



Australian Government

Defence



DCSP – Defence Cooperation Scholarship Program Handbook 2025

DCSP

**DEFENCE COOPERATION
SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**

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1. WELCOME

Welcome to the Defence Cooperation Scholarship Program.

The Australian Government's Department of Defence is committed to a safe and secure region, a vision we share with our Indo-Pacific partners. Defence supports this objective through a range of activities including education and training opportunities.

There are many positive outcomes for officers studying in Australia. DCSP Alumni have gone on to senior roles within their militaries and reflect fondly on their time in Australia.

As a DCSP scholar, Defence will support you to undertake a Masters' degree at an Australian university for up to two academic years.

The key objectives of the DCSP are to:

- provide future military and civilian leaders with the opportunity to develop their knowledge and skills to meet their potential
- help build a network of relationships among future leaders which will enhance understanding of each other's security interests
- directly support the development of regional defence capabilities.

This handbook is designed to provide you with comprehensive information about the Defence Cooperation Scholarship Program and studying in Australia.


We hope that your time in Australia allows you to develop new skills and experiences to assist you in developing your military career upon returning home. We encourage you to make the most of your time in Australia by forming memories and friendships to last a lifetime.



2. KEY CONTACTS

Defence

International Education and Training
International Policy and Pacific Divisions
Department of Defence

 ip.iet@defence.gov.au

 +61 2 5131 4261



Palladium

Palladium is contracted to administer some operational aspects of the DCSP, including case management and support for DCSP scholars.

 defence.students@thepalladiumgroup.com

 M +61 408 683 291

DCSP 24 Hour Assistance M 0417 646 855



DCSP Website



www.defencescholarships.com.au

Username: defence

Password: **Defence#2025:DCSP**

DCSP Scholar Registration site

<https://dcsp2025.defencescholarships.com.au>



EMERGENCY CONTACTS



000 - for police, fire or ambulance in case of emergency only



131 444 - for police attendance or other matters



24 Hour Student Health and Support Line
1800 887 283

Membership enquiries
134 148
<https://www.medibankoshc.com.au/>

Health Direct
1800 022 222
www.healthdirect.gov.au



Confidential phone counselling
13 11 14
www.lifeline.org.au



Medical Directory of Australia
MDA Online
www.mdaonline.com.au



Poisons Information Centre
13 11 26

Doctoralia
www.doctoralia.com.au



Australian Government
Department of Home Affairs

Department of Home Affairs
131 881
www.homeaffairs.gov.au



Translation Services Emergency
1300 655 010

Translation & Interpreting Service
131 450 www.tisnational.gov.au



University contacts:



www.realestate.com.au

www.domain.com.au

www.allhomes.com.au

www.realestateview.com.au

www.gumtree.com.au

3. DCSP ENTITLEMENTS

Note

The DCSP is a scholarship funded by the Australian Department of Defence. Defence reserves the right to change any of the DCSP entitlements at any time – changes will be advised and implemented accordingly.

3.1 Allowances

| Entitlement | Amount | Frequency | |
|---|---------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| Stipend | \$2205.50 | Fortnightly in advance | Stipend payments will commence the day after you complete the Defence Scholarship Familiarisation Course at the Defence International Training Centre (DITC). The stipend will cease on your scholarship end date. |
| Family Support Allowance (Unaccompanied) | \$2181 | Once per scholarship | If you are accompanied by family you will receive additional payments as follows Accompanied by Spouse - \$727 For each accompanying child - \$264 |
| Student Support Allowance | \$750 | Twice per year | The first payment will be made at the beginning of Semester 1, and the second payment will be made at the beginning of Semester 2. This is to cover such items as text books, laptops and stationery. |
| Bond Loan | Varied | Once per scholarship | To assist with securing rental accommodation Defence can provide an interest free loan equivalent to six weeks rent, on production of a tenancy agreement. This is to be paid back over no more than nine months with deductions made from your fortnightly stipend until the loan is repaid. |
| Tuition fees | Varied | As required | Full tuition and student services amenities fees will be paid by Defence directly to your university |
| OSHC | Comprehensive cover | For duration of scholarship | More information on OSHC can be found on page 9, 3.3 |

3.2 Family

Dependents

For the purposes of the DCSP, a dependent is:

- Your legal spouse; and
- Children under the age of 18.

Families must reside in Australia for a minimum of 9 months and live at the same residential address as the DCSP student. Defence will fund their return travel and OSHC. If they stay less than 9 months, they may be required to repay their travel to Australia and fund their travel home.

18 year old dependents

Subclass 500 student dependent visas granted under the Defence and Foreign Affairs sector are available to your legal spouse and any children under the age of 18.

If any of your children are aged 18 at the time you commence your scholarship, they will not be eligible to hold such a visa. If you decide to bring ineligible dependents with you on your scholarship, you will be responsible for making all practical and financial arrangements for them.

If any of your children turn 18 after the scholarship commences, the Department of Home Affairs is the immigration policy holder and can provide advice to your unique situation. Defence's decisions in these matters are made in accordance with the Department of Home Affairs policy guidelines to determine whether individuals will be permitted to remain in Australia for the duration of the scholarship. If you have a child who will turn 18 after the scholarship commences, please contact **defence.students@thepalladiumgroup.com** to discuss your specific circumstances.

Reunion visit

If your program is more than 12 months duration and family does not accompany you, Defence may fund one return airfare to the capital city of your home country during the summer break.

3.3 Health Insurance

Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) will be organised for you and any eligible accompanying dependents through Medibank for the duration of your visa (Medibank Comprehensive OSHC). You must not cancel your OSHC under any circumstances. The level of cover provided to DCSP students through OSHC is similar to what Australian citizens receive through Medicare. It will not cover all medical expenses or the full cost of prescription medicines. Any charges not covered by Medibank are referred to as 'gap payments' or 'out-of-pocket expenses' and you will be responsible for these costs.

More information about what is included in your OSHC is available here:

<http://www.medibank.com.au/client/staticpages/oshchome.aspx>

Cover for more comprehensive services, including optical, dental and allied health services is available. You will need to purchase Extras cover at your own expense to take advantage of this cover. Note that there will be minimum waiting periods for some services under this cover.

Please note that pre-existing conditions are not covered under your OSHC policy.

Please refer to section 6 for further information about what to do when you become sick.

Pregnancy

Please note there is a 12-month waiting period for medical services related to pregnancy under the OSHC and Defence will not provide any health care or financial support for pregnancy. If a student (or

spouse) learns of pregnancy prior to arrival in Australia, they are encouraged to remain in the home country until after the birth of the baby. If a student (or spouse) learns of a pregnancy after arrival in Australia they must notify Defence immediately. Defence will work closely with the relevant country Defence Attaché/Adviser to discuss options.

4. DCSP SCHOLARSHIP OBLIGATIONS



4.1 Code of Conduct

You are required to act in a manner that reflects well on Defence, your Parent Service and the DCSP at all times.

The DCSP Code of Conduct summarises the formal obligations and responsibilities as a DCSP scholar. It operates in conjunction with this handbook, which expands on these items as well as describing your entitlements.

You will be required to read these documents carefully and sign the Code of Conduct. It is recommended that you familiarise yourself with all your scholarship conditions. You should bring the original with you to Australia.

Defence take breaches of the scholarship conditions very seriously and may result in your scholarship being terminated.

4.2 Academic program

You are to complete your scholarship program within the duration of your approved academic program. Any exceptions to this condition require prior written approval from the Department of Defence; this includes enrolling in Summer or Winter School subjects.

You are not permitted to change your host university. You are only entitled to complete coursework programs – it is not possible to enrol in a research program. In some cases, the coursework program rules will allow you to undertake a research component however you should seek approval from Defence prior to enrolment.

You are required to attend the host university orientation sessions prior to the commencement of your first semester. Refer to your university website for further information about your orientation program.

You must enrol in the majority of your subjects in face-to-face mode. If the subject has the option to study online or face to face you must choose face to face.

It is your responsibility to advise your lecturers of any absences from class and ensure that you meet all assessment deadlines. You are expected to attend all classes scheduled for your subjects. If you are not able to submit work by the due date, you should seek formal permission for an extension – your university will have specific processes in place. If you are unable to submit assessments or undertake exams due to a medical condition, make sure you obtain a medical certificate from your doctor – this will be required as evidence by your university.

Please note if you fail a subject, any costs incurred with repeating a subject or undertaking additional units will be your financial and practical responsibility.

4.3 No work

It is a strict condition of your scholarship that you do not undertake any paid work while you are in receipt of a DCSP scholarship.

You are not permitted to undertake any volunteer work during your scholarship because you are expected to focus on your academic activities. However, you are permitted to undertake extra-curricular activities at your university. These activities can be joining a club, group or membership that interests you or is related to your field of study.

Your spouse and appropriately aged children are permitted to work on their visas with the following restrictions:

- If you are undertaking a Masters degree, your dependents can work unlimited hours; or
- If you are undertaking a Graduate Diploma/Certificate, your dependents are only allowed to work a maximum of 40 hours per fortnight.

Your dependents cannot commence employment until after you have started studying and must cease on completion of your studies. Any working dependents will need to apply for a [Tax File Number](https://www.ato.gov.au/individuals/tax-file-number/): (<https://www.ato.gov.au/individuals/tax-file-number/>)

4.4 University holidays

You are entitled to travel during official university vacation periods.

If you intend to travel within Australia or overseas, you are required to:

- Inform **defence.students@thepalladiumgroup.com** of travel dates and destinations;
- Provide contact numbers and accommodation details of where you will be staying while you are on vacation; and
- As a courtesy, you should also advise your Defence Attaché/Adviser in Canberra according to the protocols applicable for your country.

If you are travelling within Australia your stipend payments will continue as usual.

If you are travelling outside Australia (whether to your home country or a third country), your stipend payments will cease during this time. However, the rent component will continue to be paid. Your stipend payments will resume on your return to Australia.

4.5 Maintaining regular contact

During your scholarship, you need to maintain regular contact with Palladium at least once a month via email or phone, to provide an update on your academic progress and wellbeing.

Please keep Palladium and your university informed of any changes to your contact details including address, email and mobile phone number. This is to ensure your records are accurate, and you remain contactable throughout your scholarship.

4.6 Monitoring visits

A representative from Defence will conduct a monitoring visit interview at least twice per year. These interviews may be face to face or conducted online. The interviews are compulsory and provide an opportunity to discuss your progress, wellbeing and raise any concerns you have relating to your studies or your scholarship.

4.7 Academic progress

Your university will provide a copy of your academic transcript to Defence at the end of each semester. Prior to your program commencement, you are required to sign the *Release of Personal Information (including Academic Transcripts) Consent Form*, which confirms that the university can provide this information. These reports are provided to your parent service as evidence of your academic progress.

4.8 Post course leave

There is no post course leave.

Under the rules of the scholarship, you (and any eligible accompanying dependents) will be required to leave Australia at the completion of your scholarship.

4.9 Settling out accommodation

There is no settling-out accommodation at the conclusion of your scholarship.

You are responsible for all accommodation costs up until the date of your departure from Australia.



5. COMING TO AUSTRALIA

5.1 Travel

Return travel is included in your scholarship. Travel to Australia will be organised by the Defence Section of the Australian Embassy/High Commission in your home country and includes a one-way ticket to arrive in Australia.

Dependents' travel to Australia should only be arranged after your permanent accommodation has been finalised. Dependents are required to stay in Australia for half the duration of your program to be eligible for fully funded travel.

5.2 Visa

All DCSP students (and their eligible accompanying dependents) travel to Australia on a Foreign Affairs/Defence Sector Visa – **Visa Class** Student, **Visa Subclass** Student (Subclass 500), **Sector** (Foreign Affairs or Defence Sector).

This visa is a Defence sponsored visa and the Defence Post in your home country will guide on the process to apply. All visa applications are submitted online, and there is no cost for this visa.

Part of the visa application process involves obtaining approved medical examinations for you and any accompanying dependents. This will include testing for blood-borne viruses. After you lodge your visa application, you will receive details about the approved medical providers who can conduct these examinations.

Costs associated with lodging visa applications and obtaining approved medical examinations for the purposes of applying for the visa are the responsibility of the candidate and/or the candidate's parent force in the first instance. However, the Defence Post at their discretion may pay/reimburse the costs.

Department of Home Affairs impose very strict conditions on this visa, which include but are not limited to:

- You and your dependent(s) are required to reside in the same premises at all times during the stay in Australia;
- Dependents who are school-aged children must attend school for the duration of their time in Australia; and
- Defence-sponsored visas are not to be used to travel to Australia for any reason except attending or accompanying a student who is attending a university education opportunity sponsored by Defence.

More information about this visa category can be found at:

<https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-listing/student-500>

5.3 Pre-departure briefing

The pre-departure briefing will provide you with the opportunity to ask questions and may allow you to meet with other DCSP students from your country. The Australian Embassy/High Commission in your country will advise you of the date, time and location of the briefing.

Document Checklist

Pre-Departure



- 1** **Passport and Visa Grant letter**
- 2** **Flight Details/Tickets**
- 3** **Originals (and certified copies) of all important documents**
eg. Birth certificates and Marriage certificate
- 4** **Originals of all documents provided as part of your University applications**
eg. Academic transcripts, degree certificates, training certificates, references, and work experience certificate
- 5** **Credit Cards**
- 6** **International Drivers Licence**
You should also bring your driving licence from your home country and an official translation if the original is not in English
- 7** **Relevant Medical Records and/or Prescriptions**
- 8** **Immunisation Records**
For you and your family, translated into English
- 9** **School Reports, Translated into English**
Essential if your children will attend school in Australia
- 10** **Letter Of Offer from the Host University**
- 11** **Letter of DCSP Scholarship Confirmation**
Received from the Defence Post in your home country and submitted as part of your visa application
- 12** **DCSP Administration Guide and Code of Conduct**
- 13** **Rental Reference Letters**
To assist you in securing accommodation (or personal reference letters in English)
- 14** **Proof Of Income/Savings In Your Home Country**
Helpful when applying for rental accommodation
- 15** **DCSP Handbook**
Hardcopy will be provided to you at DITC
- 16** **List Of Important Contact Information**

Keep all documents with you in your hand luggage while travelling. It is recommended that you scan all of these documents, save an electronic copy, and email to yourself, and leave another set of documents at home in case you lose the originals.

5.4 What to Bring

Baggage allowances vary depending on the airline you travel on. Please check the baggage entitlement once you receive your ticket to Australia.

You will be able to purchase most things upon arrival in Australia, but the price may be higher than in your own country. Many international food items are available in Australian cities.

Clothing

On Australian university campuses, students usually dress informally. Jeans or pants with t-shirts or jumpers, sneakers or running shoes are commonly worn. Shorts and sandals are common during the summer months.

A suit and tie for men and equivalent dress for women is necessary for some formal functions such as graduation ceremonies or student balls. For celebrations, you may want to bring traditional dress and accessories.

Most primary and secondary school students will be required to wear a school uniform. This can be purchased in Australia.

You will be arriving in Australia during summer, Australian Summers can reach very high temperatures. You will need to bring clothing adequate for this climate.

You will need to wear your uniform while you are at DITC and at the DCSP Seminar, so ensure that you bring both summer and winter uniforms with you. Details of uniform requirements can be found in the DITC Joining Instructions.

<https://ditc.defence.gov.au/courses/arrival-information>

Other items you might need

Remember to bring medical and optical prescriptions to last the duration of your stay in Australia.

We recommend that you bring a mobile phone and laptop. Visit the Australian Communications and Media Authority www.acma.gov.au before making any purchases. Any external or built-in modems must be Austel Approved in order to function in Australia.

You may need to bring a power adaptor or purchase one when you arrive. The standard voltage for electrical items in Australia is 240V. Please check the voltage requirements of your electrical items carefully prior to use. If you do not have the correct adaptor, your items may not work or be damaged.



5.5 Arrival in Australia

Customs

Australia has strict laws about what you can bring into the country, particularly regarding food, animal and plant materials.

If you are carrying more than **A\$10,000** in cash, you must also declare this on your Incoming Passenger Card. It is strongly recommended that you do not carry large sums of cash and instead arrange an electronic transfer of funds into your Australian bank account once it has been opened.

If you are in doubt about whether you are carrying prohibited goods declare them anyway on the Incoming Passenger Card. If you declare something and it is prohibited, it will simply be confiscated. If you do not declare something, and it is later found in your luggage, there are serious penalties including on-the-spot fines and prosecution.

Read the Arriving in Australia information available on the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources website for more information:

<https://www.agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity-trade/travelling/to-australia> For the process on clearing customs and immigration, please view the following website:

<https://www.abf.gov.au/entering-and-leaving-australia/crossing-the-border/at-the-border>

You should also tell your family and friends what is not permitted to be mailed to Australia by checking the Bringing or mailing goods to Australia page of the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources website:

<https://www.agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity-trade/travelling/bringing-mailing-goods>

Money

Only Australian currency can be used in Australia. When you arrive in the Airport it is recommended that you withdraw Australian dollars from the ATMs displaying the Cirrus logo (if your ATM card has international access) or exchange money, as most banks do not open on Saturdays and Sundays.

Mobile Phones

There are mobile phone outlets at the airport where you can purchase a pre- or post-paid Australian SIM card if you wish to have immediate mobile connectivity.

Most modern smart phones have an e-sim capability. You may be able to download and activate an e-sim prior to departing.

Note that SIMs are widely available and can be purchased later.

Reception

A person holding a Defence International Training Centre (DITC) sign will meet you at the airport. Refer to the DSF Joining Instructions for detailed information about where to meet the DITC representative and what to do if you cannot find the DITC representative. The DITC representative will provide you with transport to RAAF Williams and allocate your accommodation.

5.6 Defence Scholarship Familiarisation course

You will participate in the Defence Scholarship Familiarisation (DSF) course prior to commencing your university course. The DSF runs from 6 January 2025 to 31 January 2025 and is held at the Defence International Training Centre (DITC) in Melbourne. You will depart for your university location from 31 January 2025.

The DSF prepares you for the demands of academic study, focusing on English for academic purposes and study skills. The course will introduce academic standards required at Australian tertiary institutions and a range of concepts such as academic writing referencing and plagiarism.

Defence representatives from International Education and Training will also brief and meet with you during the DSF. This is an opportunity to ask questions about your scholarship.

Additional information about DITC, courses and facilities can be found at the Defence International Training Centre website: <https://www.defence.gov.au/ADC/adftc/DITC/>

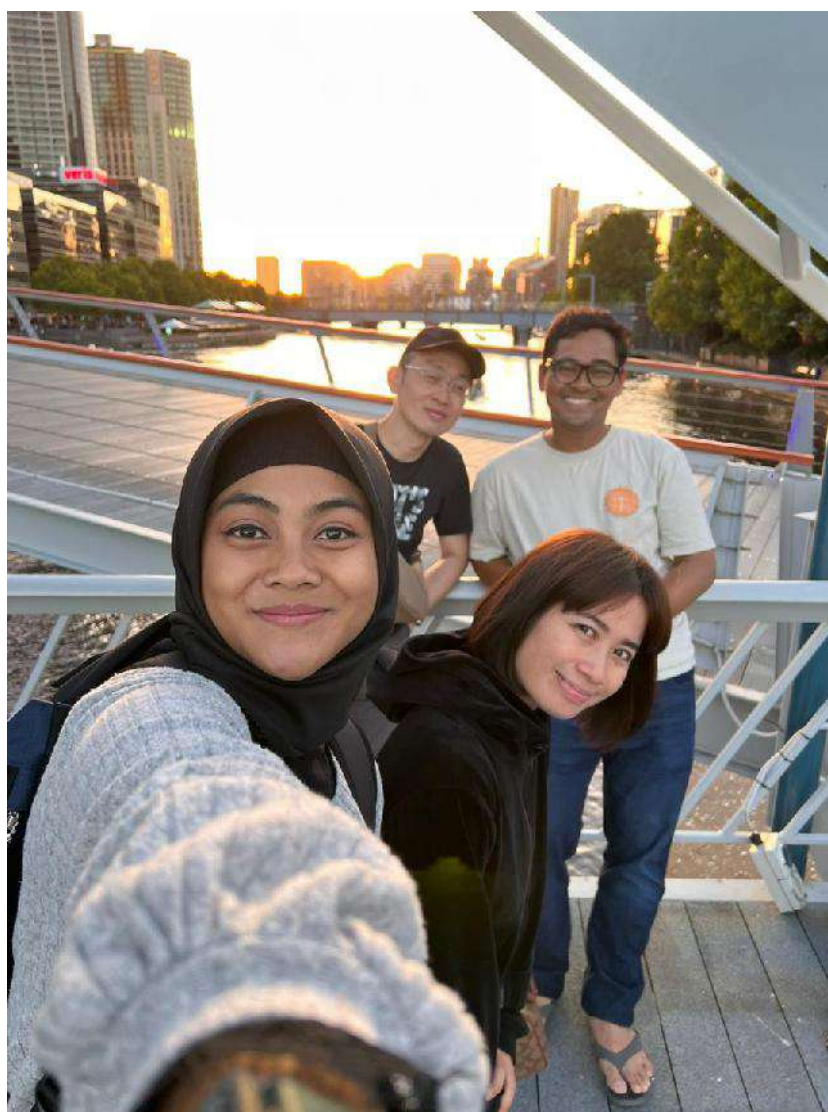
You may not travel away from Melbourne during the DSF course, but are welcome to tour Melbourne during the weekends. You must advise the DITC Orderly Room of any planned day trips during your stay at DITC.

5.7 Onward travel and temporary accommodation

Your onward travel to your host location will be organised and fully funded. This includes flights, excess baggage and airport reception to take you to your temporary accommodation.

14 nights of temporary accommodation will be arranged and funded. You may be required to share with a student of the same gender.

Please note that temporary accommodation provided under the DCSP is room only. Laundry, cooking, mini-bar, internet, roomservice, parking, etc. will be your responsibility.



6. HEALTH

6.1 What do I do if I become sick?



For a life-threatening emergency, dial **000**.

Or, if you are close to a public hospital and do not require an ambulance, go straight to the Emergency Department. You should only do this if it is a genuine emergency.

In Australia you do not have to go to a hospital to see a doctor. You can see a doctor (also known as a GP – General Practitioner) in their private practice or medical centre, with part or the entire doctor's fee covered by your OSHC provider, Medibank.

Note: Some services will incur a gap payment, for which you will be responsible for paying.

Most GPs require you to make an appointment. It is important to note that most GPs will request full payment from you at the time of consultation and you may need to submit the receipt to claim the rebate back from Medibank.

6.2 Seeing a doctor

General Practitioners (GPs) see patients in medical centres, or in their own 'practice' or 'surgery'. The role of the GP is to monitor your general physical and mental health, treat you for common illnesses like the flu or colds, chronic illnesses like diabetes and back pain or longer term conditions like depression, asthma and pregnancy. Depending on your health/medical condition, the GP can refer you to a specialist doctor if required.

The first step is to register with the GP. Remember to bring your OSHC or medical insurance details.

For more information on what to expect at your GP appointment visit :

www.defencescholarships.com.au/health/



Remember to get a medical certificate from the doctor if your injury or illness may affect your studies, especially submission of assessment, and attendance at classes and exams.

You will need to submit a medical certificate to your university when applying for consideration on medical grounds.

6.3 Finding a doctor

Medibank OSHC Support service will be able to provide advice regarding your nearest GP in Canberra. This can also be found by searching "Find a Provider" (<https://www.medibankoshc.com.au/find-provider/#/>). Medibank also offers a Health and Support Line. This service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. A fully qualified nurse will be able to make a quick assessment of your situation and can also advise you of the nearest doctor or medical clinic.

Some universities have a medical centre on campus available to students and their families, but you may find it more convenient to attend a doctor nearer to your home.

In addition, the following links will assist you in finding a doctor:

- <https://www.mdaonline.com.au/>
- http://www.healthdirectory.com.au/General_practitioners/

6.4 Public hospital waiting times

If you cannot get an appointment with a GP and want to go to a public hospital to see a doctor, you will need to attend an emergency room. Be prepared to wait for a very long time, often up to several hours.

6.5 Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)

All international students in Australia on a student visa must have health insurance. Your insurance is organised and paid for by Defence through Medibank.

Please note the following:

- The level of cover provided by OSHC is a basic cover – similar to what Australian citizens receive through Medicare. It will not necessarily cover all medical expenses or the full cost of prescription medicines. Any charges not covered by Medibank are referred to as 'gap payments'.
- Pre-existing conditions are not covered by your OSHC – there is a 12 month waiting time for treatment for any conditions deemed to be pre-existing; this includes pregnancy.

Note: *You must not cancel your OSHC under any circumstances.*

You can download the Medibank OSHC mobile app:



<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=au.com.medibank.oshc>

<https://apps.apple.com/au/app/id1456559732>

Medibank Health support (<https://www.medibankoshc.com.au/oshc-support/health-support/>) is found on their website along with what is included in your OSHC (<https://www.medibank.com.au/overseas-health-insurance/oshc/comprehensive-oshc/?productType=students>).

General information about OSHC is available at the Department of Health's website (<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/overseas-student-health-cover-oshc-fact-sheet>).

6.6 Pharmacies

You must take the prescription given to you by the doctor to a pharmacy or chemist to purchase the medication. You are able to walk in to any pharmacy/ chemist/drug store in Australia and will only have to wait for a short period (less than 30 minutes) for your prescription medicine to be prepared.

6.7 Medication

Prescription Medication

Medication prescribed by your doctor is not free. You must pay the pharmacy. You should also check with Medibank on the amount you can claim back for prescription medication. Please ensure that you get a detailed invoice so you are able to claim some of the paid amount.

Over the Counter Medication

Pharmacies/chemists also provide a variety of over-the-counter medications useful for treating colds, headaches, allergies and other minor ailments without a prescription. Ask the pharmacist on duty for advice regarding the best medication for your symptoms. Ensure that you advise the pharmacist of any other medications you are taking and/or allergies. Note that over-the-counter medications are not covered by your OSHC and you will need to pay the full cost of these items.

6.8 Dental and optical

To find a dentist or optometrist, refer to the MDA (<https://www.mdaonline.com.au/>) or Doctoralia (<https://www.doctoralia.com.au/>) websites or the Yellow Pages directory. You will need to make an appointment and pay the full fee for this service as they are not covered under your OSHC.

You are welcome to purchase 'Extras' cover at your own expense for more comprehensive cover (including optical, dental and allied health services). However, please note that waiting periods apply for some services. Costs for adding Extras to your cover will be your own financial responsibility. Contact Medibank directly to get a quote and more information.

6.9 Translating and interpreter services 131 450

If you are having difficulties communicating with your doctor, the Translation and Interpreter Service (TIS) can be used. For more information phone 131 450 or visit their website (<http://www.tisnational.gov.au/>).

6.10 Mental health and well-being

Maintaining a healthy mind is just as important as staying physically fit. With a positive mindset you are better able to maximise your learning, achieve your goals and cope with stress. Everyone experiences periods of difficulty when their mental well-being is put to the test. At these times, it is important to draw on resources to help you such as family and friends, your host university, medical services and mental health specialists.

For international students, it is not unusual to be impacted by adjusting to a new cultural environment and the pressures of an education system that may be very different to your home country. Some examples of common emotions or well-being concerns are:

- Culture shock;
- Feeling anxious about making new friends;
- Loneliness or social isolation;
- Anxiety and stress about exams, assignments or deadlines;
- Lack of motivation or depression; and
- Panic or worrying.

If you experience these or any other mental health concerns during your program, there are different support options that can be useful.

Often, you can manage your own mental health during times of stress by using self-help techniques such as exercise, getting enough sleep, having regular breaks from study, practicing relaxation (such as yoga, meditation or deep breathing), and taking steps to make new friends.

If these techniques do not help, or you start to experience more serious concerns, it is important to seek appropriate help, in one or more of the following ways. Immediately:

- Talk to someone you trust – a friend, colleague, supervisor, or the Scholarship Program Administrator;
- Visit your GP – they can refer you to people with the skills to really help;
- Make use of the free services at your host university – international student support, student well-being, counselling services etc.; and
- Contact a mental health service provider – Australia has many free telephone and online services.

Sometimes seeking professional or medical help can be personally difficult, especially in cultures where mental well-being is not yet easily discussed. In Australia, mental health issues are more openly discussed and support is readily available to everyone. Whatever you are feeling you are not alone, you are not a failure and it is not your fault.

Asking for help when needed is vital to ensuring you have a positive and successful experience, so remember that Defence and Palladium are only a phone call, email or text away. More information can be found under Health tab on the DCSP Website (<https://defencescholarships.com.au/living-in-australia/health>).

6.11 Counselling and stress management

Most universities have a free confidential counselling service available to enrolled students.

Defence has established support for DCSP students who may be experiencing stress or a mental health problem with a specialist professional service provider. They will be able to work with you on short-term solutions including:

- Face-to-face counselling;
- Telephone counselling in Australia; and
- Telephone counselling with an overseas counsellor (if required due to English language difficulties).

For information on how to access this service, please ask Defence. Please note that any requests of this nature will be kept strictly confidential.

6.12 Lifeline (mental health support) 13 11 14

Lifeline’s service is provided by trained volunteer telephone counsellors who take calls 24-hours a day, any day of the week, from anywhere in Australia.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING



Maintaining a healthy mind is just as important as having a healthy body.



A healthy mind will help you to maximise your learning and program goals.



Everyone experiences periods of difficulty when their mental wellbeing is put to the test.



In Australia, mental health issues can be openly discussed and support is readily available to everyone.



It is important to have your own self-help techniques as well as to draw on other available resources (see examples below).



Asking for help or support when needed is vital to ensuring you have a positive and successful DCSP experience.



Palladium is only a phone call or email away!

Common emotions or wellbeing concerns during cultural adjustment can include:

- Culture shock
- Anxiousness
- Loneliness or isolation
- Stress about studies
- Depression
- Panic or worry

Visit your GP who can refer you to a local mental health professional

Include frequent breaks in your study schedule (5-10 minutes every hour)

Exercise regularly (30 minutes a day is good)

Take steps to make some new friends in Australia

Make use of the free on-campus services at your host organisation - international student support, student wellbeing or counselling services

Anticipate your busy periods, set realistic goals and reward yourself for achievements

Make contact with a mental health provider - Australia has many free online and telephone services

Make sure you get some fresh air and sunlight each day

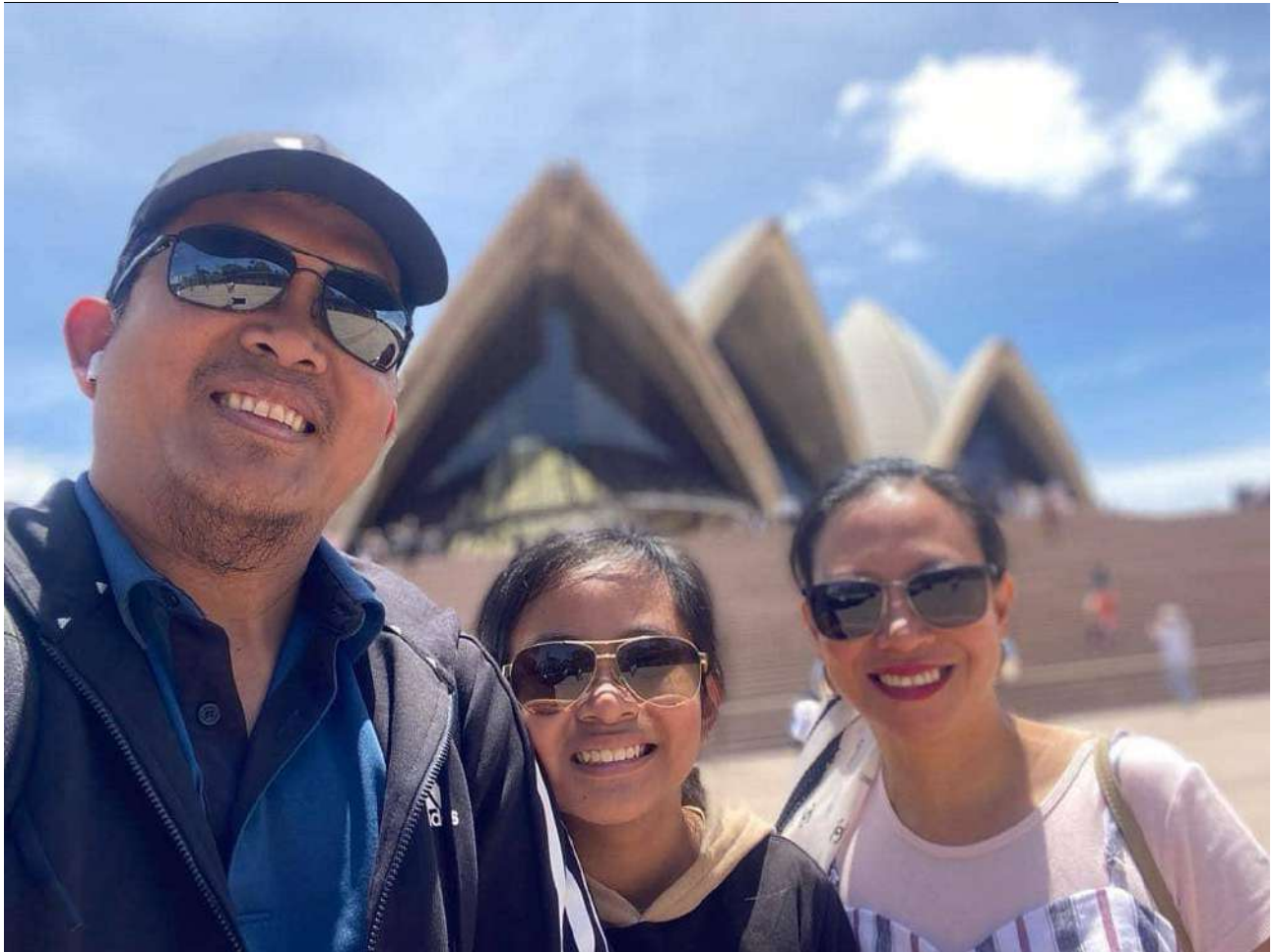
Talk to someone you trust - a friend, colleague, supervisor, Palladium

Practice relaxation such as yoga, meditation or deep breathing

Be sure to get enough sleep (6-8 hours a night)

Eat a balanced diet and avoid excess caffeine and alcohol

7. LIVING IN AUSTRALIA



7.1 Finances

We recommend that you speak with your bank or financial institution in your home country before you leave. You should be aware of all fees and charges, ease of access to your funds, and safety issues concerning the way in which you will access those funds. We specifically recommend that you organise a credit card that can be used in Australia to withdraw funds when you first arrive, and that you find out how to transfer funds from your current account to your Australian bank account once it is set up.

You will need to make sure you bring enough funds to support you when you first arrive. It is not safe to bring large sums of cash with you. Lost credit cards or travellers cheques can be replaced, but insurance companies will not replace lost or stolen cash.

7.2 Setting up a bank account

Opening a bank account is one of the first things you will do after your arrival in Australia. DITC staff will assist you in doing this. Banks are generally open from 09:30 to 16:00 (Monday to Friday). Some banks in certain locations are open on Saturday mornings.

In order to open a bank account you will need an Australian address, and you will be required to provide documents such as your passport, birth certificate, driver's licence or a signed credit card.

You are welcome to open a bank account with a different banking institution once you have arrived in your host city. Please notify Palladium of any changes as a priority.

ATMs

Automatic Teller Machines (ATM) transactions can be carried out 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In most cases it will take around five working days for a bank to issue you with an Australian ATM card (also known as a Debit Card) once you have opened an account. Check with your bank about any fees associated with your account and the use of an ATM card.

ATMs are located everywhere (including the airport) and you can immediately withdraw cash from your overseas bank account at ATMs displaying the Cirrus logo (if your ATM card has international access). Check with your financial institution before leaving home.



Credit cards

All major international credit cards are accepted in Australia, but you must remember that repayments for many of these cards can only be made in the country where they were issued. Do not rely on being able to get a credit card once you arrive in Australia because this is very difficult due to credit and identification laws.

BPAY

BPAY is a common method of payment. You will see the BPAY logo on many accounts or invoices, including rent, electricity, gas, phone, Internet, insurance and car registration. You can make payments directly from your Australian bank account by following the straightforward instructions: <http://www.bpay.com.au/Personal/Paying-with-BPAY.aspx>



Budget

When you first arrive in Australia there will be some one-off costs including:

- Rental bond and 2 weeks rent in advance (total up to 8 weeks rent);
- Furniture and household items; and
- Connection of utilities (electricity, gas, water, phone, internet).

Cost of living in Australia

State specific cost of living references can be found on the DCSP website. The below graphic provides an indication of average living costs in Australia:



7.3 Permanent accommodation

It is your responsibility to secure permanent accommodation. There is a range of accommodation options available including university accommodation, private rental accommodation and share houses.

When choosing accommodation, there are a number of considerations including proximity to your university, availability of public transport, and how much of your stipend you are willing to pay. Accommodation in Australia is generally expensive, but costs vary significantly by city.

In 2024 the average rent paid by DCSP students in private rental accommodation was:

| | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Adelaide | House \$590 per week | Unit \$460 per week |
| Brisbane | House \$620 per week | Unit \$590 per week |
| Canberra | House \$685 per week | Unit \$570 per week |
| Darwin | House \$650 per week | Unit \$550 per week |
| Hobart | House \$550 per week | Unit \$460 per week |
| Melbourne | House \$570 per week | Unit \$550 per week |
| Perth | House \$650 per week | Unit \$550 per week |
| Regional NSW (Wollongong) | House \$670 per week | Unit \$560 per week |
| Sydney | House \$750 per week | Unit \$700 per week |

Share houses and university accommodation are usually cheaper than renting private houses.

Prior to your arrival in Australia, you should research the accommodation options available in your host city. The accommodation services section of your university's website will include the most relevant information for your area. It is also recommended that you discuss options with the Accommodation Officer at your university prior to leaving your home country.

Most landlords will not allow more than two people to share a bedroom, regardless of whether you are prepared to do so. If you have a large family and you are planning to bring them to Australia you need to be aware that rent is likely to consume a large portion of your stipend.

University-managed accommodation

Most universities have a range of on-campus/near campus accommodation. Availability is usually limited and often you need to apply several months in advance to secure a room/apartment. You will need to contact the university directly to submit an application.

If you are interested in applying for university-managed accommodation you should do so as soon as possible after your university admission is finalised. Note that any costs associated with applying for university-managed accommodation will be your responsibility.

University-managed accommodation is generally available for unaccompanied students only.

If you are successful in securing university-managed accommodation, please inform defence.students@thepalladiumgroup.com as it may be possible in some cases to negotiate special arrangements regarding the required security deposit.

Share Houses

Sharing a house or apartment is cheaper than renting your own accommodation and provides you with an opportunity to meet new people. However, you will also be sharing facilities and this option is usually not suitable if you are bringing your children with you to Australia.

Common sites to search for share houses include:

- www.flatmates.com.au
- www.roommates.com.au
- www.gumtree.com.au

There are also specific Facebook groups in most cities where share houses are advertised.

Rental Accommodation

Renting a property can be expensive but will also provide you with privacy and is generally the most suitable option if you are bringing your family to Australia. In addition to rent, you will also need to cover expenses such as electricity, gas, telephone and internet.

Common sites for searching for rental houses include:

- www.realestate.com.au
- www.allhomes.com.au
- www.domain.com.au

There may also be advertisements in local newspapers, community noticeboards and online student accommodation services. Visit the **Living in Australia – Accommodation** page of the DCSP website for more information:

<http://www.defencescholarships.com.au/accommodation>

Once you have secured accommodation, please update Palladium and your university with your address. If you experience issues with your rental accommodation or are unsure of your rights and responsibilities, please contact Palladium.

Applying for a rental property

Applying for a rental property is a competitive process, and you may need to inspect and apply for a number of properties before you are successful. The steps are:

1. Inspect the property:
2. Submit an application:
3. Sign a lease/tenancy agreement:
4. Pay a bond:
5. The Condition Report:

More information on applying for a rental property can be found at www.defencescholarships.com - Accommodation

TIP

Take photos of any existing damage to the property (no matter how small) and send to the real estate agent to ensure you will not be liable for pre-existing issues. Keep a copy of all correspondence you have with the real estate agent.

During the Tenancy

During the tenancy it is your responsibility to pay the rent on time and maintain the property, including during any periods that you may be traveling during university vacations. You will be expected to change light globes and keep the accommodation clean. If repairs or maintenance are required, the landlord or real estate agent will generally be responsible for the cost, unless caused by misuse of the items by you or your visitors. You should notify your real estate agent/landlord promptly if any repairs are required and ask your real estate agent for an emergency contact number. You should not undertake any maintenance or repairs yourself without consulting the real estate agent, otherwise you may be liable for the cost.

For properties that have gardens or lawns, maintenance of gardens may be a requirement of the lease. Australia has been suffering from drought for the last few years. Check if there are any restrictions in your area limiting water use, particularly for watering gardens and washing cars.

All rental properties in Australia are required to have smoke alarms. A green light generally means that the alarm is working. A beeping noise means that there is a defect in the device, or you need to replace the batteries.

Connecting Utilities

You will usually be responsible for connecting utilities such as electricity, telephone, internet, water and gas (if available). There may be connection fees involved. Your real estate agent should be able to provide you with a list of utility providers in your area. Make sure you read the contract with any utility provider carefully before signing it and check the length of the contract as there may be fees for terminating the contract early.

Furnishing your accommodation

Most rental accommodation in Australia is unfurnished. You will be provided with a one-off family support allowance to assist with the costs of purchasing furniture and household items.

Cheap second-hand furniture and household items can be found online and in person:

- www.gumtree.com.au
- www.tradingpost.com.au

Facebook Marketplace or Facebook buy and sell groups local to your area

Charity stores (known as op shops):

- www.salvos.org.au
- www.redcross.org.au/stores
- www.vinnies.org.au/shops

Garage sales – sales held by people at their homes selling personal belongings.

There are also large department stores in most cities that sell cheap furniture and household items, such as K-Mart, Big W and IKEA.

Contents insurance

If you are in a rental property it is recommended that you obtain Contents Insurance for your belongings. This is a form of house insurance that insures the contents of the house. Landlords will usually have house insurance but your belongings will not be covered.

Before purchasing the insurance, read the insurance Product Disclosure Statement (PDS) carefully to understand what is covered and/or excluded in your policy, the claims process and any other terms and conditions of the policy. Contents Insurance may replace your belongings if they are stolen or damaged in a fire or storm.

Moving Out

When you leave the property, you need to provide the real estate agent with notice of the date you intend to move out. It is advisable to provide at least 4 weeks written notice and check your lease agreement for the conditions of ending your lease.

You will be responsible for ensuring the property is clean with no damage when you move out. The real estate agent will conduct an inspection with a final Condition Report and, if satisfied, will make arrangements to return your bond.

7.4 Communication

Telephones

If you are bringing your mobile phone, we strongly advise you not to use international roaming for extended periods in Australia as it is very expensive. Instead, you should purchase an Australian SIM card.

Major telecommunications service providers in Australia include Telstra, Optus and Vodafone. These companies have stores in most major shopping areas, and generally offer both phone and internet services.

There are a number of options available for buying a mobile phone and paying for your phone usage while in Australia. Whether you decide to sign up for a contract or a prepaid service, you will need to visit a service provider store and purchase a SIM card. If you choose to go with a contract, you will need to prove your identity (passport), proof of address in Australia (rental contract), and may need to provide evidence that you can pay for your phone bill.

Ensure you read the terms and conditions of the contract carefully and check the length of the contract.

To call overseas numbers from Australia dial: **0011 + country code + area code + number**

The Australia-wide number for emergency attendance by ambulance, fire and police is **000**.

Email and internet

Internet and email access is readily available at your university, internet cafes, hotels, hostels, and libraries.

Australia uses RJ-45 telephone plugs and Telstra EXI-160 four-pin plugs. If your plug is not correct you can purchase one at a local electronics shop. Also check that your PC-card modem is suitable in Australia.

7.5 Transport

Transport concessions

As an Australian Government sponsored student, you **may** be eligible for some form of concession fare on public transport, depending on the State in which you are studying.

Please note that international students are not currently eligible for full transport concessions in Victoria and New South Wales.

For the most up-to-date information on eligibility for discount fares and/or transport concessions, please consult the Student Centre at your university, or the transport board in your State.

Driving

If you are going to drive in Australia, even if you are an experienced driver, you must know the road rules before you attempt to drive.

Australians drive on the left-hand side of the road. Speed limits are displayed at regular intervals on all main roads and range from 25 kilometres per hour near schools at certain times of day, to 110 kilometres per hour on some freeways. Some important road rules that you need to be aware of are:

- Speeding is strictly monitored by police and speed cameras operate in various locations. Similarly, cameras operate at some traffic lights to monitor anyone driving through a red light. Fines for speeding and running red lights are expensive.
- The use of mobile phones for any purposes when driving is against the law if it's not hands-free. This applies to sending or receiving text messages, as well as calls. Penalties for touching your mobile phone for any purpose while driving are severe.
- The penalties for driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs are severe and convictions involve a criminal record as well as fines/jail and loss of license. A conviction for drink driving may result in cancellation of your scholarship.
- The driver and all passengers in a car must wear a seatbelt. Children must travel in a child seat or booster relevant to their age group and height/weight.

Different road rules apply in different States or Territories and it is important to check on these before you start driving. You must observe the safety rules and regulations. There are also differences in license requirements. Contact your local Motor Registry Office for further information.

Driving licences

You must ensure that your license from your home country will not expire while you are in Australia.

If they are available in your country, you should apply for an International Driving Permit before you leave.

As a holder of a temporary visa, you will be regarded as a 'visiting driver' and will be allowed to drive in Australia as long as you have a valid overseas driver's license. When driving, it is compulsory to carry:

- the original license from your home country
- a translation of your driver's license (if the original is not in English)
- International Driving Permit (if available in your country);
- your passport; and
- your Visa Grant Letter.

Rules regarding driving licenses vary between States and Territories. For State specific information please visit

www.austroads.com.au/drivers-vehicles/overseas-driver-licences/visiting-drivers

Owning a car

Any motor vehicle you own must be registered before you drive it on the road. You must register it in your name and provide your State motor registration board with your driver's licence details and your residential address in Australia.



You are not permitted to purchase a car until after you complete the Defence Scholarship Familiarisation course.

The Register of Encumbered Vehicles (REVS) is a service that will determine if any other party, such as a bank or finance company, has an interest in the vehicle. REVS should always be checked before buying a second-hand vehicle, especially in a private sale, to ensure there is no dispute over ownership. REVS can be contacted by telephone on **1300 799 523** (www.revs.com.au).

After you have purchased a car, and after you have sold a car, you must ensure that legal ownership is transferred. There are different processes which apply in each State and Territory. Please visit the DCSP website for state specific links.

It is recommended that you have insurance if you own a car. 'Comprehensive' insurance is recommended, as this will ensure that you are covered for any damage to your car, as well as any other cars or property that is damaged if the accident is your fault. At a minimum, 'third party property' insurance is essential, as this will protect you in the event of an accident which is your fault and reduce the amount that you will need to pay for any damage you may have caused to another car or property. Read the insurance policy carefully before signing.

You may wish to join the Automobile Association in your State or Territory. For a relatively low annual fee this will provide you with 24-hour roadside assistance.

7.6 Obeying the law

Australia is a representative democracy. Key features of Australia's system of governance include the rule of law and separation of powers (judicial, legislative, and executive). Everyone in Australia must follow the law, whether a citizen, resident, or visitor.

Failure to comply with the laws of Australia could result in termination of your scholarship, as well as a fine, the cancellation of your visa, deportation back home or imprisonment.

In being granted a visa to study in Australia, you may have signed a document (Australian Values Statement Temporary) agreeing to respect Australian values and obey the laws of Australia for the duration of your stay. You should ensure that you read the 'Life in Australia: Australian Values and Principles' booklet, which is available at: www.immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/help-support/meeting-our-requirements/australian-values

Australia values rights such as:

- Freedom of speech and expression;
- Freedom of association;
- Freedom of religion;
- Secular government; and
- Provision of equal opportunities for all citizens.

In Australia all people are treated equally, and it is illegal to discriminate against a person based on their gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, age, disability or marital status.

You can find a comprehensive outline of Australian law and the legal system at: www.ag.gov.au/legal-system.

Child protection and family violence

There are very strict laws relating to child protection and child abuse in Australia. Child abuse is illegal in Australia, and you should be mindful that behavior that may be culturally acceptable in your home country, such as physically disciplining a child, is illegal in Australia.

The same principles apply with respect to family or domestic violence. Family violence, in all its forms, is illegal and is not tolerated in Australia. This includes verbal abuse, psychological abuse, emotional abuse, financial abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, harassment, and stalking. Further information is available at www.1800respect.org.au.

7.7 Safety and security in Australia

Australian cities are relatively safe compared to many other cities around the world, but it would be wrong to think they are completely safe. Ask trusted friends or colleagues to advise you of areas that are considered unsafe within your host city.

Emergencies – Dial 000

The triple zero (**000**) service is the quickest way to reach police, fire or ambulance services in life threatening or emergency situations only.

112 may also be dialled from mobile phones. Dialling **112** will override password locks on mobile phones and will ensure you can be connected even if your provider does not have any coverage, or you are out of credit.

Do not call **000** if it is not an emergency.

Police

In a non-emergency situation, for example to report a theft, either visit your local police station or contact the police assistance line **131 444** (NSW, SA, WA, ACT, TAS). In Victoria and Queensland please phone your local police station for assistance.

In Australia, police protect people and properties, detect and prevent crime, and preserve peace for everyone. They are not connected to the military or politics.

State Emergency Service

The State Emergency Service (SES) is an emergency and rescue service dedicated to providing assistance in natural disasters, rescues, road crashes and extreme weather conditions. It is made up almost entirely of volunteers and operates in all States and Territories in Australia.

For emergency assistance in a flood or storm dial **132 500**.

Safety in Australia

The same basic safety rules you would follow in your home country should be applied when you come to Australia, for example:

- Be alert and aware of your surroundings if you are alone or it is dark
- Be discreet with your cash and valuable belongings
- To avoid your drink being 'spiked' (someone putting a drug into your drink), always buy your own drink at pubs and clubs, and never leave it unattended
- Lock the doors and windows of your house when it is unattended
- Consider installing alarms in your house to deter thieves
- Install anti-virus and security software on your computer

There are also some safety practices that you may not require at home, but you should be aware of whilst you are in Australia. This includes:

Beach Safety

Australia has many fantastic beaches, but it is important to be careful when swimming. Never swim on your own, at night or whilst under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Many beaches are patrolled by surf lifesavers who wear easily identifiable uniforms. On patrolled beaches you should always swim between the red and yellow flags. Before swimming be aware of the conditions. Refer to www.beachsafe.org.au for more information about beach safety.

Public Transport

Public transport in Australia is generally safe, but you should avoid dark or isolated areas, particularly at night. There are occasionally racially motivated incidents on public transport. All trains and trams have emergency buttons to connect to the driver. Any incidents of this nature should be reported to police and public transport officials (such as bus or train drivers).

Bushfires

Every year, parts of Australia are affected by bushfires. Under no circumstances should you travel towards a bushfire. Always follow the directions of emergency services personnel. If you are ever advised to evacuate your location due to the threat from a nearby fire, please follow this advice – the most important thing is to ensure that you and your family are safe.

Australian Wildlife

Snakes are an important part of the Australian environment. There are a number of venomous snakes in Australia such as the eastern brown snake. If you are bitten by a snake call **000** or go straight to hospital. Do not attempt to catch or kill the snake first. Try to keep still while waiting for an ambulance and apply a tight bandage to the area.

Snakes are most active in spring. When bushwalking wear protective clothing such as over-ankle boots, step onto (rather than over) logs as there may be a snake on the other side and stick to well-used trails. To make your property less attractive to snakes remove debris and woodpiles, and keep lawns cut short. If you find a snake on your property do not attempt to catch or kill the snake. Keep children and pets away from the snake and call a professional snake catcher to remove the snake from your property.

Between September and November, the magpie (one of Australia's common native birds) becomes extremely protective of its young and may be aggressive. Magpie behaviour can include swooping and pecking. Exercise caution when walking near magpie nests and try to take alternative routes during this season.

Salespeople and Scams

If you receive door-to-door salespeople asking you to donate to charity, change service providers (especially electricity or internet) or try to sell you something, ensure that you ask for identification. Do not feel any pressure to sign documents, hand over money or give personal information without taking time to consider what is offered and/or requested.

Never give your bank details or passwords to anyone who calls you on the phone. Your bank or internet company will never call you asking for this information. If you receive a lot of unwanted sales calls or scam calls, you may wish to add your phone numbers (landline and mobile) to the Do Not Call Register. More information is available at: www.donotcall.gov.au

7.8 Adapting to life in Australia

Going to a new country is always a challenging experience and it usually takes a while to settle in. It is very common to feel apprehension and homesickness in the first several weeks after your arrival.

You will find that most Australian people are friendly and receptive towards people from overseas living in our country.

You may notice that certain behaviour that is common in your home country may not be acceptable in Australia and vice versa. Be open to differences and your experience will be much more rewarding and enjoyable.

Before you travel to Australia, start watching ABC Australia TV or listen to Australian digital radio to help you adjust to the Australian accent:

- www.abc.net.au
- www.digitalradioplus.com.au/listen

Being in another country is a great opportunity to meet people from a range of countries and to learn about their cultures. Socialising with local and other international students as well as the broader community should be part of your “Australian experience”. The International Orientation sessions at your university are a good way to meet and interact with people from other cultures.

Another good way to adapt to the new environment and feel supported is to join groups associated with your home community. Your host university should be able to inform you about cultural groups in your area.

7.9 Customs and etiquette

Addressing Australians

Australians use two names: a given or ‘first’ name followed by the family or ‘surname’; for example, Jane (first name) Smith (surname). Most Australians are happy to be called by their first name once they have been introduced.

Alcohol

Australians over the age of 18 are legally allowed to drink alcohol. You should not feel obliged to accept an invitation to have an alcoholic drink – people will not be offended if you politely refuse. Drinking to excess is not socially acceptable.

Body language

Greetings in Australia are generally casual, most people are comfortable shaking hands particularly true in a professional context however if you are ever unsure don’t be afraid to ask. Outside of work, friends and family members may hug each other as a greeting. Making eye contact when you are speaking to someone is considered respectful.

Dress standards

The type of clothing that people wear reflects the diversity in our society and our variation in climate. There are no laws or rules about clothing, but most workplaces have dress standards or codes which may include, for example, not wearing shorts or sandals. Away from work, clothing is an individual choice. Some hotels, pubs and clubs may have dress standards. People from other countries can wear their cultural dress in Australia.

Gambling

Gambling is legal in all States and Territories in casinos, clubs and hotels provided you are aged 18 years or over.

Queueing

Queueing or ‘forming a line’ is expected when there is a demand for an item or service. Examples of social settings where queueing is practiced are in restaurants, bus stops, and shops.

Religion

Australia is a diverse society, and everyone is free to follow and celebrate their cultural and religious traditions. Most Australian universities have places of worship, including chapels, mosques, and prayer rooms. You can also check online for other places of worship in the area where you will be studying.

Smoking

Each State has introduced laws that, as a general rule, make it illegal to smoke indoors in offices, office buildings, public transport, restaurants, pubs/clubs/hotels and also in public places where people gather. Most university campuses are now entirely smoke-free. Designated smoking areas are provided at most venues and events.

Tipping

Tipping is rare in Australia. This is because the minimum wage for workers is high, so service staff do not need to rely on tips to supplement their pay. Though it is not expected, you can leave a tip if you feel you have received good service.

8. STUDYING IN AUSTRALIA



Studying and learning in Australia may be quite different from studying and learning in your home country. Even Australian students attending university for the first time can find the different academic demands challenging at the beginning.

The Australian educational context may be quite different for many of you because:

- Interactions with academic staff may be more casual;
- You will often address academic staff by their first name;
- Academic staff are very accessible and can be contacted by email with questions;
- Active participation in tutorials, classes, seminars and/or workshops is expected; and

- You will often be expected to participate in group presentations and assignments which will contribute to your final grade

All universities have extensive support mechanisms in place to help international students.

To increase your chances of achieving better results within the academic system at your Australian university, it is important to investigate how the Australian teaching and learning styles differ from your own.

When preparing assignments or doing exams, you will be expected to use critical thinking and independent thinking skills, and you will often be required to work autonomously.

Critical thinking is the ability to formulate, assess and defend your own opinion based on your own extensive research. Students are encouraged to show independent thinking and are discouraged from solely depending on what is written in a book or opinions of other people. Students are expected to understand the information they read and to write about it using their own words (known as 'paraphrasing').

Most universities will have various resources available to international students to help develop their academic skills in areas such as writing, reading, note-taking and presentations. You should also discuss any study problems with your lecturers and tutors to further understand the requirements of your course.

Plagiarism is using someone else's work/words without proper referencing. This is taken extremely seriously in Australia and consequences can include expulsion from the university. In some fields of study (e.g., law) it can cause permanent damage to your career. You will learn at least one referencing system while you are at DITC. If this is not the referencing system used by your university (or your lecturer) you will be able to access user guides at your host university.

You must ensure that you read your university's referencing policy to find out the type of referencing required in your university. Some universities will offer seminars or workshops on referencing to avoid cases of plagiarism.

University Orientation

Attendance at your university's international orientation sessions is **compulsory** – this may involve a general university orientation coordinated by the university's International Office as well as one specific to your Faculty. Your university orientation may include:

- An overview of the support services available to international students;
- The enrolment process;
- How to use the library, computer pools and access online materials;
- Campus tours;
- Academic workshops including referencing and writing;
- Introduction to student, cultural and sporting groups on campus;
- Safety and security issues; and
- Accommodation tips

Study structure

Your course may consist of a range of learning experiences including lectures, tutorials/seminars, lab work, group work, simulations, individual study, and self-guided study.

Assessments may range from in-class participation, essays, presentations, group work, exams, and reports. Final grades are usually based on continual assessment throughout the semester and not on final exams alone.

You should consider all assessment tasks important – do not make the mistake of assuming that particular assessments are not important because they are in less formal environments (i.e. online assessment).

You will be assessed throughout your studies and are expected to learn and perform in a number of environments:

- *Lectures* – present information and concepts that are central to the course. Students take notes while listening to the lecturer's presentation;
- *Seminars and tutorials* – lecturers may require students to present a topic or participate in a small group discussion;
- *Group/individual assessments* – methods normally involve reviewing student's written and practical work, preparation and performances at seminars and tutorials, exam results and attendance records;
- *Lab work* – conducting experiments and other activities requiring lab equipment;
- *Practical assessment* – students' practical skills are explored; and
- *Internship/placement* – students are placed to work in agencies including government, non-government and non-for-profit related to their field of study.

Study tips

The workload for your course or research will be demanding. Being self-motivated and organised is essential to meet your deadlines. We suggest:

- Plan your time well. Make yourself a weekly schedule, or timetable, to schedule study and family time;
- Reserve textbooks in advance or buy second-hand copies at your university;
- Join a study group. Studying with a group of other students can motivate and encourage you;
- If you don't understand something during a lecture, approach the lecturer/tutor or a colleague and try to obtain the answers before you leave the class;
- If you are ever unsure of something or you are struggling to understand a concept, do not be afraid to ask questions or ask for help;
- Take notes and read them, if possible, after class or on the same day. Re-read them as often as you need. Record your lectures if this is permitted by your lecturer;
- Visit the library on a regular basis and try to become familiar with it early in your first semester;

- Visit the academic learning centre at your university – attend scheduled workshops or arrange for individual consultation (if available). Make use of all of the learning resources and student services the university has to offer;
- If you have a flexible degree structure, choose subjects that interest you, and look for breadth and elective options;
- Talk with other students about topics and how they study effectively. This can broaden your ideas;
- Use past exam papers to practice exam techniques;
- Make an appointment with your lecturer/tutor or learning adviser, if necessary, for further clarification;
- Discuss your assignments with your lecturer early to ensure that you are on the right track. Many lecturers will be happy to review your outline or draft. You can then revise your work based on their feedback in your final submission;
- Always back up your work on a USB or email it to yourself so that if you have issues with your computer you will not lose your work and waste precious time having to re-do assignments.



9. THE DCSP EXPERIENCE



9.1 Seminar

You will have an opportunity to visit Canberra to attend the DCSP once during your scholarship. The DCSP Seminar aims to strengthen the linkages between Australia and its regional neighbours, create a space for students to engage in dialogues about regional security and provide networking opportunities. The seminar provides an excellent overview of Defence as an organisation, its priorities and future structure.

The program will generally include:

- Presentations from senior Australian military and government officials, with the opportunity for students to ask questions
- An opportunity for students to meet their military and diplomatic representatives in Australia
- Visits to sites in/around Canberra, including the Australian War Memorial and Australian Parliament House
- Networking opportunities and social events

The seminar occurs during the mid-year break between Semester 1 and Semester 2. When you are in Australia you will be provided with further information about the seminar, including dates and travel arrangements.

NOTE

You will be required to wear uniform during the day-time sessions of the DCSP Seminar. Ensure that you bring the appropriate uniforms with you to Australia, or you will need to make arrangements for them to be sent to you in time for the DCSP Seminar.

10. CONCLUDING YOUR SCHOLARSHIP AND RETURNING HOME

10.1 Scholarship End Date

Students finishing at the end of Semester 1 will have return travel arranged three (3) days after the final academic requirement. This is either your last assessment submission date or final exam. Students with school-aged children will have return travel arranged three (3) days after the final day of Term 2.

Students finishing at the end of Semester 2 will have return travel arranged three (3) days after the final academic requirement. This is either your last assessment submission date or final exam. Scholars with school-aged children will have return travel arranged three (3) days after the final day of Term 4.

For students finishing their studies at the end of any other teaching period, including non-standard teaching periods, the scholarship will finish three (3) days after the last exam held by the university in that teaching period.

10.2 Travel arrangements

Your departure travel will be arranged for you and the cost will be covered by Defence.

You will be contacted approximately three months prior to your scholarship end date advising you to complete the DCSP *Return Travel Booking Form*. The return travel policy is as follows:

- Return tickets are booked by the most direct route and best fare of the day;
- All flights are booked to the capital city of your home country. You will be responsible for any additional domestic travel to reach your destination;
- Fares are non-flexible. This means that once your ticket is issued, changes will not be permitted. You will be financially responsible for costs incurred if you wish to make changes to your tickets; and
- Breaking your return journey in a third country (beyond the minimum transit period required) is not permitted under any circumstances.

If your return flight requires you to transit in a third country (even if only a few hours), most airlines will require that your passport has 6 months validity after the date of your return flight. If your passport will expire less than 6 months prior to your expected return date, you may need to extend your passport.

Excess baggage

For your travel back home from Australia, unaccompanied students will be entitled to a \$600 excess baggage allowance. Accompanied students are entitled for \$1200 per couple and \$300 per eligible dependent child. You may use this allowance to send your excess baggage home by whatever method

you choose, and you will be responsible for all arrangements. If the cost of transporting your excess baggage is greater than the identified allowance, you will be financially responsible for the difference.

10.3 Accommodation

Steps to follow once your departure date is confirmed:

- Notify your real estate agent or landlord well in advance (preferably at least 1 month before) of the intended date you plan to leave the property;
- Prepare your house/unit for an inspection by the landlord/real estate agent;
- Arrange the return of your keys; and
- Request the refund of your bond

For more information about leaving a rental property please visit the website of the relevant tenants' organisation in your State and the Accommodation page of the DCSP website:

<https://defencescholarships.com.au/accommodation/>

10.4 Household and personal finances

Bills: Pay all outstanding bills for household services and rent. Advise suppliers of services (including gas, electricity, telephone, internet, water etc.) of the date you will be leaving. Arrange for disconnection of services if appropriate and arrange for final payment of your account.

Personal belongings: Arrange for the sale of your car ensuring that you transfer the registration to the new owner's name. Pay any outstanding fines. Arrange the sale of any items you are not sending home, including major items of furniture and return any borrowed household items if applicable.

Mail: Arrange with friends to collect your mail to forward to you. Australia Post does provide an international mail redirection service from around A\$90 to A\$115 per month.

Banking: We recommend leaving your Australian bank account open after returning to your home country. This to ensure you receive any reimbursements or bond refunds you may be entitled to. You should be able to close your account via the Internet once you have returned to your home country. If you close your bank account prior to leaving Australia, make alternative arrangements to receive any entitlements. Contact your bank directly for more details.

Tax: If your dependents have been working, they should lodge a tax return with the Australian Taxation Office prior to departure. They will need to contact their employer to obtain a payment summary for their tax return. They may be able to claim a refund.

Tourist Refund Scheme – (TRS): If you purchase any expensive items in Australia (computer, mobile phone, jewellery, etc.), you should keep the receipts for insurance purposes (in case of theft, fire, or manufacturer's warranty) and customs clearance (when returning to your home country).

To obtain a GST refund at the airport, the goods (with a value of A\$300 or more) must have been bought within 60 days prior to your departure. You will need to provide the original receipt and the goods must be taken on-board as hand luggage. Certain goods are not eligible for refund.

Health Cover: Finalise any medical insurance claims that are still outstanding. Please contact Medibank directly to ensure that all claims are finalised prior to your departure. Note you must not cancel your OSHC policy under any circumstances.

10.5 Host University

Join your host university alumni network. Further details can be obtained from your host university website. Ensure you return all library books, university loaned equipment and/or pay any outstanding fines, otherwise this may affect your ability to graduate.

10.6 Visa

The Department of Defence will advise the Department of Home Affairs (Immigration and Citizenship Services) that your scholarship has been completed and will then make arrangements for any remaining time on your visa to be cancelled.

You are not permitted to travel on your Defence-sponsored visa after you have returned to your home country at the conclusion of your scholarship under any circumstances. The legal penalties for anyone breaching Australia's immigration regulations are severe.

If your official graduation ceremony occurs after you have completed your scholarship and you wish to return to Australia for it, you will need to apply for a tourist visa and meet all conditions and evidentiary requirements for this visa class. You will be responsible, both practically and financially, for all arrangements (including visa application, travel, accommodation, and the graduation ceremony itself).

11. FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINTS

If you have any questions about the Defence Cooperation Scholarship Program or any information provided in this handbook please contact the International Education and Training team.

Your feedback is valuable and assists us to continually improve the Defence Cooperation Scholarship Program. If you would like to provide feedback about the DCSP or wish to make a complaint, please email ip.iet@defence.gov.au.

'The DCSP was a wonderful opportunity for my family and me to be in Australia, where my family and I can experience its diverse cultures while connecting with international friends and students. What is more, it is the biggest and most beautiful country that my family and I have ever seen. Regarding studying the Master of Education in TESOL at the University of Wollongong, I found it to be valuable and practical, and I have gained countless insights into educational theories and practices throughout the program. These invaluable experiences will always be remembered. I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to DCSP and the Australian government for providing my family and me with the opportunity to study in this beautiful country.'



Sokheng Chan
DCSP Scholar
Royal Cambodian Armed Force
Master of Education (TESOL) - University of Wollongong