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The Australian Government, through AusAID, provides Official Development Assistance to 75 countries, with a strong focus on the Asia–Pacific region.

1 INTRODUCING AusAID

1.1 About AusAID

AusAID is the Australian Government agency that manages Australia’s overseas aid program. The program’s objective is to help developing countries reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development in line with Australia’s national interest.

1.2 Why we give aid

The Australian Government is helping countries in our region achieve the Millennium Development Goals—eight targets set out in an agreement between developing and developed countries. Under the agreement, partners have joined forces to reduce poverty and advance human development in critical areas by 2015. Australia works with domestic and international partners, and with developing countries to build their capacity to meet the objectives in a sustainable way.

1.3 Australia’s development priorities

The Australian Government, through AusAID, provides Official Development Assistance to 75 countries, with a strong focus on the Asia–Pacific region. The assistance covers many areas, including health, education, gender equality, law and order, infrastructure, rural development and the environment. The aid program also helps developing countries manage global threats, such as people trafficking, illicit drugs, and HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases.

AusAID scholarships are an integral component of the aid program. Congratulations on your AusAID scholarship. We look forward to welcoming you to Australia.
What should you bring? Where will you live? How will you get to your institution each day? Where will you shop, deposit your money, relax, worship and get medical and dental attention? And what about phone and internet services? How much will it all cost, and can you or your family work? And will you fit into the Australian education system and wider society?

You are about to embark on an amazing journey. However, you will have limited time after your aircraft touches down to organise your life in a new country—just four to six weeks between the baggage carousel and the lecture theatre or laboratory. And you will spend most of that time on your Introductory Academic Program (IAP).

There is much you can do in the months before your departure to organise your stay in Australia. The better you prepare, the sooner you will be able to focus on your studies when you arrive. Advice in this booklet, from other AusAID scholars and officers, and from Australian educational institutions will ease your path on the journey of a lifetime.

2.1 Explore your new home

Covering 7.7 million square kilometres, with a continental landmass stretching about 4,000 kilometres from east to west and 3,000 kilometres from north to south, Australia is a land of extremes.

Its educational institutions are scattered across its diverse physical, economic and social landscapes. Some, such as the University of Melbourne, are in big cities. Others, including Charles Sturt University, at Bathurst, in rural New South Wales, are in country centres. All of Australia’s six states (Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania) and two territories (the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory) host universities.

In the wet season, monsoonal rains bucket down on Townsville—home of James Cook University in tropical
Queensland—and temperatures soar into the thirties. But students at the Australian National University in Canberra face hot summers and cold winters, with temperatures sometimes below 10 degrees Celsius during the day.

The cost of living and the availability of rental accommodation differ markedly between regions. In some places, supply of rental houses and units is critically short, so start researching your options now (see Chapter 4).

Public transport and other services, including banking and medical services, and the availability of part-time jobs also vary widely.

2.2 Travel arrangements
The AusAID representatives in your country will arrange and pay for your travel to Australia on an economy class airfare. You will arrive up to a week before the start of the IAP.

2.3 Important documents to pack
Apart from your ticket, passport and itinerary, bring your drivers licence if you have one, and your letter of offer from AusAID. Carry photocopies of these documents in case you lose them. Also consider bringing your medical history and prescriptions.

Other documents that could be useful for you and your family (if they are joining you) include birth certificates, your marriage certificate, academic records and job references.

2.4 Cash
Your establishment allowance and contribution to living expenses (CLE) stipend will be paid into your bank account soon after you arrive. However, you will need cash in Australian currency to cover expenses in the first few days of your stay. We recommend you bring an amount equivalent to a few hundred Australian dollars at least. You can change money at the airport on arrival.

Useful resources
- Visit your institution’s website for background on the region where you are going to live, such as the suburb where the campus is located, housing information and public transport.

‘Get into the internet. Find out about the maps. Find out about the locations. It will help a lot.’
Fred Baru, PNG, AusAID scholar
2.5 Excess baggage restrictions
AusAID scholars and alumni advise you to ‘travel light’. If you bring too much—more than 20 kilograms—you might face excess baggage penalties imposed by the airlines. Remember to pack for the climate and season of your destination. Arriving in Townsville in summer means you probably won’t need a jumper on arrival but arriving in Melbourne in winter (at the start of second semester) warm clothes will be a must! Over-packing will also burden you with possessions you don’t need, as you will be able to buy many items, such as clothing, a computer and household goods, in Australia (see Chapter 4).

2.6 Quarantine
Australia has strict quarantine laws to protect its unique native plants and animals and its key agricultural industries against exotic pests and diseases. Its line of defence against biosecurity threats includes X-ray scanning and visual inspection of baggage, along with ‘sniffer’ dogs at baggage carousels. The seizure rate is high.

You must declare food and other plant and animal material on your Incoming Passenger Card, to be completed before arrival. If you are caught making a false declaration, you could face an on-the-spot fine or prosecution. Offences carry penalties of heavy fines, imprisonment or both.

AusAID alumni tell stories about students who tried to bring food in. They stress that Australia is a multicultural society, and you can buy most ingredients here.

Other items you should declare include medicines and large amounts of cash in foreign currency. Do not bring in illicit drugs.

The Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service has reported many cases of outlawed goods, mainly food, being sent to overseas students studying in Australia. Warn your family and friends not to send you food or other plant and animal products, because all parcels are checked for prohibited items.


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‘People usually try to get spices, seeds and pulses [in]... from back home. Guys, just don’t do it!’
Ali Sayed, Pakistan, AusAID scholar

- Pack your ticket, passport, drivers licence and letter of offer from AusAID.
- Bring cash. Ensure you have Australian dollars before leaving the airport.
- Travel light.
- Don’t bring in items banned under Australia’s strict quarantine laws.
- Explore your new home online.
- Refer to the relevant Scholarships Handbook.
3 ARRIVING AND SETTLING IN

3.1 Arrival

You are about to start a demanding course. You are also about to enter a culture of ‘barbies’ (an informal Australian term for barbeque or outside cooking) and ‘BYO’, and one which is generally informal.

Don't be worried. Australian institutions have been educating students from your region for decades, and can help you adjust.

Your institution will arrange for you to be met at the airport and taken to your temporary accommodation, which it will have arranged. If family are travelling with you, you must let the institution know, as this will affect arrangements for reception and accommodation.

If you arrive on a weekend your institution and many other facilities will not be open, but you will still be met at the airport.

3.2 Temporary accommodation

You must pay for your temporary accommodation, but the institution will ensure that it is moderately priced and that it has everything you need. The accommodation will have cooking facilities or will be close to food outlets.

Your institution can provide you with details about shopping and public transport.

It is up to you to find and pay for long-term accommodation, but your institution will guide you (see Chapter 4).
3.3 Introductory academic program

You will participate in a compulsory Introductory Academic Program, lasting about six weeks, before your course begins. The IAP is designed by your institution and will cover topics ranging from accommodation to research skills. It will give you practical advice on living in Australia, while helping you adapt to the Australian education system and society. Its aim is to break down barriers that might prevent you completing your course on time.

Topics to be covered include:
- study skills
- academic writing
- living costs and budgeting
- equity and access
- chaplaincy and prayer rooms
- national and state laws
- support services provided by the institution.

Your attendance at the IAP is compulsory.

3.4 Cultural adjustment

The influences on Australian society are many—an indigenous culture stretching back at least 50,000 years, and more recent arrivals from Britain from 1788 and later from all over the world. About a quarter of Australia’s 21 million residents were born overseas, and the country is seen widely as a model of multiculturalism.

Australian English can puzzle even people from Britain and America, who speak English as a first language.

‘We’re having a barbie Sunday arvo, if you want to come. It’s BYO, and bring a plate.’

The sentence, in Australian slang, is an invitation to a barbecue—a custom popular on campuses and in the wider community. The event is to be held on Sunday afternoon. You have been asked to BYO, or ‘bring your own’ drink, especially if you intend to drink alcohol. (The host normally provides non-alcoholic drinks.) You have also been asked to contribute some food—perhaps a curry, a salad or a dessert—to share with the other guests.

Get an Australian slang dictionary or access one online.
Australian culture is generally informal. People usually call acquaintances by their first names. However, honorifics (such as Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms, Doctor and Professor) are often used when addressing someone older than yourself for the first time.

Dress codes vary widely. Many workplaces and venues have high standards. At times, many Australians wear clothes which in your country may seem immodest, especially in summer or at the beach. Don’t be surprised. There is NO expectation for you or your family to conform to this behaviour. As a multicultural community, you will find in Australia many people of different backgrounds dressing according to their cultural requirements.

Casual clothing is the standard campus ‘uniform’. However, it is common to see international students in traditional dress among those in jeans and t-shirts. AusAID scholars often wear national dress to formal events, so it’s a good idea to bring at least one set of your formal, traditional dress.

As easygoing as Australians are, there are some customs they observe rigidly. Many are set out in the Department of Immigration and Citizenship’s Life in Australia booklet.

After being very happy at first, many students experience emotional turmoil as they adjust to life in Australia. This is ‘culture shock’, and many will experience it again on return home, with their self-esteem swinging between highs and lows that can be traced out by the so-called ‘W-curve’ (see Chapter 7).

Educational institutions are aware of this reaction and can help you manage it, for example through on-campus counselling services.

Some scholars, especially PhD candidates working in isolation, find it difficult to meet Australians at university. ‘Break the ice’ by joining a campus club (they range from debating to bushwalking), doing volunteer work, playing sport or moving into shared accommodation. Some overseas students meet people through their religion or children. Don’t be afraid to make the first move. Being proactive and meeting different people on campus and in the community can lead to rewarding friendships and support.

‘We have a winter trip to the Snowy Mountains. We have sports activities. We also have barbecues.’
Dina Afrianty, Indonesia, AusAID scholar, President, University of Melbourne AusAID Club

- You will be met at the airport.
- Your institution will arrange temporary accommodation.
- Attend the Introductory Academic Program.
- Learn Australian slang and customs.
- Culture shock is normal and many people can help you.
- Join clubs on campus to make friends.
- Refer to the relevant Scholarships Handbook.
LIVING IN AUSTRALIA

From banking and budgeting to shopping and competing in the rental property and job markets—preparation and organisation are central to setting up a good lifestyle so that you can concentrate on your course.

Most scholars are on a tight budget. Your student contact officer and financial advisers at your institution can give you tips on budgeting and finance.

4.1 Money

You are responsible for your expenses in Australia and for supporting your family members, should they join you. However, you will be paid an establishment allowance on your arrival, to help cover expenses including textbooks, rental bond and insurance. This is currently $5,000.

You will also get a ‘contribution to living expenses’ payment every two weeks to help meet costs such as accommodation, transport, food, entertainment and communications. The amount is set by AusAID. Your entitlement starts on your first day in Australia and is paid ‘in arrears’ (that is, it is not paid in advance). It ends five days after your examination results are released if you are a coursework student, or five days after you have submitted your thesis if you are a research student.

Payments are tax exempt, and continue during public holidays and semester breaks, approved fieldwork and reunion visits to your home country, and for up to six weeks if you are hospitalised. Payments will stop if you are suspended from the AusAID scholarship program or convicted of a criminal offence.

‘In Australia you do have a lot of opportunity to splurge or spend money and you should be careful not to overspend and end up with debts.’
Shareen Tuladhar, Nepal, AusAID scholar

‘Find out how much it costs to live in the city that you’re moving into. Different cities in Australia have a different cost of living.’
Alex Salvador, Student contact officer
4.2 Work

Some AusAID scholars get work on campus as tutors. Others work off campus, for example in the service industry. Demand for labour varies greatly between regions.

However, few AusAID scholars meet the entry requirements for the professions, such as medicine and teaching.

We advise against working during term, as that could disrupt your studies. However, you and dependent family members travelling with you are allowed to work. Student visas granted after 28 April 2008 automatically carry permission to work for you and dependent family members. You don’t need to apply separately for a work permit.

You can work up to 20 hours a week while your course is in session, and unlimited hours during session breaks. Work that is part of your course is not counted.

A special provision for AusAID sponsored students enables dependent members of your family to work. If you are an undergraduate student your dependants can work up to 20 hours a week. For Masters and PhD students, your dependants can work unlimited hours, but not until your course begins.

See www.immi.gov.au for details of paid work on student visas.

Jobs are advertised in newspapers and on the web, and most institutions have employment and career services to help you find part-time work, write resumes and perform well in interviews.

If your course lasts for more than six months, you are considered to be an Australian resident for tax purposes. If you work, you should get a tax file number from the Australian Taxation Office at www.ato.gov.au, and lodge a tax return at the end of the financial year (30 June).

4.3 Banking

Your top priority on arrival should be to open a bank account. You will need it for your establishment allowance and your contribution to living expenses payments.

Australian banks include:
- Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Limited (ANZ)
- Commonwealth Bank of Australia
- National Australia Bank (NAB)
- St George Bank
- Westpac Banking Corporation.

‘I got (a) part-time job, not so much because of the money but because I would really like to be able to communicate and understand about the culture in Australia.’
Do Thi Mai Hạnh, Vietnam, AusAID scholar
There are many others. Building societies and credit unions also provide banking services to the public. For a full list of banks, building societies and credit unions, see the website of the financial services industry regulator, the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (www.apra.gov.au). Your institution will help you open an account if you wish.

Opening hours vary between financial services institutions and their branches, but are usually close to the standard Australian working hours (9 a.m. until 5 p.m.). Some open later or close earlier, however, and some branches are open on Saturdays.

You will need photographic identification, such as your passport or drivers licence, to open an account.

You can register for internet banking, and withdraw cash from automatic teller machines 24 hours a day and from many stores with electronic funds transfer facilities.

4.4 Accommodation

Rental housing is in short supply in many parts of Australia. If you are on your own, the simplest, safest and most convenient option is on-campus accommodation. Staying in a residential college saves you time and delivers savings on transport, while sparing you the uncertainties of the rental property market. Register with your institution long before you leave home, or ask your student contact officer for help. On-campus accommodation can fill up fast. It is important not to leave your enquiries too late in your pre-departure preparations.

Another option is home-stay (boarding with a family in their home). Sharing accommodation with other students works well for single students. The house is usually furnished and you only need to furnish your own room. Contact the student accommodation unit at your institution for details. Many universities have this information on their websites.

If your family will be joining you, you might have to ‘battle it out’ in the private rental market. At the time of writing, the markets in all Australian capitals were tight, and rents were high.

The types of properties available for rent include separate houses, usually with three or four bedrooms. ‘Semi-detached’ or ‘duplex’ houses are usually smaller, while most units (flats
or apartments), which are common in inner-city suburbs, have one or two bedrooms. Studio apartments are open plan, typically with a bathroom, a small ‘galley’ kitchen and a combined living and sleeping space. Some properties are furnished, and some have garages. It is not recommended that you sign a lease until you have visited the property.

State laws govern residential tenancy, so visit the website of the fair trading or consumer affairs departments in your institution’s state for details on the responsibilities of tenants, landlords and real estate agents.

You will have to sign a lease (a contract that binds you and your landlord), usually for at least six months to a year. You will also have to pay a bond, usually amounting to four to six weeks’ rent. This will be used to cover the costs of repairing any damage caused by you, or if you don’t pay your rent. You will get your bond back when you leave the property provided the property is left in good repair.

Rents are usually paid fortnightly (every two weeks) or monthly and normally in advance. So when you sign a lease, be prepared to pay up to 8 weeks rent, including 4 weeks as bond and 4 weeks advance rental.

It is your responsibility to get the electricity, gas and phone connected. Ask your institution for details of the local utility companies.

### Median rents, March quarter 2008 (dollars per week)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Three bedroom house</th>
<th>Two bedroom unit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sydney</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melbourne</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brisbane</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adelaide</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perth</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hobart</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darwin</td>
<td>490</td>
<td>375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canberra</td>
<td>385</td>
<td>370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold Coast</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Townsville</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cairns</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wollongong</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geelong</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data supplied by the Real Estate Institute of Australia Ltd

**Note:** this data covers all suburbs in the relevant city, and rents may be significantly higher in suburbs near your campus.

> ‘It’s very difficult to get a place to rent because you’re competing with the entire market, and young professionals.’
> Shareen Tuladhar, Nepal, AusAID scholar

> Start considering your options for permanent accommodation before you leave home.
> Accommodation for families can be difficult to find.
> On-campus accommodation is the best option for single students.
> Contact your institution before leaving home to register for on-campus accommodation.
> Seek help from your student contact officer.
> Consider homestay as an option.

Check out real estate websites
- www.realestate.com.au
- www.domain.com.au
- www.homehound.com.au
- www.rent.com.au
- www.myhome.com.au
4.5 Families
AusAID advises that if you are considering bringing your family to Australia you wait until your second semester. That will give you time to find long-term accommodation, settle in and secure places in school for your children.

Your children can attend public primary and secondary schools, which have low costs. If you need childcare, book early because there is often a long waiting period for places. You need to arrange school enrolment for your children before they can obtain a visa.

Email your student contact officer about schools and childcare providers near your institution.

4.6 Transport
Public transport varies widely between Australian cities, so visit your institution’s website for information on services.

Consult your student contact officer regarding your possible entitlements to student concessions on public transport.

Buses, trains and trams operate according to timetables. You can only get on buses and trams at designated stops. Public transport authorities generally have maps available of their routes and the times they operate. Researching the public transport routes may also help you decide where to look for long term accommodation.

Cycling is also popular among students, and some cities, including Canberra, have good cycleway networks. By law you must wear a helmet when riding a bicycle or motorcycle. Keep your bicycle locked up when you are not riding it: your institution may have a secure location to store bicycles.

Some scholars buy used cars, but running a car is expensive. Taxis also are expensive.

4.7 Communication
Australia has good mobile phone coverage and fast internet services. There is a range of commercial internet providers and many of these offer discounts for long term contracts. It is important to read through all the internet options available and ask as many questions as necessary to ensure you are comfortable with the cost and benefits of the internet package offered. Most universities and colleges also provide

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‘In first semester you have so many challenges. It is better if you have your family joining you in the second semester so that in the first semester you just catch up with things.’

Ali Sayed, Pakistan, AusAID scholar
limited internet usage from the university’s ‘computer labs’, as well as wireless internet connection on-campus if you have your own laptop.

AusAID scholars recommend that you bring your mobile phone with you and buy a new SIM card on arrival. International phone calls can be very expensive, so look carefully at your options for deals on phone cards for international calls.

Pre-paid deals are available as well as plans, but be cautious about signing long-term contracts.

See the Australian Mobile Telecommunications Association (www.amta.org.au) for links to mobile phone companies.

If you don’t already have a laptop, consider buying a laptop or desktop computer in Australia, so that it will be covered by warranty.

Electrical outlets in Australia supply electricity at 220-240 volts.

4.8 Health

Your institution will pay your health insurance, called the overseas student health cover (OSHC), on behalf of AusAID.

The insurance covers basic medical and hospital care, most prescription drugs and emergency ambulance transport, but does not cover all costs. It does not cover pre-existing medical conditions or bridge the gap between the OSHC refundable amount and the amount charged by your health professional. And it does not cover dental or optical treatment or physiotherapy. You must pay OSHC for your dependent family members. You will not be covered by Medicare Australia, the national health cover system.

General practitioners (doctors) and dentists are available on most campuses.

Practise safe sex, and do not share needles, toiletries or drinking bottles.

4.8 Religion

Australia is a largely secular (non-religious) country, but freedom of religion is a basic right. Most institutions have places of worship, including chapels, mosques and prayer rooms.
4.9 Shopping

Shops are increasingly centralised in shopping malls with big supermarkets, department stores and specialty shops.

Many cities also have fresh produce markets where you can pick up bargains. Some sell clothing, household goods and other items.

Ask shops, particularly those selling computer equipment, software, books and travel products, if they offer student discounts.

Australian retailers rarely bargain.

Average retail prices, selected items, capital cities, June 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Sydney</th>
<th>Melbourne</th>
<th>Brisbane</th>
<th>Adelaide</th>
<th>Perth</th>
<th>Hobart</th>
<th>Darwin</th>
<th>Canberra</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Milk, (2 ltr bottle)</td>
<td>$3.66</td>
<td>$3.60</td>
<td>$3.22</td>
<td>$3.63</td>
<td>$3.57</td>
<td>$3.84</td>
<td>$4.01</td>
<td>$3.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butter (500g)</td>
<td>$3.92</td>
<td>$3.70</td>
<td>$3.34</td>
<td>$3.37</td>
<td>$4.67</td>
<td>$3.83</td>
<td>$4.25</td>
<td>$4.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bread white loaf, sliced (650g-700g)</td>
<td>$3.39</td>
<td>$3.48</td>
<td>$3.20</td>
<td>$3.28</td>
<td>$3.25</td>
<td>$2.95</td>
<td>$3.88</td>
<td>$3.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flour, self raising (2kg)</td>
<td>$3.29</td>
<td>$3.41</td>
<td>$3.48</td>
<td>$3.87</td>
<td>$3.80</td>
<td>$3.82</td>
<td>$4.02</td>
<td>$3.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice (1kg)</td>
<td>$1.93</td>
<td>$2.23</td>
<td>$2.04</td>
<td>$2.15</td>
<td>$2.64</td>
<td>$2.39</td>
<td>$2.25</td>
<td>$2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roast Beef (1kg)</td>
<td>$11.19</td>
<td>$10.62</td>
<td>$11.68</td>
<td>$11.65</td>
<td>$11.71</td>
<td>$10.91</td>
<td>$11.59</td>
<td>$13.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lamb forequarter chops (1kg)</td>
<td>$9.41</td>
<td>$9.24</td>
<td>$9.02</td>
<td>$9.96</td>
<td>$9.68</td>
<td>$9.70</td>
<td>$10.06</td>
<td>$9.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicken, Whole Fresh (1kg)</td>
<td>$5.30</td>
<td>$5.44</td>
<td>$5.34</td>
<td>$5.85</td>
<td>$6.05</td>
<td>$5.90</td>
<td>$5.42</td>
<td>$5.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oranges (1kg)</td>
<td>$3.04</td>
<td>$2.98</td>
<td>$2.46</td>
<td>$3.12</td>
<td>$3.37</td>
<td>$2.95</td>
<td>$3.52</td>
<td>$3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bananas (1kg)</td>
<td>$2.16</td>
<td>$2.32</td>
<td>$2.06</td>
<td>$2.13</td>
<td>$3.06</td>
<td>$2.23</td>
<td>$4.36</td>
<td>$1.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomatoes (1kg)</td>
<td>$3.84</td>
<td>$3.72</td>
<td>$3.59</td>
<td>$4.04</td>
<td>$4.20</td>
<td>$4.07</td>
<td>$5.43</td>
<td>$3.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrots (1kg)</td>
<td>$2.39</td>
<td>$2.20</td>
<td>$2.39</td>
<td>$2.08</td>
<td>$1.59</td>
<td>$1.78</td>
<td>$2.72</td>
<td>$2.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onions (1kg)</td>
<td>$2.48</td>
<td>$2.57</td>
<td>$2.41</td>
<td>$2.51</td>
<td>$2.12</td>
<td>$2.06</td>
<td>$3.22</td>
<td>$2.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eggs (1 dozen)</td>
<td>$4.00</td>
<td>$4.40</td>
<td>$4.40</td>
<td>$4.46</td>
<td>$4.76</td>
<td>$4.31</td>
<td>$4.66</td>
<td>$4.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar, white (2kg)</td>
<td>$2.32</td>
<td>$2.36</td>
<td>$2.19</td>
<td>$2.61</td>
<td>$2.85</td>
<td>$3.58</td>
<td>$2.59</td>
<td>$2.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teabags (180g pkt)</td>
<td>$3.79</td>
<td>$3.95</td>
<td>$3.84</td>
<td>$3.69</td>
<td>$3.99</td>
<td>$4.28</td>
<td>$3.88</td>
<td>$3.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margarine, poly-unsaturated (500g)</td>
<td>$3.03</td>
<td>$3.06</td>
<td>$3.00</td>
<td>$2.89</td>
<td>$3.04</td>
<td>$3.03</td>
<td>$3.14</td>
<td>$2.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baked beans, in tomato sauce (420g can)</td>
<td>$1.50</td>
<td>$1.49</td>
<td>$1.48</td>
<td>$1.45</td>
<td>$1.45</td>
<td>$1.44</td>
<td>$1.52</td>
<td>$1.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby food (110g jar)</td>
<td>$1.04</td>
<td>$1.06</td>
<td>$1.03</td>
<td>$1.01</td>
<td>$1.09</td>
<td>$1.00</td>
<td>$1.12</td>
<td>$1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laundry detergent (1kg)</td>
<td>$5.69</td>
<td>$5.72</td>
<td>$5.69</td>
<td>$5.66</td>
<td>$5.64</td>
<td>$5.56</td>
<td>$5.75</td>
<td>$5.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dishwashing detergent (450ml)</td>
<td>$3.43</td>
<td>$3.46</td>
<td>$3.26</td>
<td>$3.20</td>
<td>$3.60</td>
<td>$3.34</td>
<td>$3.32</td>
<td>$2.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toilet tissue (8 x 390 sheet rolls)</td>
<td>$6.57</td>
<td>$6.70</td>
<td>$6.77</td>
<td>$6.83</td>
<td>$6.27</td>
<td>$6.63</td>
<td>$7.06</td>
<td>$6.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petrol, unleaded (1 litre)</td>
<td>$1.52</td>
<td>$1.50</td>
<td>$1.43</td>
<td>$1.51</td>
<td>$1.49</td>
<td>$1.56</td>
<td>$1.60</td>
<td>$1.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toilet soap (4 bar pack)</td>
<td>$8.14</td>
<td>$7.65</td>
<td>$8.20</td>
<td>$7.88</td>
<td>$7.90</td>
<td>$7.73</td>
<td>$7.11</td>
<td>$7.81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ABS 6403.0.55.001. ABS data used with permission from the Australian Bureau of Statistics www.abs.gov.au
The Australian education system long ago abandoned the ‘didactic’ model of instruction, in which information is relayed one-way, from the lecturer to the class. Students are expected to interact with the lecturer, commenting and asking questions. The approach is in line with the emphasis on developing students’ analytical skills and capacity for independent thought.

Older ideas about formality and hierarchy have broken down, and many lecturers let their students call them by their first names.

Whether you are studying plant genomics, public health policy or international relations, you will probably do much of your work as part of a group.

Group projects are designed to prepare you for teamwork in academia or the workplace.

Plagiarism (copying other people’s work) is forbidden, easily detected and grounds for exclusion. Learn how to cite your sources—for example, according to the Harvard system or by using footnotes. Your IAP will provide detailed information on plagiarism, teach you correct referencing and how to use commonly used referencing software such as the Endnote program. If you need extra assistance to manage your studies ask your contact officer to arrange it.

Scott Sheppard, Pro Vice-Chancellor International, Queensland University of Technology

The Australian education system is one that encourages involvement. It encourages—indeed requires—students to ask lots of questions, to challenge some of the statements that are made and to be self-motivated.”
6 YOUR CONTRACT

The AusAID scholarships program is a joint effort between AusAID, participating countries and Australian educational institutions. Many of the responsibilities and conditions underpinning the scheme are written into contracts. When you signed the AusAID letter accepting your scholarship, you entered into a contract with AusAID. Your institution also has a contract with AusAID that sets out its obligations.

6.1 Your obligations

Under your contract, you must take up the scholarship in the academic year for which it is offered.

You must attend the pre-departure briefing run by AusAID representatives in your country, and attend your institution’s introductory academic program.

With the exception of reunion visits, holidays and fieldwork, you must live in Australia during your studies.

You must study full time, attend activities that are part of the program (including tutorials and lectures), submit assignments on time and sit for examinations. You must make satisfactory academic progress throughout the course, and follow the rules of the institution.

You cannot hold another Australian government scholarship at the same time as an AusAID scholarship, and you must undertake only your approved program.

You must be aware that paid work during term could compromise your studies.

You must tell the student contact officer at your institution if you want to change your study program, and wait for approval from AusAID before altering it.

You must leave Australia within 14 days of completing your studies and you will not be able to re-enter Australia for two years. If you apply for permanent residence or for a visa to remain in or return to Australia within the two years, you will incur a debt to the Australian Government for the cost of your scholarship. It is important for students to return home immediately on completion of the scholarship for at least
two years to fulfil fundamental objectives of the ADS and ALAS programs—to contribute to long-term development needs of Australia’s partner countries to promote growth and stability; to advance regional reform, development and governance; and build effective networks between Australia and the region.

Other conditions cover collection and transmission of personal information.

See the relevant Scholarships Handbook for the full list of requirements, because your scholarship may be terminated if you breach your contract.

6.2 The institution’s obligations

Your institution is required to send you an information kit at least 14 days before you leave for Australia.

It is also bound to arrange for a representative to pick you up at the airport and take you to your initial accommodation.

It is the institution’s responsibility to arrange the initial accommodation, which must meet certain standards.

The institution must also help you open a bank account if you wish it to, and pay your establishment allowance and contribution to living expenses allowance into it.

It must appoint an AusAID student contact officer, run the Introductory Academic Program and advise AusAID about your academic progress.

It must also arrange and pay for your travel home.

Other obligations of the institution are set out in the institution’s contract.

6.3 AusAID’s obligations

AusAID pays for your tuition fees and travel expenses and reimburses your institution for some other expenses.

The agency conducts a pre-departure briefing in your home country and assists you where possible in obtaining your visa.

The agency also pays for approved supplementary academic support (such as tutorial help and thesis editing) and for airfares for approved fieldwork in your country or in Australia.

AusAID works with institutions to monitor your progress and welfare.

‘The reason that I’ve come abroad is to gain international experience and probably think in a different perspective from what they think back home, and bring a new dimension or a new perspective to any issues or problems my country might face.’

Shareen Tuladhar, Nepal, AusAID scholar

‘I feel an obligation after studying here. The contract asks me to go back for two years but now I also want to go back and I want to contribute and I want to share this experience. I just want to contribute towards the development of my country.’

Ali Sayed, Pakistan, AusAID scholar

› Honour your contract.
› Make the most of your Australian experience.
› Refer to the relevant Scholarships Handbook.
7 RETURNING HOME

There will be much to do before you head home: doing the paperwork to get your new qualifications, vacating your accommodation, freighting excess baggage, closing your bank account.

You have only two weeks to leave Australia after your program is complete. Coursework students have two weeks from the release of exam results; research students have two weeks from the submission of their theses.

7.1 Important documents
Because your departure will be before the usual graduation ceremony, your institution might offer an AusAID scholarship completion ceremony at which you will receive your degree or certificate.

Check with your institution for details, and find out how to get a full academic transcript if it is not available before you leave. Make sure the institution has an up-to-date address for you at home, so that they can send your graduation certificate safely.

If you have children with you, get their school reports. You might also want to take copies of medical records home.

7.2 Accommodation
Leave your accommodation as you found it and arrange an inspection so that you can receive your rental bond.

7.3 Excess baggage
You may have accumulated many possessions by now. Sell as much as you can through the internet (see www.ebay.com.au), newspapers or university bulletin boards, or hold a ‘garage’ sale.

Find an international freight company through the Yellow Pages phone book (www.yellowpages.com.au) to get the rest home. Book early, and check on packing requirements. Remember, you are responsible for the cost of your baggage.

7.4 Travel arrangements
Your institution will make your travel arrangements and pay for your fare.
7.5 Saying goodbye and readjusting

Homesick but saddened to leave their new friends, many scholars have mixed feelings about leaving Australia.

For some, the emotional turmoil that followed their arrival in Australia happens again. They return as changed people to homelands that might also have changed socially, culturally, politically and economically.

Contact your employer before leaving Australia, to discuss arrangements for your return to work.

Your institution might offer a ‘return home’ briefing. This is an opportunity to consider some of the issues you may face on your return.

7.6 Staying in touch

AusAID is developing a global AusAID scholarships alumni. Some countries have national AusAID alumni associations, and some institutions have active overseas chapters of their alumni associations. Ask your student contact officer or AusAID representatives in your country for details.

- Arrange to get your degree or certificate and academic transcript.
- Arrange to vacate your accommodation.
- Organise freight early.
- Your institution will make your travel arrangements and pay for your fare.
- Prepare for return culture shock.
- Keep in touch.
preparing > arriving > settling > living > study

www.ausaid.gov.au/scholar