone with you, with your ICE (In Case of Emergency) contact entered in the phone contacts. If you are ever in immediate danger or fear for your safety, call 000 and ask for the police immediately.

## Obeying the law

As a visitor to Australia, you are obliged to obey the same laws and follow the same rules as citizens. Breaking the law can result in fines, imprisonment or deportation.

Australia has several community organisations which can provide legal advice and inform you of your legal rights. If you need help or have questions, contact:

- Legal Aid Queensland – ph: 1300 651 188
- Queensland Association of Independent Legal Services – ph: 1800 244 504
- South Brisbane Immigration and Community Legal Service – ph: 3846 3189

In Australia, everyone is considered equal, regardless of race, gender, country of origin, political or religious affiliation, disability, sexual preference or marital status. All people should be treated fairly. It is illegal to insult, humiliate, offend or intimidate another person based on their differences, or sexually harass anyone.

If you feel that you have been discriminated against or treated unfairly, contact one of the organisations listed above for advice.

## Violence

It is illegal to act violently against another person, whether the violence happens in public or at home. Violence at home is called domestic violence. It is punished just as harshly as a crime committed in public. Domestic violence and violence against children are considered severe crimes. Anyone who engages in these crimes will be harshly punished with a jail sentence or deportation.

## Noise and pollution

Laws protect Australians from too much noise. Your neighbours will generally tolerate occasional noise, but if it is frequent, very loud or occurs at night, a noise complaint may be made.

It is illegal to litter and pollute the environment. Make sure you dispose of all your rubbish in a proper bin. Brisbane recycles waste such as cardboard and drink bottles – look for a recycling bin before tossing away your rubbish. Find out what you can (and can't) recycle at [www.brisbane.qld.gov.au](http://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au)

## The environment

Native plants and animals are protected by Australian law. Collecting or capturing native plants and animals is illegal and can result in large fines or imprisonment. You should also avoid lighting fires outdoors. Australia is a dry country and one small spark from an outdoor fire can turn into a raging bushfire!

# Laws and Safety in Australia

## Smoking, drinking and drugs

Smoking is banned in many public places in Australia, including airports, government offices, medical centres, workplaces and within four metres of a building entrance. Smoking in restaurants and shopping centres is also banned in most states/territories. Non-smoking areas are often (but not always) shown by a sign. If you aren't sure whether smoking is permitted, ask. Smokers must also dispose of their cigarette butts in garbage bins – NOT on the ground. You must be 18 years or older to buy cigarettes and tobacco products.

You must be 18 years or older to drink alcohol legally in Australia. Drinking alcohol is banned in some public places, regardless of age.

All drugs, other than those prescribed by a doctor or general practitioner, are illegal in Australia.

## Religion

In Australia, there is no official religion. People are allowed to practise any religion they choose, as long as it does not break any laws (such as violence against another person).

## Relationships

Marriage in Australia is acceptable for men and women over the age of 18 years. Arranged marriages are less common but still acceptable, as long as both people are over the age of 18 years and willing partners. If a person is already married, they may not marry another person. Being married to more than one person at a time is illegal.

The age at which the law recognises your right to have a sexual relationship with another person (known as the Legal Age of Consent) is 16 years in Queensland. This law exists to protect young people.

You can find out more about the Age of Consent or any sexual health issues from a doctor or GP or by contacting the Sexual Health Line on 3240 5881 or Brisbane Sexual Health Clinic on 3227 6509.

## Pets and animals

Although you may want to keep a pet, there are laws about what kinds of pets you can have at home and how many. It is illegal to keep native Australian animals as pets. In Brisbane, some animals need to be registered – go to [www.brisbane.qld.gov.au](http://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au) for information about how to register your pet. No animal or pet can be brought into Australia without quarantine.

Australia has strict laws protecting animals from neglect and abuse. The RSPCA is an organisation set up to protect animals. RSPCA inspectors have the power to confiscate animals who are mistreated and to prosecute the animals' owners with heavy fines or imprisonment.



*Southbank Institute business students*

# Studying at Southbank

Southbank Institute has more than 27,000 students, with almost 1400 of these international students from all over the world.

To make your transition to Australia as smooth as possible, Southbank Institute's international team and website ([www.southbank.tafe.net/site/international](http://www.southbank.tafe.net/site/international)) are dedicated to international students. If you ever have questions, make sure you contact either the international team or the international website – many of the procedures for international students are different from domestic students.

## Arrive early

It is essential that you arrive in Brisbane before both your international student orientation and your faculty orientation. You will formally complete enrolment into your program at these orientations, so attendance is mandatory.

## What to do first

Contact the international team at:  
Client Service Centre – Level 2, A Block, 14 Glenelg Street, South Brisbane

You must bring your passport with student visa with you.

You can contact your ISSO (International Student Support Officer) before leaving for Australia by phoning +617 3244 5633 or emailing [sbit.isso@det.qld.gov.au](mailto:sbit.isso@det.qld.gov.au)

## International orientation

Your ISSO can help you settle into Brisbane and prepare you to start studying at Southbank Institute. You will need to bring with you:

- this handbook
- your passport with student visa
- your orientation letter.

With this handbook you should have received an orientation letter with details of times and places to go. At the international orientation, you will learn about settling into Brisbane (accommodation, banking and transport), OHSC, working and student visas, student identification cards and general information. **You must attend this session.**

## Identification (ID) cards

At the international student orientation, you will register by simply providing your letter of offer. You must pay any outstanding fees on this day. After registering, you will be eligible for your student ID card. Right after the international student orientation, take your passport or another form of ID to the student ID room, located on the ground floor of A Block. Your photo will be taken and you will be given your student ID card.

Your student ID is essential – it is used for security and will enable you to borrow library books, gain travel concessions and open bank accounts. Student ID cards can also give you discounts on shopping and entertainment. Whenever you are making a purchase, always ask if a student discount is available. You will be asked to present your ID card at your faculty orientation.

## Faculty orientation

Your faculty orientation will give you insight into Southbank Institute, your faculty and your program. You will need to show your student ID card to prove you have already attended the international student orientation.

At your faculty orientation, you will be given general information about studying at Southbank Institute – how to find your way around campus, how to change, defer or withdraw from class, health and safety issues, support services available (counselling and disability assistance, employment) and how to use campus facilities including the gym, libraries and internet. You will also learn about your program such as timetables and material requirements. Materials fees (if any) must be paid on this day.

# Studying at Southbank

## Student rules

All students of Southbank Institute are expected to follow the rules and regulations set out for students. You can find these on the website in the program tab of Student Rules. You should read through the rules to make sure you understand them. Ignorance is not an excuse to break the rules.

Student Rules cover topics including:

- institute responsibilities
- program of study progress
- advanced standing (including Transfer Credit and RPL)
- assessment, appeals and deferred/special assessment
- code of conduct.
- conditions of enrolment
- withdrawal/cancellation/change of enrolment
- misconduct and appeals
- results and awards

## Complaints and grievances

*A student grievance* is a complaint lodged by a student of Southbank Institute relating to institute staff, other students or procedures.

*Mediation* is a voluntary discussion between the aggrieved party, the person involved in the grievance, and a third party separate from the grievance.

Any comments or feedback you provide are confidential. In no way will your feedback affect your grades and studies.

### *How to resolve your grievance:*

Follow these steps if you have a student grievance (each step is designed to resolve the issue, however, if this does not occur, continue to the next step).

1. Discuss the issue with family, friends or the person involved in the grievance.
2. Make a verbal complaint to another institute member (this can be an Institute Counsellor, Client Service Officer or International Student Support Officer)  
or  
submit a written complaint through the Client Service Centre. (Please note that the relevant manager will deal with your complaint.)

### *To appeal the outcome:*

3. An institute 'Appeals Committee' is gathered, a hearing is held and the committee then makes a decision.
4. Contact the Director, Education and Training (phone (07) 3244 5539) who will provide you with the name of an independent mediation service, which you can employ (at your cost), for arbitration.
5. Employ a legal officer to appeal to the Courts.

*Note: If you are a 'minor' (under the age of 18), your parent/guardian must be informed and be present at any interviews or actions.*

*You have the right to bring a support person with you to any discussions.*

*You can withdraw your grievance or alter the method of resolution at any time. If your grievance relates to sexual harassment, you should contact at WARN officer or phone 3244 5095.*

*For Academic Appeals you should refer to the Student Rules located at <http://southbank.tafe.net/site/students/policies.asp>*



*Southbank Institute retail students*

# Studying at Southbank

## International student visa conditions

If you are in Australia on a student visa, you must meet the conditions of your visa in order to live and study in Brisbane. These include:

- **Contact hours:** you must be physically present at class for a minimum of 20 hours per week during the semester. If you have fewer than 20 hours of class time a week, inform your faculty. They will make alternative arrangements.
- **Holidays:** you may only take holidays during semester breaks. Any holidays taken during the semester will be considered absences. If you are leaving Brisbane for a semester break holiday, DIMIA requires that you tell the international staff when you are travelling, where you are going and when you will be back.
- **Attendance:** you must attend all classes. If you are late or not in class, you will be marked absent. If you are sick, you must present medical certificates for each day you are away from class. If your attendance falls below 90 per cent, the international team will ask you to sign an agreement to state you are aware your attendance is low.

If your attendance does not improve and falls below 80 per cent, you will be reported to DIMIA without further notification, who will re-assess your visa status. They will ask to see any medical certificates or proof of non-attendance. DIMIA may cancel your visa and send you home for non-attendance. If this happens you will not be allowed re-entry to Australia for three years.

- **Academic performance:** you must complete all class activities and assignments, and pass your program requirements. If you are having trouble, please talk to your teachers to arrange help. If you continue to fail academically, you may be reported to DIMIA on grounds of poor performance. DIMIA will not extend visas if your grades are poor.
- **Changing your address:** you must inform both Southbank Institute and DIMIA within seven days each time you move. We must be able to contact you at all times. We may need to contact you for an emergency, to discuss your studies, or to send out your results. If we cannot contact you, you may be regarded as missing and the police will be informed. If you have not told us your address and do not receive your results, you will be charged money to get a new copy sent to you.

To change your address, you will need to put your new address in writing either by email or completion of a *Personal Details* form and send this to the international team.

You must also notify DIMIA within seven days of change of address. The *Change of Address* form (Form 929) can be found on the DIMIA website [www.immi.gov.au](http://www.immi.gov.au) under 'Forms and Booklets'.

- **OSHC:** you must have health insurance cover for the duration of your program. Failure to do so is a breach of your visa conditions. It also places you at financial risk should you fall ill as medical costs can be expensive.
- **Terminating studies/returning home:** you must advise the international team if you want to end your studies at Southbank Institute and/or return home. You will be given an exit interview and formally withdrawn from studies. Your student visa will be cancelled. You must continue to attend class until the process is complete. If you don't, it will reflect on your attendance records, which could affect your ability to study in Australia in the future.

## General student information

### Paying fees

You must pay all relevant fees before your semester starts, or you will not be allowed to start or continue your studies. Southbank Institute does not accept part payments or instalments after the semester has begun.

### Enrolling in classes

There are two types of enrolments: program level and class level. When you are accepted to study at Southbank Institute, you are enrolled into a program of study.

You must also enrol into classes each semester. This is essential. It will not happen automatically – you must enrol yourself. If you do not enrol into classes, you will not be on the class attendance rolls and you will not be awarded a result.

If you have any questions about enrolment, contact your faculty staff.

### Blackboard

Blackboard is an online program used by students to complete their studies.

Blackboard is internet-based and can be accessed from any computer connected to the internet. If you don't have a computer or internet access at home, you can use a computer in one of Southbank Institute's four eLearn centres.

To access Blackboard, go to <http://southbank.blackboard.com>

After logging in, you will see a welcome screen. You can return to this screen at any time by clicking on "My Institution" in the top left corner.

On the welcome screen, you will see several links that will display information about your course. "My Announcements", for example, will display any important bulletins that your course teacher may have posted to their students. "My Calendar" and "My Tasks" will display important upcoming events and tasks to be completed for your course.

Also on the Welcome screen is "My Courses". By clicking this, you will see any Blackboard courses in which you are enrolled. You can access information relating to that course by clicking on the course name.

### Refunds

If you decide not to study before your program begins, you can be refunded for the cost (minus an administration fee). However, if you decide to stop studying after your program has already commenced, you will not be given a refund. If you complete your studies in a shorter time than specified in your letter of offer, you are not entitled to any refund of tuition fees.

ELICOS students may apply for a credit if they successfully meet the English language entry requirements ahead of time and meet all other conditions to enter a Southbank Institute program while they are enrolled in an ELICOS program.

# Studying at Southbank

If you want to defer your studies, Southbank Institute may hold tuition fees for up to one year until you resume studying. If you withdraw from the program after you have deferred for one year, tuition fees will not be refunded.

Refund requests must be put in writing to the international manager, who will approve your request. You may appeal refund decisions by writing to the Director of Southbank Institute within 14 days of receiving notification.

If your request is approved, your refund will be issued within two weeks. Refunds are made to the person who signed the contract and are paid in the currency in which the funds were received.

Contact the international admissions team for more information.

## Graduation

At the end of your studies, some students only (e.g. not TESOL or Foundation) can attend a formal graduation. You are encouraged to invite your family and friends to this ceremony. Your faculty will give you the actual day of the graduation ceremony closer to the date.

## Student support services

Southbank Institute prides itself on the outstanding 'extras' it offers its students. Everyone who studies at Southbank is invited to use our range of student support services.

### International Student Support Officer (ISSO)

Where: Client Contact Centre – Level 2, A Block

14 Glenelg Street, South Brisbane

Tel: 3244 5633

Your ISSO is here to make your stay in Australia easier. They can help with support and information on everything from visas and travel to accommodation, health and general support.

### Faculty International Contact Officers (FICOs)

Each faculty has a FICO who can help you with questions or problems you might have with your programs, enrolments, attendance, results/awards and academic concerns.

### Student employment

Where: Client Contact Centre – Level 2, A Block

14 Glenelg Street, South Brisbane

Tel: 3244 5003

**Note:** An appointment is required.

If you have permission to work from DIMIA and want to find a job, the people at student employment can help you. This free service includes:

- career advice
- job vacancies
- resume and application preparation
- help preparing for interview.

# Studying at Southbank

## Counselling

Where: Client Contact Centre – Level 2, A Block

14 Glenelg Street, South Brisbane

Tel: 3244 5095

**Note:** An appointment is required.

Many students use counsellors during their studies. Southbank Institute's counsellors are experienced, trained professionals who are there to help you at no cost. Special counsellors for international students and those from non-English speaking backgrounds are available. A counsellor can provide advice and guidance for a range of issues, whether they are personal or study-related, including:

- career and program advice
- mediation and support for educational issues
- time and study management
- financial hardship
- personal issues
- cultural issues
- admission procedures
- special needs
- sexual harassment and grievances.

## *Workshops and seminars*

Southbank's counsellors run practical workshops on topics including career planning, study skills and time management.

## Disability services

Where: Client Contact Centre – Level 2, A Block

14 Glenelg Street, South Brisbane

Tel: 3244 5095

Southbank Institute aims to provide a quality education for all students on an equal basis. To do that, we offer a range of physical and human resources to help students maximise their studies, including:

- sign language interpreters
- readers and scribes
- learning support personnel
- adaptive equipment
- alternative assessment arrangements.

## Learning support

Contact your faculty or counsellor for further information.

The aim of our learning support is to help students develop the skills in order to complete assignments. International students can access extra help for their studies, such as being assigned a tutor, or being allowed to attend extra classes.

# Studying at Southbank

Southbank Institute is made up of three campuses, with different programs offered at each campus. The campus you attend depends on the program you are studying – check your letter of offer to find out which campus (or campuses) you will attend.

Each of our three campuses is in a different location in Brisbane and features different facilities. These include dining areas, bookstores, sports facilities, libraries and childcare.

## Campuses and facilities

### Southbank campus (main campus)

*Where:* 14 Glenelg Street, South Brisbane

*On-campus facilities:* shops, gym, childcare, health/beauty therapies, natural therapies, restaurants, café, canteen, bookshop, libraries, eLearn centre, student employment, counsellors, ISSO.

*Nearby facilities:* South Bank Parklands and beach, cinemas, cafés, dining, river walk, CBD, Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre.

### Kangaroo Point campus

*Where:* 417 Main Street, Kangaroo Point

*On-campus facilities:* bookshop, canteen, library, counsellors, eLearn centre.

*Nearby facilities:* hotels and pubs, barbecue facilities, Kangaroo Point cliffs (abseiling), ferry/bus access to city, newsagency, restaurants, The Gabba sporting venue.

### Morningside campus

*Where:* Clearview Terrace, Morningside

*On-campus facilities:* canteen, library, eLearn centre.

*Nearby facilities:* shopping centre, department stores, cafes, banks, post office, train station, fast food shops.

## Additional information about studying

### Recognition of prior academic qualifications

If you have already studied outside Australia, you might like to have qualifications you earned from those studies recognised here in Australia. Recognition of your previous academic qualifications would enable you to further your studies.

It is important that your qualification documents are in English. If not, you should have them translated into English.

The Australian Education International–National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) can give you information on how to have your post-secondary qualifications recognised. Phone AEI-NOOSR on 1800 020 086 for information.

The Queensland government provides a free service for assessing overseas professional and technical qualifications – visit the government website at [www.training.qld.gov.au/skillsrec/index.htm](http://www.training.qld.gov.au/skillsrec/index.htm) or phone 1800 369 935.

### Recognition of prior learning

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is a process that allows the skills and abilities you already have to be recognised, no matter how you obtained them. This might include skills you studied informally, or learned at a previous job or from other life experiences.

RPL usually means that you are able to skip certain courses from your program because you already have the skills learned in those courses.

To have your RPL recognised, you must fill in an RPL application form. Your application will be assessed by an RPL assessor or teacher from the faculty associated with the program. You may be invited to prove your skills. If your application is successful, you will be issued with the same credentials as if you had studied the course.

Look carefully at the course descriptions to see if you actually have all the skills described. If so, you are free to apply. In many cases, RPL will only be given for the classroom portion of the course. You may still need to meet the on-the-job component, which is assessed at work.

### Credit transfers

If you have already formally studied at another institution, you may be able to have credits transferred towards your program at Southbank Institute. Credit transfer can only be granted if the credits are considered equivalent, which is determined through a formal process. Credits for courses of less than one semester cannot be transferred.

For more information, contact the international team.

### Trades Recognition Australia

Trades Recognition Australia (TRA) is part of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations which assesses the skills of trade and associate professional occupations for people from other countries.

If you want to migrate to Australia under a ‘skilled visa’ category, the TRA will need to assess your skills abilities before you lodge your application with DIMIA.

For more information about skilled migration or to look at a list of skilled occupations, go to [www.dimia.gov.au](http://www.dimia.gov.au)

## Studying at Southbank

### Competency-based training

Southbank Institute uses a competency-based method of assessing skills. The key to competency-based assessment is that it is based on the actual skills and knowledge a student can demonstrate outside of the classroom (such as the workplace). This is important, because it means that students at Southbank Institute are given skill-based training, rather than theory.



*Southbank Institute contemporary music student on mixing desk*

## AusAID students

### What is AusAID?

Australian Development Scholarships (ADS) are provided by AusAID, the Australian Agency for International Development. Southbank Institute is home to the largest number of ADS students in the TAFE Queensland system.

Countries eligible for ADS include Papua New Guinea, Laos, East Timor, New Caledonia, Tahiti, Wallis Island, Vanuatu, Samoa and Tonga. Scholarship recipients have their tuition fees paid along with a living allowance.

### When AusAID students arrive in Australia

As soon as you arrive in Australia, you will be taken from the airport to temporary accommodation. Your AusAID liaison officer (ALO) will be your main contact throughout your studies and will help you settle in when you arrive.

If you have any questions or issues, see your ALO at Level 2, A Block at the Southbank campus during business hours, or phone 0408 726 411 (24 hours a day, 365 days a year).

### Conditions of your scholarship

Each student who receives an ADS must ensure they do well and complete their program within their scholarship timeframe. Failure to do so means you may be sent home without any qualification, or your qualification may be downgraded. Scholarship extensions are not possible.

If there are issues affecting your studies, such as stress, you must talk to your ALO as soon as possible.

### Academic monitoring

Your ALO will conduct progress and attendance checks twice a semester and report the results to AusAID. You are encouraged to talk about any issues during your progress checks to make sure you stay focused.

### Tutorial assistance

If you feel that you are having trouble studying, your ALO can provide a tutor to help you. It is important you address the problem early.

### Academic failure

If your grades are poor, you might leave Southbank Institute with a lower qualification. Very poor performance may result in the termination of the program.

### AusAID living allowance

The living allowance is tax-free and paid throughout the period of the scholarship as long as the student is studying full-time. Your allowance begins from the day you arrive in Australia, and stops the day you leave, or five days after the scholarship ends (whichever is sooner). Your living allowance will continue to be paid during holidays and vacation periods, and will only stop when the scholarship ends or has been suspended. ALO will not suspend a stipend without prior notification.

# AusAID Students

## Permanent residency

If you want to apply for permanent residency, you will automatically lose your eligibility for AusAID as soon as you initiate the change to a different visa. That means as soon as you apply for residency, your scholarship will be suspended. You may keep studying during that time, but at your own expense. Should you decide to apply for permanent residency you must tell your ALO, who will advise AusAID.

## Completing your studies

ADS students are required to leave Australia within five days after examination results are released, or five days after attending their graduation ceremony.

# Appendix 1

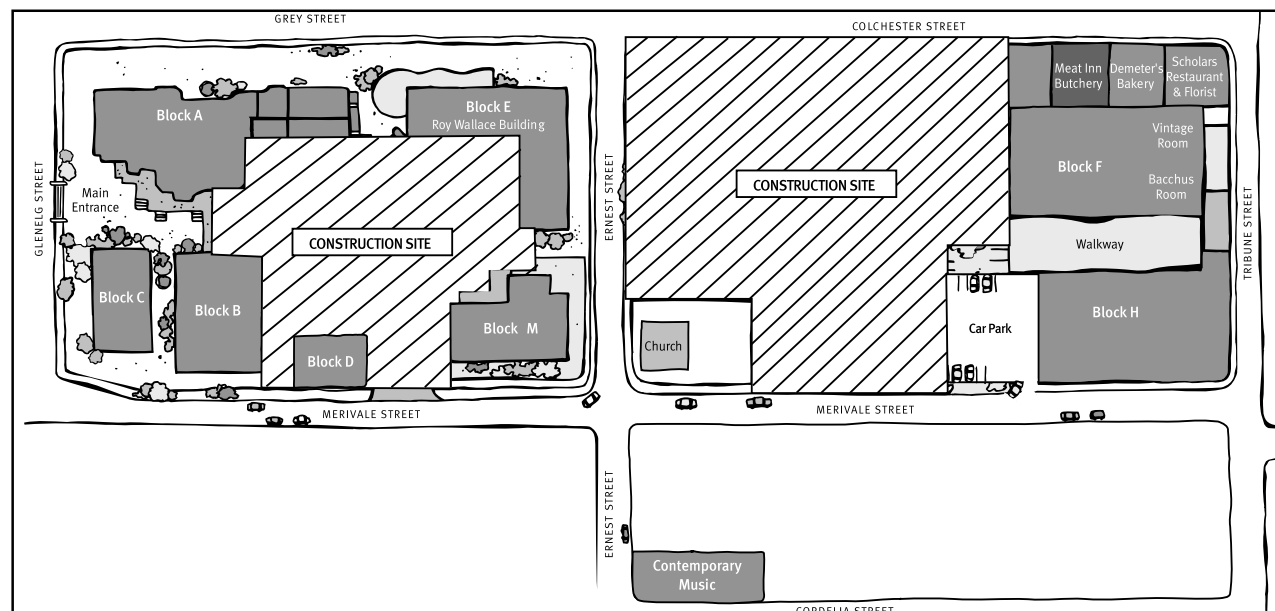
## Map of Brisbane city



-   
 Train station
-   
 Busway
-   
 City Cat
-   
 Ferry
-   
 Information

# Appendix 2

## Southbank campus map



### Block A

#### Ground

Student ID  
Textbook outlet

#### Level 2

Beauty and natural therapies salons  
International marketing  
Client Service Centre  
Careers and counselling services  
Disability services  
Mail centre  
Student admin – domestic  
Student admin – international  
Student employment services  
Sports hall, rock wall, gym

#### Level 4

Process instrumentation laboratory and classroom

#### Level 5

Reception  
Electronics engineering  
Information technology  
Multimedia  
Process instrumentation

### Block B

#### Ground

Electronic technologies classrooms

#### Level 2

Electronic technologies  
Reception  
Staff and administration  
Electronic store  
Maintenance

#### Level 3

Language training unit (migrant)

Classrooms  
Reception

### Block C

#### Ground

Civil engineering classrooms

#### Level 2

Auditorium  
Civil engineering reception  
Engineering and Design Technologies Faculty Director and staff  
Telecommunications

### Block D

#### Level 1

Classrooms

#### Level 2

Classrooms

### Block E (Roy Wallace building)

#### Level 2

Auditorium  
Childcare centre  
Classrooms

#### Level 3

Computer labs  
eLearn centre  
UNISYS Field Service – Information Technology offices

#### Level 4

Applied Science lab  
Classrooms  
Management information support  
Nursing ward  
Traineeships – Health, Human Services and Applied Science wet laboratories

#### Level 5

Classrooms

Conference room  
Health, Human Services and Applied Science reception  
Staff common room

### Block F – Food Technology

#### Ground

Apprenticeships/Traineeships reception  
Butcher  
Bakery  
Floristry (in Scholars)  
Restaurant – Scholars

#### Level 2

Food Technology reception  
Functions - Bacchus Room  
Functions - Vintage Room

#### Level 3

Meat trades department

#### Level 4

Facilities  
Food technology classrooms  
Food technology labs

#### Level 5

Bakery kitchens

### Block H – Hospitality

#### Ground

Stores  
Auditorium  
Canteen  
Hospitality reception

#### Level 1

Library/eLearn centre

#### Level 2

Classrooms

#### Level 3

Bistro bar

#### Level 4

Restaurant – Covers

#### Level 5

Restaurant – Skyline

### Block M

#### Ground

Canteen  
Finance  
Literacy and Learning Centre

#### Level 2

Directorate  
ELICOS reception

#### Level 3

Classrooms  
Learning technologies  
Library

#### Level 4

Classrooms

#### Level 5

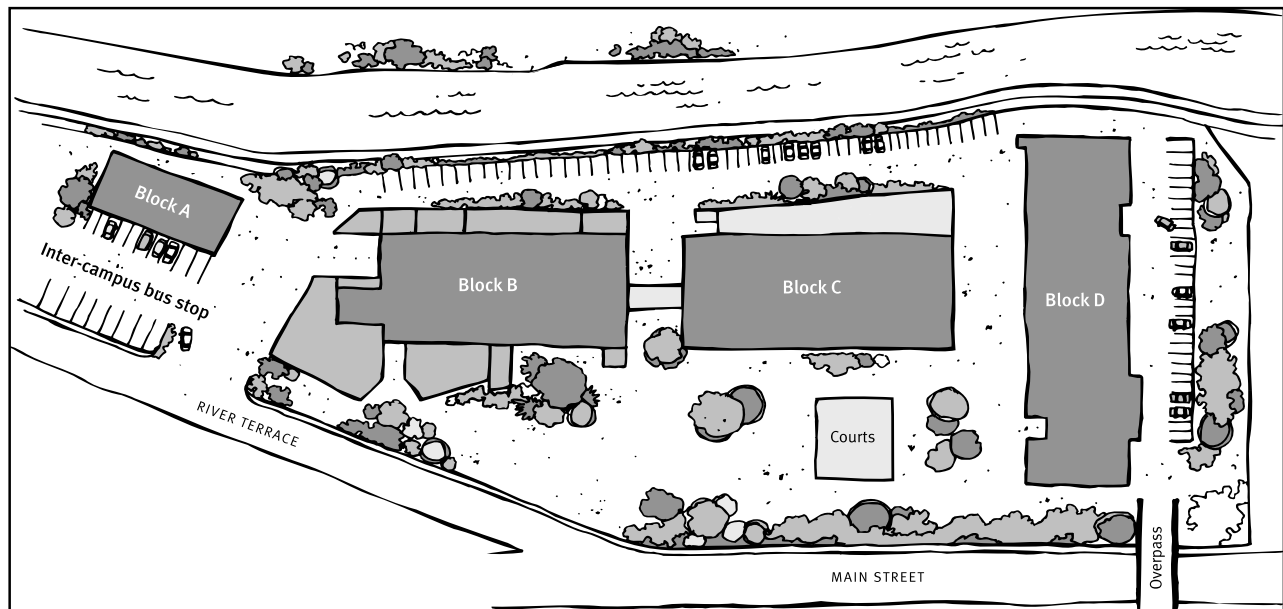
Adult Migrant English Program  
Classrooms  
Reception  
Adult Tertiary Preparation  
Classrooms  
Reception  
Volunteer tutor scheme

#### Level 6

Access 10 from (June 2006)  
Communication and General Education reception  
Marketing services  
Technology computer room  
Classrooms  
UNISYS central operations

# Appendix 3

## Kangaroo Point campus map



### Block A

#### Ground

Laundry

#### Level 1

Indigenous Australian Peoples Unit

### Block B

Lower ground floor annexe  
Watchmaking

#### Ground

Library/eLearn centre  
Special needs toilet

#### Level 2

Classrooms  
Indigenous Australian Peoples Unit

#### Level 4

University of NSW

#### Level 5

Business improvement services

#### Level 6

Dental laboratory  
Health, Human Services and Applied Science administration  
Jewellery workshop

### Block C

#### Ground

Canteen  
Textbook outlet

#### Level 1

Business and IT administration  
Business and IT Business Development  
Human Resources  
ID Room  
Workplace Health & Safety

#### Level 2

Office administration

#### Level 3

Classrooms  
Learning support  
Domestic and international students

#### Level 4

Classroom

#### Level 5

Classroom  
Business and IT Traineeship Unit  
Unisys

#### Level 6

Business and IT teachers' staff room  
Jewellery teachers' staff room

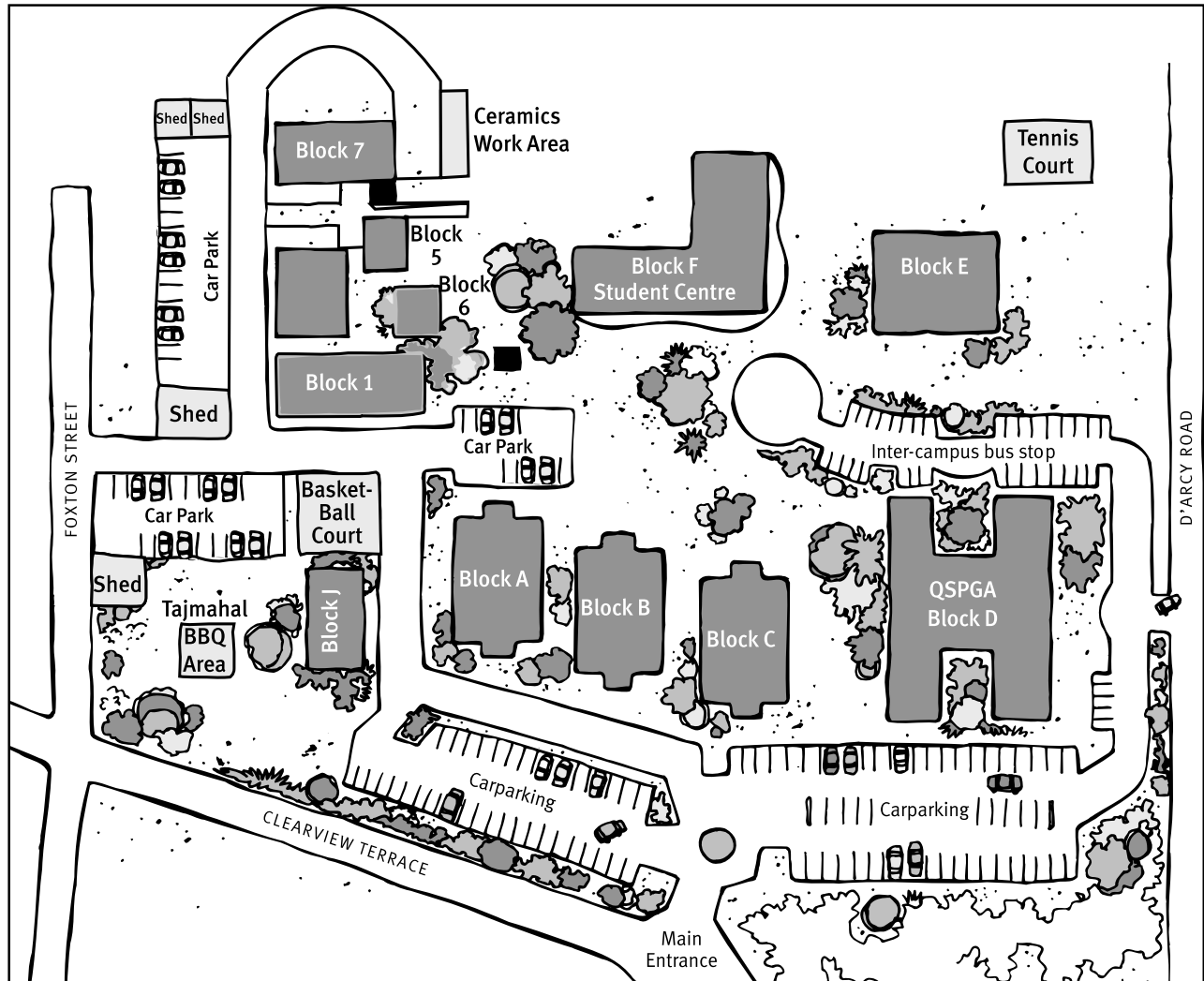
### Block D

#### Ground

Classrooms  
Conference room  
Functions – River Room  
Indigenous Australian Peoples Unit student support

# Appendix 4

## Morningside campus map



### Block A

Architecture and CAD studies classrooms  
Visual arts classrooms and staff rooms

### Block B

Architectural and CAD studies classrooms  
Reception  
Communication and General Education classrooms  
Interior Technology classrooms  
Literacy office

### Block C

Literacy  
Visual arts classrooms  
Animation classrooms

### Block D

**Ground**  
Binding and finishing classrooms  
OLI Printing and Queensland School of Printing and Graphic Arts Faculty  
Director and staff  
State Archives – binding department  
Signwriting classrooms  
Staff room

Photography  
Graphic design

### Level 2

Graphic design classrooms  
Photography classrooms  
Graphic pre-press classrooms  
Screenprinting classrooms

### Block E

Film and TV

### Block F – Student Services

Arts supply/textbook outlet  
Auditorium  
Canteen  
Library  
eLearn centre

### Block J – Admin building

**Ground**  
Client Service Centre  
ID room  
Counselling

### Level 1

Centre for Arts, Culture and Creative Industries administration

### Block 1

**Level 2**  
Online learning team  
i-Net  
Archives

### Level 3

Fine arts

### Block 5

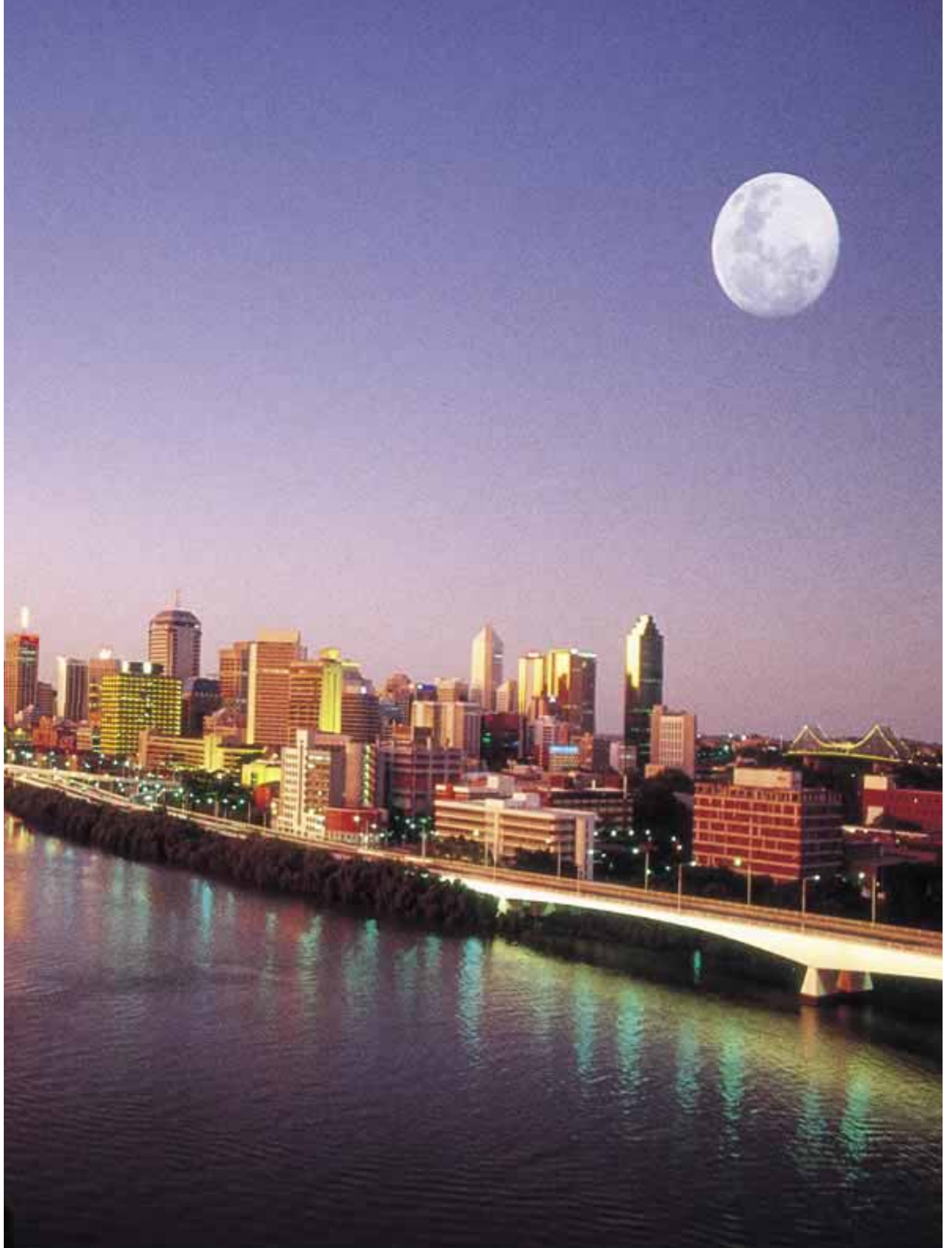
**Level 1**  
Sculpture  
Live production, theatre and events workshop

### Block 6

**Level 1**  
Performing arts

### Block 7

**Level 2**  
Ceramics  
**Level 3**  
Ceramics



*Brisbane river*

# International Student Refund Policy

## Visa

1. Where an application for a visa is rejected, Southbank Institute (SBIT) will refund tuition fees less an administration charge of \$150 after receiving a copy of the letter from the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) regarding visa rejection.
2. The terms of this policy, with regard to withdrawal from study, also applies where:
  - a. A student is granted permanent resident status during their ELICOS or formal program.
  - b. SBIT excludes a student from continuing their ELICOS or formal program.
  - c. An application for a visa extension is rejected or DIMIA cancels the student's existing visa.

## ELICOS program

1. If a student withdraws from their ELICOS program for any reason, excluding visa rejection:
  - a. More than 28 days before the program begins: SBIT will refund tuition fees less an administration Charge of 20% of tuition fees paid for the ELICOS offer.
  - b. Less than 28 days before the program begins: SBIT will refund tuition fees less an amount equivalent to 12 weeks of ELICOS tuition.
  - c. After the program begins: SBIT will not refund tuition fees.
2. If a student successfully meets the English language entry requirements and all other conditions for entry to a SBIT formal program during their ELICOS program, they may apply to credit the balance of paid ELICOS tuition fees to their formal program. Such credit may be no less than 1 ELICOS week, is not transferable to another student, and will not be refunded.

## Formal program

1. If a student withdraws from their formal program for any reason, excluding visa rejection:
  - a. More than 28 days before the program begins: SBIT will refund the first semester of their tuition fees, less an administration charge of 10% of this installment.
  - b. Less than 28 days before the program begins: SBIT will refund the first semester of their tuition fees, less an administration charge of 20% of this installment.
  - c. After the program begins: SBIT will not refund tuition fees.

## Conditions of refund

1. If a student 'fast tracks' and completes their program in a shorter time than what is specified in the offer of place, they are not entitled to any refund of tuition fees.
2. Tuition fees may be reduced or a refund issued if the student is granted sufficient Transfer Credits or Exemptions such that the program is completed in a shorter than normal time.
3. Approved refunds will be processed within 4 weeks of the Manager - International Business's decision on this matter.
4. If a student completes their program in a period less than that stated on the offer of place the installment amounts will alter. If a period greater than that stated on the offer of place is required to complete the program the student will be subject to additional fees.
5. Students may, under exceptional circumstances, defer their studies providing notification is received within two weeks of the commencement of the semester. An administration charge of \$150 applies, and fees may be held for up to one year only. If a student withdraws from their program, tuition fees will not be refunded.

## Payment of refund

1. All requests for refunds or transfer credits are subject to the approval of the Manager - International Business, SBIT.
2. All requests for refund of any monies must be made in writing to the Manager - International Business, SBIT.
3. Approved refunds may be transferred to another institution or sent to the student's home country as requested.
4. Students may appeal refund decisions by writing to the Director, SBIT within 14 days of receiving notification.
5. If SBIT defaults, as the registered provider, refunds cannot be covered by a written agreement between the provider and the student. Such situations are covered by the provisions of the *ESOS Act 2000* and the *ESOS Regulations 2001*.

# International Student Terms and Conditions

In accepting an Offer of Place with Southbank Institute (SBIT):

1. Students must have read and understood the information provided about SBIT and the program/s of their choice.
2. It is understood that payment of tuition fees will not be accepted by SBIT until a signed and dated Application Form for International Students is received, thereby agreeing to the International Student Refund Policy and Terms and Conditions.
3. Students have read, understood and agree to abide by the conditions outlined in the Offer of Place, prior to the program commencement.
4. Students understand that it is their responsibility to provide SBIT with the necessary evidence to satisfy the conditions of entry into the program as outlined in the Offer of Place, before the program begins.
5. It is understood that students who fail to satisfy the Conditions outlined in the Offer of Place will not be able to commence their program.
6. Students understand that all fees detailed in the Offer of Place must be paid by the advised due date and that failure to pay each semester's fees as they are quoted, and by the due date, may result in the charging of a late fee/s.
7. Students understand that they will not be allowed to commence their program until all fees are paid i.e. OSHC, late fees, administration charges and any outstanding fees from previous enrolments.
8. Students understand that they are responsible for payment of associated sundry expenses including textbooks, stationery, material fees, uniforms and other personal expenses throughout the duration of their program.
9. Students are required to ensure that full payment of material fees is finalised prior to the commencement of each semester of the program.
10. Students are aware of the estimated costs of their stay in Australia and understand that the financial capacity to meet such costs is their responsibility.
11. Students are required to advise SBIT of any information which may impact upon their ability to undertake the program i.e. illness, injury, disability, learning, or support needs, and that the fees outlined in the Offer of Place are based upon the information provided by the student in their application.
12. Students understand that any school-age dependants accompanying them to Australia will be required to pay full fees if they are enrolled in either a government or non-government school.
13. Students are required to arrive at SBIT in time for the international orientation and prior to the commencement of their program.
14. If a student is unable to commence their program by the advised dates, it is understood that approval to commence the program is at the sole discretion of the Manager - International Business.
15. Students are required to supply a copy of their passport and visa (where applicable).
16. Students are aware that their personal details as provided to SBIT may be made available to Commonwealth and State agencies as per the *ESOS Act 2000* and The National Code.
17. Students agree that the SBIT may use the email address they supply to email them any information the institute deems necessary.
18. SBIT is required under Section 19 of the *ESOS Act 2000* to advise DIMIA about certain changes to a student's enrolment, and any breach by the student of a student visa condition relating to attendance or satisfactory academic performance.
19. Students further understand that they must meet the following Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) student visa conditions as follows:
  - a. Maintain full-time enrolment in their program
  - b. Maintain a minimum of 80% attendance according to the terms of their program (If students do not maintain a minimum of 80% attendance, SBIT will report their attendance to DIMIA, and also may report their attendance to their Agent, Parents and/or Guardian)
  - c. Achieve satisfactory academic performance
  - d. Maintain payment of program fees by the due date for each installment
  - e. Maintain overseas student health cover (OSHC) for the entire period of their study in Australia
  - f. Advise SBIT of any change to their address or contact details within seven days of the change
  - g. Maintain enrolment at SBIT for the first 12 months

*I have read, understood and agree to the Southbank Institute of TAFE International Student Refund Policy, and Terms and Conditions.*

*I understand that this policy does not remove the right to take further action under Australia's consumer protection laws, and that Southbank Institute dispute resolution processes do not limit student rights to pursue other legal remedies.*

*I hereby undertake to meet the conditions governing my student visa and the by-laws and rules of Southbank Institute.*

*I give authority and consent to the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMIA) to disclose information to Southbank Institute of the outcome if I am reported for poor attendance and/or academic failure.*

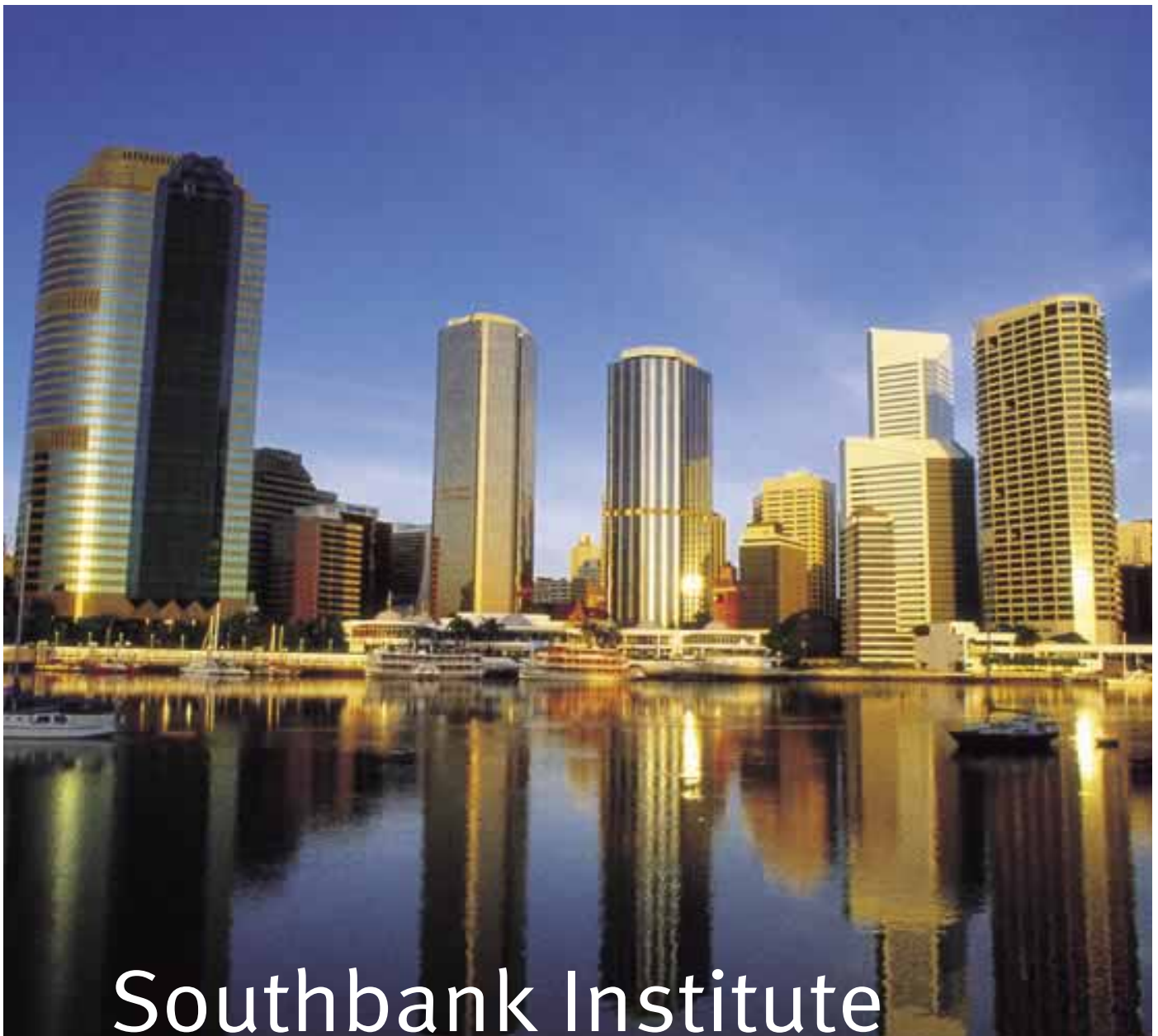
Student signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Parent/guardian signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
(If the student is under 18 years of age)

## Disclaimer

All material presented is distributed by TAFE Queensland as an information source only.

TAFE Queensland makes no statements, representations, or warranties about the accuracy or completeness of any information contained in this publication. The State of Queensland disclaims all responsibility and all liability (including without limitation, liability in negligence) for all expenses, losses, damages and costs you might incur as a result of the information being inaccurate or incomplete in any way, and for any reason.



# Southbank Institute International Student Handbook

A guide to living and studying in Brisbane



**TAFE Queensland**  
Queensland Government  
Department of  
Employment and Training

Phone +617 3244 5100  
[www.sbi.net.au](http://www.sbi.net.au)

**Southbank**  
INSTITUTE  
epicentre of education

CRICOS Provider No. 02010D

**My name:** .....

**My home country:** .....

**My student ID number:** .....

**My flight details:**

- Day and time .....
- Airline and flight number .....
- From ..... To .....

- Day and time .....
- Airline and flight number .....
- From ..... To .....

**My transport arrangements from Brisbane Airport:**

- Taxi .....
- Train .....
- Being met by ..... at ..... time .....

**My accommodation details in Brisbane:**

- Address .....
- Telephone number .....

**Useful contacts**

**My emergency contact person:**

- At home Name ..... Telephone number .....
- In Australia Name ..... Telephone number .....

**My diplomatic contact details in Australia:**

- Address .....
- Telephone number .....

**Department of Foreign Affairs:**

Telephoning from within Australia: (02) 6261 1111

**Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA):**

Telephoning from within Australia: 131 881

- My support officer contact: **International Student Support officer (ISSO)**  
3244 5633 from within Australia (dial +617 3244 5633 from overseas)  
Emergency: 0408 154 312 from within Australia  
sbit.isso@det.qld.gov.au

**AusAID**  
3244 5581 from within Australia (dial +617 3244 5581 from overseas)  
Emergency: 0408 726 411 from within Australia  
sbit.ausaid@det.qld.gov.au

## My Study Buddies

