

# VU STUDENT GUIDE INTERNATIONAL

YOUR GUIDE TO STUDYING WITH US



**VICTORIA  
UNIVERSITY**

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the Ancestors, Elders and families of the Kulin (Melbourne Campuses) and Eora (Sydney Campus) who are the traditional owners of University land. As we share our own knowledge practices within the University may we pay respect to the deep knowledge embedded within the Aboriginal community and recognise their ownership of Country.

We acknowledge that the land on which we meet, learn and share knowledge is a place of age old ceremonies of celebration, initiation and renewal and that the Traditional Owners' living culture and practices have a unique role in the life of this region.

To learn more, please contact the Moondani Balluk Academic Unit on +61 3 9919 2836 or [Moondani.Balluk@vu.edu.au](mailto:Moondani.Balluk@vu.edu.au).



# YOUR VU GUIDES



A guide for international students studying at VU



A guide for all students studying at VU

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# WELCOME

We're excited that you've decided to study at Victoria University (VU). While you may be far from home, we hope that your time with VU, and in Melbourne, will be full of excitement, challenges and great opportunities. As an international student studying with VU, you can enjoy all the fantastic free services available to VU students. We also have a number of extra resources designed just for you.

This guide includes information to help you find housing, tips for staying safe in Melbourne, a guide to Australian culture (some of us really do say "g'day mate") and what to expect when studying with VU. Please read this information carefully, in conjunction with our VU Student Guide (available at VUHQ), which is full of information about key dates, enrolment, fees, making the most of your VU experience, maps, a complete list of services and resources and lots of handy hints and tips.

If you have any questions, you can access ASKVU ([askvu.vu.edu.au](http://askvu.vu.edu.au)), call us on +61 3 9919 6100 or live chat with us. We're always happy to help. Congratulations on taking your first step towards an exciting future. We're happy you're here and we look forward to supporting you in your success.

Welcome to VU!

# ON ARRIVAL CHECKLIST

- Find accommodation  
**[vu.edu.au/housing](https://vu.edu.au/housing)**
- Set up a bank account
- Get to know your local area
- Attend your international orientation session  
**[vu.edu.au/orientation](https://vu.edu.au/orientation)**
- Enrol in your course  
**[vu.edu.au/enrolment](https://vu.edu.au/enrolment)**
- Explore your campus
- Check out orientation at your campus  
**[vu.edu.au/orientation](https://vu.edu.au/orientation)**
- Log in to MyVU and confirm your personal details are correct  
**[myvu.edu.au](https://myvu.edu.au)**
- Set up your VU student email account  
**[vu.edu.au/student-email](https://vu.edu.au/student-email)**
- Visit VUHQ to collect your student ID card  
**[vu.edu.au/vuhq](https://vu.edu.au/vuhq)**

# INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SUPPORT

Adjusting to a new culture and environment is exciting, but it can be overwhelming. We're here to support you during your time at VU. We can help you understand what's required of you as an international student, and the opportunities and support available at VU.

We want to make sure your time at VU is as rewarding as possible, so our expert team of International Student Advisors will be there from your arrival all the way through to your graduation.

Some of our support services include:

- an orientation program to assist with your transition to living in Australia
- support as you settle in to life in Melbourne and at VU
- assistance with University processes specific to international students
- help with understanding what is expected of you as a student visa holder
- assistance with health issues and referral to health services
- social activities, programs and community involvement
- support in times of natural disaster and other events in your home country
- assistance and support with cultural issues
- general and personal support and encouragement.

Students who experience unexpected or serious illness or hospitalisation, or are affected by events in their home country, should notify an International Student Advisor immediately.

**[vu.edu.au/international-student-support](https://vu.edu.au/international-student-support)**



# HOUSING

If you haven't already arranged your long-term accommodation, make sure you organise short-term accommodation for at least a week or two. This will give you time to consider your options, inspect potential offers and finalise the arrangements.

You can stay at a short-term backpacker hostel for around \$40 per night, including utilities.

Our Senior Advisors (Welfare) can help you with information and advice on your accommodation options.

**[vu.edu.au/housing](https://vu.edu.au/housing)**

**[vu.edu.au/welfare](https://vu.edu.au/welfare)**

## RENT SMART TIPS FOR WHEN YOU'RE RENTING A ROOM OR A HOUSE

- Never sign anything you do not understand.
- Don't transfer money without viewing the room first.
- Seek rental advice from Consumer Affairs Victoria – it's available in several languages.

**[consumer.vic.gov.au/  
internationalstudents](https://consumer.vic.gov.au/internationalstudents)**

## OPTIONS FOR ONGOING ACCOMMODATION

- At our VU student accommodation, UniLodge Victoria University, you can rent a studio apartment or a room in a two or six bedroom share apartment. You'll be within walking distance of our Footscray Park campus and within easy reach of other campuses by public transport. Our on-site Resident Advisors can help you adjust to uni life and meet other students at our fun social activities. This is an exciting time to start because UniLodge Victoria University now provides guaranteed accommodation to new and continuing full time students (this also applies to other UniLodge properties across Melbourne if UniLodge Victoria University is full).
- You can find a room in a share house. This means you'll have a room with use of household facilities in a private, established household. The room may be furnished or unfurnished, and the cost of gas, electricity and water may or may not be included in the rent. You can look for rooms in share houses on Facebook groups like House Hunting Friends, Queer Housing Melbourne or Fairy Floss Real Estate.



- Rooming houses and serviced hostels for singles or couples. In registered rooming houses, you have your own room but share common space and facilities with other people paying separate rent. You can rent a house, apartment, unit or bungalow. Most properties to rent are unfurnished. The cost of gas, electricity and water is not included in the rent. Leases tend to be six or 12 months, but you can sometimes negotiate a shorter or longer lease.
- A commercially operated student apartment will be furnished, and often includes common facilities and recreation services. The cost of gas, electricity and water may not be included in the rent.
- A homestay is your own room in a host's home. Meals and other support may be provided. You can get advice on your accommodation options, budgeting and tenancy rights and obligations at any stage of your stay from a Senior Advisor (Welfare).

**[vu.edu.au/accommodation](http://vu.edu.au/accommodation)**

**[vu.edu.au/accommodation-guarantee](http://vu.edu.au/accommodation-guarantee)**

**[vu.edu.au/financial-advice](http://vu.edu.au/financial-advice)**

**[vu.edu.au/welfare](http://vu.edu.au/welfare)**



# STAYING SAFE IN MELBOURNE

## EMERGENCY SERVICES

### POLICE, FIRE, AMBULANCE

In an emergency, dial **000 (triple zero)**.

Stay focussed, stay relevant, stay on the line.

- Is someone seriously injured or in need of urgent medical help?
- Is your life or property being threatened?
- Have you just witnessed a serious accident or crime?
- If you answered YES call **000 (triple zero)**.

It's a free call from any phone, 24 hours a day, for fire, police or ambulance. The operator will talk to you until help arrives, and you can ask to speak to someone in your language.

- Police officers are there to help you.
- Police officers are committed to helping the community.
- If you have anything stolen, or are assaulted or threatened, you can contact the police and report the incident.



**VICTORIA UNIVERSITY**

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## ON THE STREETS

- Avoid parks, lanes and poorly lit areas at night.
- Check the Public Transport Victoria (PTV) timetables as well as directions before you travel.
- Don't get in a car with someone who's been drinking.
- When you're walking or cycling at night, wear brightly coloured clothing so that drivers can see you.
- Feel free to approach police officers on the street or walk into a police station at any time.

## ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT

- Never cross railway crossings when lights are flashing or barriers are down.
- Stay in well-lit areas or wait near local shops or public venues.
- If you are harassed, draw attention to yourself to advise others of your situation.
- If catching a taxi or Uber, sit in the back and take note of the driver's details. Where possible, pre-order a taxi over the phone as the driver's details will be recorded.

An aerial, black and white photograph of a dense city skyline, likely San Francisco, featuring prominent skyscrapers like the Transamerica Pyramid. A white rectangular text box is overlaid on the left side of the image.

## IN A PUBLIC PLACE

- Stay alert when using ATMs, and cover your hand when entering your PIN.
- Don't give out your phone number or personal details freely.
- Always buy your own drinks, especially in a bar or pub.

## AT UNIVERSITY

- Know the layout of your campus including safe paths and exits, immediately contact a staff member if you observe anything suspicious or threatening.
- Move away from threatening behaviour in a lift, stand near the control pad and get out if you feel uncomfortable.
- Do not leave valuables such as wallets, laptops or mobile phones unattended.

## IN YOUR HOME

- Never open your door to a stranger, seek the identity first and if in doubt lock them out.
- Never give personal details over the phone e.g. marital status, working hours, types or places of employment, occupants of the premises.
- Don't display too much information.



## WHEN DRIVING

- Don't pick up hitchhikers.
- If you are being followed, drive to a place where you can get help and attract attention. Make sure you have enough fuel to reach your destination.
- Keep property such as coins, sunglasses, laptops, iPads and mobile phones, out of view.
- Park in well-lit areas.
- Watch out for wildlife, especially at dusk.

## FIRE SAFETY

Fires are preventable. You can take simple precautions to reduce the risk of fire in your accommodation.

[bit.ly/mfb-fire-safety](https://bit.ly/mfb-fire-safety)

### SMOKE ALARMS

When you're asleep, you can't smell smoke. Smoke alarms save lives as they wake you and alert you to the danger from smoke and fire. By law you must have a smoke alarm where you live. All homes must have a smoke alarm on each level.

Landlords are legally responsible for installing and maintaining alarms in rental properties; tenants are responsible for testing them regularly. We recommend changing the batteries every six months, when daylight savings starts and ends.

If you live off campus in a house or flat there must be a smoke alarm. If you live in UniLodge Victoria University the smoke alarm in your room will be tested by UniLodge staff. You do not need to touch the smoke alarm.

### LOOK AFTER YOUR SMOKE ALARM, IT CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE.

- Test your smoke alarm regularly by pressing the test button.
- Vacuum around your smoke alarm vents yearly.
- Replace your battery each year.
- Never remove the battery permanently, cover the smoke alarm or take it down.
- If there is no smoke alarm or it doesn't work, report it to your landlord.

## COOKING

More than 40 per cent of house fires start in the kitchen.

- Cook food only in the kitchen.
- Keep the stovetop, griller, oven, range hood and cooking area clean.
- Keep flammable things away from heat sources.
- Never use water to put out an oil fire.
- If it's safe to do so, use a dry powder fire extinguisher, fire blanket or saucepan lid to extinguish an oil fire.
- Turn off all cooking appliances before you leave the room or go to bed.
- Keep chemicals out of reach of children.

## HEATERS

It's nice to keep yourself warm during cooler weather, but remember that heaters are a major cause of house fires.

- Read and follow your heater's operating instructions.
- Keep all clothes and curtains at least one metre from the heater.
- Before you go to bed at night or leave your home, make sure your heaters are off and that all fires are extinguished.

## ELECTRICITY

Using electricity safely helps prevent house fires.

- If you don't use power boards properly, this can lead to fires. If you have a power board plugged into another power board, there's a danger of overloading the system.
- Avoid using double adaptors.
- Laptops and tablets can overheat if used or left on soft furnishings such as a bed or chair. They need good air circulation.
- Switch electrical chargers off after use, and only use the certified charger supplied with the appliance.
- Keep electrical appliances away from water.
- It is dangerous to cover a lamp with any type of fabric. Dim a lamp by using a lower wattage globe. Light globes can become dangerously hot.

## **CANDLES, OIL BURNERS AND CIGARETTES**

Tips for avoiding a fire due to candles, oil burners and cigarettes:

- Don't smoke in bed.
- Use high-sided ashtrays and wet cigarette butts before putting them in the rubbish.
- Don't leave your room or go to sleep when a candle or oil burner is alight.
- Don't put candles or oil burners near windows as curtains can catch fire easily.

## **PLAN YOUR ESCAPE**

Make sure you have a home escape plan, and practise it with everyone you live with. If you live in VU accommodation, make sure you know your exits and emergency assembly areas.

In a fire:

- get down on the floor and stay out of the smoke
- get out of your room
- if it's safe, close the door behind you – this prevents smoke and fire from spreading
- don't use the lift
- alert others
- if you're outside, stay out
- call 000 from a mobile phone or a neighbour's phone and ask for "fire".



## SAFER COMMUNITY

We want you to feel safe at VU.

Safer Community supports students who experience upsetting behaviour including bullying, stalking and sexual assault. You can get help from Safer Community if you:

- are worried about your safety
- are worried about someone else
- see something you think isn't right.

Use the VUSafe app to:

- send an emergency alert
- have a friend virtually watch over as you walk
- request a security escort
- track the VU shuttle bus
- report a tip
- access VU support services
- get safety notifications
- view campus maps.

**[vu.edu.au/safer-community](http://vu.edu.au/safer-community)**

## WATER SAFETY

We all love a day at the beach. However, the surf can be unpredictable.

The most important flags on the beach are the red and yellow flags. These show the supervised area of the beach and that a lifesaving service is operating. If there are no red and yellow flags, you should not go swimming.

**[beachsafe.org.au/surf-safety](http://beachsafe.org.au/surf-safety)**

Stay safe in rivers, lakes, dams, and creeks. Remember that water conditions can change very quickly.

**[royallifesaving.com.au/programs/respect-the-river](http://royallifesaving.com.au/programs/respect-the-river)**

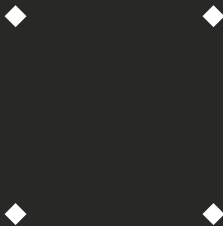
### TOP BEACH SAFETY TIPS

1. Always swim between the red and yellow flags.
2. Read the safety signs.
3. Ask a lifeguard for safety advice.
4. Swim with a friend.
5. If you need help, stay calm and attract attention.

# AUSTRALIAN CULTURE

Australians are generally informal, including at VU or work. For instance, it's common to call your lecturer or boss by their first name and use more casual words, such as "hi" instead of "hello" or "see ya" instead of "goodbye". You'll notice locals tend to shorten words, names and places. For instance, Australians are "Aussies", university becomes "uni" and Sandra might become "Sandy".

Even though Australians are quite casual, it's considered rude if you don't use "please" and "thanks" when speaking with shop staff, or if you treat others as if they are less than important than you.







## TIPS FOR DINING OUT

- If you go to a restaurant, the cost will usually be rounded up and split evenly between guests. Tipping is appreciated but not expected.
- If you're invited to someone's house, it's nice to bring a small gift, such as chocolates or a plate of food to share.
- If you're heading to a house party, you're expected to bring your own (BYO) alcohol, or a non-alcoholic alternative, like soft drink.
- If you are a smoker, you'll generally be expected to smoke outside.

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## SOCIAL CUSTOMS TO KNOW

- Don't push ahead of others who are waiting in a queue.
- It's impolite to ask people questions about their income, religion or political preferences.
- Australians generally stand about an arm's length apart when they talk to each other and feel uncomfortable if people get too close.
- Goods in shops are sold at a fixed price. If you pay cash for expensive goods, you can ask if a discount is available, especially if you're buying more than one thing.
- In Australia, it's unacceptable to squat on a toilet seat, or spit, urinate or be drunk in public.
- Sexual harassment is a serious offence. If you're attracted to someone, you need their consent before engaging in any sexual activity.
- It's illegal to smoke inside a café or restaurant, public transport and public buildings. VU also has a smoking ban on campus.

# LIVING IN MELBOURNE



## TRANSPORT AROUND MELBOURNE

To travel on a train, bus or tram you must carry a valid Myki card. You can buy a Myki card from a Myki machine at most train stations, all 7-Eleven stores and many newsagencies.

Each VU campus is within walking distance of a train station or bus stop, so take advantage of Melbourne's great public transport.

Tram rides within Melbourne's Free Tram Zone don't cost anything – look for signs at tram stops to identify boundaries of the zone.

**[ptv.vic.gov.au/tickets/myki](http://ptv.vic.gov.au/tickets/myki)**

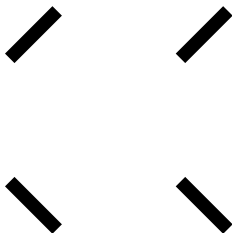
**[ptv.vic.gov.au](http://ptv.vic.gov.au)**

Most full-time international students are eligible to apply for an iUSEpass from Public Transport Victoria, which allows you to travel at a discounted rate. Check if you're eligible and apply for an iUSEpass on the VU website.

**[bit.ly/iUSEpass](http://bit.ly/iUSEpass)**

If your application is approved, a code will be sent to your VU student email address. You can use this code (along with your current postal address and photo) to register your details and buy your pass on the iUSEpass website. It usually takes around 14 days for your pass to arrive in the mail.

**[iusepass.vic.gov.au](http://iusepass.vic.gov.au)**



## TAXIS

There are lots of taxis in Melbourne and you can identify them easily.

- Drivers should be wearing a uniform with their company logo.
- Drivers must have an identity card on show at all times.
- Taxi fares can be quite expensive depending on your journey.
- Between 10pm and 5am, drivers may estimate the fare at the start of each journey and passengers will prepay the amount.

## WAYS TO CATCH A TAXI IN MELBOURNE

You can find a clearly signposted taxi rank at major hotels in the city and outside major train stations.

Hail a taxi in the street – if the rooftop light is on, it means the taxi is available for hire.

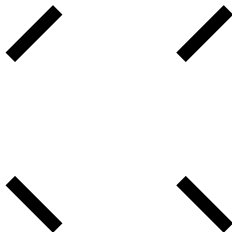
Telephone for a taxi to come pick you up or order one via an app. The two main companies are 13CABS (13 2227) or Silver Top (13 5000).

You can also use a ride-sharing app like Uber, Ola or DiDi to request a ride, track and share your journey all without cash or credit cards.

**[uber.com/en-AU/ride](https://uber.com/en-AU/ride)**

**[ola.com.au](https://ola.com.au)**

**[didiglobal.com/au](https://didiglobal.com/au)**





## DRIVING

If you hold a current, valid driver's licence from your own country, you're allowed to drive in Australia. Your international licence has to be either written in English or accompanied by an English translation, or come with an international driving permit.

You must convert your international licence to a Victorian licence within six months from the day you arrive, or you will be breaking Victorian road laws.

For students already living in Victoria, regardless of when you arrived, you have six months from 29 October 2019 to convert to a Victorian licence.

Before you begin driving in Melbourne:

- take some professional driving lessons to gain confidence
- study the Road to Solo Driving Handbook (available from VicRoads) before driving to get a good overview of the road rules and signs
- know about driving around trams and about hook turns in the city.

**[vicroads.vic.gov.au](http://vicroads.vic.gov.au)**

By law, you must wear a seatbelt when travelling in a car regardless of whether you're sitting in the front or the back seat.

Australia has strict drink-driving laws. On a full licence, your blood alcohol concentration must be below 0.05. This means if you're driving, you're allowed around one standard drink per hour – but this varies from person to person, so know your limits.

**[drinkwise.org.au](http://drinkwise.org.au)**

**[bit.ly/standard-drink](https://bit.ly/standard-drink)**



## BICYCLES

Riding a bike is one of the best ways to cut your transport costs and keep fit at the same time.

There are lots of bike paths and on-the-road bike lanes to keep you out of the traffic zones.

As a cyclist, you must obey the road rules and wear an approved safety helmet. Your bike has to be in good condition, with all the legal safety features such as a bell, reflectors and a light.

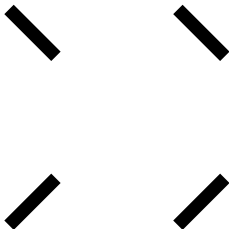
Bicycle Victoria and VicRoads have cycling network maps and general information about cycling safety on their websites.

**[bit.ly/vicroads-cycling](http://bit.ly/vicroads-cycling)**

## SHOPPING AND FOOD

Melbourne's multiculturalism has made it the culinary and cultural capital of Australia. In the city and surrounding suburbs, you'll find places serving almost every cuisine in the world.

- Hopkins Street in Footscray is great for Vietnamese and halal restaurants and stores, including Footscray Market.
- Barkly Street in West Footscray is known for its choice of Indian restaurants and grocers.
- Visit the CBD/City for Chinatown on Little Bourke Street and the Greek precinct on Lonsdale Street.
- Lygon Street in Carlton is the historic heartland of Melbourne's Italian community and the place where the city's café culture was born.
- Carlisle Street in St Kilda East is a traditional centre for Eastern European and kosher foods.
- Victoria Street in Abbotsford has a large selection of Vietnamese grocers and restaurants.
- At Sydney Road in Brunswick you'll find many halal stores and Middle Eastern restaurants.
- Johnston Street in Fitzroy is known for its Spanish restaurants.





## BANKING

You can easily open an account online once you arrive in Melbourne. Ask for a student account with no account fees.

To open an Australian bank account, you'll need your passport and Confirmation of Enrolment.

### SOME MAJOR AUSTRALIAN BANKS

- ANZ  
**anz.com.au**
- Bank Australia  
**bankaust.com.au**
- Bank of Melbourne  
**bankofmelbourne.com.au**
- Bendigo Bank  
**bendigobank.com.au**
- Commonwealth Bank  
**commbank.com.au**
- National Australia Bank (NAB)  
**nab.com.au**
- St George  
**stgeorge.com.au**
- Westpac  
**westpac.com.au**



## WATER RESTRICTIONS

Australia is the world's driest inhabited continent and sometimes has severe water shortages, so it's important to use as little water as possible.

[bit.ly/melbournewater](https://bit.ly/melbournewater)

## WATER SAVING TIPS

- Take shorter showers.
- Turn off the tap when brushing your teeth.
- Use a plug in the sink when preparing vegetables, washing fruit or washing dishes by hand.

# RECYCLING

You can recycle almost anything that's made of glass, plastic, paper or metal. Every house or apartment should have a bin with a yellow lid for recycling, which gets collected once a fortnight.

## EXAMPLES OF WHAT YOU CAN RECYCLE

- jars
- food containers
- glass or plastic bottles
- newspaper
- pizza boxes
- toilet paper rolls.

## THINGS YOU CAN'T RECYCLE

- electronic equipment
- batteries
- paint
- food
- polystyrene
- glass that wasn't used for packaging.

## WHAT CAN I RECYCLE?

[bit.ly/recyclemelbourne](https://bit.ly/recyclemelbourne)

## FIND OUT MORE

[mwrrg.vic.gov.au/waste/recycling](https://mwrrg.vic.gov.au/waste/recycling)

## NEED TO DISCARD SOMETHING THAT CAN'T GO IN THE BIN?

There are recycling centres where you can drop them off

OR

your local council can sometimes collect them from outside your house.

## LITTERING

Littering is disposing of waste in an improper way. It's illegal to litter in Australia. Dispose of your waste in rubbish bins – don't leave it on the street.

### IS THIS LITTERING?

**Leaving items beside an overflowing bin.**

Yes.

**Leaving items under your seat at a sports stadium.**

Yes.

**Leaving a newspaper on public transport.**

Yes.

**Leaving household goods on the footpath in the hope that someone else will take them.**

Yes.

# WEATHER

Melbourne is known for its inconsistent weather – often described as having four seasons in one day – so plan ahead.

## SUMMER

### DECEMBER – FEBRUARY

Melbourne warms up in summer with temperatures between 25°C and 35°C. These months are dry, with occasional hot spells that can last more than three days. Melbourne's top temperatures are usually in January and February, when temperatures can reach above 40°C at times. The sun in Australia can be extremely strong, so don't forget to carry sunscreen.

## AUTUMN

### MARCH – MAY

Autumn sees cooler weather with average temperatures ranging from 15°C to 20°C. Morning fog usually clears to welcome fine, sunny days, and toward the end of the season there can be extended periods of light winds.

## WINTER

### JUNE – AUGUST

Winter can be cold with temperatures between 10°C and 15°C during the day. The weather is frequently cold and cloudy, and nights can be accompanied by frosts.

## SPRING

### SEPTEMBER – NOVEMBER

During spring, average temperatures range from 15°C to 20°C. The season is known as the most variable of the year, when weather can quickly change from calm and sunny to cold and windy. Pack your umbrella!

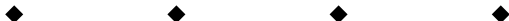
[bit.ly/melb-forecast](http://bit.ly/melb-forecast)



## STUDY MELBOURNE

Study Melbourne is an initiative by the Victorian government that provides support and information to international students, helping them have the best possible time while studying and living in Victoria. The Study Melbourne Student Centre offers a year-round program of free events and free confidential support services to make the most of your time in Victoria.

**[studymelbourne.vic.gov.au](http://studymelbourne.vic.gov.au)**



# YOUR STUDY



## VICTORIA UNIVERSITY'S OBLIGATIONS

You can recycle almost anything that's made of glass, plastic, paper or metal. Every house or apartment should have a bin with a yellow lid for recycling, which gets collected once a fortnight.

Overseas Students 2018 (National Code 2018) VU ensures that our courses for overseas students and the services we provide comply with the requirements prescribed in the ESOS framework.

VU is also obliged to inform the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) and the Department of Education and Training (DET) about all variations to a student's Confirmation of Enrolment (eCoE).

**[bit.ly/esos-framework](https://bit.ly/esos-framework)**



# TERTIARY EDUCATION IN AUSTRALIA

The Australian education system may differ from your home country's education system.

## BLOCK MODEL

At VU, you will likely study in our Block Model. Each block focuses on one unit (subject) and is only four weeks long, with up to four days between blocks to relax and prepare for the next. We break the year up into 11 four-week blocks: two semesters of four blocks each, one in the winter break and two in the summer break to offer more opportunities for students to complete their units.

The Block Model is made up of:

- **Teaching Sessions:** Each unit will have around three 2-3 hour, face-to-face teaching sessions per week and teaching sessions will be scheduled over three days, in multiple combinations of days and times (morning, mid-morning, afternoon and/or evening).
- **Study, Course and Future Essentials:** All students have access to a range of Study Essentials in their first year, Course Essentials in their middle years and Future Essentials in their final years. They are designed to enhance learning, stimulate thinking and build knowledge and skills.
- **Assessments:** Your assessments will fit within the four-week period and you will receive ongoing feedback. With less emphasis on exams, the type of assessments will depend on the unit.

## SEMESTER MODEL

Some VU courses run in the Semester Model, where you will study four units simultaneously over the course of a four-week semester. There are two semesters in a year, so you will generally study eight units each year.

The Semester Model is made up of:

- **Lectures:** A lecturer presents course information, and students take their own notes.
- **Tutorials:** These are smaller classes or groups that allow students to discuss the lecture material in more detail with tutors. All students are expected to contribute to discussion in tutorials.
- **Practical sessions:** Certain subjects such as health, science, engineering, art and design conduct some classes in laboratories or workshops. Use these sessions to practice your skills and to ask questions.
- **Assessments and exams:** Your units may have a combination of written assignments, oral presentations, group projects and exams.

## WHETHER YOU'RE STUDYING IN BLOCK OR SEMESTER MODEL, YOU'LL BE EXPECTED TO:

- attend classes
- understand principles
- think critically
- research and analyse information
- discuss ideas
- memorise facts
- solve problems
- work in groups
- communicate in English.

### DOWNLOAD THE VU APP

The VU App is your handy portal to all of your essential digital systems. Keep track of your classes, assignments, Essential Activities, results and more.

[vu.edu.au/vu-app](http://vu.edu.au/vu-app)

# ACADEMIC ASSISTANCE

## LEARNING HUBS

Learning Hubs are welcoming, collaborative spaces where you can improve your study skills and receive career guidance. We offer practical workshops and drop-in sessions to all of our students, as well as after-hours online advice. Dedicated maths, writing, careers and research advisors work with us to design our services and resources. We also have Student Mentors – experienced, successful students – here to support your transition into university life, and to pass on their invaluable knowledge and skills.

**[vu.edu.au/learning-hubs](http://vu.edu.au/learning-hubs)**



# COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

## COMPLAINTS

Victoria University's Student Complaints Policy provides for the fair and prompt handling of student complaints in a manner that's consistent with the University's values.

Our process encourages students to be independent and effective problem solvers. We encourage you to try to resolve your concern at the local level before lodging a complaint.

## APPEALS PROCESS

If you feel that the outcome of the University-managed complaint isn't consistent with the prescribed grounds of the Student Appeals Regulations, you can lodge an appeal through the University's Appeal process. You'll need to ensure you meet the prescribed grounds and the appeal application is lodged within the prescribed period.

**[vu.edu.au/complaint-resolution](http://vu.edu.au/complaint-resolution)**

### **STEP 1: IDENTIFY THE PROBLEM AND A SOLUTION**

Clarify your problem and, if you can, think of some possible solutions. You can then approach the most appropriate staff member to talk about your concerns.

### **STEP 2: SEEK ASSISTANCE**

You have free and confidential access to our support services to assist you with your problem.

### **STEP 3: INITIATE ACTION**

Speak to the relevant staff member and try to work out reasonable and realistic solutions. If you want, a Student Advocate can help you speak to a staff member.

## CLASS ETIQUETTE

The relationship between students and staff is usually informal, and it's common for you to use each other's first names.

Your lecturers may be happy for you to contact them via email using your VU student email address, via a designated office phone number or by visiting their office.

Please put your mobile phones on silent during class.

## COURSE AND UNIT ADVICE

Each college at VU has Course and Unit Advisors (CUAs) to help our students. They are the first point of contact if you need administrative assistance and advice relating to your course.

CUAs have a broad range of knowledge and expertise on the coursework programs within their college. They can provide help and guidance with most practical course-related matters.

If you're unsure whether you need to contact a CUA, visit your nearest VUHQ. The friendly staff will put you in contact with the right person.

**[vu.edu.au/course-unit-advice](http://vu.edu.au/course-unit-advice)**





# YOUR VISA

## STUDENT VISA CONDITIONS

It is your responsibility to make sure that you understand your student visa conditions. Refer to the Department of Home Affairs website for details.

**[homeaffairs.gov.au](http://homeaffairs.gov.au)**

### **YOU MUST COMPLY WITH ALL YOUR VISA CONDITIONS INCLUDING:**

- complete your course within the duration listed on your Confirmation of Enrolment (COE)
- abide by the working conditions and restrictions
- maintain Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) for the duration of your visa
- maintain satisfactory academic progress and, where applicable, attendance
- update your Australian residential address and phone number on MyVU within seven days of changing your personal details.



## CLASS ATTENDANCE

As an international student, it is a condition of your student visa that you maintain satisfactory progress during each study period. Attending all your classes will give you the best chance of success in your studies.

If you cannot attend your class, contact your college to discuss your situation.

If personal circumstances are affecting your studies, contact Counselling Services or an International Student Advisor.

**[vu.edu.au/international-student-support](https://vu.edu.au/international-student-support)**

**[vu.edu.au/counselling](https://vu.edu.au/counselling)**

## SATISFACTORY PROGRESS

VU has procedures in place to assess your progress in your course. If you're at risk of making unsatisfactory progress, we can support you in many ways to help you meet your course requirements.

Your course progress is an important condition of your student visa. If you don't maintain satisfactory course progress you risk having your enrolment cancelled.

**[vu.edu.au/student-progress](https://vu.edu.au/student-progress)**

**[vu.edu.au/cancel-enrolment](https://vu.edu.au/cancel-enrolment)**

**[bit.ly/check-visa-conditions](https://bit.ly/check-visa-conditions)**

## STUDY LOAD

It is a condition of your student visa that you complete your course within the expected duration specified on your electronic Confirmation of Enrolment (eCOE).

In order to do this, you should maintain a full-time study load (48 credit points in each half year). You can only decrease or increase your study load in special circumstances.

**[vu.edu.au/study-load](http://vu.edu.au/study-load)**

## LEAVE OF ABSENCE

A leave of absence is a break from your studies.

In accordance with ESOS requirements, you may be granted a leave of absence in compassionate or compelling circumstances beyond your control. These could include, but are not limited to:

- serious illness or injury
- death of a close family member such as parents, grandparents, spouse or child
- major political upheaval or natural disaster in your home country
- an academic progress decision.

VU may only grant a leave of absence where something has happened to you that was out of your control and has impacted and affected your ability to study. Supporting documents must be submitted with your Application for Intermission.

You can speak with a counsellor or an International Student Advisor for support.

**[vu.edu.au/leave-of-absence](http://vu.edu.au/leave-of-absence)**

## PERMISSION TO WORK

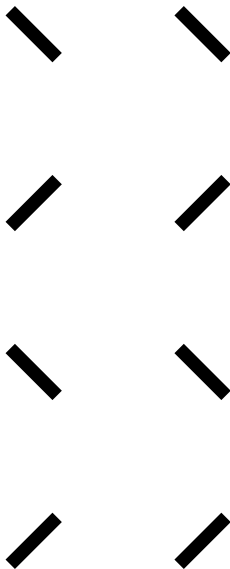
As a student visa holder, your ability to work in Australia is governed by your student visa conditions.

**[bit.ly/record-my-hours](https://bit.ly/record-my-hours)**

For assistance in job seeking methods, visit VU Employ. They can also check your resume to ensure that you are ready for the right opportunity.

**[vu.edu.au/vu-employ](https://vu.edu.au/vu-employ)**

**[bit.ly/work-conditions](https://bit.ly/work-conditions)**



We recommend working while you're in Melbourne – it's a great way to meet people and improve your communication and teamwork skills. It also looks good on your resume and helps with your living expenses.

# OVERSEAS STUDENT HEALTH COVER (OSHC)

As a condition of your visa, you need to maintain health insurance for the duration of your study.

Our preferred provider is Allianz Global Assistance. Allianz has a representative at City Flinders campus and Footscray Park campus who can help you with:

- claims
- extending your health cover
- understanding costs and premiums.

**[vu.edu.au/health-cover](http://vu.edu.au/health-cover)**

## GET INSURED

[bit.ly/oshc-allianz](http://bit.ly/oshc-allianz)

## GET THE APP

[bit.ly/oshc-app](http://bit.ly/oshc-app)

Register online and access your e-membership card.

### STEP 1:

- visit **[allianzassistancehealth.com.au](http://allianzassistancehealth.com.au)**
- click 'login' and select 'students login'
- create an account by entering your details (tip: in most cases your policy number will be your student ID followed by 'VU')
- enter your preferred email address and create a password
- verify your email address by checking your email.

### STEP 2:

- install the My OSHC Assistant app from Google Play or Apple App Store
- enter the email address and password you just created to log into the app
- select a five digit pin, which you can use to log into the app.

### STEP 3:

- click 'Select My Policy' to access your e-membership card and update your personal details.

# HEALTH SERVICES

There are many ways to stay healthy and a variety of services that can help.

- Visit your general practitioner (GP) first for most healthcare problems.
- Visit a dentist for dental care or oral health treatment.
- An allied health professional is a trained professional, such as a physiotherapist or speech pathologist, who works as part of the healthcare team.
- Complementary medicine practitioners include acupuncturists and chiropractors.
- Whatever type of doctor or health professional you consult, always make sure they are qualified and registered to practice in their health field.
- If you are concerned about your health but are not sure which service to connect with, you can visit VU's Student Health Advisor or an International Student Advisor.

**[vu.edu.au/health-advice](https://vu.edu.au/health-advice)**

**[vu.edu.au/international-student-support](https://vu.edu.au/international-student-support)**



# WORK RIGHTS

Often, workplace disputes happen because employers and employees don't know what the law is, or there has been a breakdown in communication. Try to sort out the issue by yourself with these tips:

**[bit.ly/Fairwork](https://bit.ly/Fairwork)**

If you'd like some help, get in contact with the International Students Work Rights Legal Service.

**[bit.ly/StudyMelbourne-WorkRights](https://bit.ly/StudyMelbourne-WorkRights)**



# LEGAL ADVICE

It's important to let us know if you have a legal question or problem as soon as it arises.

Victoria Legal Aid an answer your legal question online.

**[legalaid.vic.gov.au](http://legalaid.vic.gov.au)**

If you need some help with how the law applies to your legal problem, there are a range of legal services we can refer you to.

**[vu.edu.au/welfare-services](http://vu.edu.au/welfare-services)**

Family violence is not tolerated in Australia. Types of family violence include physical and sexual violence and financial, emotional and psychological abuse.

If you want to know more about family violence and your rights, there are several services you can access.

**[dvvic.org.au/understand/about-family-violence/](http://dvvic.org.au/understand/about-family-violence/)**

**[wire.org.au/what-is-family-violence](http://wire.org.au/what-is-family-violence)**

**FIND OUT ABOUT YOUR EMPLOYMENT  
AND WORKPLACE RIGHTS AT THE FAIR WORK  
OMBUDSMAN**

**[fairwork.gov.au](http://fairwork.gov.au)**

# STAYING FRIENDS

When you graduate from VU, our connection doesn't need to end.

Participating in the VU Alumni community, that has a global network of over 220,000 people across 130 countries, has many benefits including:

- networks with other professionals
- career advice
- participation in lifelong learning
- social events.

Connect with the VU Alumni network to make sure you stay in the loop.

**[vu.edu.au/alumni](https://vu.edu.au/alumni)**



[vu.edu.au](http://vu.edu.au)  
[vupolytechnic.edu.au](http://vupolytechnic.edu.au)



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