

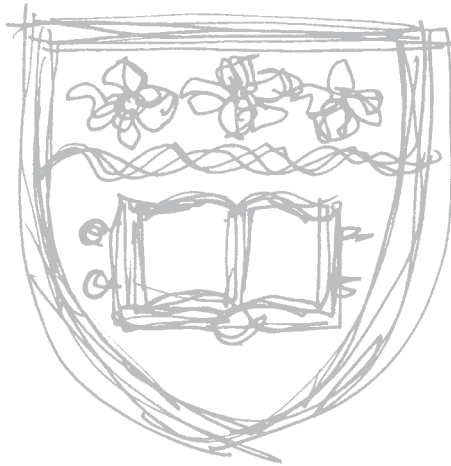
University of Wollongong



**INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS  
ORIENTATION HANDBOOK**

**2007**

# **International Students Orientation Handbook**



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University of Wollongong  
2007**

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**Print Disclaimer**

The University attempts to ensure that the information herein is up to date at the time of production, however we reserve the right to amend without notice in response to changing circumstances.

## **Acknowledgments**

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## The Illawarra Region

Wollongong has a population approaching 270,000 and is the centre of the Illawarra region. It features one of the most beautiful landscapes in the whole of Australia. Much of the beauty of the region is due to the contrast of the outstanding beaches, and the high, heavily wooded escarpment with its promise of excellent bushwalking in a beautiful and totally unspoilt environment. Yet all this variety is contained in a compact area.

With over 85 national groups in its population, Wollongong is perhaps the most cosmopolitan of all Australian cities. The diverse tastes in food, clothing and customs are amply catered for. Shops, theatres, cinemas, and art galleries are all located in Wollongong.

The city is little over an hour by car from Sydney, Australia's biggest city, and about an hour and a half by the regular rail service. Sydney's international airport is about an hour away by coach. There is also a daily coach service to and from Canberra, Australia's capital and seat of government.

You will find a map of the Illawarra region in booklets provided by the local Tourist Information Centre. Maps of the Illawarra and Wollongong may also be found at the beginning of the yellow pages section of the Wollongong telephone directory which also lists points of interest for the newcomer. More information may be obtained from the Tourist Information Centre located on the corner of Crown and Kembla Streets, Wollongong (ph 4227 5545).

## Learning To Live in a New Country

No matter what country you come from, you will find Australia unfamiliar at first. Much will be new to you: the look of the people, their clothes, the houses, the smells, the countryside, the cars; the sound of another language all around you; the sense of living among strangers whose behaviour you don't understand. You may miss the food you are used to and the comfort of the friends and family you lived among at home.

Like many other students, you may find these changes very upsetting and confusing. You could feel hopeless, frustrated or even angry. Or your reaction could be to withdraw from your new surroundings, by spending most of your time with other students from your own country, or by staying in your room (or even in your bed!). If you are very distressed by the feelings you have in this new place, you are probably undergoing culture shock.

All overseas students have some of these feelings—they are quite normal—but most learn to overcome them in the first weeks and months of their stay here.

## Coping with culture shock

- You can overcome these feelings little by little as you get to know your new environment. Learning about a new culture is an important part of the education you will receive here, and worth the effort you put into it. There are many ways you can find out about Australia and Australians, and learn to feel “at home” here:
- Remember, that when people behave in a way you don’t understand, there is usually a reason for what they do. Although their behaviour might be unacceptable in your culture, it is almost certainly acceptable within their own culture and according to their personal standards.
- You will need to observe people, listen to them and ask many questions. It is important not to judge people before you understand their values and customs.
- It’s a good idea to learn to laugh at the mistakes you will make from time to time. People will be happy to help you if you are relaxed and ready to learn.
- Find ways to meet as many people as possible. Join clubs, go to concerts, be ready to talk.
- Your physical surroundings will become familiar to you as you find your lecture rooms and the UniCentre. Use the map inside the back cover of this booklet, and explore a little further each day.
- The University has Student Equity and Diversity Liaison Officers (SEDLOs) and Counsellors who would be happy to help you with any problems you have settling in to your new life and meeting people (see ‘Services and Organisations that can help you’ in this handbook).

## Going home

You may be surprised to learn that you can suffer another culture shock when you return to your own country. You have changed during your stay here, while the people and customs at home may have remained the same. Your friends and family may want you to be exactly as you were when you left, and you may have difficulty accepting the “rules” now you have become accustomed to a new lifestyle; at first you may feel that you don’t belong anywhere. Knowing that you might face these feelings, it would be a good idea to attend a Returning Home Workshop or talk with your SEDLO before you leave for home.

## Language

When you arrive at the University of Wollongong one of the first and most difficult problems you may face is language.

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## **The spoken language**

Even if you have spent many years learning English in your home country, you will probably find that you don't understand much that people say here. You may have difficulty expressing yourself in English, too, when you want to tell people who you are, how you feel and what you need. This is normal. But why is it so difficult to understand English at first?

You will find that Australians speak very fast. You can ask people to speak more slowly; they will try to make it easier for you. The main thing is to relax. Don't try too hard to understand every word at first. And remember you don't have to speak fast to be understood!

The Australian accent may be new to you. Many international visitors find that we do not speak as clearly as American and English people do, and our vowel sounds are very different from theirs. You will soon begin to recognise the words you know.

You will meet lots of new words. The words used in everyday living, the words peculiar to Australia, to Wollongong, to university life, may not yet be in your vocabulary. You will learn them quickly because you will hear them every day and because you will need to use them. This is the best way to learn to speak fluently.

Australian spoken language is very informal and contains a lot of slang, that is, words and expressions with a special meaning for a small group of people. Australians often use abbreviations too, that is, shortened forms of words, even just initial letters. Ask people to explain any words you don't understand. The slang used by the students of the University of Wollongong will soon become familiar to you. It's fun to use these words and when you do you will feel you belong.

Anxiety may be a problem for you too. But this is normal and the more you learn the easier it will become to relax.

## **Written language**

At university, in your reading, you will also find many words that are not in your English vocabulary. You may be unfamiliar with some of the grammar. There are some suggestions that may help you to improve your understanding and increase your vocabulary in the section on 'Academic Survival'. You can also talk to the staff at the Learning Resource Centre in Building 19.G102 or phone 4221 3977. This service is free and available to all students seeking help with their language and academic skills.

## **Body language**

People express themselves with more than speech: facial expressions, hand and shoulder gestures, nodding, and bowing all add extra meaning to what we say.

Some of this “body language” is just part of the individual personality, but other movements have special meanings in different cultures.

Generally, Australians like to look people in the eye when they greet each other, and from time to time while speaking to them. This might be impolite or insulting in your culture but Australians believe it is both polite (to show they are listening) and sincere (to show they honestly mean what they say). It is rude to stare at people, however, that is to keep your eyes fixed on someone for too long, whether you are speaking with them or not. Take note of what people do and you will soon know what to expect and how to act.

Australians talk to people in an informal way, but they do not stand very close to others or touch them much during conversation. It is not an insult in Australia if you are handed something with the left hand. No special meaning is attached to left and right hands here.

## **Getting To Know Australians**

While you are at the University of Wollongong you will meet many Australians. You may be surprised to find what a mixture of different people Australians represent. The Aboriginal people have lived on this continent for many thousands of years. The first Europeans arrived to settle only some 200 years ago but since that time new settlers have come from all parts of the world.

## **Some characteristics of Australians**

Although their backgrounds are different Australians have many things in common. They have a common language and laws, of course, but they also share many attitudes. Possibly this is because so many of the new settlers came here to seek a relaxed lifestyle, or to leave behind oppressive political regimes or class systems.

### **Informality**

In particular you will notice that Australians like an atmosphere of relaxed informality. They do have some polite forms, usually based on the British ones, but young Australians in particular are uncomfortable with complex rules.

### **Individuality**

Many Australians want to be treated as individuals, rather than as representatives of a certain class or position or group. This independence, this individuality, tends to make them suspicious of authority. Their concept of government is that it exists to serve them, not the other way around.

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## Equality

Australians grow up believing that people should have equal social, legal and political rights. Anti-discrimination laws aim to prevent discrimination on the basis of race, religion, gender, sexual preference and marital status. Many Australian women may seem more independent and self-reliant than women in some other countries and this is a reflection of the relative equality of men and women in Australia. Many women have responsible jobs and commonly continue to work after they are married and have children. There is great informality in social relationships between men and women. Many young women leave their parental home before they marry to live alone or with friends of either sex. Women have great freedom in the way they dress but this does not suggest that they have low moral standards.

## Directness

Discussing issues, events and ideas openly with other individuals is considered quite proper in Australia. Australians might bring up in conversation issues you would consider sensitive or embarrassing or rude; try not to be offended. Australians are also quick to get to the point, particularly in business situations. They do not spend a lot of time on polite social talk before getting down to business. They may also voice disagreement openly, whether with friends, teachers or employers.

## Asking questions

Australians ask a lot of questions, some of which may appear to you to be uninformed and elementary. Try to be patient in answering them. Australian students here may not know much about your country or your way of life. They are sincerely interested in learning about your country and culture and in trying to find out what you are like.

## Making friends

Overseas students can have difficulty getting close enough to Australians to become friends. Why?

- Everyone seems to be in such a hurry it's hard to talk to anyone for very long.
- It is important to realise that Australians themselves have many "acquaintances" they can talk with casually, but only a small number of true friends. It takes time before a speaking relationship turns into friendship.
- The students you see may have known each other in high school before coming to the University.
- When people know your stay in Australia is limited, at first they may hesitate to commit themselves to friendship. And you may also seem very different to them until they get to know you.

You mustn't give up, however. If you are open and friendly, and keep on trying you will succeed. Not everyone would make a good friend. You need to find people you like; probably they'll like you too. And once you have made a good friend, new opportunities for friendship will open up.

## Get involved

In the beginning, when you are hoping to make friends, don't worry if your English doesn't seem good enough. Join in the conversation anyway and in the effort to communicate, you may find a friend. In the effort to share ideas and friendship with a few words, interest and caring can begin. Don't be afraid to make language errors; nobody is going to laugh at you.

Tell Australian students where you are from, and tell them about your country. Usually people are interested to know how things are done in other countries. If someone shows an interest, answer his or her questions; don't be hesitant or shy.

Living in a college can offer opportunities for friendship. If you live off campus, plan to eat on campus now and then. If you have the opportunity to be a teaching assistant or to work part-time (if this does not interfere with your studies) consider doing this. Go to student dances, even if you do not know how to dance Australian style; it is very easy to learn, and someone (who may become a friend) will be happy to teach you.

Sometimes lecturers or other University staff can become friends or can open up friendships with their families or with other people in the community.

Become involved in student activities, perhaps initially through the international students organisations of your country. If you are invited to a college or faculty party, go and meet the members of staff and other students.

The Illawarra Committee for International Students (ICIS)\* plans recreational events and provides services to all international students and their families. Take advantage of these opportunities and you may experience friendship which you will treasure all your life. You can meet the ICIS Co-ordinator, on the ground floor of the UniCentre, building 11 (ph on 4221 3158), next to the Glasshouse.

## Customs and culture

The following notes about Australian customs will help to guide you in practical situations.

### Greetings

People usually shake hands firmly the first time they meet. "How do you do?" is

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\* (See the ICIS section)

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the formal greeting at a first introduction, and other formal greetings are “Good morning” , “Good afternoon” and “Good evening”. Usually young people just say “Hello” or “Hi”, often followed by “How are you?”. People appreciate it if you use their name, for example, “Hi, Peter”.

## **Punctuality**

You are expected to be punctual or “on time” in Australia. If you have an appointment at 10.30 am with the dentist, be there at 10.30, no later. If you are invited for dinner at 7 o’clock, be there at 7.00 (not earlier, however) or within ten minutes after 7.00. If you cannot keep an appointment or if you cannot avoid being late, it is extremely important that you telephone immediately and explain. If you are late and you have not telephoned, you may find the person you are meeting to be abrupt and even unpleasant. Most concerts, lectures, church services, and so on, begin on time.

## **Social invitations**

Invitations should be answered as soon as possible. When you receive an invitation, formally through a note or informally by telephone, you will be expected to respond quickly and honestly. On a written invitation, “RSVP” means “Please reply”, and you should do so as soon as you know whether or not you will attend. It is also wise to get the person’s telephone number, so you can call and notify them if you must change your plans or are delayed.

While appointment times for social affairs are more flexible than business appointments, you should try to arrive as close to the appointed time as possible, particularly if you are invited to dinner. Under normal circumstances a person who extends an invitation to you and takes you to a restaurant or a theatre pays for the meal and/or tickets. However, since students are often short of money, an invitation may merely mean “we’d like you to join us”, suggesting that you would be expected to pay for yourself. If you are in doubt, ask. “Going Dutch” means that each person pays his or her part.

You may receive an invitation to a barbecue and be asked “to bring your own steak”. This seems strange to most international students (and to some Australians) but it is an acceptable way to entertain. Buy a steak at the supermarket (they come neatly packaged), put it in a bag and give it to the person who greets you when you arrive at the party. You could bring a vegetarian alternative if you wish. If you are asked to “bring a plate” this means bring a plate of food as a contribution to the meal — don’t just bring an empty plate! Groups often have meals where everyone brings a prepared cooked dish, salad or dessert to put on the table. A dish from your country would be greatly appreciated at such a meal.

## Saying thank you

It is always polite to send a thank-you note to your host. It is not necessary to take a gift to your host, especially if you go only for dinner or a short visit. Although a bottle of drink or a box of chocolates is always appreciated. If you are invited to a party celebrating someone's birthday, or for Christmas, take a small gift. It is never necessary to give an expensive gift, but a small souvenir from your country would be received with delight. "Thank you" is a phrase used often in Australia. Even when a person is only doing his or her job (such as a sales assistant in a shop), it is customary to say "thank you".

## The use of names

Here are a few guidelines on the use of names:

- First names are more readily used in Australia than in other countries. It is acceptable to automatically use the first name of someone of approximately the same age as you or younger.
- People older than yourself are often addressed by their titles, Mr (pronounced Mister) for men, and Ms (pronounced Mizz) for women until the individual requests that you use his or her first name, or until you get to know the individual better.
- Some Australian women prefer either Mrs or Miss as rather than Ms.
- Men and women will be confused if you use Mr, Mrs, Miss or Ms with a given name, as is the custom in some countries. These titles are used with the last or family name. Thus, it is incorrect to call Miss Barbara Jones "Miss Barbara".
- If you have any doubts about what to call someone, simply ask, "What shall I call you?" If people seem unsure what to call you, tell them the name you prefer.
- The use of "nicknames" is very common in Australia. A nickname is not the person's real name but a name given by friends (usually) because of some physical characteristic or behaviour pattern, or it may be a short form of his or her real name. Someone whose name is Andrew, for instance, might be given the nickname, "Andy". Someone who has very red hair might be called "Blue". Being called by a nickname is not uncomplimentary; in fact, it is often a sign of acceptance and affection.

## Respect

Most people in Australia think of themselves as your equal, and the taxi-driver, waitress and garbage man expect to get the same respect from you as the accountant or the school teacher. Wealth and position are not regarded as justification for treating other people, whatever their occupation or economic circumstances, as less than equal.

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## Conversation

Do not be worried if you are not fluent in the English language. Your hosts will understand this and if they speak too fast, ask them to speak a little more slowly. Meeting an Australian family is a very good way to improve your English and the more you speak the English language the more fluent you will become. Your hosts will ask you questions about your country, and you, no doubt, will ask them questions about Australia. Do not expect them to know everything about Australia and they, in turn, will not expect you to know everything about your country.

Some questions are never asked in Australia unless you know the person very well or you are related to them. For example: never ask a woman, especially an older woman, her age. Never ask men or women how much money they earn at their jobs. Questions about the cost of a person's house and the land on which the house is built, and the cost of the various items in the home are considered impolite in Australia. If you would like to know the cost of a particular item, ask the question in a non-personal way. For example, you could say, "How much does the average house cost in Wollongong?" This type of question is quite acceptable to your host and will not cause embarrassment.

## Humour

The national characteristics of equality and informality are reflected in Australian humour, much of which is directed against those people who consider themselves superior. Teasing (or "rubbishing" as it is sometimes called) is also a favourite pastime and if spoken in a joking way, it is an indication that you are liked and accepted by the people concerned. Australians also like to use sarcasm or irony. This is when someone says the opposite of what they mean and is usually meant as a joke. For example, some-one might say "I LOVE coming to class at 9 am on Monday", when they really mean the opposite.

## Meals and table manners

Australians eat three meals each day: breakfast around 7 to 8 am, lunch around 12 to 2 pm and an evening meal called tea or dinner, around 6 to 7 pm. You will most likely be invited either to lunch in the middle of the day or the evening meal at night. Australians eat with their fingers only at barbecues or picnics outside the home. Inside the house, you are usually invited to sit down and use knives, forks and spoons. If you are not sure which one to use first, wait to see what your hosts do and copy them.

When you are at someone's house for dinner and you are asked if you would like a "second helping" (more to eat), do not refuse out of politeness (and do not accept just to be polite). If you would enjoy more to eat, accept. After you have had enough, it is perfectly all right to decline further servings. If you have medical,

dietary or religious restrictions on certain foods, it is acceptable to inform your host or hostess when you accept an invitation to dinner (especially if there is a possibility such a food might be the main course served).

After the meal your host or hostess will be delighted if you offer to help with the washing up. Remember, Australians do not normally have servants and Australian families do all the work in the home themselves. It is polite to write a short note to your hosts thanking them for their hospitality, after you return home. Alternatively you can send a thank-you card which you can buy at a newsagents.

## **Servants**

In Australia almost nobody has servants and if you are accustomed to having servants do most of the work in your place of residence you may find difficulties adjusting to a situation where you will be expected to do at least some of the household duties yourself. In Australia children are taught to be self-reliant and learn how to do tasks around the house from an early age; it is not considered shameful for anyone to do manual work and husbands frequently share in household duties. Sometimes a “cleaning lady” is employed once a week to clean the house, but most people do the major part of the work of house, child care and garden themselves. This means they do not have as much free time as they would if they had several servants, and they cannot entertain as frequently or in such style.

## **Tipping**

It is not general practice, and is not expected, that tips (or payment over and above the actual costs of service provided) will be paid in Australia. Employees generally receive award wages, which are not reduced to take into account any tips that may be received. Nevertheless, people sometimes tip the waiter/waitress at a restaurant, more often in expensive restaurants. There may be other occasions, particularly if the service provided is better than usual, for which people may wish to tip. In a restaurant, it is usual to tip 10% of the bill, if the service has been satisfactory. Tips are not given in cafeterias, or fast food establishments (McDonald’s, for instance).

## **Alcohol**

In Australia people under the age of 18 are not permitted by law to buy alcoholic drinks and there are heavy penalties for people who drive while under the influence of alcohol, including fines and possible imprisonment. Australian customs regarding drinking in pubs (hotel bars) may be different from yours in some ways. You should pay for each drink as soon as you receive it, and not when you are about to leave the hotel. The Australian custom of “shouting” means that if someone buys you a drink you are expected to “shout” the person back by buying the next drink.

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## **Smoking**

Smoking is not allowed on public transport or in public buildings. It is not allowed in any buildings on campus.

## **Bargaining**

Bargaining is not practised in Australian shops. The prices marked are the prices at which goods are sold. In some street and weekend markets you may be able to bargain.

## **Gambling**

Gambling is a common pastime in Australia, particularly on horses, lotteries and cards. In Australia, like the rest of the world, it is much easier to lose money than to win at gambling.

## **Living in harmony - What not to do**

Some behaviour is socially unacceptable. There are laws against it. It is against the law for you to be drunk in a public place, to swear in public, to talk indecently, to behave in a sexually indecent way or to urinate in public. There are often council rules against spitting. If you need to clear your throat or nose, use a handkerchief or tissue, don't spit. Australian toilets are not made to handle the pressure of someone squatting on them. Australians sit on the toilet seat or hover above the toilet with both feet on the ground.

## **Mothers and babies**

It is usual for women to breast-feed their babies in private, and for babies to wear nappies. Most large department stores and toilets in public buildings have a mothers' room where you can sit and feed your baby quietly, and change soiled nappies. However, it is increasingly common for women to breast-feed their babies in public.

## **Noise**

In most States it is an offence to make loud noise that is unreasonably annoying to another person, even if you make the noise in your own home. Below are some guidelines supplied by Wollongong City Council, Environmental Services Section.

## Hours of restricted use for certain articles

Noise source	Times during which restrictions apply	Responsible authority
Musical instruments & sound equipment (radio, TV, stereo, etc)	12 midnight to 8 am - any day	Local council or police
Power tools, chain or circular saws, compressors	8pm to 7am on weekdays 8pm to 8am on weekends and Public holidays	Local council or police
Domestic air conditioners	10pm to 7am on weekdays 10pm to 8am on weekends and Public holiday	Local council
Lawn mowers (electric or petrol)	8pm to 7am on weekdays and Saturdays 8pm to 8am on Sundays & Public holiday	Local council or police
Motor vehicles (except when entering or leaving the premises)	8pm to 7am on weekdays 8pm to 8am on weekends and Public holidays	Local council or police
Swimming pool or spa pumps	8pm to 7am on weekdays 8pm to 8am on weekends	Local council

## Garbage and litter

Local councils are responsible for keeping the streets clean and disposing of garbage. Most have a garbage collection service which collects household garbage from bins you put out in the street once a week. Some make collections of large household rubbish on request, or once or twice a year. Some councils also have garbage tips where you can take other rubbish. There are litter bins in the streets for casual rubbish such as papers. Littering or dropping rubbish on streets or in public places is an offence and you will be fined for it. Everyone using the campus is expected to keep it clean.

## Relationships

In Australia, young people are free to decide who their friends will be. They may go out as couples without adult supervision if they wish to do so, although many young people prefer to meet with a group of others at a party, a movie or a dance.

Australian society is changing all the time and the present customs are a mixture of the traditional ideas with more recent ones. But, generally, what you need to know is that each person you meet will expect to be treated as an individual, with the right to choose who their friends will be, and how they wish to be treated by them.

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Male-female relationships are no exception. While in many cases the male is still expected to take the initiative, today it is not unusual for a woman to ask a man to accompany her on a “date” or to some group activity. And these days women often wish to pay for themselves where once the man was expected to pay for the whole evening.

If you propose an outing or accept an invitation, it is important that you keep your date. To “break a date” is not acceptable unless you have a good reason for doing so and you must let the other person know as soon as you can. It is quite okay, however, to suggest a change in plans (for instance the time, or the place you wish to go) and the other person can then decide whether the change suits them.

*(Adapted from Handbook for Foreign Students and Professionals, Office of International Education and Services, University of Iowa.)*

Homosexual relationships are accepted in New South Wales and recognised within the legal system.

## **Some possible misunderstandings**

Some Australians may hesitate to become involved with foreign students—not because they are racist, but because they are unsure about the customs and expectations of people from another culture (in the same way that you felt confused when you first arrived here).

Misunderstandings can easily arise between students of different cultures, particularly about sexual involvement. As Australian society seems to be very liberal about sex, overseas students sometimes believe (wrongly) that all male-female relationships here automatically include sexual involvement. And some Australian women believe (wrongly) that all male overseas students are only interested in sex.

## **Sexual activity**

Remember that all people are individuals, and that sexual involvement is a personal matter to be decided freely by the two people concerned. Each person will have his or her own views about when sexual involvement is appropriate.

Attitudes to women in Australia have changed in the past few years: it has become more acceptable for women to be involved in sexual relationships before marriage; but perhaps more important is the acceptance that women are also free to say “no” to sex. In their relationships with each other and with Australians, it is important for both male and female overseas students to know that the law recognises this right to say “no”. Decisions about sexual involvement must be made by both partners.

If you engage in sexual activity, you need to take a responsible attitude to protect yourself and your partner. Physical or emotional problems concerning sexual activity can be discussed with the University Counselling Service. If you want to talk about

these matters with friends be careful to respect your partner's privacy, particularly concerning the physical details of your relationship.

## **Contraception**

To decide the best form of contraception for her, a woman should contact a doctor (General Practitioner). The oral contraceptive ("the pill") must be prescribed by a doctor. Similarly, an intra-uterine device (IUD) or a diaphragm has to be fitted by a doctor.

Condoms are available without prescription at chemists shops and some supermarkets, as are the spermicidal jellies, creams and foams for use with condoms and diaphragms.

A Women's Health Clinic is organised on campus about three times a year by the Illawarra Committee for International Students (ICIS).

## **HIV (AIDS): Be aware - Take care**

In Australia, as in all other parts of the world, the deadly HIV virus is threatening lives. Many people who are infected by the HIV virus show no symptoms at all. The only sign that they have been infected is a positive blood test for antibodies to the HIV virus. While they may feel and look perfectly well, these people are infectious and can easily pass on the virus.

In some people, the virus may remain dormant for a long time. In other people, something eventually triggers the virus and it becomes active. The virus attacks the body's natural defence system—the immune system. When someone who carries the HIV virus begins to show symptoms, their condition is described as Acquired Immuno-deficiency Syndrome (AIDS).

At this stage it is not known how many people with antibodies to the HIV virus will progress to the final stage of AIDS (full AIDS). The immune system of people with full AIDS has been destroyed by the virus and they suffer from infections that healthy people fight off easily. These opportunistic infections are the ultimate cause of death and may include a rare cancer of the blood vessels, or diseases that affect the lungs or the brain.

## **Transmission of HIV**

HIV is primarily a sexually transmitted disease. It is also spread through the sharing of needles and syringes. The HIV virus can be transmitted through the blood, semen or vaginal secretions of people carrying it. It cannot be absorbed through the skin, but any cut or open sore in the skin can let it in.

Heterosexual men and women as well as homosexual men and women are all at risk of sexual transmission of HIV.

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At the present time, homosexual activities and intravenous drug use, present the greatest risks because of the high rate of infection in these groups, but anal intercourse is a particularly high risk activity for either sex.

The HIV virus can be transmitted to you through:

- Unprotected anal or vaginal intercourse—The virus is present in semen, vaginal secretions and menstrual blood. The mucous membranes which line the vagina and the rectum are more fragile than skin and the virus can easily gain access through tiny tears or cuts. A condom, properly used, will minimise the risk of infection.
- Sharing Intravenous (IV) needles and syringes—This is another easy way to contract HIV. If you inject drugs, don't share needles and syringes with anyone.

## **Protection against HIV**

While there is no cure for HIV, there are simple steps you can take to protect yourself against it.

- Do not share IV needles and syringes.
- Abstinence — You may decide to protect yourself against HIV by not having sexual intercourse.
- Having one continual, faithful sexual partner—By only ever having sexual relations with one uninfected partner, you will not catch HIV.
- Sexual intercourse using a condom—The HIV virus can't pass through an unbroken condom. Make sure the condom is used correctly. Follow the instructions on the pack
- Mutual masturbation—This is safe if the semen contacts with healthy skin.
- Kissing—If neither person has open cuts or sores in the mouth or on the lips, dry kissing is considered safe.

Remember: You cannot catch HIV, you have to let someone give it to you. It is your behaviour that allows the transfer of the virus.

Pamphlets and additional advice are available on campus from University Counselling. Free services are provided at the Sexual Health Clinic at Port Kembla Hospital (ph 4276 2399) . There may be some costs associated with pathology tests).

## **Understanding the University System**

### **Sessions, Subjects and Courses**

The academic year consists of 28 weeks of teaching divided into two 14-week sessions. A subject may be taught in the Autumn or Spring Session or over the Autumn and Spring Sessions (that is, both sessions). There is also a Summer

Session which runs from December to February of the following year. The course or pattern of studies you are enrolled in is specified. The rules governing your degree course can be found on the University home page at [www.uow.edu.au](http://www.uow.edu.au) under 'Information for Current Students'. These rules tell you which subjects you will have to study (or may choose from) as well as the sequence and length of time you will have to study them.

## **The Numbers Game**

Like most large organisations the University makes extensive use of computers. As computers are used to 'thinking' in numbers, most things in the university have a number, including you. The main numbers you need to be concerned with are:

**Your Student Number**—On entering the university, each student is given a seven-digit Student Number. Your Student Number is used for various administrative purposes, such as enrolment in courses, arranging examinations and mailing your results to you. Because someone may have the same name as you, it is wise to give your number in any correspondence with the university. Your Student Identity Card carries this number and identifies you as a student currently enrolled at the University of Wollongong. The main uses for this card are in borrowing books from the library, obtaining details from Student Enquiries and sitting examinations.

**Subject Numbers**—Each of the subjects you are taking as part of your course has its own unique number, which consists of four letters followed by three digits. The four letters indicate the School or Department and the three numbers identify the subject, for instance: PSYC235, MGMT101, MATH324.

## **Academic Misconduct**

Students and staff on the campus are, of course, governed by the normal laws which regulate our daily lives. But in addition the University has its own code of rules and conduct, and can impose heavy penalties on students who breach them. These penalties range from failure in a subject, loss of privileges, fines, payment of compensation, and suspension, to exclusion from study for a certain period or even permanent expulsion from the University.

It is important to realise, however, that misconduct within the University covers more than behaviour that is offensive or unruly, or which may cause damage to other people or property. Misconduct that could lead to a student being disciplined within the University includes anything regarded as academic misconduct according to current academic usage, as well as any conduct which impairs the reasonable freedom of other persons to pursue their studies or research or to participate in the life of the University.

It is important that students realise how broad the definition of academic misconduct (refer to Examination and Assessment Rules on the UOW web page) may be. It certainly covers practices such as cheating or copying or using another

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person's work. Sometimes, however, practices which may have been acceptable at school are considered to be misconduct according to current academic usage within a University. See also [www.uow.edu.au/about/policy/](http://www.uow.edu.au/about/policy/)

For example, this can occur where you fail to acknowledge adequately the use you have made of ideas or material from other sources (refer to Department/Faculty handouts and/or subject outlines - requirements might be detailed). If you are unsure whether, or how, to make acknowledgment, consult the section on writing in this handbook.

## **Academic Survival**

### **What's university in Australia all about?**

#### **Being independent**

At university in Australia, lecturers make course requirements clear and help is available if you need it, however, your degree is your own responsibility. That means that it is up to you to decide how much you should study at home, whether you do the work, whether it's handed in on time or not, etc. More importantly, you must take responsibility for which information you will be exposed to and learn: where you find readings for assignments and which ones you select, and which notes you take in lectures is up to you. No-one will tell you exactly what to do. Therefore you must develop strong organisational and academic skills, including:

- time management
- effective study skills
- note taking
- library research skills

Read the sections below for information on these and other skills and more ways to access assistance.

#### **Being a critical thinker**

Australian university students are expected to do more than repeat what they have read or heard. It is not enough to restate the ideas or arguments of others. Students must analyse them (understand various aspects or parts and how they fit together) and criticise them. Criticising in this sense means judging the merit or value of the material. Criticism can result in positive judgements (e.g. the argument is logical, based on true premises, takes into consideration all of the facts/issues, is relevant) or negative judgements (eg. the argument is illogical, based on false assumptions, ignores key issues, is irrelevant). Being able to criticise, or evaluate, academic material is perhaps the most highly valued skill in the Australian university context. Without it, no student, whether of science, humanities, creative arts, or any other discipline, can succeed at university.

## For assistance with critical analysis

It is suggested you read:

Ballard, B. and Clanchy, J. 1984 Study Abroad: A manual for Asian Students, Kuala Lumpur: Longman.

Or attend the 'Academic Writing' workshop at the Learning Resource Centre (LRC). Drop in to the LRC in building 19, room G102 or call 4221 3977 for details and enrolments.

## How can I get the most out of lectures?

Although lectures are not the only source of important content, they are the best guide to what is most crucial in your course. Therefore it is important to make most of them. This does not only mean attending, although that's a good start! It means preparing, engaging with the material, and taking effective notes. It is especially important to learn how to do these things (and to do them!), as lecturers see them as YOUR responsibility. Most lecturers will not provide copies of notes or give you time to take extensive notes, nor will their lectures necessarily indicate how the information presented fits into the wider framework.

### Preparing

Being prepared for lectures is the best way of improving your chances of understanding the lecture content. You can prepare by:

- looking up the lecture topic in your subject outline
- skimming the required readings for that topic
- looking up any unfamiliar vocabulary you come across
- thinking about any questions you might have on the topic

If you do these things, you will not be left wondering about the terminology being used in the lecture or struggling with the main concepts. Instead, you will have time to process and think about what is being said. Also, you will not waste time taking notes of what is already written for you in the readings, as you will be familiar with the resources which you already have.

### Engaging

Engaging with the content involves listening closely and reflecting on it, thinking about its relevance and how it fits into the broader context. As was mentioned above, you will be more able to do this if you have prepared for the lecture. Another way of encouraging your own engagement is drawing a column on your page for any questions or comments which you might have on the material. This will get you thinking during the lecture and will give you some indications of what to follow up after the lecture.

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## Taking notes

The great majority of university lecturers will not provide notes for you to copy down, copies of notes already made, or extra time to take notes. They will simply talk, and might use some visuals such as over-head transparencies with diagrams or key points. Thus it is extremely important that you learn to take good notes. This means:

- not trying to copy down every word the lecturer says: you won't have time and don't need to anyway
- identifying key issues only and noting them in point form (not whole sentences)
- using symbols, diagrams and abbreviations
- clearly indicating the lecture topic and date

### For assistance with lectures and note taking:

Attend the 'Study and Exam Skills' workshop at the Learning Resource Centre, building 19, room G102. Visit the centre or call 4221 3977 to enrol.

## What should I do in tutorials and seminars?

The purpose of tutorials and seminars is to provide an opportunity for students to consolidate and expand on what has been learned in lectures by discussing key issues and asking questions. The success of a tutorial or seminar depends on the participation of all students: you need to be a participant, not a passenger!

Participation in a tutorial or seminar means doing presentations (usually once for each subject) and discussing the issues raised with the tutor and other students. Presentations involve giving an analysis (not just a description) of a set topic. Students usually use an overhead projector and/or handouts to summarise their key points and present any useful diagrams. They also prepare some questions to promote discussion at the end of the presentation and provide time for others to ask questions. It's a good idea to talk from notes rather than to read, as the listeners can get bored if you are not maintaining contact with them. In order to build up your confidence to do this, you can:

- make sure that you know the material well
- practise several times beforehand, either in front of the mirror or with a friend
- be organised on the day
- speak loudly, slowly and clearly
- stress key points with your voice or with gestures
- maintain eye contact with the other students
- have a clear introduction, body and conclusion
- use clear visuals (over-head transparencies and/or handouts)

In order to participate in the tutorial, you should prepare beforehand. If you have prepared, you will be able to follow what is going on and you will also feel more confident about joining in the discussion. Preparing means finding out what the topic of the tutorial is (from your subject outline), doing the required readings, thinking about the topic, and identifying issues which you don't understand, questions you want answered, and aspects you'd like to hear other people's ideas on.

### **For assistance with participating in tutorials and seminars:**

Attend the following workshops at the Learning Resource Centre:

- Presentation Skills • Pronunciation • Conversation

Visit the centre in building 19, room G102 or call 4221 3977 for details and enrolments

## **How can I study effectively at uni in Australia?**

### **Managing your time**

Working in an unsystematic or haphazard manner can only succeed for a limited time while you are at university. Often, students find that they seem to have been managing without doing much work throughout the session, but are left with a pile of work to do at the end of session and not enough time to do it. This experience can be very stressful and is self-defeating, as you cheat yourself out of using your learning potential. You can also place yourself at risk of academic failure, as not handing in work on time can result in failing a subject even if you have passed other components of it.

The best way to avoid this situation is to plan your study. As the English cliché says, 'fail to plan and you plan to fail'. At the start of each session, find out how many major and minor assignments, essays, practical reports, tutorial papers, exams and class tests you are required to do for each subject (this information will be in your subject outlines) and how much they contribute to the assessment of the subject. To get the results you want, you may have to focus your efforts on the tasks that are given more priority in your assessment for a subject. For example, if an assignment is worth 40% of the total mark, then it makes sense to spend more time on it than an assignment worth 10%.

### **Reading academic texts**

There is no doubt that you will be given a long list of books and articles to read for each subject. You will also probably find that you come up with piles of articles to read for your essays, reports or thesis. This can seem overwhelming at first, however, there are some things you can remember and strategies you can use to help you get through.

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Remember that you don't have to read every word of every article: some articles or parts of articles are more relevant than others, so:

- Always read with a purpose: know which questions you want answered.
- Find out which readings answer your questions by reading the abstract, contents page, introduction, headings and conclusion rather than the whole article.
- Only read those books/articles which answer your questions.
- Only read in detail the parts of the article/ book which are relevant to you. Skim read the rest.
- Try not to stop if you don't understand a word: often the meaning will become clear through the context or through examples later. Stopping can make you lose track of the argument or the main idea.

## **Learning and remembering for exams**

University exams in Australia are the same as other types of assessment: you are expected to demonstrate not only that you have read and remembered the material, but that you understand it, can apply it, can be critical of it, and can formulate your own ideas about it. Thus studying for exams should be active. You should:

- ask yourself questions about what you are learning (eg. 'why is that so?' 'how does this relate to other issues?')
- evaluate the ideas/ arguments you are reading
- try to apply the material to real life contexts if possible.

In order to study for exams effectively, you can:

- make lots of notes
- talk aloud about the material (alone or with others)
- get copies of past exams from your lecturers or from the library and write mock exam answers
- plan answers to questions which you think will be in the exam

If you are restless, try studying in short bursts to begin with, perhaps 30 minutes at a time. Making sure that you are active during exam time (playing sport, going for walks etc.) can also make it easier to concentrate when you sit down to study. You might even motivate yourself by promising yourself a game of tennis or a swim at the beach after you have done your study for the day. If you have had enough study and can no longer concentrate, decide when you will study next and what you will do, then leave it for the moment.

## **Working with other students**

Other students are often willing to help you when you get stuck. This can be reciprocal - you can help each other. It's very rewarding to study with a group of

students, as discussion about your work is an effective way of learning. This is why you are provided with tutorials, seminars and practical classes; however, you can also organise your own study groups outside of class time.

It is very important that you do not take this group work to the point where you are doing each other's work. You are not learning anything if you rely too much on others. You will soon realise this when you are in an exam or you are trying to do an assignment based on learning that was supposed to take place in a previous assignment. Assignments are given so that you will learn by doing. Copying each other's assignments is counter-productive as you are not learning anything. Furthermore, it is obvious to teaching staff, no matter how clever you are disguising what you have done, and they will not hesitate to penalise you for it.

## **Balancing work and play**

Hard work needs to be balanced with fun and exercise. UniCentre, the Sports Association, and the Students' Associations all organise activities for your benefit. There is a range of clubs and societies you can join. Get involved early in the year and get to know people on campus. You will be able to study more effectively if you give yourself recreation and exercise. To find out what you can do for fun on campus:

- pick up copies of the student publications 'The Tertangala' and 'Time Out' on the ground floor or first floor of the UniCentre building
- visit the Recreation and Aquatic Centre in Building 13
- keep an eye on the notice boards around Uni
- subscribe to the international students' electronic mailing list (is-infoservice)

## **Managing stress**

It is important to prevent the stresses in your life from reaching a level where they interfere with your activities and general satisfaction with living. This requires you to be aware of when you are feeling stressed, what makes you stressed, and how you can prevent and manage your stress.

Talking with another person about difficulties you are having can help you to become aware of what is happening in your life and to resolve problems. Regular recreation and exercise can also help prevent and manage stress. Sometimes stress is complex and you need to talk to a counsellor who has professional training in dealing with these issues. The University counsellors have specialised knowledge about stress and ways in which it can be managed and resolved. Stress management and assertiveness training workshops are also available. For assistance, visit the Student Services office at the end of the corridor on the third floor of the UniCentre building (take the lift opposite the bookshop). The counselling service is free and confidential.

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## **For assistance with study skills and time management:**

It is suggested you read:

Bernard, M.E. 1991 Procrastinate Later: how to motivate yourself to do it now, Melbourne: Schwarz & Wilkinson.

Freeman, R. 1991 Mastering Study Skills, 2nd edition, London: Macmillan.

Orr, F. 1992 Study Skills for Successful Students, Sydney: Allen & Unwin.

Orr, F. 1984 How to Pass Exams, Sydney: Allen and Unwin.

Race, P. 1992 500 tips for students, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Or you could attend the 'Study & Exam Skills' workshop at the Learning Resource Centre. Visit the centre in building 19, room G102 or call 4221 3977 for details and enrolments. You can also pick up a copy of 'Studying for Exams', at the Learning Resource Centre.

## **What is academic writing in English like?**

Academic writing at university in Australia is analytical and critical (see 'What's Uni in Australia all about?'). You are expected not only to repeat what you have read and heard, but to synthesise it, understand how its various parts fit together and influence each other, and evaluate it. In short, you are expected to demonstrate that you have understood and interpreted the material, not just memorised it. The questions you are asked in assignments and exams will usually make this expectation quite clear, for example, you may be asked to 'evaluate the author's argument' or 'critically review the research'. It is most important that you understand the difference between being descriptive and being analytical and critical.

## **For assistance with analytical and critical thinking:**

It is suggested you read:

Ballard, B. and Clanchy, J. 1984 Study Abroad: a manual for Asian Students, Kuala Lumpur: Longman.

Or De Fazio, T. (1999) Studying in Australia: A guide for international students, Allen & Unwin, Sydney.

Or attend one of the workshops and read 'The terminology of assessment tasks' handout, available at the Learning Resource Centre, building 19, room G102 (ph 4221 3977).

## The nature of academic writing

Academic writing in this context is also formal and impersonal. It is made formal through the use of sophisticated and technical vocabulary rather than conversational usage and through the avoidance of idioms and proverbs. It is impersonal through its avoidance of making reference to the writer or reader (ie. avoidance of the personal pronouns 'I', 'we' and 'you') and its avoidance of rhetorical questions (ie. any question which you write in your paper). Thus instead of writing phrases such as 'I think that this is true', we use 'This seems to be true', 'It is possible that this is true' and instead of writing questions like 'What can be done about this', we can write 'It is important to consider what can be done about this'.

If you are unsure of how to use language in a formal and impersonal way, you can use your readings as models. The type of language used in the books and articles you read is the type of language your lecturers expect you to use.

### For assistance with academic writing

It is suggested you read:

Oshima, A. and Hogue, A. 1991 Writing Academic English,  
Mento Park, California: Addison Wesley.

Or you could attend the 'Academic Writing' workshop or the 'Essay Writing' workshop at the Learning Resource Centre, building 19, room G102 (ph 4221 3977), or pick up a copy of the 'Academic English' module at the Learning Resource Centre.

## Plagiarism

### **PLEASE READ THIS SECTION AND MAKE SURE YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT PLAGIARISM IS AND HOW TO AVOID IT. IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT!**

The Western tradition places great emphasis on individuals creating new ideas, as you can see from our preference for writing which is analytical and critical, rather than descriptive. Once an individual has discovered something, or created a theory or argument, that idea is considered to belong to that person. Thus in academic writing, it is extremely important to let the reader know who the ideas you are using belong to and where they come from if they are not your own. You should always use a reference (give the name of the author and the date of publication) when you have included an idea which is not your own original idea and is not common knowledge. That is, you must reference when you use an idea which is recognisable as belonging to a particular author. It does not matter whether you have presented the idea in the author's original words (ie. as a quote) or in your own words (ie. as a paraphrase); you must reference it! If you do not do this, you are, in effect, stealing other people's ideas. This is called plagiarism and can lead to heavy penalties, including failure of subjects and exclusion from the University. To avoid problems

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like this, you should follow the guidelines for referencing at all times, ensuring that you use references appropriately and correctly.

Detailed guidelines for referencing can be found in faculty handbooks and some subject outlines, and can also be obtained from the Learning Resource Centre (building 19, room G102). However, some general guidelines are as follows:

- If the idea is not yours and is not common sense, reference it.
- When you are using the author's exact words, put them in quotation marks ("...").
- When you are presenting the author's idea in your own words, do not use quotation marks.
- There are three common ways to give references: the Harvard system (also called 'in text' referencing), the Oxbridge system (also called the 'footnote' system), and the MLA system. Find out which one is required by your faculty or department and use it.

Sometimes students plagiarise because they are in the habit of taking down notes in the author's exact words as they read. They then forget the source of those notes and thus do not give a reference. To avoid this, only take down direct quotes (the exact words of the author) if you think that it is absolutely essential that the reader see the original quote. If you do take down a direct quote, remember to write the details of where it came from next to it. Otherwise, try to take notes in point form, using key words only (still noting where it came from, of course) This will help you to understand the idea in your own way and be able to communicate it in your own words later.

It is also important not to assist others to plagiarise. Do not lend your assignments to other students. If they plagiarise from you, it will be difficult for the lecturer to know whose was the original piece of work and you may both be penalised.

Remember that plagiarism is a serious offence and is easily detected by lecturers: they are familiar with the text books and articles and have probably written or edited some of them themselves. It is not worth putting yourself or others at risk: **DON'T PLAGIARISE!**

## **What is thesis writing all about?**

Writing a thesis is about exploring new territory in your discipline, becoming an expert on your topic, and presenting your knowledge to the academic community. Your work must be original and must be presented in a clear and scholarly manner. There are strict conventions for doing this. You can find out what they are by:

- attending postgraduate orientation days
- attending workshops on thesis writing run by Learning Development (call Student Services on 4221 3977 for information)
- talking with your supervisor
- looking at other theses from your discipline (your supervisor should have some

copies to lend you)

- picking up resources on thesis writing at the Learning Resource Centre
- watching out for thesis writing workshops in your Faculty
- asking staff at the Learning Resource Centre if you require a list of books on thesis writing.

In general, thesis examiners want to see a thesis which is based on a clear research question as its central focus, is organised according to the conventional structure for theses, is written clearly and concisely, and is free from grammatical mistakes. In order to make sure your thesis fulfils these criteria, you should start writing as early as possible, noting down good ideas as they come to you and giving yourself time to make as many drafts as necessary. You should also ensure that you have enough time to edit your work and/or to have it proof read by someone else. This cannot be done in a few days - often it takes months. It is a good idea to make up a timetable for completion of your candidature, taking all of these things into account.

## **What is the role of a supervisor?**

As a postgraduate student, you are expected to be independent, however, you are not expected to know everything. For this reason, you will work closely with a member of the academic staff who is responsible for supervising your research project. Your supervisor will advise you about all matters relating to your research and about the procedures of the University. You should meet regularly with your supervisor to discuss your progress and any concerns that you have about your research.

It is very important to let your supervisor know if you are having problems of any kind related to your work. Supervisors are there to help you, but they cannot help you if they don't know what kind of help you need. It's up to you to communicate clearly what you want and expect from your supervisor at any stage and to be sure that you understand what your supervisor expects of you. If you are not sure about anything, ASK!

Information about Codes of Practice for students and supervisors is on the University web page under 'Information for Current Students'. You can also find out more about the student-supervisor relationship by attending the postgraduate orientation days and thesis writing workshops mentioned in the preceding section. If you have problems that you cannot discuss with your supervisor, including complaints about him/ her, you should seek help from your Head of Department or from an SEDLO (on Level 3 of the UniCentre).

## **What are exams like at uni in Australia?**

- You may have to complete more than one exam for a subject.
- Exams at the University of Wollongong are usually in essay, short answer, or

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multiple choice (choosing the correct one from a selection of answers) format, or any combination of these.

- Some exams are 'open book', which means that you are allowed to bring written materials like textbooks into the exam. In open book exams, the aim is to show that you can apply what you have been studying to practical situations. You will be informed when an exam is open book.
- Information about the format of the exam will be provided in the subject outline, distributed at the beginning of session, and may be repeated or elaborated on by the lecturer.
- The exact time and location of exams is posted on the internet at: [www.uow.edu.au/student/](http://www.uow.edu.au/student/)
- Strict rules about cheating exist and are applied. Cheating is an extremely serious offence and can lead to the student being suspended from the University or receiving a Fail grade for the subject, if found guilty. For information about University Rules and penalties for cheating, visit the University home page at [www.uow.edu.au](http://www.uow.edu.au) and click on 'Information for Current Students' then 'Student Rights and Responsibilities'.

## **When should I talk to lecturers and tutors, and how?**

You will probably notice that students often talk to lecturers and tutors at university in Australia. For example, students might ask questions during lectures, usually towards the end, when the lecturer may allocate 'question time'. Also, students talk with tutors during tutorials, as mentioned in section on tutorials and seminars above. In fact, it is required that students participate in tutorials by talking with the tutor and the other students. However, you may also talk to lecturers and tutors outside of class times.

### **Why meet with a tutor?**

Your tutor should be your first 'point of contact' for questions relating to subject content or assignments.

### **When to meet with your tutor**

The best time to ask your tutor a question is during the tutorial. This is what tutorials are for, and that way the other students can benefit from the information also. However, if you have a good reason for not asking the question during the tutorial (eg. you have not been able to attend due to sickness, the question is urgent, of a personal nature, or is not relevant to other students, such as a request for an extension), you can approach the tutor after the tutorial. Sometimes, tutors also provide contact details such as phone numbers and office locations so that you can contact them outside of tutorial times. Usually they will inform you of when they are contactable.

## Why meet with a lecturer?

There are no rules governing in which situations you can meet with your lecturer, however the usual reason is that there is no tutorial and you have a question about the lecture content or an assignment. You can also see your lecturer if you have already talked to your tutor and she/ he has been unable to help you.

## When to meet with your lecturer

All lecturers have set times when they are available for consultations with students. These times are advertised on lecturers' office doors and are usually in subject outlines. Other information about how and when to contact lecturers, for example phone numbers and email addresses, is usually given in subject outlines also.

## How to address tutors and lecturers

In the Australian university context, most lecturers and tutors are very informal and relaxed with their students. You will notice students using their lecturers' and tutors' first names (personal names, not family names) and joking and chatting with them. It is not necessary to be formal with your teachers: you should not call them 'sir' or 'madam', or 'teacher'. Rather, you should use whichever name they introduce themselves with, or what you hear Australian students calling them. If you are not sure what to call them, ask a local student or use their title and family name (e.g. Professor Wong) at first. If they want you to use a first name, they will tell you.

## Administrative staff and institutional procedures

You need to be aware of the various administrative requirements the University demands of you. The University is complex, as you may have discovered when you enrolled. You can't afford to ignore administrative procedures or you might find yourself at a considerable disadvantage if you don't bother to understand or do what is required of you. Make sure you are enrolled in what you think you are enrolled in. Make a copy of what you submitted on your enrolment form. When your confirmation of enrolment form comes in the mail, check and make sure it is right. Go to Student Enquiries in the Administration Building and sort it out if it's not. Don't regard letters you get from the Administration as some sort of bureaucracy you can deal with at a later date. There are usually final dates by which you must submit forms such as applications for changes in your course. So read the letter straight away, do something about it, make sure you understand it and go and see the appropriate person in Administration if you don't. Consult the SEDLO if you do not understand what is required of you.

**YOU MUST ALWAYS INFORM THE UNIVERSITY WHEN YOU CHANGE  
YOUR RESIDENTIAL ADDRESS**

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## **Watch out for deadlines**

The first half of a subject's duration is regarded as an "experimental" time. If you find that the subject does not suit you either because you lack interest or find the work beyond your capabilities (this is difficult to assess so don't be hasty about coming to this conclusion) you can withdraw without failure from the subject. You have till halfway through a session to withdraw from single-session subjects and halfway through a full year course to withdraw; check the dates on the front cover of the timetable you were given. You can discuss with an academic adviser whether this is a wise course of action to take. If you do withdraw from a subject, make sure that you can still meet the minimum progress requirements of your degree. These are listed on the UOW home page under 'Information for Students'. For help understanding the rules ask your academic adviser or Student Enquiries. If you don't know who your academic adviser is, ask the secretary of the department whose subjects you are predominantly enrolled in. You can consult an academic adviser whenever you want advice about selecting subjects or how to structure your degree.

## **Changing subjects**

If you want to change subjects, you can do so online at [www.uow.edu.au/student/sols](http://www.uow.edu.au/student/sols) before the relevant dates. You can discuss the wisdom of changing subjects with an academic adviser in a department or the faculty office relevant to your course. There is an Academic Adviser for Undergraduates and one for Postgraduates in each Faculty.

## **Withdrawing from courses and subjects**

If you decide to discontinue your course you should formally notify the University. Contact Student Central if there is any chance that you will want to return to the same course the following year, second and subsequent year students should apply for leave of absence from their course for a year. You must leave Australia for that year as you are not an enrolled student. Always keep receipts you receive from University Administration for subjects you have discontinued or added to your enrolment.

When you receive confirmation of your enrolment through the mail make sure you are enrolled in the subjects you are attending. If there are any discrepancies contact the University by the required date.

## **Minimum progress requirements**

Minimum progress requirements are set out on the UOW home page under 'Information for Current Students' in the Course Handbook. If you fail subjects, and do not make the minimum progress rate required by the University, you will

be asked by the University to show cause. That is, you will be asked to state the reasons for your poor performance and whether the causes of your failure will continue to interfere with your studies. If you satisfy the University that you will do better, you may be permitted to re-enrol.

If you have not met the minimum progress requirements and you wish to show cause, then you can discuss your situation with an academic adviser in your faculty. You must submit your application on the appropriate forms by the specified date. All show cause cases are considered by the Admissions and Re-Enrolment Committee of the relevant faculty or board. You are usually advised of the Committee's decision before the start of the next academic year.

Although you are expected to take a responsible independent approach to being a university student you are not expected to do it entirely on your own. The University provides various resources to help you make the most of your time here. It is up to you to make the best use of these resources. You need to take some initiative in seeking out who can help you and making good use of their skills. Don't be afraid to ask for help. Staff are willing to help you when you need it. Don't feel you must do it all on your own. Most endeavours in life require some measure of interdependence and co-operation with others. The support services available for you are listed on the University web page at [www.uow.edu.au](http://www.uow.edu.au).

## **Who should I see if I have a problem?**

### **Academic Enquiries**

For problems with a subject see your tutor or lecturer or the Course Co-ordinator as noted in your course outline. If unable to resolve the problem then see the Head of the Department.

### **Dean of Students and Sub Deans**

The Dean of Students and Sub-Deans of faculties are available to assist students with difficulties associated with administrative decisions and minimum study progress. The Dean of Students also acts as an advocate in resolving student grievances.

The Dean of Students is Ms Yvonne Kerr (4221 4355).

#### The Sub-Deans of each Faculty are as follows:

Faculty of Arts:	Assoc. Prof. John McQuilton (ph 4221 3738)
Faculty of Commerce:	Mr Ron Perrin (ph 4221 4118) and Ms Nadia Verrucci (ph 4221 3650)
Faculty of Creative Arts:	Ms Penny Harris (ph 4221 5553)

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Faculty of Education: Dr Pauline Lysaght (ph 4221 3590)  
 Faculty of Engineering: Dr Ian Porter (ph 4221 3451)  
 Faculty of Health &  
 Behavioural Sciences: Dr Deanne Condon-Paoloni (ph 4221 3492)  
 Faculty of Informatics: Assoc. Prof Fazel Naghdy (ph 4221 3398)  
 Faculty of Law: Dr Scott Grattan (ph 4221 4423)  
 Faculty of Science: Assoc. Prof. Ted Bryant (ph 4221 3172)

## Student Enquiries

Staff in the Academic Registrar's Division can assist with enquiries regarding fees and payment, course variation, change of address, student records, special consideration, student visa and health cover (ph 4221 3927). See 'Student Enquiries' section. Student Central, ground floor Building 17, also handles most administrative enquiries as well as accommodation and casual employment enquiries (ph 4221 4622).

## Student Equity and Diversity Liaison Officers

This is a confidential service providing information and assistance with study, academic or administrative concerns, settling into life in Australia, personal problems, legal or health problems, family concerns and opportunities for contact with the Australian community. These officers are located in Student Central (every morning) and in the faculties:

Faculty	Location	Phone
Arts	Blg 19 Room 1075	4221 3635
Commerce	Commerce Study Centre Blg 40 Room G13	4221 4714
Creative Arts	Blg 25 Room G04	4221 5969
Education	Blg 25 Room G04	4221 5969
Engineering	Eng. Enquiries Centre (Mon-Wed 12pm)	4221 5670
Health & Behavioural Science	Blg 41, Enquiries Centre	4221 5332
Informatics	Blg 3 Room 114 (Wed pm - Fri)	4221 3833
Law	Blg 19 Room 1075	4221 3635
Science	Blg 41 Enquiries Centre	4221 5332

## UOW Security

Security Officers are available on campus 24 hours a day every day of the year. UOW Security Officers are there to help you and can offer assistance and advice. After dark they are available to provide Safety escorts on campus and as far as Gipps Road to the south of campus and to North Wollongong Railway Station when

the North Wollongong Railway Station to Wollongong campus shuttle service has finished running of a night.

On campus if you have lost property, or should you experience a theft or if someone makes you feel unsafe or if you feel threatened you should seek assistance from UOW Security Officers.

The Security Office is located in Building 11 near the UniShop. You can call security from any Security telephone on campus or you can telephone the following numbers:

- Security Office 4221 4555 (ex 4555)
- Report emergencies 4221 4900 (ex 4900)

## Accommodation and Living Expenses

### Off-campus accommodation

Students find off-campus housing by referring to advertisements in the newspaper, by searching the streets for signs indicating that a room or flat is for rent and by getting help from other students who are more familiar with the suburbs around the University.

Accommodation Services is located in Student Central on the Ground Floor of Building 17, just opposite Sal Paradise cafe, and adjacent to the Library. Office hours are: Monday-Friday, 9am to 5pm (ph 4221 5467).

Website [www.uow.edu.au/about/accommodation](http://www.uow.edu.au/about/accommodation)

There are a range of options for you to choose from, including:

- University managed residences (catered or self-catered), which are located close to the campus and a short walk, bus or train ride to the Wollongong Central Business District.
- Accommodation with a local family (arranged through Leisure Coast Homestays).
- Private rental accommodation in shared houses or apartments in the Wollongong area for people who prefer a fully independent living style.

Applications for University housing may be made online at:  
<http://apply-accom.uow.edu.au>

### Shared houses or flat

Shared accommodation is available where somebody has a spare room in their house or flat which they wish to rent. The rent and costs of gas/electricity are shared equally between the people sharing the flat. Each person is also expected to help clean and tidy the shared living space, (kitchen, bathroom, living room). People

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sharing a house or flat are also responsible for cleaning their own room, doing their washing, and cooking their own meals. Sometimes the buying of food and cooking of meals is done on a group basis, with each person being expected to take a turn doing these tasks.

## **Rented houses or flats**

These are usually for a longer term. Most flats do not contain any furniture except a stove for cooking. There are some furnished flats offered for rent although they are taken very quickly. Houses are considerably more expensive than flats, and the rent varies with size, condition and location. The cost of electricity and gas is additional. Where you live will affect the quality of your life, and restrictions imposed by your accommodation will affect what you can do and how much money you will have. It is very difficult to find full board in a private home. Most of the offers are also some distance away from the campus. A room with the use of facilities is easier to find in most suburbs than full board.

The most popular type of accommodation is that shared with other students. Such households do not want members who cannot or will not do their share of the cooking, cleaning, and shopping. As there is a very high demand for suitable accommodation it would be advisable to arrive three to four weeks before the start of session if possible in order to have a chance of finding suitable accommodation.

When renting a house or flat you can either sign a lease or enter into a tenancy agreement (written or verbal) with the landlord. A lease is for a fixed time, such as six months or a year, so that if you wish to move before the end of the lease period you may have to pay rent, even if you have moved out, until a new tenant is found. With a tenancy agreement you need only give notice, one rental period before you wish to leave, that is, usually two-weeks notice. Think carefully before signing a lease, as it is difficult to cancel if you change your mind later.

## **Renting and leasing**

All agreements with landlords should be in writing. Make sure you fully understand any agreement **BEFORE YOU SIGN**. Always inspect the place carefully **BEFORE** you move in and keep a list of any items that were damaged by previous tenants. This prevents problems when you claim the return of bond money. For furnished flats, always compile a list of furniture and equipment. A copy should be held by you, and a copy held by the landlord or real estate agent. See Inventory of Contents in the glossary of terms at the end of this section. Always get a **RECEIPT** from the landlord/agent when you pay rent and keep these receipts and any signed agreement in a safe place. Make sure you have a receipt for any bond money you have paid and keep this until you leave the accommodation.

The landlord is entitled to inspect the property (see [www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au](http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au) for more information). Please make sure you know who will be doing it, as the

inspection may be carried out by any one of a number of people from the Real Estate Agents.

If you are uncomfortable about being alone at your residence when they arrive, make sure you have a friend with you.

Always give notice IN WRITING at least one rental period before you intend moving out and retain a copy of the dated letter yourself. At the time of submitting this notice you would be wise to check whether there are any special conditions required for repayment of your bond before you vacate your flat or depart from Australia. This is because some flats are managed by large companies which will only refund the bond from their Head Office to a forwarding address after you move out. If you require the money before you leave Australia you will have to make special arrangements beforehand. Your landlord or the agent will be able to tell you what is required.

If your money has not been returned by the time you leave Australia, keep a bank account open with the minimum amount (usually about \$5) and leave the book with someone you trust. The cheque for the bond money can be paid into this account and the bank will then draw a cheque for the full amount made out to you and your friend can forward it to you.

## Glossary of terms

**Bond**—This is money paid by the tenant to the Rental Bond Board of New South Wales when a tenancy agreement is entered into. The landlord may deduct the cost of repairs of damage caused by the tenant, or rent owing, from the bond when the tenant moves out. One common excuse landlords give for not returning all of the bond money is that the electric or gas stove has been left dirty. It is worth spending some time cleaning the stove to prevent this happening (in fact it's best to clean it regularly while you are there!). It is no use saying that the stove was dirty when you moved into the flat/house—this will not make any difference.

**Eviction**—is the legal process by which a tenant can be removed from the premises at the termination of a rental agreement.

**Fixed-term tenancy agreement**—A fixed-term tenancy agreement states that the tenant agrees to rent the premises for a specific period of time such as six months or a year .

**Inventory of contents**—A list of the contents of the premises, including furniture and furnishings with notes on the condition of the items.

**Key deposit**—A deposit (usually \$10 to \$20) payable to the landlord, to be refunded when you move out and return the key.

**Landlord**—The person who owns the property and is entitled to collect the rent for the property. The landlord may be represented by an agent in his dealings with the tenant. The agent then has the same responsibilities as the landlord.

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**Lease**—A lease agreement is a tenancy agreement.

**Notice to quit**—A notice which you will give to the landlord if you want to terminate the tenancy or which the landlord will give to you if he/she wishes to terminate the tenancy. It must be given in writing.

**Continuing Agreement**—It is not necessary to renew a written agreement when the original fixed term period ends. The landlord and tenants may prefer the flexibility of continuing under the same terms and conditions of the expired agreement and decide not to sign another one.

**Premises**—The house, duplex, unit, flat or apartment which the tenant rents.

**Property inspection report**—A report on the condition of the premises when the tenant moves in. (Note: In some States the Property inspection report and Inventory of contents are jointly referred to as an Inspection Record Form.)

**Rent**—The money paid by a tenant to occupy the premises.

**Receipt**—A written acknowledgment that payment has been made.

**Tenant**—A person who rents accommodation to live in.

**Termination of agreement**—To terminate a rental agreement means to conclude or end the agreement.

Further information about off-campus accommodation can be obtained from the Accommodation Services, Student Central, Ground Floor Building 17.

## Housekeeping in Australia

Below is a simplified guide to basic house-cleaning. Friends also can probably recommend products and procedures.

**To wash dishes**—use liquid detergent (Sunlight, Palmolive liquid detergent or a similar product). Use only a small amount in hot water as it is highly concentrated. If the flat has a dishwasher, ask how to use it and also for suggestions about what kind of dishwashing detergent to use. Use only as much as necessary to remove stains and black marks from pots.

**To clean sinks, counters and basins**—use a cleanser (Jiff or a similar product that does not scratch the surfaces). Some scrubbing (hard rubbing with a cloth or brush) is required. Rinse well.

**To clean linoleum or vinyl floors and woodwork**—make a solution of about 1 tablespoon of a product like Flash in a bucket of water. Use a mop or damp cloth to wipe the floor or cabinets. Allow floor to dry before walking on it. Rinsing is not necessary. Vacuum cleaners are used for cleaning rugs and carpets, brooms for sweeping hard floors.

**For cleaning toilet bowls**—use Harpic or a similar product. Follow directions on the label.

**For cleaning windows and mirrors**—use Windex or a similar product. With a spray bottle, it is easy to apply. Wipe with a dry cloth and shine with a clean, dry cloth.

**Cleaning the oven**—oven cleaners sold in supermarkets can damage the electrical element. The best thing is to wipe out the oven with a damp cloth each time after you use it. Occasionally, clean more thoroughly with a mild solution of ammonia and water.

**To clean the refrigerator**—wipe out with a damp cloth, using plain water. You can add a bit of powdered bicarbonate of soda. Do not use ammonia or cleanser as these products may lend an unpleasant odour to food in the refrigerator.

*There are also some environmentally friendly products available. Search the internet to see what you can find.*

**Garbage**—Some kitchen sinks have garbage disposals. If there is one in your unit, ask the landlord how to use it. It is important never to wash garbage down the sink, without a garbage disposal. If your sink does not have one, put garbage in a plastic bag and put it in the garbage bin. Do not leave bags of food scraps in your flat/house when you go away from it for even a short time. If a blowfly gets into it, there will be millions of maggots by the time you return! Garbage bins are emptied every week. Check the Wollongong City website ([www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au)) for the day your bin is emptied. Make sure you have your bin at the road kerb the night before your bin is due to be emptied.

## **The cost of accommodation and living expenses**

On campus accommodation is limited and costs vary according to the style of accommodation provided. For accommodation off campus a single room with use of facilities will cost at least A\$60 a week. House and flat rents start at A\$120 week and can be shared by students depending on the number of rooms. The University estimates an international student requires a minimum of \$12,000 for living expenses in each year of study. However students should have more money than this to cover the initial cost of books and incidental expenses. In estimating incidental expenses students should consider the following items:

Clothing, laundry, transport, occasional restaurant meals, recreation and entertainment are likely to total at least \$1,500 a year in the experience of many international students. Recreation and entertainment are matters of personal preference: the amount spent depends on one's taste, budget and location. The figures given do not include the costs of such large non-essential items as household equipment or a car. Owning and operating a motor vehicle is very expensive in Australia. Insurance is compulsory and costly (see 'Insurance against Accidents' section), and parking both on and off campus may be a problem. It is inadvisable for any student to own a car unless absolutely necessary for everyday transportation. Many students find that these unusual expenditures cause serious problems if they are undertaken on a limited budget.

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## Summer vacation expenses

The summer vacation time requires special financial planning. Expenses for this period must be carefully estimated and added to costs for the academic year in order to give a realistic total figure for the calendar year. University eating facilities and some university college housing facilities close during this time.

As a general rule, international students should expect to spend at least as much on monthly living expenses during the summer as they do during the academic year. If you leave the institution for the summer, you should expect to spend more for housing and meals. It is important to start with a realistic idea about the money needed for living. Failure to do so may cause great unhappiness and difficulty in completing your course.

## Part-time and vacation work

Some students are able to supplement support from parents with money from part-time and/or vacation work. Such work is not always regular even when available and this can lead to anxiety and contribute to study problems. In general it is unrealistic to start a course with insufficient funds in the hope that “something will turn up”. A casual employment service is operated at the University for all students on campus who may wish to find part-time employment while studying. The service is conducted at the Job Shop. Located with Accommodation Services at Student Central on the Ground Floor of Building 17. Employers in the Illawarra and surrounding regions are keen to offer employment to students. Jobs are advertised on the notice board, and are regularly updated. Students may also advertise their services for tutoring, essay correction, note taking etc. This service will soon be available online. Office hours: Monday -Friday, 9am to 5pm (ph 4221 4622). Students can often help themselves by looking regularly at newspapers, especially local ones, and by enquiring at shops, restaurants and factories. One of the difficulties about part-time work is that you will have very little time for it before and during examinations, and you should make an employer aware of that well in advance. Some important points you should remember are:

If you have a student visa with permission to work you are restricted to working a maximum of 20 hours per week when your course is in session.

Pay your income tax if you earn over the tax-free amount (\$6,000) for the financial year (July to June).

For taxation purposes ONLY international students living in Australia for over six months qualify for the \$ 6,000 tax free threshold on earned income

## Climate

Australia's climate ranges from the tropical to the temperate. Slightly more than half of Queensland, 40 per cent of Western Australia and 80 per cent of the

Northern Territory are within the tropics. The remainder of the continent, including the whole of New South Wales, ACT, Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania, is in the temperate zone.

The average summer temperature varies in Wollongong from about 25 to 32 degrees Celsius. Winter temperatures in Wollongong vary between 10 to 16 degrees Celsius, Although frosts are rare in Wollongong, temperatures may drop as low as 6 degrees during the night.

Summer is from December to February; Autumn is March to May; Winter is June to August; and Spring is September to November. The hottest months in Wollongong are December to February.

## **Clothing**

Warm clothes are necessary in southern Australia during the winter months. A light overcoat, jacket or lined cloth raincoat is recommended. Simple casual clothing has become standard dress on campus. Where possible it is advisable to bring as much clothing from home as possible, especially if you have limited funds while staying in Australia. However, all types of clothing are available and you will want to seek information from fellow students.

Price \* ranges for commonly required items are as follows:

Man's shirt: \$20-\$45+; Woman's blouse: \$20-\$60+; Man's trousers: \$30-\$60+; Woman's skirt: \$25-\$60+; Man's jacket: \$50-\$100+; Woman's slacks: \$25-\$70+; Man's suit: \$200-\$300+; Shoes: \$35-\$80+; Dress: \$30-\$100+; Sweater: \$25-\$50+; Raincoat: \$60-\$100+; Overcoat: \$100-\$160+.

Prices for haircuts vary greatly depending upon where you go. There are on-campus hairdressing facilities in the UniCentre Building which offer a student price. Generally, for a basic haircut you can expect to pay as follows: Men: \$15-\$25+; Women: \$18-\$30+.

## **Cost of books**

These vary from course to course, and you can often save considerable amounts by buying second-hand books. You must make sure that the edition you are buying is still acceptable. You should be aware that in some courses the books for a year might cost several hundred dollars, and many of them do need to be owned by the student. There is, however, the possibility of selling some of them, if in good condition, at the end of the year (a good reason not to write on them!). Wollongong University Student Association operates a second-hand bookshop as a service to both buyers and sellers. The bookshop is located in the UniCentre Building.

In some subjects there are laboratory manuals and similar material that students

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\* Note: These prices are subject to inflation and currency fluctuations.

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need to buy at the beginning of the year. The amounts involved are relatively small.

## Shopping in Wollongong

### Supermarkets

Here you will find in one store foods which you may be accustomed to buying in several shops (Woolworths, Coles, Franklins, Jewels). There are fresh fruits and vegetables, frozen foods, canned goods, meat, bread, laundry and cleaning supplies, paper products, personal needs and non prescription drugs, even some inexpensive clothing. Most supermarkets are open by 8:30 am. Check the opening hours in your local supermarkets.

Self-service is normal in supermarkets. You select the items you want to buy, put them in a trolley or basket and present them for payment at the cashier's counter (called a "check out"). Usually there is one fast, "quick checkout" counter, for shoppers with fewer than a certain number of items (six or eight, for example). Scales weigh and compute the prices of produce. They are generally accurate, and shop assistants are almost always honest.

**Meats**—In a supermarket, meats are pre-packaged. You can see how large the portions are, and the label tells the "cut", the weight, the price per kilo and the total price of the package. If you do not see what you want, ring the bell and the butcher will come and help you. Australian meat cuts may be unfamiliar to you. You can also buy meat at butchers' shops in your suburb.

**Fruits and Vegetables**—Select what you need. There are scales on which you can weigh produce sold by the kilogram. Some produce is pre-packaged or tied in bunches or sold by the piece.

**Specialty foods**—Many supermarkets have a section of foreign or imported foods. Special ingredients for foreign dishes sometimes can be found here. Most supermarkets carry imported cheeses.

**Frozen foods**—It is important to keep frozen foods frozen. Plan your shopping so that you go directly home from the store. Put frozen foods immediately in the freezer or freezing section of your refrigerator. If frozen food thaws, use it right away—do not refreeze it.

### Asian grocery shops

A number of Asian grocery shops and butchers are located in Wollongong. Some are to be found at the northern end of Keira Street or in Fairy Meadow. A halal butcher is also located in Cringila (Anadole Halal Butchery, 39 Bethlehem St.). A convenience store on the corner of Keira and Market Streets, Wollongong sells halal meat.

## **Food speciality stores**

There are usually food specialty shops in a shopping centre: bakeries (party cakes can be ordered here), health food stores, fish shops, delicatessens, fruit markets, butchers, and liquor stores (also available in the bottle shop of a hotel sometimes called a “pub”).

## **Pharmacy or chemist**

Chemist shops are the only shops authorised to sell prescription pharmaceutical products. Most pharmacies have a large selection of cosmetics, shampoos, toothpastes, household medicines and other items.

## **Department stores**

Department stores sell many things: clothing, pots and pans, furniture, fabrics, gifts, china, jewellery, shoes, books, etc. Walk through several department stores (David Jones, Myers etc.) and notice all the things that are offered for sale. You will get some idea of differences in price and differences in quality. Compare before you buy. The same items are frequently sold in different stores at different prices. Watch for “sales”, when certain merchandise is sold at a reduced price for a limited time.

## **Discount stores**

Discount stores such as Target, K-Mart and Big W are department stores that regularly have lower prices than other stores, because they buy in large quantities, sometimes lower quality and sometimes older models, and their stores are large, economically built and not very elegant. You can find bargains if you shop carefully.

## **Hardware stores**

Hardware stores carry tools, nails, electrical and plumbing equipment, knives, paint, pots and pans, kitchen appliances and the like.

## **Petrol or service stations**

Petrol service stations sell petrol, oil, tyres, etc. and usually provide a car-repair service. Most are “self service” others “full service”. Full service means the attendant will fill up the car with petrol, clean the windscreen, check the oil, water and battery and (if you ask him or her) the air pressure in the tyres. Self service is less expensive than full service. If you regularly buy at the self-service pumps, you must remember occasionally to check the oil, water and battery yourself.

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## Markets

A market is held on Thursdays and Saturdays, Gipps Street (opposite Bunnings Warehouse Carpark), Wollongong from 9am - 3pm. The Produce and Creative Traders Market is held in Lower Crown Street Mall on Fridays from 9am to 3pm. Dapto Sunday Markets are held from 7am - 1pm at the Dapto Showground. Check Saturday's Illawarra Mercury for others.

## Second-hand goods

Read the Illawarra Mercury for a wide variety of second-hand goods, from motor vehicles to furniture. These are usually advertised by private individuals. Also read the notice boards in the supermarket, library foyer and WUSA for books, furniture or other items advertised by other students. Look out for garage sales. Also try the St. Vincent de Paul Society, Montague Street, Fairy Meadow (ph 4229 7919), Lifeline Furniture and Clothing Depot, 19 Auburn Street, Wollongong (ph 4228 0722); the Salvation Army, 48 Kenny Street Wollongong (ph 4228 5644); Mission Australia, 4 Ralph Black Drive, Fairy Meadow (ph 4225 9820).

## Some shopping cautions and suggestions

Compare prices, and also compare quality. Before you go shopping (particularly for groceries) make a list. Because there is so much on display, it is easy to buy on impulse, spending a great deal of money and buying things you really don't need. Read tags, labels and signs carefully. Be sure you understand the price. Take your time. This is easy in Australian shops where the shop assistants' main responsibility is to take your money, not help you shop. Save sales dockets in case you should want to exchange or return an item. In Australia it is usually acceptable to take back something you bought (except food) if you decide you don't want it (providing not too much time has elapsed and you have not used the item).

It is very important, when shopping in Australian shops, never to put anything in your pocket or purse or a shopping bag or the fold of clothing. If you do, it may appear to an employee of the store (or a security guard) that you intend to take the item without paying for it. To take something from a store without paying for it is called "shoplifting", and it is a crime. Many stores employ security guards to stop shoplifters. Large stores sometimes mark merchandise with electronic tags; if the merchandise is taken from the store without the sales assistant removing the tag, a loud signal will sound to alert security personnel. Keep merchandise in plain sight as you shop. After you have paid for your selections, the sales assistant will put the purchase in a bag and give you a receipt as proof of payment. Use shopping trolleys in supermarkets, rather than shopping bags, as is the custom in many countries.

Prices in Australian shops are fixed, and it is not the custom to bargain for a lower price. An exception is in car buying, when bargaining is quite in order, and also at

open markets.

When you first arrive in Australia be very careful when you pay for something. Australian currency is unfamiliar to you, and it will take a while before you are sure of its value, compared to the value of the currency of your country.

## Public transport

Public transport to the University is by Number 10 or 11 bus to and from central Wollongong.

Timetables are available from the UniShop, the Tourist Information Centre in Wollongong or from a bus driver. They can also be downloaded from a link on the University website. Student concessions are available on the local bus trip to and from the University only.

The closest train station to the University of Wollongong is North Wollongong, 100 metres south of International House. The service is irregular and not all trains stop at North Wollongong, so it is advisable to obtain a free timetable from any station booking office.

You must have a ticket to travel, however if you board a train when the booking office is closed and there is no ticket machine available, you may pay your fare on arrival at your destination. **YOU CANNOT BUY A STUDENT CONCESSION TICKET.** There is a \$200 fine for travelling without a valid ticket. Unfortunately international students are NOT eligible for student travel concession cards for trains or buses in the state of New South Wales (except some Scholarship and Exchange students). Be particularly careful when using ticket machines at the train station. If you are found travelling on a student fare you will be fined \$200. If you have to travel by train late at night, try to travel in a group. If you cannot do this, get into the carriage nearest the driver or guard.

## Australian currency

Australian currency follows a decimal system. The dollar (\$) is the basic unit of exchange. It is divided into 100 cents (c). Paper notes are in different colours and increase in size as they increase in value. Notes come in denominations of \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50, and \$100.

Metal coins come in denominations of \$1 and \$2 (gold coloured coins), 50¢ (the largest coin, which has a series of flat edges and is silver with the Australian Coat of Arms on the back), 20¢ (about 2.5 cm in diameter, silver, with a picture of a platypus), 10¢ (silver with a picture of a lyre bird), 5¢ (silver with a picture of an echidna or spiny anteater).

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## **Banking arrangements and hours**

To open a bank account you will need your passport and your student card.

You will need to apply for a Tax File Number. Applications are available from the Australian Taxation Office, Commonwealth Building, 43 Burelli Street Wollongong or from the website at [www.ato.gov.au](http://www.ato.gov.au) . When you receive your number, notify the bank.

The National Australia Bank (NAB) has a branch on campus and is able to handle overseas transactions. It can issue drafts, travellers cheques or foreign currency notes and accept telex or airmail transactions. Clearing an overseas cheque can take 3 weeks or more. You should consider this delay when organising your funds from home, especially funds for paying your fees. It is advised that money from overseas should be in the form of travellers' cheques or cheques drawn on Australian banks in Australian dollars. Banks in Australia are open from Monday to Friday (not public holidays) from approximately 9.30am to 4.00pm. Some banks stay open until 5.00pm on Fridays. Check with the branch you will be using frequently.

Money may be deposited or withdrawn from many automatic teller machines 24 hours a day or from the tellers inside the bank during banking hours.

## **Hire purchase**

This is a system where you take goods home after paying an initial deposit and pay the rest in instalments. This is an extremely expensive way of buying something as the interest charges are very high. If repayments are not met by the due date, the company supplying the product has the right to remove the goods from your premises. You may not be able to get any money back. **IT IS STRONGLY RECOMMENDED THAT YOU DO NOT BUY ANYTHING ON HIRE PURCHASE**

NOTE: Do not sign any contract for lease of premises or purchase of goods unless you fully understand it. If unsure, seek advice from the Department of Fair Trading (ph 4254 3433). This is a government department responsible for protecting consumers rights and providing free advice and information. Where a dispute of a serious nature arises concerning goods or services you have purchased, the Department of Fair Trading may help you to rectify the problem.

## **Medical and Hospital**

### **Why you need Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)**

OSHC, the overseas student health cover plan, has been introduced to help you and your family pay for any medical and hospital care you may need while studying in Australia.

## **Who manages OSHC?**

Australian Health Management Group is managing OSHC for the University of Wollongong. For further information see their website at [www.oshc.com.au](http://www.oshc.com.au)

## **How do you register?**

If you are planning to come to Australia to study, you will be required to pay for your OSHC premium before obtaining your visa. Soon after you have arrived in Australia and enrolled at the University you will receive your membership card. You must keep your payment of OSHC up to date while you are in Australia.

## **Who is covered?**

OSHC covers you, and also your spouse and dependent children (under 18) if they come with you to Australia. Cover is provided for medical costs and Public hospital care as a public patient and treatment in some private hospitals within Australia from the date of your arrival until the end of your stay as a student in Australia.

## **What is covered?**

OSHC helps you pay for the doctor to treat you in hospital, at home or at the doctor's surgery; for x-rays; to have your blood tested. You can choose any general practitioner (GP) you want. Dental and optical services are not included. OSHC pays for emergency ambulance transport. Benefits are also provided for prescription drugs (except for oral contraceptives and those drugs used during an operation) after the payment of the patient contribution (currently \$20 per drug). Students or their spouses qualify for immediate benefits for pregnancy related services if they hold a student visa which has a duration of longer than three months. In vitro fertilisation is not covered at all. Any pre-existing illness will not be covered AT ALL for the first 12 months of your stay. When a medical service DOES NOT take place in a hospital, OSHC pays 85% of the scheduled fee. This means that you will need to pay the rest. When you have paid a medical bill you can claim your rebate online at [www.oshc.com.au](http://www.oshc.com.au)

## **Doctors**

You will find doctors (general practitioners or GPs) listed in the yellow pages of the Wollongong telephone directory under "Medical Practitioners". There are many general practitioners in Wollongong who were born overseas and who may speak your language. There are also many female general practitioners and at least one female gynaecologist in the area. You can speak to the SEDLOs if you are unsure how to find a suitable doctor.

There are some Medical Centres in Wollongong where you do not need to make

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an appointment and where a range of services such as x-rays and blood tests are offered. The HOSPITAL EMERGENCY Department is only for urgent attention for serious medical conditions when your GP is not available.

Multicultural Health Southern Network is available for information and referral. Ph 4221 6700/4274 6233.

## **Radio Doctor**

In Wollongong there is an after hours doctor service available between 7.00 pm and 6.00 am week days and midday Saturday until Monday 6.00 am. Phone 4228 5522. A doctor will come to your house, they will need to see your Medicare card.

## **On-campus facilities**

The Medical Centre is located on the first floor in the UniCentre Arcade. A dental and optometrist service is available to students and staff and referral service to a GP in Keiraville is also available. You will need to pay for these services. Students with OSHC will receive back 85% of the fee for the doctor's service or for the consultation by the optometrist but not for any dental services (ph 4226 2199 for an appointment).

## **Child Care**

There are two forms of child care available at the University. As demand for these services is high, you should collect an application form, fill it out and return it to the childcare centre as soon as possible so that your name can be placed on the waiting list. There is over a one year waiting list. The two services and their relevant details are listed below.

- Kids Uni is a multi-purpose child care centre on campus. The centre provides child care for both staff and students in either full-day or half-day blocks. There are 117 places available. An educational pre-school program is provided during the day for children up to five years of age.
- After-school and holiday care is available for school children up to 12 years. The centre is open all year round, including Summer Session. Occasional care, part-time care and emergency care are also available.

Child care fee rebates are NOT available to international students. Students should note that full fees can be a considerable weekly expense.

The centre accepts children who do not speak English, and currently has a number of children from various cultural backgrounds. Help with learning English is included in the daily program.

For further information call into the Centre (building 10) or phone 4221 8035.

For information regarding alternative off-campus care such as play groups, day-care

centres, commercial child-care centres, call in at the centre and ask for a copy of Children's Services in the Illawarra. Copies are also available from most of the local Council Community Services, such as Baby Health Clinics, Illawarra Children's Cultural Resource Centre, Department of Youth and Community Services.

## Religion

The main religion in Australia is Christianity, the three largest denominations being Anglican, Roman Catholic and Uniting Church. Smaller Christian denominations include Lutheran, Jehovah's Witness, Seventh Day Adventist and Baptist. There is also a smaller percentage of non-Christian religions, including Jewish, Islamic, Buddhist, Tao and Hindu, among others. Legally, there is complete religious freedom in Australia. While in Australia you will have no trouble finding an appropriate place of worship. Places of worship are listed in the yellow pages of the telephone directory under 'Churches, Mosques & Temples'.

Local centres are as follows:

- Christian—Churches are listed alphabetically in the white pages of the Wollongong telephone directory. For example, Anglican churches can be found under the letter A; Catholic churches under the letter C; Uniting Churches under the letter U, and so on.
- Buddhist—Nan Tien Temple, Berkeley Road, Berkeley (ph 4272 0600)
- Hindu—Sri Venkateswara Temple, Walker Street, Helensburgh(ph 4294 2705)
- Islamic—Bilal Mosque, 1 Bethlehem Street, Cringila (ph 4274 6232) —There is prayer space for Muslim students in Building 50 during term time.
- Omar Mosque, Foleys Road, Gwynneville (ph 4225 1962)

## University Chaplaincy Service

The Chaplaincy Service is provided within the University for the benefit of students and staff. The office is located on the first floor of the UniCentre Arcade (ph 4221 3534). The Service offers fellowship, personal counselling and guidance, and leadership in biblical and doctrinal studies and in worship. The visiting Chaplains maintain close liaison with student religious societies. The University chaplains can be contacted by telephone:

- Anglican (ph 4225 8655, email [rblight@uow.edu.au](mailto:rblight@uow.edu.au))
- Baptist (ph 4229 1671, email [sreeve@uow.edu.au](mailto:sreeve@uow.edu.au))
- Congregational (ph 4226 1750)
- Interdenominational Chaplain (ph 4221 5889, email [rchin@uow.edu.au](mailto:rchin@uow.edu.au))
- Jewish - (ph 4221 4120, email [grose@uow.edu.au](mailto:grose@uow.edu.au))
- Latter Day Saints (ph 4226 9967)
- Roman Catholic (ph - (02) 9313 7099 - mob 0402 452 342)
- Uniting Church (ph 4221 5636 - mob: 0401 058 420, email [ucchaplain@uow.edu.au](mailto:ucchaplain@uow.edu.au))

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# **Police and the Law**

## **Police duties and rights**

Police have a duty to preserve the peace, to prevent and detect crime, and to protect life and property. The Police Department is a part of the Public Service and is NOT part of the army. They have the right to arrest in certain situations.

## **Federal Police**

Duties usually concern Federal law, mainly immigration and customs. They have similar powers to State Police in Canberra, and are controlled by the Federal Government.

## **State Police**

Duties concern all other laws, and they are controlled by individual State Governments.

## **Other enforcement officials**

There are other officials whose work concerns particular laws. There are Commonwealth Investigators, for example, to deal with Federal tax, or customs; there are State Inspectors and Investigators concerned with, among other things, fisheries and wildlife, or motor vehicle testing; while parking, health, or buildings are overseen by Local Government Inspectors. The police are always responsible to elected representatives and Parliament, never to the armed forces.

Remember, whether you are in trouble with the police or whether they are helping you out of difficulty, things will run more smoothly if you co-operate with them and explain your situation politely and calmly.

## **What are your rights?**

Your most basic right is to be considered innocent until you are proven guilty in a court. You don't need to answer police questions or give your name (except for traffic offences) or even to make a statement. You have the right not to say anything that might incriminate you. The Police must not threaten you or injure you (but if you resist arrest they can use "reasonable force"). You can also refuse to go with Police unless they arrest you.

The Police should allow an arrested person to make one telephone call. You have the right to ask for an interpreter or to contact a lawyer or a friend or relative. If you want to make a statement, you have the right to write it yourself or to get an interpreter to do it. You have the right to ask for bail.

## **Bribery**

It is a serious crime to bribe anyone, especially a policeman. It is a crime even to try to bribe someone. Be very careful not to let anyone mistake your actions as offering a bribe, for example, don't try to pay the policeman who gives you an "on-the-spot" fine. Officials are not allowed to accept money or gifts but appreciate it when people are courteous and say "thank you".

## **Legal help**

There are a number of agencies in the Australian community that offer cheap or free legal advice and help.

The Legal Aid Office in each State will give free advice in short interviews, at certain times, to anyone. It will give free legal help to persons with limited income who are charged with certain serious crimes. They sometimes have a Duty Lawyer at courts for people who do not have a lawyer. Apply through any Legal Aid Office, Court or private lawyer. Legal Aid is a limited resource and may be difficult to obtain. There is no legal aid help available for Traffic Driving Offences only criminal cases.

Consult the SEDLO if you have any legal problems. You will be referred to the most appropriate agency.

Wollongong University Students Association (WUSA) can also refer you to a free legal service.

## **Protecting Yourself and Your Property**

Wollongong is still a relatively safe place to live, but you should take sensible precautions so that you do not become a victim of crime. Make a habit of being careful.

Make sure you lock your car and your flat (or house) when you leave them.

If you share a house with other people, talk to the others about security and consider putting a lock on your own door. Your flatmates may be trustworthy, but student households have frequent visitors coming and going and thieves can pass unnoticed.

Do not carry large amounts of cash around with you, and keep your purse or wallet on your person, rather than in your bag.

If you go out at night, try to arrange to do so in company. In this way you are less likely to have problems. Keep to well-lit places with people around.

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## Cars - Buying a car

You should exercise extreme caution when purchasing a second-hand car, as there are many unreliable vehicles for sale. The following are some points to remember when purchasing a second hand car:

Do not make a hasty decision and always take a friend who knows about cars to see the car you want to buy.

If you wish to buy a car from a private seller, check the registration papers with the Road Traffic Authority to make sure the car is not stolen. It is also important to satisfy yourself that the car is owned outright by the person selling it, and is not under any hire-purchase agreement. You should check out carefully by calling the Register of Encumbered Vehicles (REVS, ph 1800 424988).

Some advertisements in newspapers which appear to be from genuine private sellers are actually from dealers. Be very careful if you find this is so from checking registration papers.

Make sure you read any document carefully before you sign it.

Detailed notices of information on buying a car are available from the SEDLO or The Office of Fair Trading (ph 4254 3433).

## Registering a car

Every car **MUST** be registered with the State Government before it can be driven at all.

If you are buying a second-hand car, it will more than likely be registered already. You will, however, need to transfer the registration of the car to your own name within 14 days of purchase. Take the registration paper, signed by the previous owner, to the Roads And Traffic Authority where you pay a transfer fee and stamp duty.

Cars must be re-registered every year. The sticker on the left-hand-side windscreen shows the date on which the registration must be renewed. Papers will be sent to you before the renewal date. You must take your papers to a Motor Registry Office to pay the registration fee and present your “pink slip” (if necessary) and your “green slip”. The pink slip is obtained from a service station and certifies the car is fit to drive. The green slip is obtained from an insurance office and shows you have paid for third-party compulsory insurance (see below). You must attach the new registration sticker to the left-hand side of the windscreen.

Number Plates (also called “licence plates” or “registration plates”) do not mean that the car is registered or fit to drive—they only make it easy to identify the car. Each State has its own kind of plate; they belong to the Government and must be given back even if the car is totally destroyed in an accident.

## Driving a car

### Driver's licence

Do not drive without a licence. It is against the law. You cannot drive at all in any State unless you have a driver's licence. Each State issues its own licence. If you go to live in another State, you must get a new licence. In NSW you may drive with a current overseas or international licence during the period of your studies. If the licence is not in English you should carry an official English translation. To obtain a NSW licence or change your overseas licence to a NSW driver's licence, you will need to pass a knowledge test on road rules and driving techniques (obtain the Motor Traffic Handbook from the Roads & Traffic Authority to study the rules), a practical driving test, and an eyesight test. Once you have a licence, you need to notify the Roads And Traffic Authority when you move house.

### Learning to drive

If you do not have a licence, you must first apply to the RTA for a learner's permit and pass the computerised driver knowledge test (available in English, Arabic, Chinese, Croatian, Greek, Japanese, Korean, Serbian, Spanish, Turkish and Vietnamese).

Once you have your learner's permit, anyone can teach you to drive who has a current unconditional driver's licence. A fully qualified driver of at least one year's standing must be with you in the car whenever you drive. Check that the car in which you are learning to drive is comprehensively insured, or you may have to pay high costs if there is an accident.

You will also need to pass an eyesight test and, when you are ready, a practical road test, before being granted your licence.

### Road laws

Each State has its own road laws or "rules of the road". These define traffic offences and rules of behaviour that must be obeyed. There are important differences between the States, for example, speed limits. Find out what these are: the fact that you "didn't know" is not an excuse if you do the wrong thing. You must report any accident to the Police if someone is injured.

Important Australia-wide road laws:

- Always stop after an accident and give help.
- Always carry your driver's licence with you.
- Always wear a seat belt.
- Always give police your name and address if stopped.

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## Riding a bicycle

You are required to obey the road rules when riding a bike. You must wear an approved helmet when riding in a public place. Ride on the left side of the road. At night your bike must display a bright or flashing white light at the front and a red light and red reflector to the rear. Your bike must be fitted with at least one effective brake and bell or horn. You must give hand signals when turning left or right or stopping. You must give way to pedestrians. The penalty for infringement of these rules is \$45 or more.

## Pedestrian safety

Students should take particular care when crossing roads. Wollongong has a high rate of pedestrian accidents. You should use the footpath if there is one, cross at lights or crossings where possible, always look left, right and left again before crossing the road and wear light coloured clothing at night so motorists can see you better.

## Alcohol and drugs

In every State it is a crime to drive a car when you are affected by drugs or alcohol. You can be fined large sums (\$1000 or more), have your licence taken away from you, be sent to prison, or all of these. Each State sets a special limit for the maximum amount of alcohol you are allowed to have in your blood when you drive. In most States, this means you only have to drink 2 glasses of beer or 2 glasses of wine in the first hour to go over the limit. After that, one glass an hour will keep you over the limit. In many States police can stop your car and test your breath for alcohol, whether or not you have been driving badly. Remember, if you drink alcohol when you are also taking certain medical drugs, you can increase the effect of the alcohol.

**DO NOT DRINK AND DRIVE!**

## Spiked drinks

Drink spiking occurs when either alcohol or drugs are added to your drink without your consent or knowledge. You may not see or taste the difference. Drink spiking is illegal and dangerous. Some of the dangers are: sexual assault, rape, assault, robbery or hospitalisation from extreme symptoms. If you have a spiked drink you may feel dizzy, faint, sick, sleepy or very drunk after only one or two drinks. To avoid spiked drinks, don't leave your drinks unattended, buy your own drinks and know what you are drinking, don't accept drinks from anyone you don't know and trust. Watch out and look after your friends. If you think that your drink has been spiked, report the incident to the local Police or call 000.

## Insurance against accident

Accident insurance protects you from having to pay large sums of money after an accident.

**Compulsory third-party insurance**—By law you must pay for this insurance before the car is registered each year. It is the minimum insurance you must have. It covers injury to other people involved in the accident: for example, your passengers and the other driver. It does not cover property such as other cars or fences.

**Third-party property insurance**—Covers damage to other people's property in an accident: for instance, the other car. It is not compulsory, but wise to have this type of insurance. If you cause an accident, you could be financially ruined by the compensation that you might have to pay.

**Comprehensive insurance**—Covers damage to your own car as well as standard "property" cover. It is useful if the accident is your fault, if you can't prove the other driver was at fault, or if the other driver was at fault but is not properly insured. You must have this kind of insurance if your car is on hire purchase. Insuring privately, NRMA or GIO offer competitive rates. You do not have to insure with the loan company's insurer.

**Mechanical breakdown insurance**—can also be useful, particularly if you have a second-hand car. The National Roads and Motorists Association (NRMA) offers its members emergency road service and many other services as well, including maps, tourist information, vehicle inspection, legal advice and all kinds of insurance at competitive rates.

## Beach safety

The perfect way to relax in Australia is to go to the beach. Although it is great fun it can also present some dangers especially for inexperienced swimmers. Here are a few guidelines you should follow to ensure a safe and enjoyable day:

- always swim at places patrolled by lifesavers or lifeguards
- swim between the red and yellow flags, they mark a safe swimming area
- never swim alone, swim with a friend or under supervision
- read and obey any signs
- if unsure of conditions ask a lifesaver
- don't swim directly after a meal
- never run and dive into the water, conditions are constantly changing
- if you do get into trouble, don't panic, raise your arm, float and wait for assistance

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# Immigration Essentials

## A summary of your legal responsibilities

Like all other countries, Australia has laws and regulations governing temporary residents or visitors. Below is a summary of the essential things for which you as an international student are responsible:

- Keep your passport current and renew it at your government's consulate or embassy at least SIX months before the date of expiry.
- Keep a current student visa.
- Advise the University of your Australian address at enrolment and each time you change your address.
- As a full-time student, you must be enrolled in a course of at least 18 credit points per semester (or 2 subjects per intake for students of the Graduate School of Business GSBPD).
- You must make satisfactory academic progress.
- If a student is sick for a length of time and requires leave of absence they must return to their home country.

Comply with your visa work conditions

- If you have work rights, do not undertake more than 20 hours of employment per week when your course is in session.
- Do not take a trip outside Australia until you are certain that all your travel documents are in order. You must have a 'multiple entry permit' before you leave Australia.
- Keep Overseas Student Health Cover payments up to date.

Be aware of immigration matters. Ask the SEDLO for clarification if you are in doubt. Never seek immigration advice from a friend. Each situation is unique.

Applications for visa extension can be lodged on-line at [www.immi.gov.au](http://www.immi.gov.au) or in person at the Department of Immigration (DIMA) in Sydney. Ring 131881 for an appointment. You can obtain a checklist of documents that you need from the DIMA website. You will need a confirmation of enrolment and details of your financial circumstances. You will also have to pay your Overseas Student Health Cover and must undertake a medical examination and x-ray by a Commonwealth Medical Officer if you have not had one within the previous twelve months.

Information sheets and some application forms can be obtained from the Student Central (building 17) or from the SEDLOs or the DIMA website [www.immi.gov.au](http://www.immi.gov.au).

Enquires regarding applications for permanent residence should be directed to DIMA. The International Students Advisers are not authorised to give immigration advice. Migration Agents may give immigration advice. They charge a fee for their services. You should only consult a registered migration agent. A list of registered agents can be found at the MARA Website at [www.themara.com.au](http://www.themara.com.au)

## Permanent Residence

International students can apply in Australia for permanent residence under the Graduate Skilled category. You will need to have completed your degree in Australia after at least 2 years study here and meet other immigration requirements. Applications must be made within 6 months of completing your course (not graduation). You should obtain information from the DIMA website at [www.immi.gov.au](http://www.immi.gov.au) for Booklet 6 – General Skilled Migration, which you will need to read before you apply for Skilled Migration. For enquiries you can contact DIMA by phone on 131881 or the Adelaide Skilled Processing Centre phone (03) 96574115, email [adelaide.skilled.centre@immi.gov.au](mailto:adelaide.skilled.centre@immi.gov.au)

## Immigration Advice

Enquires regarding applications for permanent residence should be directed to DIMA. The SEDLOs are not authorised to give immigration advice. Migration Agents may give immigration advice. They charge a fee for their services. You should only consult a registered migration agent. A list of registered agents can be found at the MARA Website at [www.themara.com.au](http://www.themara.com.au)

## Discrimination and Equal Opportunity

A law passed in NSW in 1977 makes it illegal to discriminate against people, under most circumstances, because of their:

- Race, colour, national or ethnic origin
- Sex
- Marital status
- Physical or intellectual impairment
- Homosexuality or presumed homosexuality

The law is administered by The Anti-Discrimination Board (ADB), which has the task of helping people gain equal opportunity. The law as it now stands affects discrimination encountered in employment, trade unions, education, the provision of goods and services, registered clubs and accommodation. It is also unlawful to discriminate in advertisements. The Board also has the responsibility of researching equality and human rights issues, conducting special programs to combat bias and prejudice and promoting understanding of human differences.

If you believe you are not getting a fair go or in some way have been discriminated against on any or several of the above grounds, then you can go to the ADB and discuss with one of its conciliation officers the problem you have encountered. If necessary, they will help you lodge a formal complaint. Often, however, it is also helpful simply to talk with them. Your experience helps them understand new situations; their experience may help you combat the problem in your personal life.

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You can telephone and talk with a conciliation officer but if you want to make a formal complaint, that must eventually be done in writing.

If you want to know more about the Anti-Discrimination law and the Board that administers it, contact an SEDLO on campus or the University Counselling Service.

## **Racism**

No one can deny that racism still exists in Australia, as it does in other countries. Racism can take many forms and may be expressed openly in verbal abuse or violence, in graffiti or in literature intended to incite hatred. Racism can sometimes be the hidden reason for denying employment, education or other basic human rights to people of another race. Racism probably stems from a fear of anything different and ignorance of other societies. Racists usually feel superior to people of other colours and cultures. If you feel that you have been discriminated against or disadvantaged in any way because of your race, you should speak to the Student Equity and Diversity Liaison Officer (SEDLO).

## **Sexual harassment**

Sexual harassment refers to sexual advances that are unsolicited, unwelcome and persistent. It can take the form of:

- Smutty (dirty) jokes
- Displays of erotic pictures
- Questions about aspects of a woman's private life
- Repeated requests for dates
- Lewd comments about physical appearance
- Leering, touching, pinching or rubbing
- Requests for sexual favours

Some women may blame themselves if they are the subject of unwanted sexual attentions rather than realising that such behaviour represents a major form of discrimination against them. Sexual harassment is an exploitation of male power. It trivialises women's status and reinforces an image of women as mere sex objects. It also undermines women's efforts to be recognised as equal members of society.

There are lots of misconceptions about sexual harassment. Some believe that women who are sexually harassed must have been "asking for it" - by dressing too attractively, perhaps, or by saying no but "obviously" meaning yes. There is no excuse for harassment, however, irrespective of the clothes a woman wears. This tendency to blame the woman rests on the unwarranted assumption that men have uncontrollable sexual appetites and are not responsible for their actions.

If you are sexually harassed contact the University Counselling Service, the Women's Officer in WUSA or the Equal Employment Opportunity Unit in the Administration Building.

## Services and Organisations that Can Help You

University education requires independence. However, there are many resources on and off campus that can ensure that your experience of the University of Wollongong is rewarding and satisfying. Take the initiative to contact the services listed when you need to.

### University services

#### Student Equity and Diversity Liaison Officers

Student Services has specialist Student Liaison Officers to help you during your time in Australia and the University. If you are having difficulties settling in, or understanding how the University works, it is important that you seek advice.

The SEDLOs can help you with problems relating to homesickness, settling-in, legal matters, student visa and health or with questions related to any other aspect of your life in Australia. They can also help you to meet other students and community members. All students are treated completely confidentially.

You can call in person to make an appointment on Level 3, UniCentre (building 11) or phone 4221 3445 or internal 3445, or contact them individually. Their phone numbers are below:

Faculty	Location	Phone
Arts	Blg 19 Room 1075	4221 3635
Commerce	Commerce Study Centre Blg 40 Room G13	4221 4714
Creative Arts	Blg 25 Room G04	4221 5969
Education	Blg 25 Room G04	4221 5969
Engineering	Eng. Enquiries Centre (Mon-Wed 12pm)	4221 5670
Health & Behavioural Science	Blg 41, Enquiries Centre	4221 5332
Informatics	Blg 3 Room 114 (Wed pm - Fri)	4221 3833
Law	Blg 19 Room 1075	4221 3635
Science	Blg 41 Enquiries Centre	4221 5332

### Wollongong UniAdvice

UniAdvice handles enquiries from students from overseas. It admits students to the University on authority from the University Council. It was established to market the University's courses overseas and to co-ordinate programs for international students. It administers exchange programs with overseas Universities.

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## **Student Enquiries**

Student Central is on the ground floor of Building 17. The Centre aims to provide a high-quality, client focused “one-stop-shop” to cater for the broad spectrum of UOW students. The Centre can assist with student administration (enrolment, fees, exams, academic transcripts, graduation). Other services located at Student Central are Study Abroad, Accommodation Services, casual employment, SEDLOs. The Centre accepts applications for special consideration on medical or other grounds as well as applications for advanced standing for previous tertiary studies. It is also responsible for important aspects of your stay in the University: your fees and your student visa. It is important that you ensure that the University always has your current address in Australia. The current phone number for Student Enquiries is 4221 33927 email [studenq@uow.edu.au](mailto:studenq@uow.edu.au)

If you have a problem and do not know what to do about it or who to see, then go to the SEDLO for help.

## **Counselling**

Adapting to life in a foreign culture is not an easy task. Students often experience difficulties which effect their personal lives or study progress. These difficulties can include anxiety, homesickness, depression, emotional stress or dealing with bad news from home.

The counselling service provides free and confidential assistance to students who may be experiencing problems at University or difficulties in their personal lives. Phone 4221 3445 to make an appointment.

## **Help with English or study problems**

### **Learning Development**

Help with English and academic skills is available for all students. If you need help with grammar, speaking, essay writing, thesis writing or other language or academic issues, visit the Learning Resource Centre Building 19, room G102 or call 4221 3977. The staff there can see you individually, provide you with resources or enrol you in a free workshop at the Centre.

Website [www.uow.edu.au/student/services/ld/](http://www.uow.edu.au/student/services/ld/)

### **Careers Service**

The Careers Service of the University of Wollongong provides resources, programs and services to assist students make a smooth transition into post-university employment. Students from any stage in their studies are welcome to use the free services. In fact, the earlier you access the services the better. On offer are workshops on job seeking; careers fairs; employer information sessions; resume

checks; individual careers counseling; and online information about job seeking and links to Australian and overseas job opportunities.

The Careers Service also offers a range of Workplace Learning programs. These programs are designed to help you develop valuable employability skills. Look out for Univariate Illawarra, SIFE, Graduate Attributes Challenge (GAC) and the Employment Experience Program (EEP) – for more details and information on how to get involved, go to the Careers Service website. Make sure you register with “My JobAlert” – the online service to notify you of upcoming activities or job opportunities that suit your background.

The Careers Service is located on the lower ground floor of the UniCentre Building – just down the stairs opposite the bookshop. To make an appointment, come in or phone 4221 3325, and check out the website at [www.uow.edu.au/careers](http://www.uow.edu.au/careers).

## **Alumni Association**

The expansion of the University in recent years to an institution with a reputation that is highly regarded both nationally and internationally has emphasised the need for greater interaction with our graduates and other former associates. After you have left the campus and become established in your own career, as an alumnus you will have the potential to be one of the University’s best ambassadors in the wider community, both in Australia and overseas, and you yourself will also have much to gain by keeping in touch with us.

The Alumni Association hopes that you enjoy your time of study at the University of Wollongong and encourages you to maintain contact with us after you graduate. In the meantime there are some alumni services which are also open to you now as students, such as the sale of University mementos (for instance, ties, T-shirts, wall plaques) which may be purchased through the Alumni Office or the University UniCentre Bookshop.

The Alumni Office is located in the Wollongong UniAdvice office in Building 36. The Alumni Officer would be happy to meet students who might consider becoming active alumni in due course and can explain more about the function of the Alumni Association. The Alumni Officer can be contacted on phone 4221 4676.

Website [www.uow.edu.au/alumni/](http://www.uow.edu.au/alumni/)

## **International Friendship Program**

The IFP is coordinated by the Illawarra Committee for International Students (ICIS) and promotes cultural exchange between members of the Wollongong community and individual international students. Interested students can be linked to a ‘friend’ or ‘host’ and they arrange to meet occasionally for a meal or an outing. This helps students learn first-hand about the Australian lifestyle. It also helps the local community to learn about the cultures of our students from around the world. For enquiries please call into the ICIS Office on the Lower Ground Floor of building 11,

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next to the Glasshouse (ph 4221 3158, email [icis@uow.edu.au](mailto:icis@uow.edu.au)).  
Website [www.uow.edu.au/student/services/isa/IFP.html](http://www.uow.edu.au/student/services/isa/IFP.html)

## **International student organisations**

Below is a list of International student groups and associations in Wollongong. Everyone is urged to join and participate in a group. The various student associations will hold their membership drive day during International Student Orientation Week.

Some of the groups are:

- African Students Association
- Assosiasi Pelajar Indonesia
- Bangladesh Students Association
- Chinese Students Association
- Filipino Students Association
- Indian Students Association
- Indonesian PPIA
- Iranian Students Association
- Japanese Society
- Jewish Students Union
- Hong Kong Students Association
- Malaysian Students Association
- Muslim Students Association
- Pakistan Students Association
- Saudi Students Association
- Taiwanese Students Association
- Temasek Singapore Students Association
- Thai Students Association
- Turkish Students Association
- Vietnamese Students Association

## **Wollongong University Students Association (WUSA)**

The Wollongong University Students Association (WUSA) on the Ground Floor, Building 11 provides advice on issues of concern to undergraduate students, advocacy for academic or administrative problems, second hand book bank, cheap photocopying, student newspapers, emergency loans and emergency food supply (4221 4201).

Website [wusa.uow.edu.au/](http://wusa.uow.edu.au/)

## **Wollongong University Postgraduate Association (WUPA)**

The WUPA is an organisation that specifically cares for the interests of postgraduate students at UOW. All postgraduate students automatically receive membership to

WUPA, which offers facilities and services such as the Postgraduate Resource Centre. The Centre's facilities include a seminar room; quiet study area; reduced-price photocopying; Macintosh computers; CD writers; Zip drives; email and web browsing (in Japanese and Chinese); as well as kitchen and BBQ facilities. WUPA also provides an advocacy and outreach service to assist you during your studies, plus a range of social activities and events. WUPA is located opposite the University in Northfields Avenue (ph 4221 3326).

Website [www.uow.edu.au/wupa](http://www.uow.edu.au/wupa)

## **Illawarra Committee for International Students (ICIS)**

ICIS is a non-profit community organisation. It provides services that contribute to the welfare of international students and organises activities in which international students and the Australian community can interact and become aware of each other's cultures. The University provides funds that enable ICIS to run its services. But ICIS is a voluntary organisation in which all of its members give their time and energy because they support the aims and activities of ICIS.

The Executive members make decisions relating to ICIS activities on behalf of the committee. Membership of the Executive Committee is open to a student from each of the overseas student organisations, Australian community members plus other interested individuals. Sub-committees may be formed as the need arises. International students can provide a valuable contribution to the Committee by attending their meetings and taking a part in the decision-making process.

### **ICIS activities include:**

- regular meetings where international students, members of the local Illawarra community and University staff plan activities
- a range of bus trips to places of interest such as the Blue Mountains, Canberra and the Snowy Mountains
- orientation activities such as welcome lunches and tours of Wollongong
- International Student dinners/events with members of the local Illawarra
- hospitality for participants in the International Friendship Program
- links with Wollongong community groups covering a range of interests
- English conversation group held at the beginning of each session for international students and their partners
- women's health program

The ICIS office is open from 9am to 5pm on Wednesday and Friday. It is located on the ground floor, UniCentre, Building 11 (ph 4221 3158, email: [icis@uow.edu.au](mailto:icis@uow.edu.au)).

Website [www.uow.edu.au/student/services/isa/ICIS.html](http://www.uow.edu.au/student/services/isa/ICIS.html)

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## **Other services available**

### **Libraries**

Wollongong Library is free and there are branches throughout the Wollongong area. You may join the Wollongong Toy Library, but there is a fee to be paid.

Illawarra Multicultural Services has a multiucultural toy library - ph 4229 6855 for more information.

### **Family services**

The South Eastern Sydney and Illawarra Area Health Service (SESAHS) aims to promote and protect the physical and mental health and social adjustment of the family. Services provided by SESAHS are free and include community midwives, early childhood health centres, school health service and immunisation clinics. Look under South Eastern Sydney and Illawarra Area Health Service in the phone book for a Centre near you.

### **Education**

WEA courses may be undertaken by you or your spouse, fees apply (ph 4226 1622). Your spouse and dependants may take English courses through TAFE if they are accepted and full fees are paid. The Anglican Church currently conducts low cost English classes at various locations near the University. Enquiries can be made by phoning 4228 8402. Conversation class (free) at IMS - ph 4229 6855.

### **Interpreter and translation services**

Ethnic Affairs Commission (ph 42268480) provides an interpreting and translation service for quite a high fee. The Telephone Interpreter Service can be reached at any time by phone at the cost of a local call (ph 131450).

## **Government Departments**

### **Department of Immigration & Multicultural Affairs, (DIMA)**

26 Lee Street, Sydney, NSW 2002

Ph 131881

Website: [www.immi.gov.au](http://www.immi.gov.au)

### **Office of Fair Trading**

(For consumer advice and complaints procedure)

Ground Floor, 63 Market Street

Wollongong, 2500

Ph 4254 3433

Website [www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au](http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au)

### **Consumer Trader & Tenancy Tribunal**

Ph 1300 135 399

Website [www.cttt.nsw.gov.au](http://www.cttt.nsw.gov.au)

## **Consulates and Embassies**

While all Embassies are located in the National Capital, Canberra, about 250km to the south of Wollongong, a number of countries have consular representation in Sydney.

A Consular List with information on consular representation by foreign governments in Australia with addresses and contact details can be found on the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade website at [www.info.dfat.gov.au/protocol](http://www.info.dfat.gov.au/protocol).

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## Contact Phone Numbers

### University

Accommodation Service	4221 5467
Alumni Office	4221 4676
Airport Connections	4261 7393
Careers Service	4221 3325
Dean of Students	4221 4355
Illawarra Committee for International Students	4221 3158
Learning Development	4221 3977
Library	4221 3545
Research Student Centre	4221 5452
Security	4221 4555
Student Enquiries, Academic Registrar Division	4221 3927
Study Abroad/Exchange	4221 3170
UniAdvice Admissions	4221 3218
UniCentre	4221 8000
WUPA	4221 3326
WUSA	4221 4201

### Other services

Community Relations Commission	4224 9922
Department of Immigration	131 881
English Classes for family members (Anglican Church)	4228 8402
Illawarra Legal Centre	4276 1939
Overseas Student Health Cover (AHM)	134 246
Roads & Traffic Authority	132 213
Translating Interpreting Service	131 450
Wollongong City Council Library	4227 7428
Wollongong City Council	4227 7111

### Emergency

Police, Fire & Ambulance	000
Electricity - Integral Energy	131 003
Lifeline 24 hour telephone counselling	131 114
Water Emergencies	132 090

