WESTERN SYDNEY
UNIVERSITY

International College

International Student Guide

Diploma in Arts

Welcome

Welcome to the Western Sydney University International College student guide for Diploma in Arts students. This guide brings together suggestions, tips and advice from other Arts students who have successfully completed their Diploma program at the International College and from the staff who will support you whilst you are with us. We hope this guide provides you with valuable information and recommendations so that your transition into the International College, and life in Sydney, is as easy and effective as possible.

The guide covers what you need to know about life as an international student from pre-departure preparations; to everyday life in Sydney; key tips on study success; making new friends; money matters; staying healthy; and the key support services and staff who are there to help you succeed in your studies.

The guide gives helpful tips from previous Arts students on how to make the most of your time at the International College and how to enjoy all that life in Sydney as an international student has to offer.

We welcome further suggestions from you on ways to make this guide as helpful as possible for future students and offer our best wishes for your successful study with us.

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PRE-DEPARTURE PREPARATIONS

What to know before you land

Here are 5 tips from previous Diploma in Arts students on how to prepare yourself prior to arrival in Sydney, Australia:

1. Research the course you will be studying.
This research may include talking to your friends who are studying in the same or similar field, connecting with people who are working in your chosen industry and doing some online research, including exploring the WSUIC website.

2. Make sure you read the International College handbook.
Pay particular attention to the cost of living guide and information on public transport. The cost of living guide will allow you to plan your expenses and create a weekly budget. Knowing what train to catch and where to go to catch it, will make it easier to get to campus and travel around Sydney on the weekend.

3. Read the course guides.
Having an understanding of what topics will be covered in your classes will mean you are better prepared for your classes. When the teacher calls on you in class, you will be ready to answer confidently.

4. Practise your English, both written and spoken.

This will help you feel confident on arrival in Australia and you will feel more confident that you will be able to keep up with your studies.

5. Be prepared to meet new people.
You will meet lots of students from many different backgrounds and cultures at Orientation. Everyone is very friendly and welcoming so be ready to have some fun!

"You should also ensure that you have all the necessary documents before coming to Australia, including your passport, visa, grant documents, eCOE, offer letter, and proof of accommodation and money (less than $1000)."

Pujathmee Udawatte,
Arts student, Sri Lanka

PRE-DEPARTURE PREPARATIONS (CONT.)

WHAT TO PACK

Sydney is a large cosmopolitan city in which you can buy everything you need. However, you are advised to bring some items with you to Australia because many items may be more expensive here than in your home country.

You may choose to bring larger electrical appliances such as rice cookers. These items are widely available in Australia but may be more expensive than your home country. Note: Australia uses 240-volt AC 50 hertz electricity and three-pin plugs to access power points.

Accommodation does not include linen or blankets. A sleeping bag may be useful the first few nights until you have a chance to purchase items.

Australia has strict customs laws. It is illegal to bring many items, such as food of any description, including herbal medicines, into Australia. For details of what is and is not permitted check the Australian **incoming passenger Card** before you pack.

As it can often take some time for money to be transferred from your home country to Australia, it is suggested that you bring enough money to cover your expenses for the first few weeks. Foreign currency can be exchanged for Australian dollars at Sydney Airport. If you arrive on a weekend (Saturday/ Sunday) and do not change some currency at the airport, you may not be able to change it until the next working day. If you want to use cash, you may only use Australian currency.

Bring some lightweight items from home to make your new place feel like home - like a decorative cushion cover or photo in your favourite photo frame.

For more information, please visit Smart Traveller here.

"As my first time living abroad and far away from family, I prepared for everything, from clothes to food, and even social skills, because I knew I would be here alone and needed to do everything without support from anyone."

Thi My Di Chau, Arts Student, Vietnam

IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS

When you arrive at an Australian airport, you will first need to go through immigration and customs clearance. If you need help finding your way around, just ask the airline staff or one of the border officials in the arrivals area. A clearance officer will check your travel document and visa (make sure you have your passport and eCOE ready), and once cleared you will be able to collect your luggage to go through customs and the quarantine clearance processes.

You will be given an **Incoming Passenger Card** before you arrive in Australia. This is a legal document. It is important that you complete this card truthfully and declare any of the items listed on the card, including:

- Plant material.
- Animal products
- Specific foods – including fresh fruit and vegetables, spices, herbs

You will need to present the following documents to officers in immigration clearance:

- a valid passport or other acceptable travel document
- a valid student visa or authority to enter Australia (including electronic visas)
- a completed and signed Incoming Passenger card, including health and character declaration.

If you arrive without a valid travel document, visa or authority, you might be refused entry to Australia or delayed until your identity and claims to enter Australia have been confirmed. **For more information, please visit the Department of Home Affairs here.**

ARRIVAL IN AUSTRALIA

Climate

If you are arriving in Sydney between December to May it will be summer with temperatures ranging from *20°C (68° F) to 35°C (95° F).*

If you are arriving in Sydney between June to November it will be winter with temperatures ranging from *8°C (46° F)to 25°C (77° F).*

Clothing

Australia is a culturally diverse society. The variety of clothing which people wear reflects this diversity. There are no specific laws and regulations on clothing in Australia.

Many people tend to dress casually or informally for comfort or according to the social situation or climate. You may find you will need business wear for work, or formal clothes for special events. Most public places do require that you wear appropriate footwear.

SIM Cards

When you land in Australia, you can get a cheap prepaid SIM card right at the airport and pop it into your phone. This gives you immediate, low-cost connectivity for staying in touch with home and meeting new friends, without the hassle of long-term contracts.

Welcome Desk

We want you to feel welcome when you arrive in Australia. When you land at Sydney Airport feel free to visit the International Student Welcome Desk.

The Welcome Desk is staffed by student volunteers who will be able to help you with general information and provide you with guides and maps for Sydney.

The Welcome Desk is located in Terminal 1, opposite Arrival Hall A. For detailed information on the location please view the **Sydney Airport International Student Welcome Desk Map.**

Click here to check out the video of Sydney Airport International Student Welcome Desk.

AIRPORT TRANSPORTATION

The University offers an airport pick-up service to help you make your way from Sydney Airport (Kingsford Smith International Airport) to your Western Sydney University campus. **You can request a quote here.**

You must submit your free airport pick-up request at least five working days prior to your Sydney arrival date. You will receive a confirmation once your request is processed. If you submit a request less than five working days prior to landing, your request may not be processed in time for your arrival and you will need to seek an alternative service at your own expense.

You may only use this service on your first arrival to Sydney Airport. The service is only available from Kingsford Smith International Airport, Sydney to a Western Sydney University campus (except the Sydney City campus). A drop-off at a location other than a Western Sydney University campus is not possible.

Vehicle capacity is limited. Accompanying friends and family who have not been booked on the service may not be able to ride.

At the airport - meeting your driver

Your driver will be available to meet you 1.5 hours after your scheduled on-time arrival. This ensures we accommodate any delays you may experience with flights or at customs. Once you have passed through customs, please proceed to the **meeting point** at McDonald's.

Check your phone for a text with your driver's direct phone number. Call your driver who will come from the holding area to collect you. If you have trouble with your phone, use the airport's free WiFi to contact the airport pick up service.

Please ensure you are ready and waiting at the meeting point. The driver will not be able to wait at the terminal for an extended time due to airport regulations.

Public transport

You can also take the train or bus from Sydney Airport to your desired location.

Please remember to purchase an adult ticket as international students are not eligible for student transport concession, and fines apply. **You can find more details on the use of trains and buses at the Transport NSW Information Page.**

Alternatively, you can take a taxi from the airport. The taxi stand is located outside the international terminal.

When you arrive at Sydney Airport, you also have the option to purchase an Opal card from selected Sydney airport retailers or at the entrance to the train station. You can use the Opal card to travel from the airport to your desired location, and then continue to use it on public transport across Sydney. Once you have used eight trips in a week (calculated Monday to Sunday), the rest of your travel that week will be free.

For more information on transport from the airport, please visit the Sydney Airport Transport Page.

FINDING ACCOMMODATION

There is a range of accommodation options near your campus to suit your lifestyle and budget, giving you every opportunity to immerse yourself in a rich and vibrant learning environment.

Living On Campus

With a range of activities, sporting facilities, indoor and outdoor entertainment, living on campus at Western Sydney University is a great way to meet a range of people from different cultures, make new friends and embrace the next phase of your life. **Click here to find out more about living on campus.**

If you want to live nearby but not on campus, or you missed the living on campus application cut-off date, there are always alternative options around the Western Sydney region. **For more information visit the website here.**

"When looking for accommodation, you can consider using WSU accommodation as it is cheaper compared to other options." *Pujathmee Udawatte, Arts student, Sri Lanka*

Homestay

A homestay involves staying in either a single or shared room at the home of an Australian family. It is a great opportunity for you to immerse yourself in the English language and Australian culture, either for the duration of your study, or while you find your own accommodation. **For more information about homestay accommodation, click here.**

"On-campus accommodation is cost effective and convenient. You won't need to worry about paying bills like electricity and gas. The added bonus is that you will meet other students quickly, and it's easy to get to class on time."

Laurentcia, Arts student, Indonesia

LIFE IN AUSTRALIA

Everyday life in Sydney

Everyday life in Sydney is likely to be more expensive than you will find in your home country. You are going to need to buy your own groceries and cook your own meals, so come prepared.

You will need to be totally independent and highly organised, in order to juggle your studies, possibly a part-time job and paying bills.

Weekends are definitely time for fun with friends! It's fun to explore the beaches in Sydney and there are so many to choose from. Manly and Bondi Beach are favourites with international students and make for great Instagram pics. There are also many great walks to do in and around Sydney and it's fun exploring new places with friends.

"Living in Australia can be challenging as you are away from your family and, expenses can be high, causing you to feel like you are spending more than you have. That is normal thing, and it will be fine after you find a job."

Pujathmee Udawatte,
Arts student, Sri Lanka

Friends enjoying drinks and food at Nick and Nora's rooftop bar Parramatta.
Image source: Destination NSW.

Friends enjoying a walk by Parramatta River in Western Sydney.
Image source: Destination NSW.

ADJUSTING TO LIFE AT WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE

Western Sydney University International College and Western Sydney University have a rich culturally and linguistically diverse student population. We have a large number of international students and students who have recently migrated to Australia.

Adjusting to life and study in Australia may be challenging and may mean having to make some changes to your life. This may also include changes to the way you study as well as having to study in a different language.

"Everyday life in Sydney is great. The streets are clean and the food is really good."
Eric, Arts student, Vietnam

The information below will help you face the challenge and improve your university experience.

- **Adjusting to a new country and culture**
- **Making friends**
- **Where to get help**
- **Tips for a good first year**
- **A different style of learning**

TIME MANAGEMENT

Here are some tips on how to manage your time effectively:

- Devise a schedule allowing time for study, extracurricular and social activities and any of your other interests. A good balance will mean you have enough time to study, get a good night's sleep and may even help you save money.
- Be a little more flexible with your normal routines. Don't let a dirty house or overgrown lawn make you feel stressed. If you're feeling a little overwhelmed, ask your family or friends to pitch in and help you out.
- Appreciate your time at uni because it is a unique experience that most people will only go through once in their lifetime. Make your study/life balance work so you can enjoy the fun side of uni without letting your grades slip.
- Focus on one thing at a time and prioritise your tasks. Don't overwhelm yourself by worrying about everything. When you're studying give all your attention to your work. When you're at work or out having fun, forget about study.
- Be realistic about what you can and can't do. Remember, you can only do so much so it's okay to say 'no' sometimes.

"Having a strict time management schedule is important for me. I make time for my classes and assignments. Some of my friends without a schedule, procrastinate a lot."
Eric, Arts student, Vietnam

"You need to focus on class and be on time. Listen and practice everything your teachers tell you."
Im, Arts student, Cambodia

LIFE IN AUSTRALIA (CONT.)

PART-TIME WORK

As an international student, you may work up to 48 hours per fortnight during each study session and unlimited hours when your course is not in session. Permission to work is automatically included in your student visa. Although you are able to work, you may not be able to rely on that income to fund your tuition fees or living costs for the duration of your stay in Australia.

Many international students choose to work part-time during their studies, but it is unrealistic to expect that you will find part-time work as soon as you begin looking for it. You will first need to become familiar with the city and the areas where part-time employment is available. It is also important to understand your study obligations before you commit yourself to part-time work.

The money you earn from your part-time job will help pay for your groceries and some expenses. It may not be enough to pay all your living expenses, so make sure you have enough money for 12 months upon arrival.

Places you are most likely to find work include fast-food chains, retail stores and restaurants.

"It is important to find a part-time job to reduce stress and earn extra money. When applying for a part-time job, make sure to highlight any relevant experience and speak confidently during the interview."
Pujathmee Udawatte, Arts student, Sri Lanka

TRANSPORTATION IN SYDNEY

The transport options available in and round Sydney include buses, trains, light-rail and ferries. Your access to these transport services will vary depending on where you live.

Public transport costs vary depending on where in Sydney you live and the type of transport you are using. To find out more about public transport in NSW, including how to buy a travel card, departure times and how to plan a trip, **click here.**

"I would recommend students use the app, TripView. It helps me navigate my way around Sydney."
Eric, Arts student, Vietnam

GETTING TO CAMPUS

Public transport - Visit Transport NSW for up to date travel information.

Walk - The Parramatta City campus at 100 George Street and is less than a five minute walk from Parramatta train station.

Drive - Parking bays are not available as the Parramatta City facilities are located in the heart of the CBD with no available land to accommodate parking. So you are strongly encouraged to use public transport.

MOBILE PHONES AND THE INTERNET

Having a mobile phone is important when studying in Australia to stay in touch with friends and family back home and to socialise with your new friends in Australia. When you first land and don't have international romaing, you can pick up a cheap SIM card right at the airport that can easily be inserted into your current phone.

There are many phone carriers that offer short-term contracts or commitment-free prepaid plans that you can top up whenever you run out of credit. You can also purchase pre-paid international calling cards, so you don't receive a big surprise bill!

The biggest providers in Australia are:

- **Vodafone**
- **Optus**
- **Telstra**
- **TPG**
- **Belong**
- **Boost**

"It was easy to set up a mobile phone. I just went to a convenience store and got a sim card. Then I set it up online. You need a passport and your address."
Eric, Arts student, Vietnam

BANKING

One of the most important things that you'll need to understand is the Australian Banking System. In Australia, you will get a wide range of choices to manage your finances, starting from local credit unions and building societies to banks.

Many banks in Australia offer banking options for international students too.

So, if you are looking for the easiest ways on how to set-up your bank account in Australia for paying tuition fees, managing your everyday finances and more, below are some suggestions:

Choosing a Bank

Australia offers various banks for International students to choose from. They include:

- **NAB**
- **Westpac**
- **Commonwealth Bank**
- **ANZ**

The Right Type of Bank Account

There are three types of bank accounts available for international students: Transaction account, Savings account, and Student account.

- **The transaction account** is the most common type of account that can be used for daily expenses, deposits, money access, shopping, paying off bills, and withdrawing money from the ATM.
- **The savings account** is a ready to go account. It is linked to your everyday bank account. A Savings account is different from the transaction account as it allows you to earn interest on your balance.
- **The student account** gives you the same features as a transaction account but with no fee. You will not be charged on a monthly or annual basis or even when you deposit cash or withdraw from an ATM.

In Australia, most international students prefer to open a transaction account as it is easy to maintain. It gives them the freedom to access the account and manage their finances easily without any hassle.

Opening a Bank Account

Opening a bank account in Australia is a simple and quick process. You can either visit a bank or open it online before coming to Australia. For opening a bank account online, all you need is - a passport, valid email address, and your date of arrival (three months before) in Australia. You need to fill in a form on the bank's website, including the details like passport number and expiry date.

Once you've received the details of your new account, you will need to deposit money into it. Upon your arrival, you have to book an appointment at the local bank branch to prove your identity and to access your money.

You'll need to bring along your passport and proof of your address in Australia like a tenancy agreement or a utility bill. As soon as you arrive in Australia, it is a good idea to make an appointment with your local branch. Make sure to complete this process within the first few months to avoid any kind of hassle. You can even open a bank account in person, but make sure to do it within the first 1 to 6 weeks after your arrival.

Documents Required

In Australia, banks use a points system for documentation to open an account. You will need to present documents that can add up to 100 or more points. Below is the list:

- Driver's license - *40 points*
- Passport/citizenship/Birth certificate - *70 points*
- Any card with your name on it like store account card, library card or credit card - *25 points*
- Address proof such as utility bill or tenancy agreement - *25 points.*

After your account has been opened, your debit card will arrive in your mail within a few weeks.

For more information, click here.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

Service Fees

Many banks charge monthly service fees in order to maintain your account. This often adds up in the long run. So, before you choose a bank, inquire how much it charges! If you are an international student, some students suggest you choose an account that allows you to withdraw money worldwide for free and they will not charge any fee on international money transfers.

ATMs

When choosing a bank, make sure the ATM of the bank is available near your locality andacross campus. You can also choose banks that offer free ATM services.

Debit Cards

After opening a bank account, you will receive a card with your welcome kit. You can use it to withdraw money from the ATMs or use it while shopping. Visa Debit or Mastercard debitcan be used all over Australia and overseas. Please note that an EFTPOS card can be only used in Australia.

As an international student, when choosing a bank in Australia, make sure your bank offers the following features:

- Online and mobile banking
- No international fees for ATM withdrawals
- Competitive interest rate
- Unlimited deposits and withdrawals
- No minimum balance
- Speedy transfer time
- Extensive ATM network
- Fee-free International Money Transfers

"As an international student, you should ask for assistance in setting up a bank account. I would recommend students research the process online before they visit the bank."

Eric, Arts student, Vietnam

STUDY SUCCESS

ATTENDING ORIENTATION

An Orientation program is arranged for you prior to the commencement of your first session of study. Attendance is compulsory for all new students.

The date of your Orientation is detailed in your welcome letter.

During Orientation, you will learn about the campus and student support programs, and you will meet your new classmates. You will also arrange your timetable and enrol in new units as necessary for your course.

You will also be required to complete an English and Maths diagnostic test on your enrolment day. The purpose of this test is simply to assess your current skill levels, so we can provide the right academic support to help you succeed.

Before classes commence, teaching staff will reinforce attendance requirements and misconduct rules. We suggest you familiarise yourself with the International College policies prior Orientation. **You can view our policies and procedures here.**

We look forward to welcoming you!

ACADEMIC SUPPORT

Academic support classes
You can attend regular workshops designed to improve your overall academic performance. Taking academic support classes on maths, English and other key learning areas, could be the difference between a credit and a high-distinction. Academic support classes run each session. Details are emailed to the students and published on the notice board at the start of each session.

IT support
Get help and support with IT problems via the **MyIT Services Portal**. You can also contact the IT Service Desk by email or phone to get help for a range of computer and account problems, audio visual equipment loans and discount computers.

The IT Service Desk is now open extended hours and on weekends, so getting tech support is even easier:

Current access times area:

Monday to Friday: 8.00am - 8.00pm
Saturday and Sunday: 9.00am - 5.00pm

Computer Requirements
If you've purchased a new computer in the last few years, it's likely that this will be suitable. There are specific system and software requirements for accessing our online systems like vUWS and eForms.

Detailed computer requirements for both Windows and Macintosh computers are available on the **Online computer requirements page.**

In addition to the computer specifications, we recommend the following internet specifications:

- A minimum of ADSL2+ broadband service
- An unlimited download plan as part of this service

Utilising the library
The University Library provides a range of services to help you access Library resources from home or work, as well as the Turnitin assignment submission tool. Turnitin is a web-based text matching software that identifies and reports on similarities between documents. It is used as a tool to improve academic writing skills and assure academic integrity.

Need help? The Online Librarian is ready to assist via chat, email and phone during opening hours. The Library FAQs are available any time and cover a wide range of topics.

Find out more about how the Library can help.

Preparing for assessments and exams

Study Advice
Here are the top ten tips on studying and preparing for assessments and exams from previous students:

1. Read the assessment focused learning guide for each subject before the first class and ask any questions about what you have to produce for assessment, how assignments are marked etc in your first class.
2. Give your studies your undivided attention and fully commit to your classes.
3. Don't be afraid to ask your teachers questions - be brave!
4. Research the subjects you will be studying before you arrive in Sydney, so you can be confident you have chosen the right pathway.
5. After your class, review any recordings of it. Revise the work you have covered and follow up immediately on anything you don't understand.
6. Make sure you priortise your tasks and write down all your deadlines, with reminders in your phone's calendar, so you don't miss anything.
7. Review the learning guide for each unit, making sure that you are clear on what you have to do for assessment and how your assessment tasks will be graded. There is a lot of good information in the guides that can assist you through the course.
8. Don't be afraid to collaborate with other students. They may be able to help you with something you don't understand, and it's fun to meet new people.
9. Ask your teacher for help if you need it. You can email them outside of class or ask them a question during class. Mark things down in class you aren't sure of, so you can refer back to them later.
10. Check the task requirements so there are no surprises.
11. Seek feedback from your teachers so you can continuously improve.

Academic Integrity

At Western Sydney University International College, students are expected to:

- Act honestly, ethically, and responsibly in all academic work.
- Submit their own work and properly acknowledge the ideas and contributions of others.
- Avoid misconduct such as plagiarism, collusion, cheating, falsifying data, or the unethical use of Generative AI (e.g., using AI to complete assessments without permission).
- Seek guidance from staff when unsure—academic integrity is a shared responsibility and essential for both learning and professional development.

"I would highly recommend to new students that they should prepare for assessments and exams as soon as possible before their due date. By making enough effort during studying, such as focusing on the teacher's lecture and noting down the notes, do not forget to attend class frequently, so you do not miss out on anything important and obtain good marks."
Thi Kim Cuong Le, Arts student, Vietnam

"Set reminders for assessments and aim to finish them before the due date. This will give you time to make any corrections and become confident in your work. You can also ask your friends to read your work to ensure it's understandable or use WSU assessment helper to get assistance."
Pujathmee Udawatte, Arts student, Sri Lanka

"For a new student I would encourage them to research more, check the task requirements so there are no surprises. Talking to the lecturer is really important particularly if you don't understand something. If you don't ask, you will only feel pressure. I would advise students to come here with the objective to give their studies their full attention and commit to them.
Laurentcia, Arts student, Indonesia

"Preparing for my assessments wasn't difficult. The teachers were very friendly and you could ask them for help. I would either email them or ask them in class. I would always mark down things to ask in the next class I had."
Mohammad, Arts student, Bangladesh

SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

Making friends in a new environment helps us adjust and feel like we belong. It's important to be in the right frame of mind when thinking about or trying to make new friends. We encourage all students to see university as a place to learn and expand your knowledge about people from other cultures and backgrounds.

Mates - a mentoring program that helps new students meet other students and adjust to the university environment.

Campus Life - your hub for social activities, with over 70 clubs and societies as well as sporting clubs, tours, fitness facilities and social events on campus. Student

Campus Councils (SCC) – join in with student representation! Each campus has a Student Campus Council which works with the University-wide Student Representative Council (SRC). Each council is there to represent student interests and run social events. There's a Student Rights Advocate to provide support and advice.

Making friends can be as simple as saying 'hello' and seeing where the conversation will take you. If you're not feeling very confident about making new friends, there are a number of different programs and opportunities here that can help you meet people and make friends.

If you find making friends is very difficult and you start to feel homesick and depressed, talking to a Western Sydney University Counsellor may help. Counsellors are sensitive to cultural diversity and will respect your privacy. You can either email a question or concern to **eCounselling** or organise a phone or face to face appointment with the **Counselling Service.**

"Aussie people smile at someone they don't even know. (in a positive way). Aussie people are so friendly."

Thi My Di Chau, Arts student, Vietnam

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES AND GROUPS

How and where to meet new friends:

Get involved in extracurricular activities! This is a great way to make friends, have fun and avoid burnout.

Introduce yourself to others in your tutorials. Getting to know the people in your tutorial is handy for study group sessions and can lead to great friendships.

Seek advice from students or tutors who have been through the uni process. Ask them for advice and ideas about resources you need to know about to survive at uni. Having someone to give you non-academic feedback and show you the ropes can be invaluable.

Build up a list of contacts and support people. Make sure you have a good support network of teachers, family, friends, employers and even counsellors who know you and your situation and want to help you succeed.

Remember, balance is important. Don't neglect your social life, it's important that you make time to pursue your interests and unwind.

"It is also an important thing to reduce homesickness by making more friends and hanging out in a new place. Australia has many famous landscapes that deserve to be visited."

Thi Kim Cuong Le, Arts student, Vietnam

KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH FAMILY

It's important to maintain contact with family and friends throughout your University journey. In the past keeping in touch with family overseas took a lot of time and planning. Writing letters, sending postcards, phoning and waiting for return calls. Nevertheless, the time it took keeping relationships nurtured and healthy was important. It still is important today and can be much easier.

For personal satisfaction and well-being, social support is important. You feel a sense of belonging when you have social support. You also feel supported, loved, cared for and part of the family and community. Communication helps you feel like you are connected still to home. Keeping connected to family and friends and having the ability to share your trials and tribulations may assist with mental well being and lead to less worry, less anxiety and depression.

Staying connected is what Social Media is all about. Therefore, a recommendation is to learn the communication tools that help you stay connected. Become tech savvy so you can share your overseas experience with your family and friends. Check too that they are tech savvy and can share with you.

Your family and friends may wish to keep in touch with you in different ways. The best ways to keep in contact with everyone is for you to create a communication schedule. A plan that combines both speaking with your family and friends as well as sharing messages and photos with them. With so many systems available, you are sure to find a way that suits you and your family. Naturally, there is the good old-fashioned phone that you can call home with. However, today family and friends love to see you online and be part of your life.

MONEY MATTERS

CREATING A BUDGET

Budgeting is a great way to assess your income and manage your costs, especially when you're studying and on a limited income. Check out the following tips for creating a budget that is realistic and useful.

KEEPING TRACK OF YOUR MONEY

Before you budget, it is important to know where your money is going. It is easy to spend more than you earn or receive - so track your spending by keeping a spending diary. Use a notebook or download a budget app and note exactly what you are spending over a period (for example, a week). By noting the category into which each item falls you will be able to see how much you are spending and on what.

By knowing your income (e.g. work, Centrelink, allowances from family, interest from bank accounts etc.) and your expenses (e.g. bills, rent, clothes, food, leisure, transport costs), you'll be able to see where you are overspending and what items might be luxuries rather than needs. Check for spending leaks (expenses that can sap money from your budget without you really noticing) and see what you can do about them. For example, if you buy a coffee daily, consider reducing your purchases and bringing coffee from home. The savings you can make from putting this into practice may be significant.

BE REALISTIC ABOUT DEBT

Another important component about your budget is identifying if you have any debt and working to manage it. Ask yourself:

- Do I know exactly how much I owe?
- Have I put off visiting the dentist, buying a prescription, an important book or an essential item because I can't afford it?
- Do I usually pay my bills late?
- Am I constantly borrowing money from friends or relatives?
- Am I using more and more of my income to pay debts?
- Is my income running out by the end of each week or fortnight?
- Am I paying only the minimum amount on my loans or credit cards each month?
- Am I at or over the limit on my credit cards?

Are you answering yes to any of the above? Then it is time to get organised and make sure that your budget is realistic and perhaps get some assistance. A budget will also help you to realise what changes you might need to make (e.g. a part time job, going out less etc) to make sure you're not always in deficit.

It may be helpful to set up a direct debit system so that bills, living expenses and savings are taken out of your pay immediately and set aside so you can't spend them on other things. Centrelink offer a service called Centrepay which is a free direct bill paying service offered to customers receiving their payments.

For further information on financial assistance, please visit the Australian Government's Study Assist page here.

MONEY SAVING TIPS

Work out some money saving strategies. Consider buying no-name brands and checking weekly specials to reduce the cost of your groceries. Think about buying your textbooks second-hand -check the noticeboards on campus for students selling their books or go to: **www.textbookexchange.com.au**

You can also borrow books from the library or try renting them from online sources. **www.textbookrentals.com.au**

Textbooks can be quite expensive. If you can't afford to get them all, most of them will be available for loan from the library. Try looking for them in the reserve section of the library if you can't find them on the shelf.

STAYING HEALTHY

DIET AND EXERCISE

Eating a healthy balanced diet accompanied by regular exercise is essential in maintaining physical and mental health and well-being. Not only are these effective in preventing excess weight gain or in maintaining weight loss, but healthier lifestyles are also associated with improved sleep and mood. Here are some tips to ensure you are maintaining a healthy lifestyle while living overseas:

- Balance your workload and activities so you can get adequate sleep. If you are well rested, you'll be able to concentrate better and be more productive.
- Stay healthy and eat right. Make sure you exercise a few times a week and eat a balanced diet.
- Get into yoga or Pilates. They're both great stress relievers for the body and mind and a great way to stay healthy.
- Exercise increases your ability to think and it also de-stresses you. If you live close to uni, ride a bike or walk. You'll get fitter and reduce your carbon footprint.
- Keep your supplies well stocked! Keep a bottle of water and a small snack on you for an energy boost.
- Boost your immune system. Staying up late doing uni work can take a toll on your immune system. Try and get to bed earlier and take some vitamins - a good multivitamin, omega 3 and garlic are all great for the immune system, energy levels and concentration.

STAYING POSITIVE

Do not be intimidated by the idea of university study. You can be proud that you've taken the first step to further your education. Here are some things to remember in order to maintain a positive outlook:

- You're not alone. University is a brand new experience for every commencing student.
- Be positive. Stay enthusiastic about your new educational adventure. Be sure of your abilities and opinions and remember that you'll get more confident over time.
- Give yourself time to adjust. It may take a few weeks or even months before uni starts to feel comfortable. Don't feel like you have to hit the ground running and be able to manage everything perfectly right from the very first moment. Slowly but surely is the key.
- Be assertive and take the initiative. Ask questions, investigate and follow up with your tutors and lecturers if you're unsure of information.
- Learn from your mistakes and don't give up if you achieve a poor result along the way – learning what doesn't work is just as important as learning what does.
- Be open minded to different views and cultures. University is diverse and everyone has something unique to offer. Learn to recognise stress. Signs can include exhaustion, loss or increase of appetite,increase or decrease in sleeping or an increase in crying or headaches. Changing even the simplest things can reduce stress. Set realistic goals, reduce the number of events or commitments in your life or even use incense and relaxation exercises - lavender, chamomile and peppermint are great for stress relief, relaxation and focus.
- University is not just about careers, assignments, exams, and stress. It's also about discovering yourself as a person and your place in the world, and about having a great ride along the way.
- Many students feel shy, anxious or awkward when attending new classes. Remember that you have demonstrated the abilities and qualities needed to get you into university and you will feel more confident with time.
- Don't give up if you fail a unit. It's not the end of the world, it just means that you can try again and aim for an HD.

SAFETY TIPS

Parramatta is a generally safe city to live in. However, as with anywhere, the following safety steps should be taken:

- always inform another person when going out, including information on destination, people to be met and expected time of return
- travelling alone at night should be avoided
- never leave personal belongings unattended
- always carry either a mobile phone, change for a pay phone or a phone card
- take note of any security guidelines provided by the university/college
- avoid giving personal information to strangers
- lock all doors and windows before going out.

If faced with a life-threatening emergency, dial **000** on the telephone. The operator will ask if fire, police or ambulance services are required before transferring the call. **For security and safety matters, please contact campus security on 0414 345 976.**

"Sydney is very safe. I don't worry when I go out on my own."
Im, Arts student, Cambodia

HELP AND SUPPORT

SUPPORT AND ADVICE

Student Services

It can be tough coming to a new country where you may not know anyone. At Western Sydney University International College, we're dedicated to your success. We offer a range of student support services to ensure you get the education you deserve. Whether English is your second language, adjusting to life in Australia is challenging, or you face academic or personal obstacles, our committed team is here to help. If you need more information about your enrolment, choosing a timetable, or where your classes are, our Student Services team can assist you. The friendly team can answer your questions on any matter. You can contact us at: **wsuic@westernsydney.edu.au**

"I appreciate the way that the support services the college provides to students throughout their study at WSUIC. Besides, teachers in Diploma of Arts are so kind, enthusiastic and tolerant, they always supervise and support the students' learning when they have any issues.
Thi Kim Cuong Le, Arts student, Vietnam

Communication

The primary means of communication between you and the International College, other than face-to-face, is the student portal, through which you can:

- select units and lecture and tutorial times (returning students)
- update contact details
- obtain unit information such as lecture notes and assessment details
- check results and your Grade Point Average (GPA)
- send and receive messages from lecturers or tutors
- receive information from administration staff
- check your attendance record
- access timetable and examination timetables
- obtain provisional invoices
- check student fees account

Religious Venues

Prayer and multifaith rooms are available at the Parramatta City campus, 169 Macquarie Street. Additional prayer room is available on Level 6 at Parramatta City campus, 6 Hassall Street. These multifaith facilities are founded on the spiritual places of the Darug People, the traditional caretakers of this region. They are available for all who hold to a faith tradition as well as those who do not. They offer a safe place to meet, pray, reflect, meditate or simply take some time for yourself. There are multifaith libraries to browse, chaplains to chat with, groups to connect with and religious festivals to celebrate.

Under 18's

At the International College, we have special structures in place to protect the welfare of students who are under 18 years of age. These are in addition to our commitment to caring for every International College student though our welfare and counseling, pastoral care and academic support services.

These structures ensure that accommodation for our younger students are age and culturally appropriate, that your safety, health and welfare is continually monitored and that processes are in place to act swiftly and thoroughly should you need any support or assistance.

The International College's Students Under 18 Years Policy outlines this structure in more detail and complies with both the Education (Overseas Student) Regulations, and the Department of Border Protection (DIBP) requirements for ensuring that, if you are under the age of 18, you are adequately cared for during your studies.

Parents of students under 18 are encouraged to maintain contact with the International College Student Services staff at **wsuic@westernsydney.edu.au**

STUDENT COMPLAINTS

A student has the right to raise a complaint or appeal, and to have that matter considered with courtesy, in a timely manner and without fear of prejudicial treatment. The International College believes complaints and appeals should be resolved, wherever possible and appropriate at the informal level with a minimum of formal procedures. Wherever possible, an informal process involving discussion between a student and a member of staff will be conducted in each case to try to resolve the issue prior to a formal appeal being lodged. **For more information on the complaints process, click here.**

COUNSELLING SERVICES

Academic and Course Advice

Whether you're after academic course advice or general assistance, we provide you with support outside the classroom.

Student Counsellors

If you are experiencing challenging academic and/or personal circumstances, our highly-trained counsellors are available to help you find solutions and ease the pressure.

Disability Support Services

If you have a disability, chronic health condition or short-term injury, we can help you reach your full academic potential with our team of professional Disability Advisors. We can provide academic note-takers, transcription of videos/podcasts, training and access to assistive technology.

For further information on Western Sydney University's counselling services, please click here.

WELFARE SERVICES

Welfare Officers

Speak with Student Welfare Officers for a deeper understanding of Western Sydney University International College policies and procedures like special consideration, review of grades, withdrawal without academic penalty, appeal against exclusion and conditional enrolment.

The trained officers also provide support for academic, research and/or general misconduct hearings, financial hardship, and other matters such as accommodation, sexual health and welfare related concerns.

Academic Support Classes

You can attend regular workshops designed to improve overall academic performance. With classes on essay writing, referencing, skim-reading, literacy skills and more, a few workshops could be the difference between a credit and a high-distinction.

Career Services and Workshops.

Access a wide range of career services and workshops to develop your career path. With classes on CV writing, interview skills and more, we can set you up with the tools to land your first job out of University. To register for a workshop, please visit the Western Sydney University Careers Hub.

For more information on Western Sydney University's welfare services, please click here.

LEARNING SUPPORT

Student portal

The student portal for International College students is accessible via **internationalcollege.westernsydney.edu.au**

Click 'Student Portal' in the top right hand corner of the homepage. After logging in, you will find the following pages:

Home page provides the access to the following systems or information

- Moodle via 'International College Learning (Moodle)'
- Your student email via 'My Email'
- Complete class enrolment via 'My Registration'
- Check class timetable via 'My Timetable'
- Check attendance record via 'My Attendance'
- Check tuition fee status via 'My Fees'
- Student Lounge
- Final results via 'My Results'
- Check policies via 'Policies'
- Various forms via 'Forms'

The Services & Support page provides the access to the following information:

- Student Welfare & Support
- Library & Resources
- My Profile
- Study Assistance & Academic Workshops
- Campus Life
- Academic Calendar
- iHelp & IT Support
- Survey
- Contact Us
- Documents
- Under 18 Students

ONLINE LIBRARY RESOURCES

The Western Sydney University online library is accessible at: **library.uws.edu.au**

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Western Sydney University International College is committed to demonstrating high standards of personal and professional conduct. As such, as a student at the International College there is a range of policies and procedures you need to be aware of and adhere to.

The policies and procedures can be accessed through this link.

CONTACT INFORMATION
Western Sydney University International College
Levels 6, 6 Hassall Street, Parramatta 2150

OPENING HOURS
(Monday to Friday): 9.00am to 5.00pm

STUDENT SERVICES
wsuic@westernsydney.edu.au

Western Sydney University International College
CRICOS Provider 03663C

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