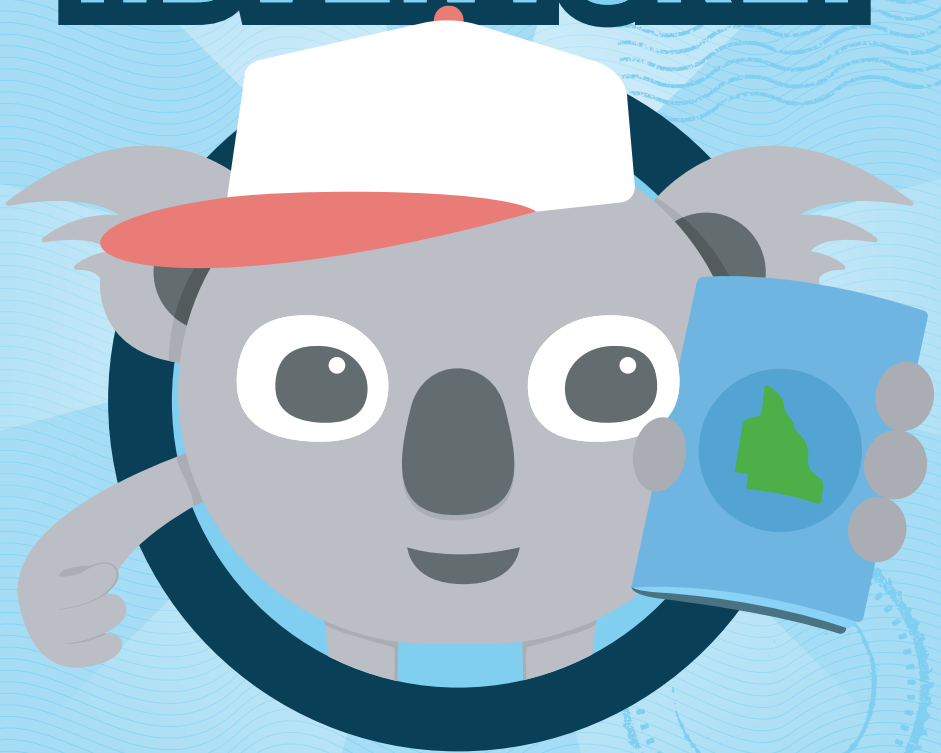


# WELCOME TO YOUR QUEENSLAND ADVENTURE!



Queensland Department of Education International  
trading as Education Queensland International  
CRICOS provider code 00608A





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# WELCOME

**Congratulations, you are about to begin a wonderful adventure!**

Travelling to a foreign country can be one of the most exciting and interesting experiences of your life.

Learning about the place you are travelling to will help you plan your trip and get the most out of your stay.

This booklet talks about our culture, environment, people, customs and school system. It also helps you plan for the practical things you need to do for a smooth trip.

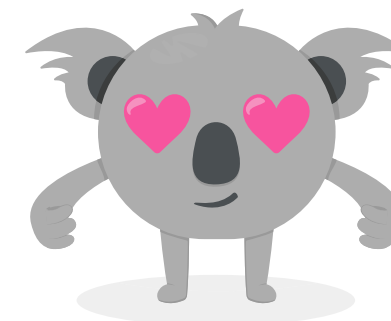
We have also made a mobile phone application (app) called 'Your Passport to Queensland' which contains lots of fun games, videos, activities and information. This is all designed to help you settle into your new life and school in Queensland, so you can focus on enjoying your study experience.

The application also includes modules showing you how to stay safe at the beach, in the bush and in the city. As an Education Queensland International (EQI) student, you can download the app from all major app stores worldwide.

For more information, visit [eqi.com.au/yourpassport](http://eqi.com.au/yourpassport)

Whether you use the mobile app or this brochure, you can share this information with your family at home so they will feel part of your adventure too.

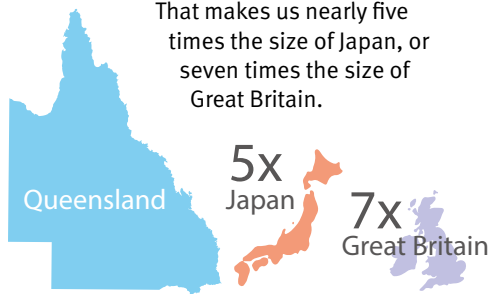
Thank you for choosing a Queensland Government school. We look forward to welcoming you to our beautiful State and wish you a lifetime of happy memories.



# QUEENSLAND AT A GLANCE

Queensland is the second largest state in Australia, covering more than 1.7 million square kilometres.

That makes us nearly five times the size of Japan, or seven times the size of Great Britain.



It can take several hours to fly from one part of Queensland to another and it's not unusual for Queenslanders to drive three to four hours for a day trip.

We are probably best known for our stunning beaches, but Queensland has a wide range of landscapes and unique experiences on offer.

From our major cities to smaller towns, from rainforests to the outback – there is a Queensland experience just right for you.



## FUN FACTS

Capital city: Brisbane

Second largest state in Australia

Population 5.1 million

Multicultural society

Relaxed and friendly communities

Home to the Great Barrier Reef

Known for our beautiful beaches

Warm, sunny climate and outdoor lifestyle

## OUR QUEENSLANDERS

Queenslanders are friendly, outgoing people known for their casual and relaxed attitude. We enjoy spending time with family and friends, and social activities are an important part of our lifestyle.

It will be easy for you to learn about your homestay family and school friends by talking with them. Most people enjoy sharing information about themselves and will be interested in getting to know you as well.

Australia is a multicultural society. In Queensland you will have the opportunity to learn about other cultures, meet people from different cultural backgrounds, hear languages other than English being spoken and sample food from all over the world.

Queenslanders are friendly and often the best thing to remember is to smile. A smile means happiness or friendship and can set the other person at ease.



## OUR CULTURE

The Australian culture is an interesting blend of influences from many parts of the world. We are a democratic nation and pride ourselves on values of fairness and equality. Respect for others is an important part of our culture.

### Rights and freedoms

Acceptance of cultural diversity is very important to Australian people and the Australian Government. Racism is not tolerated.

All Queenslanders are entitled to equal rights, opportunities and responsibilities regardless of their cultural, ethnic or religious background, their gender or sexual orientation. Discrimination on these grounds is illegal.

### Religion

There is total freedom of religion in Australia. A wide range of different religions are actively practiced and many people practice no religion at all. If you have particular religious needs while in Queensland, mention those to your homestay family or International Student Coordinator.

# OUR CUSTOMS

Courtesy and good manners are important in Australia.

It is disrespectful to talk or interrupt while others are speaking. It is also considered rude to talk through movies and other kinds of public performances.

It is OK to say that you don't understand something and to ask questions. To most Australians, asking questions shows that you are interested in what they are saying.

At school, teachers will expect you to ask questions. It shows that you are listening and trying hard to learn.

Australians are social and it is common to hear people talking and laughing loudly at home and in public. Most Australians do not cover their mouths when they laugh.

We are accustomed to having a lot of personal space and standing too close may cause people to feel uncomfortable.

## General good manners in Australia includes:

- Shaking hands when you first meet someone. In more familiar relationships, people may hug, give kisses on the cheek or pats on the shoulder or back.
- Knock on a door before entering a room and wait for permission to enter.
- Ask before using other people's property, for example using the telephone or computer.
- Make eye contact when speaking with someone. Australians may think you are rude or not interested if you do not make eye contact with them while talking.
- Be punctual and let people know if you are running late or cannot attend a pre-arranged meeting.
- Don't push in front of someone who is in a queue or waiting to cross the road.
- Place your knife and fork together on the plate when you finish a meal.
- Use a tissue or handkerchief to blow your nose. Cover your mouth or nose when coughing or sneezing.
- It is never okay to spit in Australia. It is illegal to spit on the street and in public places.





# COMMUNICATION

Australians speak English, just like in the USA and the United Kingdom, but we have our own Aussie drawl and relaxed way of talking.

We tend to be casual and direct in the way we speak to others. We also use quite a lot of slang.

If you don't understand something at first, ask the person to repeat it slowly, or to explain what they mean. We're used to it and won't mind.

## Common greetings and terms

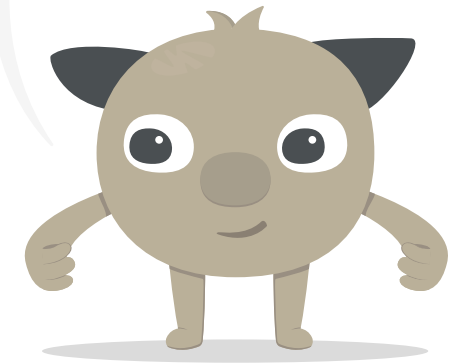
It is considered good manners to say **hello** and **goodbye** when arriving or leaving.

We also use the words **please** when asking for something and **thank-you** when receiving or accepting something.

We say **excuse me** when walking in front of someone, needing to interrupt, or getting up from the meal table or leaving a meeting.

**Sorry** is used to apologise, such as when you bump into someone.

G'day mate!



## Slang

Slang is a type of language consisting of words and phrases that are regarded as very informal. They are more often used when talking than when writing.

Australians use abbreviations and slang a lot in everyday speech. If you hear something you don't understand, ask what the expression means.

One expression you are sure to hear is **G'day** – a friendly way of saying hello.

You are also likely to hear people calling each other **mate**. In Australia, it is a common term to use between friends and some people call everyone mate whether they know them or not. It is not intended to cause any offence.

## Expressing emotions

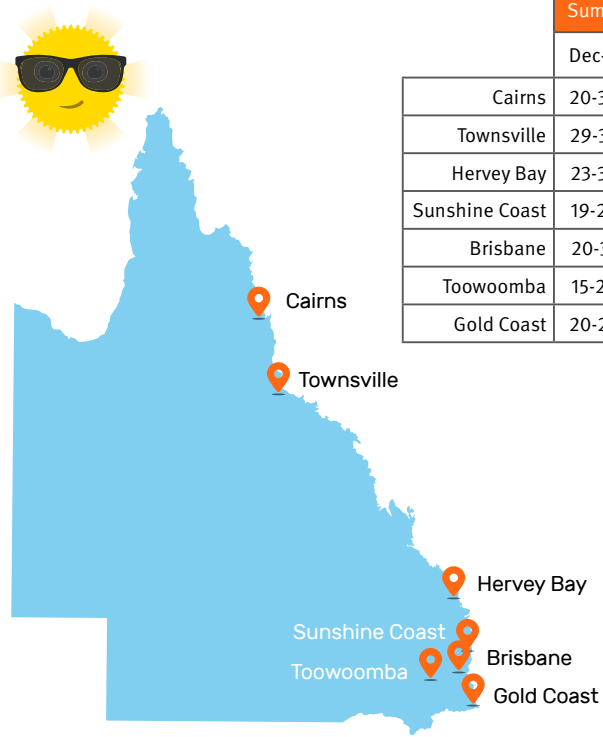
Many Australians express their emotions openly without being embarrassed.

It is also OK to openly disagree with another person's opinion, as long as this is done in a non-aggressive way.

Many people are comfortable discussing personal issues with others, especially friends, family and trained professionals (e.g. the Guidance Officer in school).

# OUR CLIMATE

Queensland has one of the most sought after climates in the world. Summers can be hot and with some humidity, particularly in Northern Queensland.



	Summer	Autumn	Winter	Spring
	Dec-Feb	Mar-May	Jun-Aug	Sept-Nov
Cairns	20-36°C	23-27°C	17-26°C	18-32°C
Townsville	29-33°C	22-27°C	16-25°C	17-28°C
Hervey Bay	23-32°C	21-25°C	13-26°C	15-28°C
Sunshine Coast	19-28°C	18-24°C	10-23°C	14-27°C
Brisbane	20-31°C	19-23°C	8-23°C	12-27°C
Toowoomba	15-26°C	14-18°C	6-17°C	10-20°C
Gold Coast	20-28°C	16-26°C	10-22°C	15-25°C

Winters are generally short and mild, although some inland areas can get much colder temperature than coastal areas.

Australia uses the celsius scale to measure temperature. The table above shows the average temperatures in some of our key regions.

# OUR LIFESTYLE

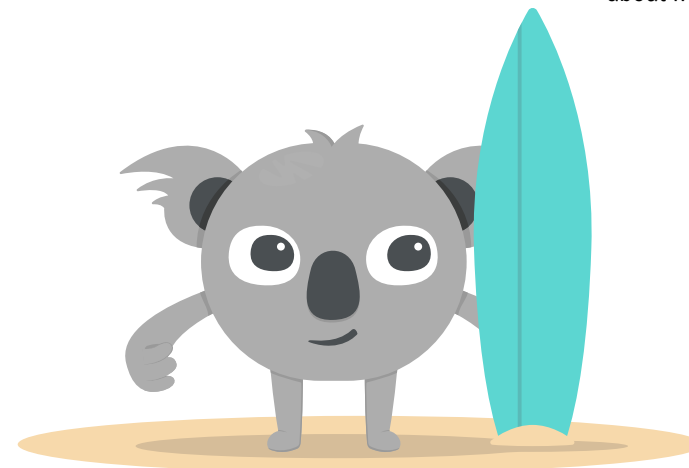
Our wonderful weather makes outdoor activities very popular, including eating outdoors at barbecues (BBQs) and picnics.

Sport is a big part of the Australian lifestyle and many families participate in and watch sports regularly, at sports stadiums and on TV.

We also love going out to meet with friends or entertaining at home. Leisure activities vary considerably between families and will depend on their hobbies and interests.

Queensland has beautiful beaches and experiencing them will be a great part of your stay in Australia. However, waves can be rough and there are strong undercurrents compared to many overseas beaches.

Read the section on **beach safety** later in this booklet, or use our interactive mobile app to learn about water safety.



# PLANNING YOUR TRIP

There are lots of details to manage when planning your trip, including some important documents. Boring, but true.

These items are essential – you can't travel without them – and they may take some time to arrange.

## Passport and travel documents

- Apply for your passport and other travel documents well before your departure as these can take some time to process.
- Your education agent can help you with information about visas and any other travel documents you may need.

If you don't have an education agent

- [The Australian Department of Home Affairs](https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-finder/study) website explains visa requirements. <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-finder/study>

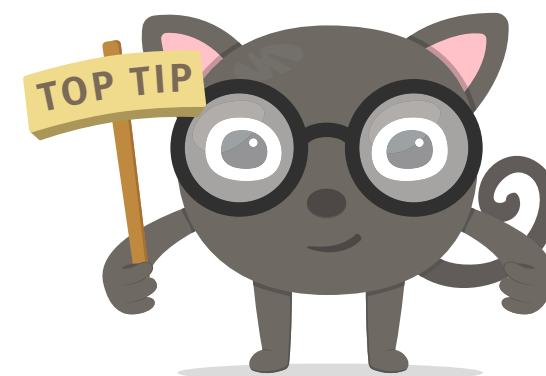
## Insurance

- It is a good idea to have travel insurance that covers you for the duration of your stay. Check with your education agent or your travel agent to get the best type of cover for you.
- You must have medical insurance cover while in Australia. This is a requirement of the Australian Government. Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) can be organised by EQI on your behalf, or you can arrange your own cover. Your education agent can help you with OSHC.

## Immunisations and medication

- Before you leave home, arrange with your doctor to have the recommended vaccinations for Australia.
- If you need to carry medications with you, check that you are permitted to bring those medicines into Queensland. You may need a letter from your doctor (in English) for some medications.
- Most common medicines are readily available in Queensland and are of a very high standard.

It is a good idea to photocopy or take a photo of important documents before you depart. Leave one copy with your family and take a copy with you, storing it in a different place to your passport.



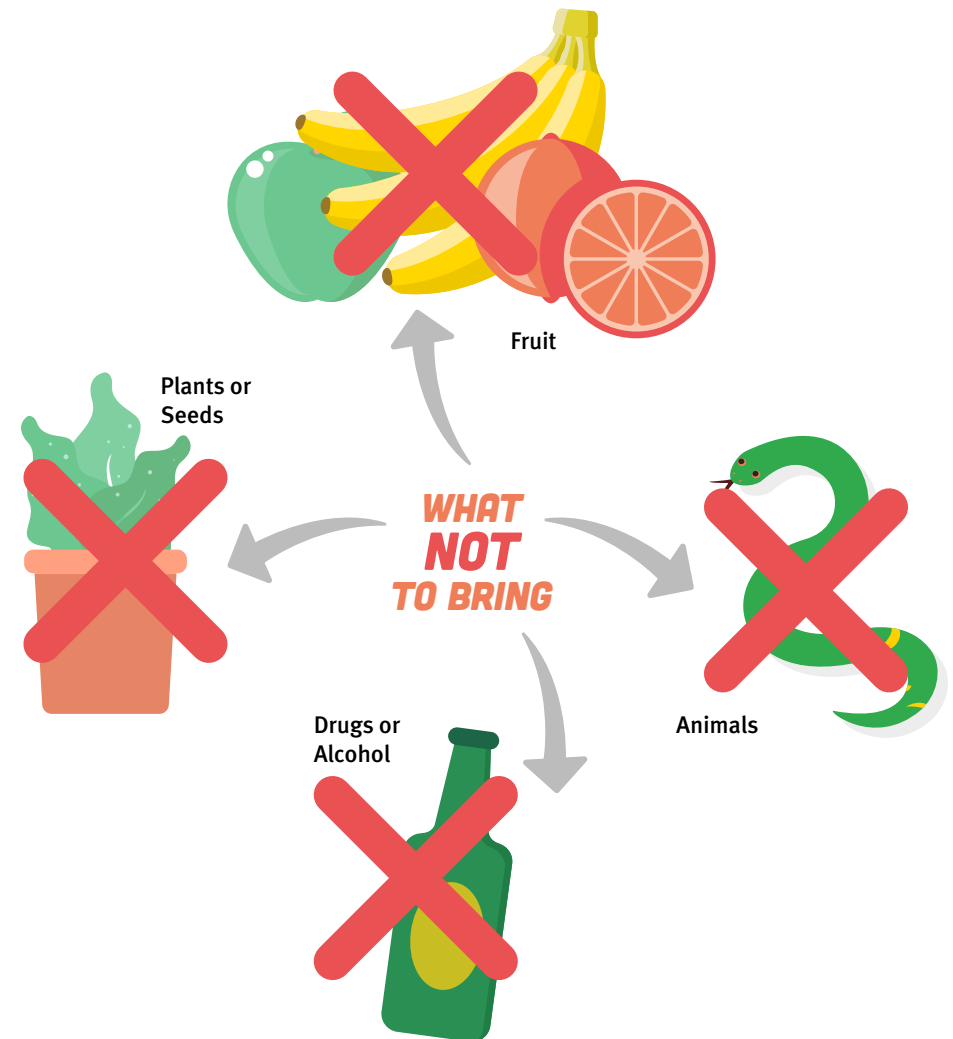
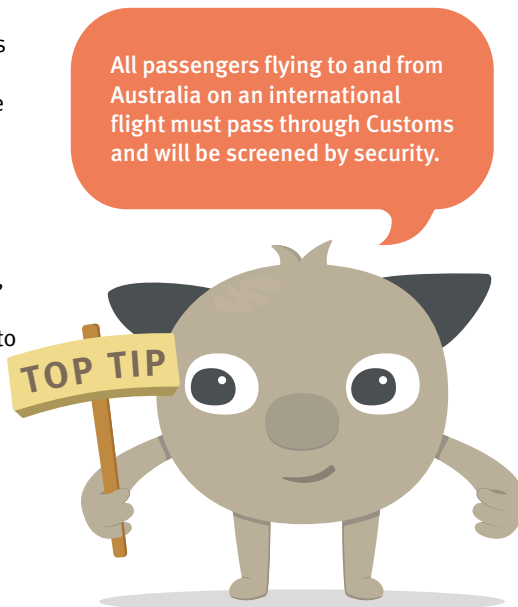


# PACKING FOR YOUR TRIP

When packing for your trip, there are a few things to remember:

1. **Luggage limits** – Your airline will have rules about the amount of luggage you can bring and sometimes there are extra charges. Check your travel booking for this information.
2. **Restricted items** – there are some items that you are not allowed to bring on a plane for safety reasons. Check with the [Australian Department of Home Affairs](#) for travel policies. Your home country may also have regulations about what you can take out of the country.
3. **Quarantine** – it is illegal to bring plants, animals, animal products, wooden articles and other quarantined items into Australia. Check [Australia's quarantine regulations](#).

<https://www.abf.gov.au/entering-and-leaving-australia/can-you-bring-it-in>



# WHAT TO BRING

## Clothes and personal items

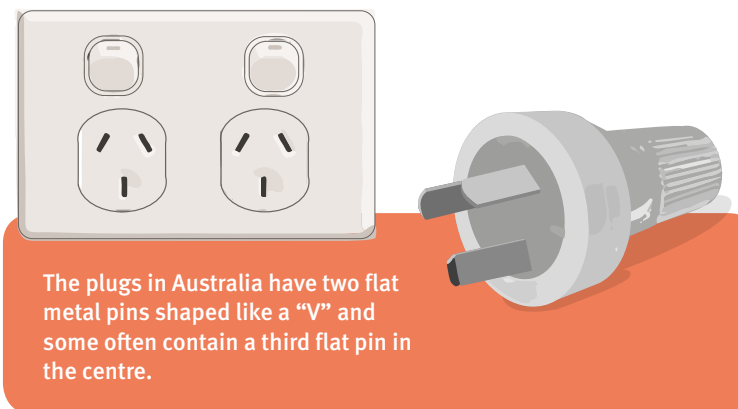
The type of clothes you need depends on when you will be here and where you will be living. You can check Queensland's weather at [www.bom.gov.au](http://www.bom.gov.au) or check page 12 for average temperatures.

Mostly you will need casual, comfortable clothes like jeans and shorts, shirts and T-shirts, a jacket, hat, swimwear and comfortable walking shoes.

## Money and official documents

We recommend bringing around \$100 or \$200 of Australian currency with you. Don't carry too much cash at any time. The safest way to manage your money is by opening an Australian bank account and then you can easily access your money once you are here.

And of course, remember your passport, travel documents and any paperwork you need from EQI or your Queensland school.



The plugs in Australia have two flat metal pins shaped like a "V" and some often contain a third flat pin in the centre.

## Camera or phone

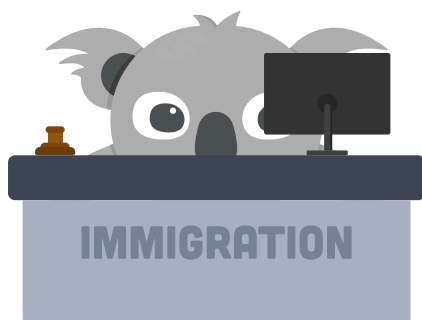
Don't forget your camera or phone! You will want to take photos to send home to your family and for your own memories later on. Remember to bring your charger too. Note: The mains voltage in Australia is 230V 50Hz. If your country does use the same mains voltage as Australia all you need is a power adapter. This enables you to plug your appliance into the sockets in Australia. Simply plug in your appliance into the power adapter and then plug the power adapter into the wall socket in Australia.

## Photos and mementos

It's always nice to have something from home with you when you travel. Photos of your family, school and hometown are also a great way to show Australians how you live at home.

## Gifts

You may wish to bring a small gift to give to your Host Family as a token of friendship and gratitude.



# ARRIVING IN QUEENSLAND

## At the airport

When you arrive, you will go through Australian Customs and security screening. This is routine for all international visitors and can take an hour or longer, depending on how busy the airport is.

Your host school will arrange for someone to meet you at the airport when you first arrive in Queensland and take you to your Homestay Family home

If you have any difficulties or get lost at the airport, you can call our 24 hour support phone service freecall 1800 QSTUDY (1800 778 839) for assistance.

## Homestay

Homestay is a great way to experience the real Queensland lifestyle as part of a friendly and welcoming family environment.

Your Homestay Family will understand that when you first arrive, you may be tired, jetlagged or shy and will give you a chance to rest or freshen up. You will have plenty of time during your stay to get to know your host family. Read more on page 23.

## Your first day at school

On your first day, your Homestay Family will help you get to and from school. At school you will be met by the International Student Coordinator who will help you settle in and answer your questions. Your first day in school may include the following:

- School orientation
- School or facilities tour
- Discussion regarding class timetable, student handbook
- Student support services
- Communications
- Uniform purchase and general introductions.



# WHAT TO EXPECT AT SCHOOL

Our schools might run a bit differently to yours at home. Here are some basics you need to know:

- The school year runs from late January to December and is split into four terms.
- There is a short holiday break between each term with a longer break at the end of the year.
- School days are Monday to Friday and the hours are usually 9am to 3pm. Attendance at school is compulsory.
- All schools will have student dress standards and personal presentation requirements which students must comply with.
- Students are expected to ask questions. Teachers are very approachable and you should always ask for help if you don't understand something.
- During break times (first break and lunch), students often gather in casual groups to eat and talk. Sometimes there might be sport or games you can join in with.
- Schools offer extracurricular activities like sport, art, theatre or clubs like chess and robotics. Joining these activities is a great way to find new hobbies, make friends and practice your English outside the classroom.
- Drugs and alcohol are strictly prohibited and will result in your enrolment being cancelled and sent home.

# HOMESTAY

Just like at school, our family environments may be different to what you are used to at home.

Here are some tips to help you prepare for a smooth and happy Homestay experience.

## Every family is different!

Some families have children, some don't. Sometimes other relatives live with the family, like a grandparent or aunts and uncles.

## Houses are different too

They can be small or large, most will have a garden or yard, some might have a swimming pool or basketball hoop. You will always have a bedroom to yourself that includes an area for you to study.

## Everyone helps

Australian families do not usually have hired help, so everyone helps with household chores. You will be expected to keep your bedroom tidy and you may be asked to help in the kitchen or with other small tasks.

## Communicate

Open and honest communication is best. Australian families discuss problems and conflicts so they can be resolved. It's ok for you to raise concerns and ask questions, but you should always be polite and respectful.

## ARRIVING IN QUEENSLAND

### Internet and WiFi access

Every family has different internet and Wifi access. Students are encouraged to talk to their Homestay Family about access and rules around usage.

### Privacy

It is polite to knock on a door and wait for permission to enter. This is especially important for private areas, such as the bathroom or someone's bedroom.

### Meals

Your Homestay Family will provide you with three meals a day. Make sure you tell your host family about any allergies or foods you do not eat or what is your favorite.

Australian families usually eat meals together in the kitchen, dining room or lounge of the home. In nice weather, a BBQ or picnic might be held outside. Everyone helps to prepare food, set and clear the table, wash and wipe dishes and put food items away.



## ARRIVING IN QUEENSLAND

### Pets

In Australia, pets are treated as part of the family and often live inside the house. Dogs and cats are the most common family pets. If you are afraid of, or have allergies to some animals, tell your education agent and we will try to place you with a Homestay Family that doesn't have pets.







STAYING SAFE



STAYING SAFE

# STAYING SAFE

Australia is a safe place to live and has a low crime rate, but it is still important to take care of your personal safety, just like you would in your home country.

## At home

Your Homestay Family will explain any household rules to you. This is a normal part of Australian family life to keep children safe.

For instance, they will want to know if you are going out, where you are going and when you will be home. They will want your mobile phone number (if you have one) and they will give you their contact phone numbers.

There may also be safety rules around the home, especially if the family has a pool or sports equipment.

## At school

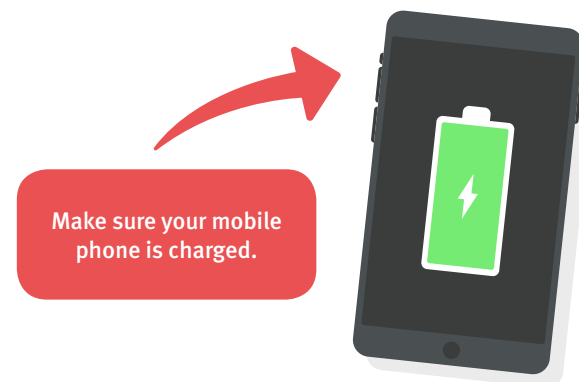
Queensland schools have many systems in place to ensure all students are in a safe environment while at school, or on a school excursion.

Your teacher or International Student Coordinator will let you know what you should or shouldn't do to make sure you stay safe.

## Everyday safety tips

Here are a few general tips to help keep you safe in Queensland:

- Never carry large amounts of money with you. You can access money in your bank account at most stores with your Automatic Teller Machine (ATM) card.
- When using an ATM, prevent others from seeing your personal identification number (PIN) and secure your cash quickly in your bag. Don't count your money on the street.
- Keep your bag zipped up or fastened so thieves can't reach in and take any valuables like your purse, wallet or phone.
- Don't walk alone at night. Walk in a group and stay in well-lit areas. Walk with confidence and be aware of any suspicious activity around you.
- If you're going out, plan your trip so that you know how you're getting home, and make sure you have enough money for transport if you need it.
- Make sure your mobile phone is charged and carry the phone numbers of your host family and International Student Coordinator and 1800STUDY with you.
- Be careful of road safety, especially if your home country drives on the other side of the road. Always cross the street at a pedestrian crossing or at traffic lights with pedestrian signals.





# AT THE BEACH

A day at the beach is about as Aussie as it gets and Queensland has some of the most beautiful beaches in the world. Visiting the beach is sure to be a highlight of your stay with us.

Water safety is a huge part of Australian life. Local children are brought up with it and most Australian children learn to swim at a very early age.

Many overseas visitors are not used to the force of the waves and don't know how dangerous our under-water currents can be.

There is a lot of information available about [beach and water safety](#), but here are a few of the essential:

- Always let someone know where you are and always swim with others - never alone.
- Always swim between the red and yellow flags. The flags mark the safest place to swim and is the only area patrolled by lifeguards.

- The sun in Queensland is very strong and sunburn hurts! Always wear sunscreen, a hat, a shirt and sunglasses, and stay in the shade whenever you can.
- If you do get into trouble in the water, don't panic. Stay calm, float with the current and raise your hand so the lifeguards know you need help.

There are lots of great water safety tips on our Mobile app – have you checked it out yet?



# IN THE BUSH

The bush is a phrase most commonly used to describe any unpopulated areas outside of the major metropolitan areas.



Queensland is also known for our beautiful national parks, bushland and walking tracks, but the bush can be dangerous if you are not properly prepared.

- Always let someone know where you are going and never go bush walking alone.
- Plan your walk – always know where you are going and how far you are going. Wandering aimlessly is a good way to get lost!
- Wear the right clothes – comfortable, closed in walking shoes and a hat are essential. Even if it is hot, you might want to wear long trousers and sleeves to protect from the sun or insects.

- Take a day pack with drinking water, sunscreen, a snack, your phone and any essential medications (e.g. for asthma or allergies). A small first-aid kit is always a good idea too.
- If you see any wildlife – don't approach them and don't touch. Some animals are dangerous and some are even poisonous, like many Australian snakes and spiders.
- Be respectful of the environment – don't litter.
- Never, start a fire! As well as being incredibly dangerous, it's illegal.



# WHAT DO I DO IF I HAVE A PROBLEM?

Living in another country can be exciting and fun. It can also be stressful and sometimes confusing.

It is normal to feel homesick or overwhelmed by a different environment.

There are many support services for you while you are studying in Queensland.

1. Talk to your Homestay Family if something is bothering you. It might be a simple misunderstanding with an easy solution. Australians are generally comfortable discussing problems in a respectful and non-aggressive way. They will appreciate you being honest with them.

2. There are support people at school to help you as well. The International Student Coordinator is there to help you with all aspects of your study program, and most schools have a Guidance Counsellor to provide advice on academic and personal issues if needed.
3. Freecall **1800 QSTUDY (1800 778 839)** is an after-hours free call phone number you can call for help before and after school, or at any time on weekends and school holidays.

The most important thing to remember is, you are not alone.

# RESOURCES

You may find these websites helpful when planning for your trip.

### Visa requirements

[immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-finder](http://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-finder)

### Quarantine (restricted items)

[dfat.gov.au/about-australia/visiting-australia/Pages/quarantine.aspx](http://dfat.gov.au/about-australia/visiting-australia/Pages/quarantine.aspx)

### General travel advice and tips

[smartraveller.gov.au/guide/all-travellers](http://smartraveller.gov.au/guide/all-travellers)

### Information about Queensland

[www.queensland.com](http://www.queensland.com)

[www.australias.guide/qld/facts](http://www.australias.guide/qld/facts)

Freecall 1800 QSTUDY (1800 778 839) is an after-hours phone number you can call for help before and after school, or at any time on weekends and school holidays.



**Let's Play!**  
**Download the app now!**



**Your Queensland  
adventure starts here**

[eqi.com.au/yourpassport](http://eqi.com.au/yourpassport)

