



What to do,
where to go,
what to see,
when you arrive.
Enjoy your stay!

International Student Arrival Guide



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WELCOME

Welcome to Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE (NMIT). We are very pleased that you have chosen to study at NMIT and hope that your time here is rewarding and positive.

We understand that leaving your family and friends is very difficult so remember we are here to help you.

This guide should answer most of the questions that you have. If you need further assistance, please contact the International Office, Level 1, Collingwood Campus,
Phone: + 61 3 9269 1666.

ARRIVING IN AUSTRALIA

When you arrive in Melbourne you must go to the Entry Control Point.

You must have your passport and completed Incoming Passenger Card.

Once your passport is stamped at Immigration you collect your luggage from the baggage claim area.

After you collect your bags you can go to one of two exit channels.

RED EXIT - Goods to declare

or

GREEN EXIT - Nothing to declare

Australia has very strict quarantine and customs laws to stop insects and other agricultural diseases from damaging our environment and industries.

If you have brought any of the following things with you from home you **must** go through the RED channel.

- Chinese herbs and medicines
- Fruit dried/fresh and vegetables
- Herbs/seeds
- Seafood
- All dairy, egg, and meat products
- Bee products honey/wax
- Bones, horns, feathers, shells
- Flowers (fresh and dried)
- Plants or wooden products

Fines

There are monetary fines for not declaring these kinds of foods and plants (from AU\$200-\$2,000)

Penalties for importing illegal drugs are severe.

Making a false declaration (ie deliberately filling in your customs declaration incorrectly) can result in fines and/or seizure of the goods.

Coming to Melbourne on a domestic flight

If you arrive in Australia at Sydney, Brisbane or Perth airport you may need to go through Customs and Immigration at that airport. You will then get a connecting flight to Melbourne.

You should check with your agent or the crew on the plane about where you will go through Customs and Immigration.

Pick up from Melbourne Airport.

If you have requested accommodation assistance you will be collected from the airport by NMIT's approved pick up service.

When you leave the customs area you will enter the Arrivals area.

Go to the Information Desk where you will meet your driver and be taken straight to your accommodation *Le Student 8* - you will stay here for your first week in Melbourne.



If you are not collected from the airport - please go outside to the taxi rank and take a taxi to:

Le Student 8
205 Bell St
Preston
Ph: **9485 0200**

This should cost AU\$40-\$50.

When you arrive at *Le Student 8* phone **9269 1666** (the International Office) and let the staff know that you have arrived. It is quite safe to take a taxi from the airport to *Le Student 8*.

If you have any problems in travelling to Australia, or problems when you arrive please contact the International Office **9269 1666** between 9.00am - 5.00pm Eastern Australian Time.

In an emergency outside these hours, please contact **0400 261 209**.

Hotel Arrival

Your first week of accommodation is pre booked by the International Office.

The hotel NMIT uses is *Le Student 8*. Go to **www.lestudent8.com** for information. You must pay your first week room fee on arrival. (AU\$240 at the time of printing) When you arrive at the hotel there will be a package for you with a letter that says where, and what time the Housing Officer will meet you.

This meeting will happen soon after arrival.

International students can also stay at *Le Student 8* permanently.



ARRANGING YOUR PERMANENT ACCOMMODATION

The Housing Officer at NMIT will come to see you either at Le Student 8 or the International Office to talk about your accommodation needs. If you are studying for 12 weeks or less, you will be placed at Le Student 8 as it is difficult to find other short-term options.

Types of Accommodation

There is some choice available when you are thinking about long term accommodation, but you should think carefully about:

1. Making sure it is within your budget
2. Whether you will feel comfortable

There are four long-term options you can consider.

- a) Homestay
- b) Student hostel
- c) Shared accommodation
- d) Renting

Making a choice of what type of accommodation you prefer prior to arrival will ensure an easy placement when you arrive. You will need to indicate on the NMIT arrival form which type of accommodation you prefer. So please consider carefully.

A) Homestay

Homestay is living in a home where meals are prepared and bills are included. You may be invited to participate in family activities, as well

as completing some household jobs - washing dishes etc. Homestay can be a very rewarding experience as you will have many opportunities for speaking English and being in a family/group setting. The cost per week is approximately AU\$220.

If you choose the Homestay option you are expected to stay for a minimum of three months.

Homestay providers welcome you into their home and spend some time in helping you settle into your new home. It is unfair if students stay for a short time and then leave - unless there is a good reason to do so.

In Homestay, you will have your own room with bed and linen provided. You should also have a desk, chair and a study lamp. You will share bathroom, living and kitchen areas.

B) Student Hostels

This accommodation varies according to your budget. You may have your own room, with a bed, chair and desk and you share kitchen, laundry and living areas. This type of accommodation can be positive because you are with other students and can share experiences together. You also have the privacy of your own room if you do not want to interact with others. Bills may be extra or included in the rent. You need to buy and cook your own food.

Le Student 8 is a student hostel where NMIT students often choose to live.

The cost varies greatly (AU\$130-\$250 per week approx.)

C) Shared Accommodation.

This type of accommodation is where you share a house or a flat (apartment) with other people. It may be a group of fellow students or it may be a family household.

In a share house you need to:

- Pay for your own food and do your own cooking
- Pay your share of bills eg. gas, electricity, water and telephone.
- You may also need to bring your own bed, furniture, linen etc.

Shared accommodation can be fun as you live with different types of people. But you need to be clear on the '**house rules**' before you move in.

For example:

- How much will your share of the rent be?
- How exactly will the bills be paid (especially the phone bill)?
- Agreeing on cleaning duties, visitors and smoking

Everybody should be clear on their responsibilities.

You should be an independent person if you choose to live in a sharehouse. There may be many different personalities in a sharehouse.

The cost of rent varies greatly (AU\$80-\$130 per week approx.)

D) Renting a Vacant Property

Renting a vacant property is only viable if you intend to stay for a long time. It is a difficult and expensive option.

You usually rent a vacant property through a Real Estate Agent. You will be required to pay one month of rent as a bond as well as the first months rent in advance. The bond is returned to you when you leave your accommodation as long as there is no damage. You are required to sign a lease for a minimum of 6 months and some landlords request a 12-month lease. Price can vary greatly depending on location and type of property. You must furnish the property, which can be very expensive.

Bond

It is usual to pay a bond at all accommodation to the person who owns the accommodation. The bond is held separately from your rent and is returned to you after the notice period is over. A bond is taken as security for the accommodation provider. Money will be withheld if there is damage or rent owing.

Choosing your accommodation

When you have decided on what type of accommodation you would like the Housing Officer will take you to look at 2 choices and you can make a choice from either of these.

Paying rent

How you pay your rent will depend on who you are renting from. Your Homestay provider will probably ask you to pay your rent every two weeks, whilst a Real Estate Agent will require payment monthly.

When you know when the payment is required please make sure that you pay the rent on time. It can make your living situation uncomfortable if your host or share house mate has to ask for the rent to be paid.

Receipts

Any time you pay for anything to do with your housing eg rent, share of bills etc your Homestay provider or Landlord is required to give you a receipt. If they don't provide a receipt you should ask them for one.

Giving notice

Once you become settled in Melbourne and make friends you may choose to leave your accommodation.

When you leave your accommodation you must tell your Homestay provider or housemate in advance before you leave - **this is called 'giving notice'**. When you move in, ask how much time you need to give notice. It may be two or four weeks.

Giving notice provides your Homestay provider or housemates time to find another person to move in.

If you choose to leave before the notice period you will still have to pay rent for that time. You must pay your share of any bills that arrive during the notice period.

IF YOU RENT THROUGH A REAL ESTATE AGENT YOU ARE REQUIRED TO SIGN A LEASE AND YOU ARE COMMITTED TO STAY FOR THE LENGTH OF THE LEASE. AFTER THIS, 28 DAYS NOTICE IS REQUIRED.

Problems

When you move into a new environment and experience a different culture, there may be times when things are not explained clearly or mistakes are made. You must try and clear up these problems as soon as they happen. Talk to your accommodation provider about your concerns and try to find a solution.

If you need further assistance, contact the NMIT Housing Officer on **9269 1321**.



BANKING

To open an account you need to satisfy some government requirements about identification. (100 points) Your student identification card is 40 points and your passport is 60 points. You need to bring both of these forms of identification with you when you open the account.

You can use your confirmation of enrolment from NMIT as identification before you get your student card.

You also need an address so information can be sent to you.

There are 4 major banks in Australia

- Westpac
- ANZ bank
- National Australia Bank
- Commonwealth Bank

Each has branches around Melbourne.

Each bank has its own Automatic Teller Machines (**ATM's**). You can access your account from any ATM regardless of which bank you use.

ATM's have 24 hour access.

Supermarkets and service stations also have ATM's or you can ask for cash after you buy something with your ATM card.

Money When You Arrive

It is a good idea to have a few hundred Australian dollars (plus AU\$240 for one week at the hotel) with you before you arrive to cover expenses for the first few days. Transferring money from home into your Australian account could take 3-4 business days.



Currency

Australia uses a decimal system with 100 cents in the dollar.

- Bank notes in use are \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50 and \$100.
- Gold coins are \$1 and \$2
- Silver coins are 5, 10, 20 and 50 cents.

Use an online currency converter to work out the exchange rate with your currency.

Taxation

For tax purposes only, international students are considered residents of Australia. This means you will pay the same rate of tax as an Australian citizen. If you earn an income during the year you must complete a tax return by the end of the financial year (October 31st).

Tax File Number

A Tax File Number ensures you are taxed the correct amount.

To apply for a Tax File Number you will need to complete an application form. (available from the International Office, any Post Office or via the Australian Tax Office website) www.ato.com.au

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance

Australian Government visa regulations require a class attendance rate of at least 80% for all courses. It is NMIT policy to review attendance every two weeks and enforce this regulation.

You are expected to attend all classes - missing class may mean that you could miss a learning outcome and be unable to complete a subject.

You must also be on time for the start of class - late arrivals are taken into account when considering attendance requirements. If you are unwell and do not come to class you should contact the International Student Co-ordinator or your Course Co-ordinator. It is a good idea to find out the name of these people and their direct phone number.

Academic performance

Your visa requirements also require you to maintain a satisfactory level of academic performance.

If you find that you are having problems with your studies you should ask for help as soon as you can to make sure that you pass all your subjects. Talk to your teacher about any learning problems.

Academic Credit transfer

You may be able to apply for academic credit for subjects that you have already passed before commencing your course - talk to your teacher for more information.

Change of address

You must notify the International Office if you change your address while studying at NMIT. Collect a green form from the International Office or through your department.

STARTING CLASS

Your confirmation of enrolment letter will tell you where and when your classes start. Where possible, the Housing Officer will take you to your classes on the first day or will give you detailed directions and maps of how to get to the campus. You should arrive at school 15 minutes before class starts.

Timetable

Your timetable will be given to you during the first day from your teacher.

Booklist and Study materials

Any books, paper, pencils or discs you need can be purchased from campus Libraries.

Enrolment

The International Office will enrol you in your course. Your photo will be taken and you will be given a student card. This card is your Library card and should be carried with you at all times you are at NMIT for identification.

Courses

NMIT's academic year is divided into two semesters. First semester commences early February and the second in early July.

You should check with your Program Co-ordinator for the exact holiday dates before you make plans to travel or return home.

STUDYING IN AUSTRALIA

You may find that studying in Australia is different in the following ways.

1. You may call your teacher by their first name - usually they will prefer this to a more formal title.
2. Your teacher may use humour in their teaching methods. They may also use games as a learning tool.
3. You will be invited and encouraged to be involved in class discussions.
4. Teachers would like you to make comments based on your own experience. It is also important that you listen carefully when other students make comments and the teacher responds. Even if you are not directly involved, you can learn from the discussion going on around you.
5. You will also be expected to carry out your own research for your assignments.

This means that you will develop independent learning skills - the ability to use the Library, Internet and other sources of information.

If you are having trouble in these areas you must talk to your teacher as soon as possible.

Successful tips for studying

- Organise a space for study only.
- Establish a weekly study routine and follow it.
- Study when you are fresh and awake.
- Learn how to take notes.
- Don't just re-write from the book.
- Take regular breaks - 10 minutes every hour is a good time frame.
- Use different techniques to help you understand and learn.

WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

Counselling

A free and confidential counselling service is available at each campus.

Students are welcome to make an appointment to speak with a Counsellor about any concerns that you may have about being away from family and friends, study skills etc.

Counsellors can be accessed by visiting your campus Library.

Talk to your teacher

Your teachers have worked with many students that have just arrived in Melbourne so they have probably heard most of the questions that you have.

They are happy to try and help - don't be afraid to ask them.

Working in Australia

International students can work up to 20 hours per week - providing this does not interfere with their studies. You can work full-time during term breaks.

Applications for a work visa can only be made after you begin your course. You apply for a work visa through the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) website - www.immi.gov.au

HEALTH

Health cover.

You must be enrolled in the Overseas Student Health Cover Plan (OSHC) for the length of your course. This is paid on a yearly basis (or less if your class time is for less than one year) NMIT chooses Medibank Private for NMIT students' OSHC.

Call **1800 234 601** for 24 hour emergency advice and assistance. This phone service includes interpretation for Japanese, Mandarin, Indonesian, Malay, Cantonese, Thai, Korean and Portuguese.

Medibank Private Offices are located at Centrepoint Mall, 283 Bourke St, Melbourne

Northland Shopping Centre, Murray Rd, Preston.

Other office locations can be obtained by calling **1800 234 601**.

Medical Treatment

The International Office will assist you in getting medical treatment if you become unwell at the Collingwood campus. All other campuses have First Aid trained staff members so you should go to the Library at any other campus and ask for help.

General Practitioners (GPs)

You can choose to see any Doctor that you wish. OSHC pays 85% of the scheduled fee and you pay the difference.

If you need to go to hospital OSHC will pay 100% if you are in a shared ward in a public hospital.

If you are ill and see a Doctor you should ask for a medical certificate if you are going to be away from class for 2 or more days.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

You will be provided a full public transport map in your information pack on arrival. To check out the Melbourne public transport system online, go to www.metlinkmelbourne.com.au

International students must pay full fare on all public transport.

You are able to purchase discount airfares if you apply for an International Student Identity Card (ISIC). The International office can help you apply for this card.

ABOUT MELBOURNE

Melbourne has a population of about four million people from about 140 different countries and enjoys a reputation for being the sporting capital of Australia.

There are lots of big open spaces and some beautiful parks and gardens that often have free events. Check out www.thatsmelbourne.com.au for up to date information about what's happening in Melbourne.

Weather

During summer the sun is extremely hot so use '30+' sunscreen lotion, wear a hat and long sleeves when you are outdoors to protect your skin. It is also recommended that you try and stay out of the sun between 11.00am - 3.00pm as this is the hottest part of the day.

Average Temperatures

Season	Summer	Autumn	Winter	Spring
Average temp.	28C (82F)	18C (64F)	14C (57F)	20C (68F)

Clothing

Australians are fairly relaxed about clothing and wear mostly casual clothes. Jeans are usually OK to wear unless an invitation has a specific requirement.

Shopping

Queen Victoria Market and Preston Market are great places to buy fresh produce at reasonable prices.

Each of the campuses is close to a shopping strip such as Smith St Collingwood and High St Preston.

Northland Shopping Centre is close to Preston campus and contains many large retail stores.

Epping Plaza also has a variety of shops, doctors, chemist etc.

There are also a number of Asian and specialist supermarkets close to the Collingwood campus.

Religion

Australia has a wide religious tolerance and most religions are represented in Melbourne.

Melbourne has places of worship for many Christian denominations as well as Buddhist, Muslim and Jewish faiths (refer to the telephone directory for contact numbers and addresses).

Most Australians are Christian, and everybody is free to follow the religion of their choice. Many Australians do not have a strong religious belief.

Recreation/Activities

Many major events are held in Melbourne including: Formula 1 Grand Prix, Melbourne Cup, Melbourne Fashion Festival and Australian Open Tennis.

Australians enjoy being outdoors. They enjoy going to the beach, walking in the bush and going for picnics or barbecues.

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

Most Australians are relaxed and friendly. There are some different customs that may seem strange. If you understand a little about the lifestyle you will find it easier to meet Australians and settle more easily.

Here are some important points about Australian culture. Try to remember them as you make new friends and settle into your new surroundings.

- Men and women are equal in Australian society as are people from all levels of wealth, authority and occupation.
- Very few Australians have servants
- Most Australians do their own housework. Men and women share jobs in the household like cooking, cleaning, washing dishes etc.
- Australians enjoy watching and playing sport.
- In Melbourne, Australian Rules football is very popular during the winter. You may like to choose a team to support.
- Punctuality is important. Australians think it is rude if you don't keep an appointment on time. It is polite to telephone and let the person know if you are going to be late or cannot make the appointment.
- People stand in queues when waiting at the bank or to get on a train or bus or to buy tickets. It is not polite to push ahead of somebody in a queue.

- You should also say please and thank you when someone has given you something or tried to help you.
- It is considered bad manners to spit or sniff in public.
- Respect other people's privacy - don't go into other people's rooms or offices without knocking and saying, 'excuse me'.
- If you have an appointment with someone or are in class you should turn your mobile phone off.

What to talk about?

When you meet somebody for the first time it can be difficult to know what to talk about.

Some good topics are; family, weather, sports, hobbies, where they live and what kind of work they do.

It is best to avoid questions about relationships, religion or how much money they earn.

SERVICES

Postal Service

Post Offices are located near all the main campuses and post boxes (for posting mail) are found in the street. All post offices have basic postal and bill paying services and some of the larger ones sell other goods and souvenirs.

Telephone

All public telephones charge a higher rate than private phones.

Most public phones have a card facility also. The Yellow Pages or www.yellowpages.com.au are a good resource for general information.

BEING SAFE

Australia is a clean and relatively safe country. You will find that most Australians are relaxed and friendly but as in all countries you must take responsibility for your own safety SO -

DO NOT get into cars with strangers.

DO NOT leave your bags or backpacks unattended.

DO NOT give your phone number or address to strangers.

Keep your passport, wallet and other important documents **in a safe place**.

In an **emergency** call **000** for assistance e.g. police, fire, ambulance

It is quite **safe** to travel by **taxi**.
Taxis are yellow.

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