



University of  
South Australia

Study  
Overseas



# Pre-departure Guide





# *Congratulations!*

You are about to participate in the adventure of a lifetime. As with any travel you will undertake, good planning and managing your expectations are important as you prepare for your exchange.


This booklet is designed to answer many of your questions and to give you a clear overview of the practical and cultural preparations you need to consider leading up to your departure, while on your exchange, and when you return home. Please take this guide with you overseas – you will find it useful. You can also download a copy from the UniSA International Study Overseas website: [unisa.edu.au/studyoverseas](http://unisa.edu.au/studyoverseas)

You should also carefully read your host university's website and any materials they provide for you. This will help you finalise your preparations.

The information in this booklet is also provided to make you aware of the obligations and responsibilities you have as an ambassador both for UniSA and for Australia.

We wish you safe travels and a successful and rewarding exchange experience.

**Study Overseas team**  
University of South Australia





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*Applying for exchange*

## Application process

There are two steps to your application:

- // You are receiving this guide because you have already completed step 1:

Applying to the UniSA student exchange program and having been accepted into the program.

Step 2 will involve you completing:

- // An application to the university you will be exchanging to. The UniSA Study Overseas team will advise you on how to do this
- // A UniSA Course Approval Form (CAF)
- // A Student Exchange Participation Agreement and Talent Release Form
- // The UniSA Business Travel Request Form (BTR). Completion of this form (including uploading your flight itinerary) ensures you are covered by UniSA Travel Insurance as well as registered with our emergency assistance provider (International SOS). Complete BTR here: [unisa.edu.au/business-travel-request](https://unisa.edu.au/business-travel-request)
- // If you do not attach your travel itinerary as part of the BTR process, you will be required to complete an International SOS MyTrips Profile and forward your itinerary to ISOS directly (more info on BTR and ISOS in the Health and Safety section on page 18).
- // OS-HELP application (if required)

### Pre-departure workshop

There will be a mandatory two hour pre-departure workshop that you must attend. We will cover important information about insurance, risk and safety management, OS-HELP, culture shock and mental well-being. Your attendance is expected unless you have exceptional circumstances. The Study Overseas team will advise you of the date and time. You will need to save the date and make sure you are available. This workshop also offers the opportunity to meet other students going on exchange and get some useful tips and recommendations from returned students.

## Applying to the host university

### Completing your host university application

The UniSA Study Overseas team will nominate you to your host university. After this you will be provided application instructions, either by us or by your host directly. The application format varies significantly between universities. Some will be online applications, others will be paper-based and some will be a mix of both. The timing of the process also differs between host universities. While we will provide you with initial guidance, it is your responsibility to look closely at the host university website to ensure you are completing their application correctly.

### Documents to attach

You must attach all other documents requested. These may include some or all of the following:

- // Photos and copy of passport
- // Your transcript (UniSA will provide you with this)
- // Statement of purpose/motivation letter
- // References and financial information
- // Language certificate
- // Letter of reference
- // Health certificates

### Certification of finances

Some countries require proof of finances in order for you to receive your student visa.

Please complete these forms carefully and provide ORIGINAL documentation. You can include a copy of the Acceptance email you receive from UniSA setting out the travel grant amount and/or scholarship you will receive. If you require any additional evidence in relation to the Travel Grant/Scholarship, please email the Study Overseas team. You may need to show documentary proof of the funds required at the time of submitting your application to the host university. Funds required can range from AUD\$7000 - \$10,000.

## Host acceptance

The host university will review your application and make a decision regarding your admission. Turnaround times differ from one institution to another and notification of your acceptance can be as fast as one week, or take as long as 12 weeks.

The host university will advise us once you have been accepted. In some cases you may receive notification of your acceptance directly from the host, in this case it is important you forward this to the Study Overseas team. The host will also send you further information regarding your exchange (important dates, visa information, health insurance requirements etc). Once the Study Overseas team has your acceptance from the host we will send you your exchange participation agreement.

## Choosing courses at your host university

- // Make sure your chosen host university offers courses suitable to your program and in the appropriate semester. You will have done some initial research on this before putting in your application
- // Discuss course selection with your Program Director to ensure your courses and study load are approved and that you will obtain credit for your chosen courses. Research host university courses before your meeting
- // You must complete the equivalent of a full-time load while on exchange. That is, an equivalent minimum of 13.5 UniSA units or an equivalent maximum of 18 UniSA units. The measurement of workload and credit differs between universities, so you will need to work this out. Refer to the host university website and the UniSA Credit Equivalency Table online: [unisa.edu.au/Credit-Equivalencies-Table](http://unisa.edu.au/Credit-Equivalencies-Table)
- // It is your responsibility to ensure you are taking the correct unit load at the host university in order to obtain the required UniSA credit

// You cannot overload. All courses taken while on exchange must be part of your UniSA program not in addition to it

## Changing your courses while on exchange

Acceptance into your host university courses is not guaranteed. They may be full or unavailable. If you need to change your course selections when you arrive at your host university, you MUST seek approval from your UniSA Program Director – this can be done by email. Please copy in the Study Overseas team to all correspondence.

## UniSA Course Approval Form (CAF)

On this form you will nominate your host university courses and the UniSA courses for which you will obtain credit.

Your Program Director must sign this form. Without approval, you cannot go on exchange. You must complete the form before your departure. Failure to do so will result in you being withdrawn from the exchange program and your host will be notified of this.

Return the signed form to the Study Overseas team as soon as possible. We need this form to arrange your enrolment in the UniSA Exchange Program following acceptance by your host university. You cannot enrol yourself.

Please do not enrol in UniSA courses for the period of your exchange.

## Enrolling in courses at the host university

While the UniSA Study Overseas team will enrol you into the Exchange Program at UniSA, it is your responsibility to liaise with your host university to ensure you are enrolled there in your chosen subjects/modules. UniSA does not do this for you.



# Exchange participation agreement

Once we receive your host university acceptance, UniSA will send you:

- // The Exchange Participation Agreement. This is a contract outlining your responsibilities while on exchange
- // A Talent Release Form
- // If requested by you, a letter for you to take to Centrelink

If your host university sends your acceptance material direct to you, PLEASE NOTIFY the Study Overseas office as soon as possible and send us a copy of your acceptance letter, so we can send your participation agreement to you.


////////////////////

*"I have been able to develop my communication and leadership skills while on exchange and I feel like I have matured as a person. One of the highlights was a mid-semester trip to see the Northern Lights."*

*Natasha Pfeiffer*  
University of Calgary



# Preparing to go

A full-page background image showing two people standing on a large, reddish-brown desert rock formation. The person on the left is wearing a dark hoodie and jeans, holding a camera. The person on the right is wearing a light-colored hoodie and jeans, carrying a bag. They are both looking out over a vast desert landscape under a clear sky. The lighting suggests it is either sunrise or sunset, with warm orange and yellow tones.

*If you've received a letter of acceptance from us and also from your host university, you're going on exchange!*

*It is important to leave plenty of time to arrange your travel documents, such as your passport, visa and tickets for travel etc.*

*Some of your responsibilities at home will continue, or will need to be finalised before you leave. You will also have new responsibilities relating to your host country, new home, and new place of study.*



## Take some time to think

- // Why are you going on exchange?
- // Have you travelled overseas before?
- // Have you lived away from your family before?
- // What do you think might be difficult for you?

Take a few minutes to write down what you want to achieve on exchange.

Try reading some returned student experiences at: [unisa.edu.au/Hear-from-our-retained-students](https://unisa.edu.au/Hear-from-our-retained-students).

If you haven't already, you may also wish to join the Global Society: <https://forum.globalsociety.com.au/>. The Global Society is a membership based organisation for Australian University students with international study experiences. It provides the opportunity to network with other Australian exchange students and access a range of resources on studying overseas.

There's no doubt that planning ahead is time consuming and not quite as exciting as the trip itself. However, every traveller who sets off to achieve something will tell you that preparation makes the trip go a lot more smoothly.



## Destination research

Knowing something about your destination will help inform some of your pre-departure decisions. For example, what to pack and whether you can walk to the campus. Here are some things to consider in your research:

- // Cultural differences
- // Weather
- // Health and safety, including vaccinations
- // Language
- // Local transport
- // Currency and shopping
- // Food
- // Accommodation
- // Local seasonal sports/pastimes

### Where's the information?

- // Buy or download a current country guide book
- // Buy a language phrase book or App
- // DFAT website for travel warnings and links to consulates
- // Look through the International SOS website and App
- // Google Maps can show you where the host university is in relation to the city centre and potential accommodation
- // Lonely Planet website can give you a feel for the country/city
- // OANDA currency converter
- // [worldweather.wmo.int/en/home.html](https://worldweather.wmo.int/en/home.html)
- // Partner University website and information sheets
- // Download guides from the Global Society and get to chat with other Australian exchange students through The Global Society Forum



# Accommodation

It is your responsibility to organise all aspects of your accommodation while on exchange, including any deposits you may have to pay to secure accommodation. You should start looking into your accommodation options for the duration of your exchange as soon as you have been notified that your application has been successful. Applying for accommodation is different for each university and housing application deadlines may apply so it is important you start looking into your options early. You may have to organise short-term accommodation and this is best done before you leave.

Many of our partners have on-campus accommodation for exchange students but in some cases you may also have the option of staying off-campus. You should be aware though that some partners may provide little or no assistance with finding off-campus accommodation.

If your host university does not provide on-campus housing or if you have elected not to take advantage of the on-campus housing provided, you will have to find your own accommodation on arrival.

- // Make sure you arrange some form of accommodation before you arrive in your host city, even if it is only temporary

- // Allow plenty of time (one to two weeks before Orientation or the beginning of classes) to find suitable accommodation
- // Do not rush and rent the first place you find. Ask for local advice on a rental contract before you sign and find out your rights and responsibilities as a tenant. Familiarise yourself with rental procedures and tenancy rights (the host university should be able to provide this information to you)
- // If possible, take a local buddy along when you view accommodation or interview housemates
- // Think about how you will travel to university from your accommodation. Transport details may be provided in your host university's acceptance pack or on their web site. Don't assume public transport will be readily accessible

## Arrival

Arrive at least two weeks before the study period starts and attend any orientation programs. Do they offer an arrival reception service? If they do, notify them of your arrival time. If not, you will need to research the local transport and have local money to pay for it.



*Tip*

Try not to arrive on a public holiday as taxis and public transport may not be available.





# Travel essentials

## What to pack

Think carefully when packing. Returned exchange students often comment that they took far too much:

- // The regulations on weight and size of baggage can vary between countries and airlines. Check with your airline for specific regulations on the weight, size and number of suitcases, excess baggage, airfreight, and costs. If you are not checking your baggage through to your final destination, be sure to enquire about baggage regulations for your intermediate stops
- // Check out the weather of your host city and pack appropriately. If you are travelling to a colder climate, take enough clothes (especially a jacket) to make sure you will be warm when you first arrive. Other clothes can be bought once you settle into your new surroundings
- // Never carry items for strangers. Make sure you pack your own luggage and know what it contains

*Tip*

Don't over pack! You can buy most things overseas and excess baggage charges can be high. It may be cheaper to send extra luggage as unaccompanied baggage.



## Essential items in your hand luggage

(Keep in mind customs rules for liquids and electronics etc.)

- // Passport and visa
- // Air ticket (and evidence of return ticket)
- // Official acceptance letter from the host university
- // Financial statement (e.g. bank statements)
- // Immunisation document
- // Receipts and labels for all prescriptions and letter from doctor about medical conditions
- // Essential toiletries (toothbrush, deodorant)
- // Any electronic equipment (laptop, phone, camera), their power cords and foreign power adaptors
- // Spare change of clothes

## Useful items to pack in your checked luggage

- // Australian power board, electrical adaptor plugs, and charges for electronics
- // First aid kit – including over the counter medications, multi-vitamins
- // Travel guide books
- // Australian souvenirs for gifts
- // Sleeping bag
- // A journal

*Tip*

Bring a few momentos from home so you won't be too homesick – family photos, Vegemite, Tim Tams, Milo!



## Customs

It is IMPORTANT to check your destination's customs and quarantine regulations. Items that seem harmless to you, may be illegal to transport to your destination. Breaking the rules can mean heavy fines and even criminal charges. A travel agent (or Google!) may be able to provide you with the information you need.

You may want to buy TSA (Transport Security Administration) approved luggage locks. These locks can be easily opened and locked again by customs and security officers. This reduces the likelihood of theft because of broken luggage locks. They are recommended for travel to the USA but are useful for all destinations: [tsa.gov/travel/travel-tips](https://tsa.gov/travel/travel-tips). You can purchase these locks from the luggage and travel sections of department stores. You may also need universal travel adapters for electronic items. They can also be purchased from department stores, travel stores and at the airport.

You should be aware that airports have strict security requirements: [casa.gov.au/dangerous-goods-app](https://casa.gov.au/dangerous-goods-app). There are strict rules for taking liquids, aerosols, gels and sometimes electronics on flights into and out of Australia in carry-on baggage: [homeaffairs.gov.au/about-us/what-we-do/travelsecure/overview](https://homeaffairs.gov.au/about-us/what-we-do/travelsecure/overview).

It is also important to be aware of Australian customs quarantine and other restrictions. More information about customs matters can be found on the Australian Customs Service website [customs.gov.au](https://customs.gov.au) - click on "Travel and crossing the border".

Telephone: +1300 363 263 from anywhere in Australia, or +61 2 6275 6666 from outside Australia. Email: [information@customs.gov.au](mailto:information@customs.gov.au)

## Document safety

Make a copy or scan documents to your email including your airline ticket, passport, visas, credit cards, and acceptance letters. Pack one copy in your hand luggage and leave one copy at home with a relative or friend. This will speed up replacement should you lose any of these documents.

## Passport

Most host universities require a copy of your passport with your application form.

Check that your passport is valid for at least 6 months after your return date. Most countries will not allow you entry if your passport is close to its expiry date.

## Student visas

You can only apply for your student visa once you have received the acceptance letter from your host university.

// Applying for and obtaining a student visa for the country in which you will be studying is solely your responsibility and not the responsibility of the University of South Australia. UniSA cannot advise on visas. Please refer specific questions to the embassy/consulate of your host country

// You should apply for your visa immediately after you receive your letter of acceptance. Do not leave your student visa until the last minute as visa turnaround times vary and can sometimes take up to 90 days to process. Delaying could mean you do not receive your visa in time. Check with your travel agent as they may help you apply for your visa (and courier all the necessary documents to the embassy) for a small fee. The UniSA Travel team also offers this service for a fee (they can also handle your flight bookings) [unisa.edu.au/travel-team](https://unisa.edu.au/travel-team)

// You should have already researched the website of the embassy or consulate of the country in which you will be studying to find out the residency requirements and visa costs. If you are an international student, you may have to apply for your student visa in your home country

// Remember you should attach your host university acceptance to your visa application. Make sure you include all required documents. Forgetting to do so could delay your visa



- // If you think you may want to work while you are on exchange, you should check with the embassy/ consulate on whether it is possible to work on your visa type and if it is, how you would go about obtaining work rights

## Other visa issues

- // Will you need more than one visa? You may also need visa/s for the countries you travel through en route to your destination (or on return), e.g. If you're studying in Canada there's a good chance your initial travel will pass through the USA, and you'll need a visa even if you're only in transit! Make sure you check out those embassy/consulate websites as well
- // Health check-up? You may need a health check-up and proof of vaccination to obtain your visa
- // In some cases you may need to visit the foreign embassy in person to lodge your application, which could be interstate. Make sure you factor this into your planning and budgeting
- // If you are applying for your visa by mail, use registered post or a courier as you will have to include your passport in the package. International students must ensure they have a valid Australian visa while on exchange
- // If you are an international student studying at UniSA make sure you consider what impact going on exchange will have on your Australian student visa

For further information, please go to: [homeaffairs.gov.au](http://homeaffairs.gov.au)

## Overstaying your visa

Be aware of your host country's rules and restrictions governing visas and your length of stay. It can be difficult for you if you stay on after your visa expires. You could be fined, arrested, deported or forced into a lengthy bureaucratic process.

Take a few extra visa photos with you. They can be invaluable if you try to extend your visa, get a visa for a third country, or do other official business.



*Tip*

Check the location of the nearest Australian consulate/embassy to your host university in case of emergencies.





## International students

As you will be leaving Australia for more than 30 days to participate in the exchange program, you should be eligible for Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) overseas credit. Please contact your OSHC provider for specific advice on eligibility requirements and procedures.

Please remember that, as an international student, you are obliged to complete your UniSA degree within the duration of your Australian student visa. Going on exchange does not exempt you from this obligation.

Should you need it, the Study Overseas team will provide a letter confirming details of your exchange. You may have to present this letter to the Department of Home Affairs prior to your departure.

## Tickets for travel

Research your flight options and obtain quotes, but don't confirm or pay for your booking until you have received:

- // Your full acceptance from UniSA Study Overseas team (including Program Director approved Course Approval Form)
- // Your host university acceptance, **and**
- // Your student visa

Finalising your travel arrangements without your visa is risky. If you cannot obtain a visa, you cannot travel. You will still have to pay for the flights even if you can't obtain a visa in time.

When you are ready to book your flights:

- // Check with your travel agent that your ticket includes departure tax
- // Check your required time of arrival at the airport before departure
- // Arrange transportation for you and your luggage to the airport

Be sure to check these items again on the way home because it will vary between airports.

*Tip*

Flight lay-by – this is a special deal for The Global Society members that allows you to book your flight overseas before being accepted by your host University!





# Money matters

## Budget - How much money will you need?

- // Know how much you have to spend while you are on exchange and create a budget based on suggested costs of living, so that you are not left in the lurch after three months
- // Keep in mind the exchange rate and how it might go up and down during your time on exchange. Check the exchange rates using the OANDA currency converter: <https://www.oanda.com/currency/converter/>. Learn the currency rate and download XE currency converter app to aid in conversions
- // Do not carry large amounts of cash with you
- // Remember that you may need to purchase household items upon arrival – check out local markets, charity shops and ask local students about cheap buys
- // DO NOT rely on finding paid work in your host country as this may be prohibited by your visa conditions or it may not be available. If your visa does permit it, check the detail. It may restrict the number of hours you can work
- // Use the budgeting guide to help calculate how much you will need

## Budgeting guide

Funds Available	AU\$	Estimated Expenses	AU\$
Savings to date		Airfare	
Expected savings		Visa/s	
Family/other contributions		Travel/medical insurance	
Centrelink benefits (if any)		Accommodation & utilities	
OS-HELP loan (if eligible)		Living expenses	
UniSA travel grant or scholarship (if applicable)		Books/stationery	
<b>Total funds available</b>		<b>Total estimated expenses</b>	

## Banking

- // Notify all financial institutions in Australia (e.g. banks, credit card companies) about your travel plans
- // Be aware of any fees associated with international withdrawals/purchases from an Australian account/card
- // Check out the local banks in your host city if you wish to open an account once in country – they may have lower fees and special student deals. If you do, consider a large national bank rather than a state/local bank where charges may be higher and branches less accessible. Find out before you leave what documents you may need to take with you to enable you to open a bank account in your host country

## How to take your money overseas

You will need to think about how you are going to access your money while you are overseas. We recommend you access your money overseas using a combination of methods such as a bank Travel Card, credit card, electronic transfer and cash. It is never advisable to take large amounts of cash.

- // Travel Cards are pre-paid debit cards for travellers and some do not have any exchange rate/withdrawal fees associated to them.
- // Electronic transfers from your Australian account to a local bank are useful for transferring large amounts of money, but can be costly. Alternatively consider using transfer services provided by companies such as Western Union: [westernunion.com.au](http://westernunion.com.au)
- // Debit and credit cards are useful when making larger payments for travel bookings etc. Visa and MasterCard are more widely accepted than American Express.

Find out what services are available with your Australian credit cards (e.g. cash advances, Cirrus and Maestro network). Note that cash advance charges are quite high, and it is advisable not to use these unless you are desperate. Credit services normally have foreign currency conversion charges at a certain percentage. You may want to consider a pre-paid foreign currency travel card instead of a credit card.

Ensure someone at home has authority to act on your behalf i.e. is authorised to be your Power of Attorney. They should be able to transfer money to you immediately.

Be aware that services available in Australia may not be used frequently in your host country. Some countries will not use EFTPOS widely and may use cheques or rely more on cash. ATMs may have restricted hours of operation and may not accept cards from other countries. You may need a new card and/or a special international PIN.

## International Student Identity Card (ISIC)

ISIC is the only internationally accepted proof of student status ([isic.org](http://isic.org)). This card accesses a world-wide network of specialist student travel offices offering you savings on accommodation, tours and transportation. Go to the ISIC web site to find the closest travel agent offering 'The Card'.

*Tip*

As a Global Society member, you receive a complimentary ISIC card!



## Financial assistance

### Centrelink

If you receive benefits from Centrelink, you may still be eligible to receive this while overseas.

Contact your Centrelink Officer for eligibility information. It is your responsibility to understand the rules and regulations of Centrelink.

If you are not currently eligible, check with Centrelink as you may be eligible to receive benefits during your period of exchange. After receiving your host university acceptance, you will be able to request a letter confirming the details of your exchange for you to take to Centrelink. It is your responsibility to inform Centrelink of any changes.

For enquiries regarding your payments while you are overseas, go to The Department of Human Services: Payments for students and trainees: [humanservices.gov.au/customer/subjects/payments-students-and-trainees](http://humanservices.gov.au/customer/subjects/payments-students-and-trainees)

Telephone: 131 673 if you are calling from Australia. Free call numbers if you are calling from outside Australia can be found at [humanservices.gov.au/individuals/contact-us](http://humanservices.gov.au/individuals/contact-us)



## OS-HELP

If you are an Australian student, you may be eligible for an OS-HELP loan. OS-HELP is an Australian Government loan that assists eligible students to study overseas. Your OS-HELP debts will be added to your accumulated HELP debt (including HECS or HECS-HELP debts).

Please note that you do not need your letter of acceptance from the host university before applying for OS-HELP.

One loan covers anything up to a six month study period, and you can apply for a maximum of two loans over your lifetime but they cannot be within the same six month period. Students can apply for back-to-back loans, but payments will not be released within the six month period.

To be eligible:

- // You must be enrolled in a commonwealth supported place
- // You must be studying full-time when overseas
- // You must have completed enough courses to count for one full-time year of study before you leave (1 EFTSL is the technical definition)
- // You must have at least one subject to complete when you return from studying overseas
- // Your overseas study must count toward your Australian degree. This means that you must have received credit approval for the courses you plan to study overseas in order to qualify to get the money

Apply for OS-HELP through the MyScholarships link on your MyUniSA student portal or go to the Australian Government's OS-Help loans and Study Overseas page at: [studyassist.gov.au/sites/studyassist/helppayingmyfees/os-help\\_overseas\\_study/pages/os-help-loans-and-study-overseas](https://studyassist.gov.au/sites/studyassist/helppayingmyfees/os-help_overseas_study/pages/os-help-loans-and-study-overseas)

Student Finance will assess your eligibility for an OS-HELP loan no earlier than six months before the commencement of your exchange.

All questions about OS-HELP should be directed to UniSA Student Finance: [StudentFinance.Enrolment@unisa.edu.au](mailto:StudentFinance.Enrolment@unisa.edu.au)

### Update your address

You won't be in Adelaide during your exchange so please make sure that your postal/residential address is updated in your myUniSA Portal.



# Health and safety preparations

## Register with International SOS

**IMPORTANT - In order to undertake the exchange (and before you will be enrolled or paid the travel grant), you are required to be registered with International SOS.**

UniSA has partnered with International SOS to offer our students medical, safety and security advice, referrals, emotional support and routine and emergency assistance when travelling or living abroad.

If you are experiencing an emergency, require assistance or advice while overseas you should contact International SOS. You will be issued a card with contact details and your UniSA member number. Please carry this with you at all times while travelling.

Through International SOS, as a UniSA student studying overseas, you have access 24-hours a day, every day of the year to a worldwide network of:

- // 26 Assistance Centres staffed by doctors, nurses, coordinators and security professionals for immediate advice, referral and assistance
- // more than 58 clinics and a fleet of air ambulances
- // health and logistics advice from 1,200 full-time physicians and 200 security professionals, with local expertise, preventative advice and emergency assistance, who have access to a global network of over 70,000 vetted and approved providers

### Option 1

#### Register your details through UniSA Business Travel Request (BTR) Form

- // All UniSA students must complete a UniSA Business Travel Request Form (BTR). You can access the form here: [unisa.edu.au/business-travel-request](https://unisa.edu.au/business-travel-request)

- // Completion of this form will ensure you are covered by UniSA International Travel Insurance and with International SOS
- // If you do not upload your travel itinerary when you complete the BTR you will still be required to complete Option 2 below

### Option 2

#### Register directly with International SOS

- // If you do not upload your itinerary when you complete the BTR form you will need to create an International SOS MyTrips Profile. The Study Overseas team will provide you information on how to do this. Complete your MyTrips profile here: [mytrips.travelsecurity.com/Login](https://mytrips.travelsecurity.com/Login)
- // You are also required to provide International SOS with your travel details. Using your UniSA student email address, forward your flight itinerary (ies) to [UniSATravel@itinerary.internationalsos.com](mailto:UniSATravel@itinerary.internationalsos.com)

We strongly recommend that you download the International SOS Assistance App: [internationalsos.com/assistance-app](https://internationalsos.com/assistance-app)

The Assistance App provides:

- // one-click dialling to the nearest International SOS Assistance Centre, for immediate help
- // mobile-friendly medical and travel security information to prepare for trips, with deeper content a further tap away
- // the latest medical and travel security alerts, delivering travel advice before and during trips
- // A further ability to receive messages from International SOS and the University
- // Register with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)
- // Registering with DFAT will help you gain access to consular services, should you need help overseas. Register here: [smartraveller.gov.au](https://smartraveller.gov.au)
- // Non-Australian citizens should register with consular officials from their home country

- // Check the travel situations for your destination on **smartraveller.gov.au**. If the security situation increases to a Level 3 or 4 while in the country, the exchange program to the region may be cancelled. If you are concerned for your safety, please contact International SOS Assistance Centre (24/7) +61 2 9372 2468

## *Medical tips*

- // Arrange for a health check-up with your doctor, dentist and optician. You may need a doctor's statement for your visa
- // If you have a medical condition, you may need to work out a health management plan with your GP. Make sure that your medications are available at your exchange destination, or arrange to bring them with you. Make sure to carry a doctor's letter listing your medications (the trade and generic names) and dosages
- // Carry a supply to cover the period you are away as it may be difficult to obtain similar medication in our host country. If taking large amounts of medication with you, check with the consulate to see if there are customs limits at your destination
- // Ensure that you are up to date with routine immunisations e.g. tetanus
- // See a travel doctor at least six weeks before you leave Australia to get appropriate vaccinations
- // Take copies of optical and other prescriptions and spare glasses/contact lenses
- // Carry your Medicare card with you, as the countries you visit may have a reciprocal healthcare agreement with Australia

- // Make up a small first aid kit. Include items such as hand sanitiser, headache tablets, antiseptic cream, Band-Aids, tissues, condoms, thermometer, tweezers, anti-diarrheal medication, multi-vitamins and electrolyte sachets/tablets

Sending or taking medicine out of the country under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) may be illegal unless it is for your personal use, or the personal use of someone travelling with you. Fines are steep and gaol time may apply. Before sending or taking medicine subsidised under the PBS, you should:

- // Contact the embassy of the country you are visiting to ensure the medicine is deemed as legal
- // Take a detailed letter from your doctor explaining any ongoing/existing medical conditions and medication that may be required in case this is demanded by Australian and overseas customs officials. Include both the chemical and commercial names of the medication
- // Leave personal medication in original packaging so it is clearly labelled with your name and dosage

For more information refer to the Medicare web site for 'taking and sending PBS medicines overseas' at: **[humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/medicare/travelling-overseas-pbs-medicine](https://humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/medicare/travelling-overseas-pbs-medicine)**

# Travel and health insurance

It is essential that you have sufficient travel and health insurance for the entire period you are away from Australia.

## UniSA travel insurance

UniSA provides eligible students with travel insurance for study related travel. Information is on the Student Insurance website: [unisa.edu.au/student-insurance](http://unisa.edu.au/student-insurance)

Upon application, travel insurance cover is provided automatically and free of charge if:

- // Your trip does not exceed 270 days
- // You do not have any pre-existing medical conditions
- // Your age while travelling does not exceed 74 years
- // You are receiving academic credit for the overseas activity
- // You do not intend working overseas
- // You are not travelling to a Level 3 or Level 4 country as rated by Smartraveller

## Applying for travel insurance

To apply, please complete and submit the UniSA Business Travel Request (BTR) [unisa.edu.au/business-travel-request](http://unisa.edu.au/business-travel-request)

- // If your circumstances meet the criteria above, cover will be confirmed automatically
- // If your circumstances are different to the criteria above, you may still qualify for UniSA travel insurance but your individual circumstances will need to be assessed. The Insurance Office will be notified via the Business Travel Request and will contact you to (where possible) arrange any necessary extensions to the policy. Any additional premium or associated costs are the responsibility of the traveller

Read the information on the student insurance site carefully so you are aware of what is covered by this insurance. Print and take with

you a copy of the Travel Policy Summary (which can be found on Travel Insurance website).

## Making a claim

If you are experiencing an emergency, require assistance or advice while overseas you should contact International SOS.

If you need to make a claim, all claim forms are obtained by contacting the Insurance Office. A claim should be submitted to the Insurance Office at the earliest opportunity at [insurance@unisa.edu.au](mailto:insurance@unisa.edu.au).

## High-risk activities

High-risk activities may not be covered automatically by the travel insurance. Trekking, snow skiing on groomed slopes and scuba diving may be covered but should be referred to the Insurance Office on a case-by-case basis for clarification. Aerial activities such as parachuting, bungee jumping, paragliding and the like are specifically excluded from cover. If you are unsure whether an activity may be covered, contact the Insurance Office.

## Compulsory host university health insurance

You should note many partner universities (particularly those in the USA) require you to purchase local health insurance. This is usually to meet visa requirements.

In some instances, the host university may accept the UniSA travel insurance in lieu of the compulsory health insurance. Enquire with them if this may be the case. If they do not accept our travel insurance in lieu, you will have to comply with their requirements even though you are also covered by UniSA travel insurance.

## Questions

Frequently asked questions can be found at FAQs on travel insurance: [i.unisa.edu.au/staff/finance/faqs/travel-insurance/](http://i.unisa.edu.au/staff/finance/faqs/travel-insurance/)

All other questions to [insurance@unisa.edu.au](mailto:insurance@unisa.edu.au)



# Tying up loose ends

## Power of Attorney

It might be worth considering giving a family member or a trusted friend Power of Attorney before you leave for your exchange, so they can sign important documents while you are overseas or take action if an emergency arises. They will need a Power of Attorney to manage your finances or sign formal agreements for you. You will need legal advice to create a Power of Attorney.

Some matters that may arise while you are away include:

- // HECS paperwork
- // Registering or selling your car
- // Receiving and banking your tax refund
- // Receiving the returned bond cheque from your accommodation
- // Operating a bank account in Australia for you
- // Finalising Medicare claims

## Taxation

If you have been working, you should lodge a tax return with the taxation office prior to your departure.

If you are unsure about the timing, or you know you will not receive your group certificate before you leave, contact your accountant or the Australian Taxation Office: [ato.gov.au](http://ato.gov.au)

## Accommodation and bills

If you will be leaving rental accommodation, make arrangements for cleaning, landlord inspection, return of your keys and requesting the refund of your bond.

Advise utilities providers of the date you will be leaving. Arrange disconnection and final payments of services if appropriate (e.g. gas, phone and electricity).

Arrange for mail to be forwarded to you or a family member or to a friend.

## UniSA

- // Return UniSA library books and materials and pay any monies due
- // Make sure you are not in bad financial standing (BFS) with UniSA. If you haven't cleared this debt you will not be able to proceed with your exchange. You will not be able to be enrolled as an exchange student, receive a UniSA travel grant or receive OS-Help funding

*"Going on exchange is an excellent talking point on your resume. It also opens up a whole new network of people that could help progress your career in the future. My six months overseas definitely changed my life and I met some amazing people."*

*Jason Zecchin*

University of Liverpool





*Arrival and settling in*





# Communication with home

## Contact home

This sounds a little obvious, but do phone home when you first arrive. It is a good way to familiarise yourself with using international dial codes. Better now than when it is urgent. Be sure to set up a way to communicate with friends and family while you are away. Make sure you give them your phone number, address and/or email address. Skype/call home when you feel the need.

## Keep in touch with UniSA

It is vitally important to your studies and, potentially, your graduation that you keep contact with UniSA.

Remember to:

- // Check your UniSA student email regularly - this is how we will correspond with you. It's a good idea to also let us know a secondary email (@gmail or host university)
- // Keep your UniSA in-box accessible by deleting unnecessary items
- // Follow us on Instagram @unisaoverseas and tag and share your experiences with us

## First impressions

Travelling can be exhausting. You're tired. Everything is new.

Your first impressions may be confusing. It will take a while before you are familiar with your new environment. Don't worry, this is quite normal.

## What can you do to find out about your new environment?

- // Attend the orientation program! Meet other new and current students and familiarise yourself with the university.
- // Talk to other people about what they have done to feel at home. New and current students and staff will be very happy to offer advice. Most local people will be happy to help you with directions as well. Ask lots of questions!
- // Explore the city – try the public transport. Ask someone how the ticketing system works. Walk around during the day to see where things are. Don't be afraid to ask other students to go with you.
- // Eat well and get enough sleep. If you arranged short-term accommodation before your arrival, you will need to make longer-term arrangements within a few weeks of arriving.
- // Find out what accommodation services are provided by your host university.





# Culture shock

As the excitement wears off and you are faced with the challenges of living and studying in a new culture, you may find the differences between home and your host country become more obvious.

The initial excitement can sometimes turn to frustration and anxiety. You may experience what is often referred to as 'culture shock'. Culture shock does not always happen quickly or have one single cause. It usually accumulates from a series of events and experiences that constantly challenge your basic values and beliefs about what is 'right' and 'normal'.

## What you can do

- // Be patient. Adjusting to a new place takes time
- // Keep in touch with family and friends – text, email, call
- // Keep a journal or set up a blog. What are your first impressions? Who have you met?
- // Ask for help from the university's support staff
- // What are you worried about? Record it all
- // Get plenty of exercise. What are the local favourite sports/pastime?
- // Give yourself time before making any big decisions
- // Even difficult situations have a positive side, try to find it. How do others cope? Watch them. Ask them
- // Is anything the same as home? Look for the similarities, they can be comforting
- // Find something you like about the new culture every day
- // Try not to judge others when they do things differently. Experiencing difference is a key part of exchange, so embrace it
- // Use/learn the local language. Read the local newspaper and watch television
- // If you're feeling overwhelmed, set small goals that you can achieve every day
- // Meet people. Join a club. Find activities you think you will enjoy. Ask the student association or guild
- // Keep in contact with the people you meet during orientation
- // Ask questions when you are unsure what is expected of you. Gradually, you will feel more confident, develop new friends and interact more comfortably. Your study will be more effective and you will feel that you are benefiting from the experience. Some students get to this phase quite quickly but for others it may take longer

# A cultural shift

## Things that help intercultural adjustment

- // **Open mindedness:** Keeping your opinions flexible and receptive to new stimuli is important.
- // **Sense of humour:** A sense of humour guards against despair when things are going wrong. In another culture there are plenty of things which can make you cry, get angry, be annoyed, embarrassed or discouraged.
- // **Ability to cope with failure:** Tolerating failure is critical. People who go overseas have often been the most successful in their home environments and have rarely experienced failure, so have never developed ways of coping with failure.
- // **Communication:** The ability and willingness to communicate your feelings and thoughts to others has been suggested as an important skill for successful intercultural communicators.
- // **Flexibility and adaptability:** Responding to or tolerating the ambiguity of new situations is important to intercultural success. Keep options open and judgmental behaviour to a minimum. Try to be an adaptable or flexible person.
- // **Curiosity:** Curiosity is the demonstrated desire to know about other people, places, ideas, etc. This skill or personality trait is important for learning the many things you need to adapt to a new environment.
- // **Positive and realistic expectations:** There are strong correlations between positive expectations for an intercultural experience and successful adjustment overseas and at home.
- // **Tolerance for differences and ambiguities:** A sympathetic understanding of beliefs or practices differing from your own is important.

- // **Positive regard for others:** The ability to express warmth, empathy, respect and positive regard for other people is a key component of effective intercultural relations.
- // **A strong sense of self:** A clear, secure feeling about yourself creates a person who relates to others with polite confidence. People with a strong sense of themselves stand up for what they believe, but do not cling to those beliefs regardless of new information, perspectives or understandings which they may encounter.

Source: Worldwide Classroom: Consortium for International Education & Multicultural Studies, [www.worldwide.edu/travel\\_planner/culture\\_adjusting.html](http://www.worldwide.edu/travel_planner/culture_adjusting.html)

## Support while you are overseas

If you continue to experience physical or emotional responses which are difficult to manage, don't hesitate to reach out! You can:

- // Seek advice from a health practitioner or staff at the host university
- // Visit the International Centre at your host university to find information about help from counselling services or similar support
- // Access UniSA's professional and confidential counselling service [unisa.edu.au/counselling](http://unisa.edu.au/counselling) to assist with any stress, anxiety, confusion and adjustment issues you may experience while you are overseas
- // Don't forget you can contact individual staff members, or the UniSA Study Overseas Office at any time: [student.exchange@unisa.edu.au](mailto:student.exchange@unisa.edu.au)



Tip

Embrace new experiences – what have you got to lose!



# Safety, security and emergencies

No matter where you are, it is your responsibility to keep yourself safe. At home, it's easier. You know your friends, neighbourhood and city. In your new home, you will need to take on new safety advice. You will need to establish safe behaviour patterns, be aware of circumstances that may lead to danger and avoid them.

It is essential you take the advice of your host university's international student advisors about local safety issues. This will include advice about venues or places that are dangerous or unsafe, as well as local tips on social customs and other issues that could lead to problems. Do not hesitate to contact an advisor if you are in any doubt about a situation.

## Please ensure you complete the following

- // Create an International SOS MyTrips Profile and forward your flight itinerary(ies) (if you have submitted a BTR form this will be done automatically for you)
- // Register with your nearest government representative. Australian citizens can register online at [smartraveller.gov.au](http://smartraveller.gov.au)
- // Update your address in myUniSA Portal
- // Download the International SOS App
- // Register your address with the Exchange Office at the host university
- // Regularly check the travel advice for your host country and travel destinations on the Smartraveller website [smartraveller.gov.au](http://smartraveller.gov.au)

## Safety and security tips

- // When you arrive in a new destination, register your location with International SOS by using the app
- // No matter what the social customs of a destination, it is NEVER acceptable for you to feel threatened or unsafe and you should always seek appropriate help

- // Don't forget to be street-wise. A very common reaction to arriving in a new place is to feel safe and protected - but beware, every town and city in the world has some level of crime and be aware of your surroundings at all times
- // Shortly after you arrive take note of the emergency contact details at your host university and your address while overseas and local emergency phone numbers
- // Does your university have a security office? Where is it? Are there security phones? Where are they?
- // Do they have security escorts at night? Find out what is available and how to access it
- // Avoid walking through the campus by yourself at night. If you feel unsafe, look for other people and don't be afraid to call out for help
- // Exercise the usual caution you would if you were living in your home city. This should apply to your personal belongings and personal safety
- // Introduce yourself to your neighbours as soon as possible. This way if you do have any problems you will feel more comfortable if you need to approach them for help
- // When travelling to other cities/countries be sure people both in Australia and at your host university know where you will be and when you will return
- // Do not participate in any political activities in countries you visit, avoid angry groups or demonstrations
- // Be respectful of the dress code of your host culture
- // Immediately report any incidents to your host university's international centre and relevant local authorities. Follow this up by contacting the UniSA Study Overseas Office as soon as you can
- // If something unfortunate does happen, be sure to know what to claim on insurance and how to do it. For more information about insurance see page 20 of this booklet



- // Stay away from dark streets and poorly lit buildings. Avoid walking by yourself at night
- // Stay with groups of people as much as possible. Be aware of where you are and who else is around you
- // Assess the risk of what you are about to do and try to minimise or even avoid it. For example, do you need to walk to your car/bus stop alone, or can you arrange for friends to walk with you?
- // Go out with others until you are familiar with your new environment. Take the advice of others on what is safe and unsafe in their city
- // Be mindful of online security. Think before you post, adjust your privacy settings, accept people you know or have met as friends. Visit Stay Smart Online: [staysmartonline.gov.au/your-identity](http://staysmartonline.gov.au/your-identity)

Check the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) Smartraveller web site: [smartraveller.gov.au](http://smartraveller.gov.au) for:

- // Travel and health advice and bulletins
- // Passport and visa information, and
- // Information about registering your presence with an Australian Embassy overseas

Follow the prompts to 'Register with us' at the Smartraveller website so that Australian consular officials can contact you in an emergency. If you don't do this before you leave Australia you can register with the closest Australian Embassy in your host country. The full listing of overseas Australian posts is available at: [dfat.gov.au/missions](http://dfat.gov.au/missions)

DFAT's 24 hour Consular Emergency Centre (CEC) in Canberra provides emergency consular services all day, every day around the world. [smartraveller.gov.au/services/pages/consular-services-charter.aspx](http://smartraveller.gov.au/services/pages/consular-services-charter.aspx)

If you are unable to contact the Australian Embassy, High Commission or Consulate in an emergency you can contact the CEC from anywhere in the world on +61 6261 3305. The CEC is also an advisory line for concerned family

members in Australia and can be called on 1300 555 135 for the cost of a local call in Australia.

## What to do in an emergency

- // In the event of an emergency overseas follow the instructions of the local authorities in the first instance
- // **Contact International SOS - Emergency Travel Assistance**
  - o UniSA member number is: 12AYCA773040
- // Call: +61 2 9372 2468 (you can contact the local operator and request a reverse-charge call)
- // Go online [internationalosos.com](http://internationalosos.com) OR
- // download the Assistance App: <http://i.unisa.edu.au/staff/finance/services-we-provide/insurance-landing-page/travel-insurance/> The UniSA member number is: 12AYCA773040

International SOS can be contacted from anywhere in the world (24 hours a day, 7 days a week).

- // Contact your family, UniSA Study Overseas team and your host university to inform them of your wellbeing, whereabouts and plan of action

In any emergency where an operator or message taker is involved, please be prepared to provide the following information:

1. Your name
2. Where you are
3. Nature of the emergency
4. Telephone number and where administrator(s) may contact you
5. Until when/for how long you will be in that location
6. When you will call back if you cannot be called

Stolen or lost passport

If your passport is lost or stolen, contact the nearest Australian embassy/consulate immediately and report it to the police. Get a copy of the police report or the report number. To obtain a replacement you will need to complete an application form, produce written evidence of your Australian citizenship (for example, a birth or citizenship certificate), provide a copy of the police report or number, present new photographs and pay the required fee.

Remember, your passport is your most important legal document while travelling overseas. As a visitor, some countries require you to carry your passport at all times. Guard your passport carefully and do not travel away from your host university without it.

Emergency Card

In addition to carrying your International SOS card, you should fill in the emergency card below and make at least three copies. Leave a copy with your Australian emergency contacts, with your overseas emergency contacts and keep a copy with you at all times. Keep a record of your credit card number separate from this but in a safe but accessible location.

Student emergency information card		
Student Name	UniSA Emergency Contact International SOS Tel: +61 2 9372 2468 <i>internationalsos.com</i>	Health and travel insurers' emergency contact
Date of Birth	UniSA member number: 12AYCA773O4O	Australian embassy or high comission emergency contact in host city
Citizenship	Host university emergency contact	DFAT Consular emergency centre Tel: +61 6261 3305
Passport number	Family emergency contact	Missing credit card contact
Blood type	Equivalent of OOO in host city	
Special medical conditions		
fold		fold

# Studying at the host university

## Teaching styles

The method of teaching and assessment will undoubtedly be different at your host university from that of UniSA.

If you experience difficulties adjusting to the differences in your classes, do not wait too long to get help.

Use the academic support or counselling services provided at the host university so that you can perform well academically and gain credit for your studies overseas.

## Attendance at classes

At many universities, class attendance is recorded. If you miss more than two classes, or if you come to class late and miss having your attendance recorded, you may risk failing the course (common in USA, Japan, China and France).

Find out the attendance requirements for your courses at the start of your exchange semester and make sure you meet those requirements.

## What if your pre-approved courses change?

It is not uncommon for students to have difficulties getting into the courses they have had approved for their exchange.

In some universities, courses fill up very quickly; in others, programs change and the courses you selected may no longer be offered.

If you have to get new courses approved by your Program Director, make sure you take the following steps:

1. Gather information about the new course, including a description of the topics covered, contact hours, methods of assessment, texts used, the credit value of the course and the level of the course (introductory vs advanced).

2. Email the new course information to your Program Director, copying in the Study Overseas team.
3. If the course is approved, keep all communication you have had with the Program Director to ensure ease of credit transfer on return to UniSA.

## Coming home early

Sometimes things don't go as planned and you may need to come home early. If this does occur, please contact the Study Overseas team for further information.

If you need to return early, you will need to consider the following implications.

## Abroad and at the host university

- // Does your host university have a withdrawal fee?
- // What financial penalties are there with regard to your accommodation?
- // Will you be subject to any fees to reschedule return flights?

## In Australia and at UniSA

- // Have you passed the financial liability for withdrawal date for enrolled study?
- // Will you be able to return to study at UniSA in the current semester?

Please note that if you return prior to the census date for that semester (31 March for Study Period 2 and 31 August for Study Period 5), you may be able to be unenrolled from the Exchange program. Please contact the Study Overseas team as soon as possible to arrange.

- // Have you received a scholarship/grant? Depending on your circumstances, you may be required to pay back any grants or scholarships you have received. This can be discussed with the Study Overseas team.
- // Do you have to do anything regarding Centrelink payments?

# Getting the most out of your exchange

## Your obligations

As a UniSA exchange student and as an Australian traveller, you have obligations. Your exchange responsibilities are set out in the UniSA Exchange Agreement. Remember that while on exchange you must abide by the standards, policies, and rules of the host university as well as those of UniSA.

Please remember that, as a representative of UniSA, your behaviour can have a significant effect, both positive and negative, on the image of the University and its students, and, in turn, the exchange relationship with your host university.

These responsibilities are taken seriously by both UniSA and the host university. UniSA is entitled to cancel your exchange and request the return of any travel grant and/or scholarship you may have received.

## Representing UniSA

An important part of the success of an exchange program is the reciprocal exchange of students, so part of your job as a UniSA ambassador is to encourage more students from the host university to come to UniSA on exchange.

You may be called upon to participate in promotional events for the host university's exchange program (e.g. Study Abroad fairs, pre-departure seminars etc.).

## UniSA+ program

Stand out as an exceptional graduate and prospective employee by participating in UniSA+. All undergraduate and postgraduate coursework students are eligible to participate!

Although your exchange will not count towards UniSA+, you may take part in non-credit-bearing extra-curricular activities.

You can record your participation in eligible activities online through CareerHub. You will be required to provide evidence in the form of a certificate or statement of participation/achievement for each activity. Visit: [unisa.edu.au/unisaplus](http://unisa.edu.au/unisaplus)

# Career benefits

## Learning from your exchange experiences

Remember, your exchange experience is a valuable opportunity for both personal AND professional development. It provides a unique opportunity to build skills that are highly desired by employers and will position you ahead of the crowd once you graduate. Your exchange can be more than a great travel experience – it can be a strategic move in your career development.

What are these skills that employers value? Here's just a few:

**Initiative and independence:** Just the decision to step out of your comfort zone and into a completely unfamiliar environment shows initiative! You're someone who is prepared to try new things and stretch yourself. Every day in your new environment requires you to think laterally to find your way.

**Problem solving:** That new environment has a unique set of challenges that you may not have faced before, so you will develop a stronger ability to source your own solutions away from the normal constructs.

**Communication:** Surrounded by different individuals, a new institutional setting and a new cultural environment, you will need to hone your communication skills. You will be listening to and observing others, clarifying information, clearly articulating your thoughts and resolving conflict or misunderstanding.

**Cultural competency:** Your host culture could be quite different to your home culture, so be open-minded and willing to learn that things may just be different, not wrong. Withhold your judgement and give your tolerance. Your ability to understand and work with diverse groups of people is a strength that employers will appreciate.

**Team work:** Closely linked to other key skills such as communication and cultural competency, working closely and effectively with others is fundamental. Some things you cannot do alone, and learning how your attributes complement those around you and vice versa will help you be a great team player.



**Self-awareness:** Living in a new environment will teach you a lot about yourself. Take time to reflect on your experiences and what you can learn from them, both the wins and the challenges. This kind of self-awareness shows that in the work place, you will have the capacity to evaluate your own performance and adjust your approach, behaviour and attitudes accordingly.

**Networking:** Your ability to establish and maintain relationships, both personally and professionally, will be stretched and strengthened. Use the professional networking platform LinkedIn to build your connections including fellow students, academic staff and industry contacts. The people you are now studying with are the employers and leaders of the future, so stay in touch. You never know where those connections will lead.

So, how can you maximise your exchange experience to benefit your future career path?

Be intentional and deliberate in building the skills mentioned, along with many others.

Keep a reflective journal noting down your key experiences and learning, even recording specific examples of the skills you are building. Remember, these examples will also be useful when it comes to building your resume and informing responses during interviews!

Set goals for yourself related to some of the skills you need to develop more. Celebrate your achievements and also your challenges. Keep your broader career plan in mind and use this perspective to bring clarity in challenging times. All that you are learning and experiencing is just another step in building you as a person, and preparing you for a great career!

Visit UniSA Career Services if you need assistance or would like to know more about Career Planning.



*"My Korean study experience has made me more adaptable in all aspects of life and given me more independence in my own learning. I now have invaluable international experience that can be transferred to many different challenging situations and I feel like a global citizen."*

*Michelle Howie* Chung Ang University



A close-up photograph of two young women smiling and taking a selfie. The woman on the left has long brown hair and is wearing a white shirt under a red and white plaid shirt. The woman on the right has dark curly hair and is wearing a red and black plaid shirt, making a peace sign with her hand. A white smartphone is visible in the lower-left foreground, partially obscuring the women's faces. The background is a bright, out-of-focus outdoor setting with sunlight filtering through.

## *Coming home*

////////////////////

The semester will be over before you know it and you will leave your host country with mixed emotions – glad to be going home but sad to be leaving the new friends you have made. Coming home will have its challenges, so here is some advice to minimise those challenges.

## Travel and living arrangements

- // Pay all outstanding bills (including housing)
- // Close your bank account
- // Confirm your travel arrangements home
- // Finalise all arrangements and payments to move out of your accommodation

## Host university arrangements

- // Pay any monies due to the host university so that your transcript can be released
- // Return all library books and host university equipment, including keys
- // Consider how you will transport artworks and materials home

## Update your address

When you are back in Australia, please change your address in MyUniSA student portal back to your Australian address.

# Host university transcript and credit transfer

## Transcript

At the end of your exchange, most partner institutions will automatically send UniSA your academic transcript listing the courses you have taken and the grades you have received. You will be notified by email when your transcript arrives and will be able to collect it from the International office. Please collect your transcript as soon as possible as it will be destroyed if not collected within 12 months of completing your exchange.

Some partner universities expect you to order your transcript yourself. Please confirm whether you need to request a copy of your transcript before you leave your host university. Should your transcript be sent directly to you please ensure you send a copy to UniSA, so we can finalise your credit transfer.

## UniSA credit transfer

As part of your exchange agreement, you are required to complete a returned student report. We use these reports to inform students who are thinking about going on exchange and want to hear about another student's experience at particular universities and countries.

We will contact you towards the end of your exchange asking you to complete your report and providing instructions on how to do this.

Once we have your completed returned student report and your transcript from your host university we will be able to complete your exchange credit transfer.

Any delay in providing this report will delay your credit transfer and therefore your ability to graduate.

Let the Study Overseas team know if you expect to graduate soon after completion of your exchange, so that we can attend to your credit transfer as a matter of priority.

Depending on your performance, your transcript will be updated to include a Non-Graded Pass (NGP) and/or a Fail (F) for the period of exchange. The name of your host university, list of the courses you undertook on exchange together with relevant grades will appear at the bottom of your transcript.

## Cultural re-adjustment

You have immersed yourself in another culture and collected the skills and knowledge to work successfully across cultures. It's called intercultural competency and it's a useful skill to have.

Just as you had to accept the differences of your new culture, you will begin to question some of the basic norms of your home country when you return.

The difference between culture shock when you go away and re-entry shock when you return is that you expect things to be different in a new country. When you return home you naturally expect nothing to have changed. Problem is, your friends and family have been changing while you were away.





## What is reverse culture shock?

Reverse culture shock is characterised by the unmet expectation of total familiarity (that nothing at home has changed while you have been away) and the ease, therefore, of adjusting to life at home.

## Symptoms of reverse culture shock

- // Feelings of alienation and mutual misunderstandings between you, your friends and your family
- // These feelings are brought about by the inconsistency between your expectations of home and the reality, plus the lack of interest from your family and friends in your period overseas (everyone wants to tell you about the local gossip you've missed out on in the last six months but no-one wants to listen to your "when I was overseas" stories!)

Please be aware that these feelings are not unusual and that, eventually, you will re-adjust to life at home.

## What can you do?

- // Prepare for it. Go back through your journal or blog. If you don't have one, take some time to reflect on how much you've changed
- // Assist at student exchange workshops and fairs. Speaking to students about your exchange experience will help others and remind you what you've learnt
- // Keep in contact with the friends you made on exchange
- // Make plans to visit your host country. Perhaps in one or two years' time. You will enjoy revisiting some of the places from your old home or local friends you made
- // Keep up your language skills and appropriate foreign customs into your lifestyle. Watch TV or movies in your host culture's language, make friends with people from your host culture and plan a 'Thanksgiving', 'Day of the Dead', 'Diwali' etc party





# Links

## Introduction

UniSA International Exchange: [unisa.edu.au/exchange](http://unisa.edu.au/exchange)

## Applying for exchange

Returned Student Reports:  
[unisa.edu.au/Student-Life/Global-opportunities/study-overseas/Hear-from-our-retained-students](http://unisa.edu.au/Student-Life/Global-opportunities/study-overseas/Hear-from-our-retained-students)

Credit Equivalency Table:  
[unisa.edu.au/Credit-Equivalencies-Table](http://unisa.edu.au/Credit-Equivalencies-Table)

## Preparing to go

Returned student experiences: [unisa.edu.au/student-exchange/testimonials](http://unisa.edu.au/student-exchange/testimonials) and [studyoverseas.gov.au](http://studyoverseas.gov.au)

The Global Society: [globalsociety.com.au](http://globalsociety.com.au)

International SOS: [internationalsos.com](http://internationalsos.com)

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT): [dfat.gov.au](http://dfat.gov.au)

DFAT passport service: [passports.gov.au](http://passports.gov.au)

Lonely Planet website: [lonelyplanet.com](http://lonelyplanet.com)

OANDA currency converter:  
[www.oanda.com/currency/converter](http://www.oanda.com/currency/converter)

World Weather: [worldweather.wmo.int/en/home.html](http://worldweather.wmo.int/en/home.html)

International students visa information: [homeaffairs.gov.au](http://homeaffairs.gov.au)

US visa contact information: [ustraveldocs.com/au](http://ustraveldocs.com/au)

UK visa contact information:  
[ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/countries/australia](http://ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/countries/australia)

TSA approved luggage locks: [tsa.gov/travel/travel-tips](http://tsa.gov/travel/travel-tips)

Airport security requirements:  
[casa.gov.au/dangerous-goods-app](http://casa.gov.au/dangerous-goods-app)

Airport baggage requirements: [homeaffairs.gov.au/about-us/what-we-do/travelsecure/overview](http://homeaffairs.gov.au/about-us/what-we-do/travelsecure/overview)

Australian Customs Service: [customs.gov.au](http://customs.gov.au)  
email: [information@customs.gov.au](mailto:information@customs.gov.au)

Western Union: [westernunion.com.au](http://westernunion.com.au)

International Student Identity Card (ISIC): [isic.org](http://isic.org)

Human Services: Payments for students and trainees:  
[humanservices.gov.au/customer/subjects/payments-students-and-trainees](http://humanservices.gov.au/customer/subjects/payments-students-and-trainees)



Centrelink contacts:

[humanservices.gov.au/individuals/contact-us](http://humanservices.gov.au/individuals/contact-us)

UniSA Student Finance department email:

[StudentFinance.Enrolment@unisa.edu.au](mailto:StudentFinance.Enrolment@unisa.edu.au)

Australian Government OS-HELP loans and Study Overseas:

[studyassist.gov.au/sites/studyassist/help-paying-my-fees/os-help\\_overseas\\_study/pages/os-help-loans-and-study-overseas](http://studyassist.gov.au/sites/studyassist/help-paying-my-fees/os-help_overseas_study/pages/os-help-loans-and-study-overseas)

UniSA Travel Insurance:

[unisa.edu.au/student-insurance](http://unisa.edu.au/student-insurance)

Health Insurance services for travellers:

[www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/medicare/reciprocal-health-care-agreements](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/medicare/reciprocal-health-care-agreements)

Human Services 'Travelling Overseas' information:

[humanservices.gov.au/individuals/subjects/australians-overseas](http://humanservices.gov.au/individuals/subjects/australians-overseas)

Medicare email: [medicare@medicareaustralia.gov.au](mailto:medicare@medicareaustralia.gov.au)

PBS medicines overseas:

[humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/medicare/travelling-overseas-pbs-medicine](http://humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/medicare/travelling-overseas-pbs-medicine)

Australian Taxation Office: [ato.gov.au](http://ato.gov.au)

UniSA facebook page: [facebook.com/UniSA](https://facebook.com/UniSA)

UniSA Student Counsellors: [unisa.edu.au/counselling](http://unisa.edu.au/counselling)

Australian Embassy overseas posts: [dfat.gov.au/missions](http://dfat.gov.au/missions)

DFAT's Consular Emergency Centre (CEC):

[smartraveller.gov.au/services/pages/consular-services-charter.aspx](http://smartraveller.gov.au/services/pages/consular-services-charter.aspx)

Worldwide Classroom: Consortium for International Education & Multicultural Studies:

[worldwide.edu/travel\\_planner/culture\\_adjusting.html](http://worldwide.edu/travel_planner/culture_adjusting.html)

## Coming home

Submit a Returned Student Report:

[unisa.edu.au/Student-Life/Global-opportunities/study-overseas/Returning-students/Returned-student-reports/](http://unisa.edu.au/Student-Life/Global-opportunities/study-overseas/Returning-students/Returned-student-reports/)

Student Services and Support:

[unisa.edu.au/studentsupportservices](http://unisa.edu.au/studentsupportservices)

UniSA Career Services: [unisa.edu.au/careerservices/](http://unisa.edu.au/careerservices/)



## Smartphone apps

- // International SOS
- // Trip it (travel organiser)
- // TripAdvisor (helps find Hotels, Flights, Restaurants)
- // Lonely Planet Guide
- // iHandy Translator Pro
- // TripCase (travel itinerary manager)
- // Urbanspoon (restaurant guide)
- // Qantas Frequent Flyer
- // Kayak (flights and hotel search)
- // FlightBoard (live flight arrival and departure status)
- // maps.me/en/home (detailed offline maps)
- // Triposo (guidebook)
- // XE Currency Converter
- // WhatsApp Messenger (send sms via WiFi)
- // Private Wifi (protect your privacy while using free WiFi)
- // Wi-Fi Finder
- // ICE (In Case of Emergency)
- // Allergy FT (allergy food translator)

# Checklist

## 1. Applying for exchange

- ☐ Complete and submit the host university application form and supporting documentation (e.g. financial statements, health reports)
- ☐ Complete a Course Approval Form. Your Program Director must approve your choice of courses. Return it to the Study Overseas team
- ☐ Passport - if you do not have a passport, apply for one immediately. Any post office will have an application form
- ☐ If you have received your host university letter of acceptance, make sure the Study Overseas team receives a copy (email is fine)
- ☐ Complete the UniSA Business Travel Request (BTR) form and/or create an International SOS MyTrips Profile

## 2. Preparing to go

### Travel paperwork

- ☐ Make sure your passport has at least 6 months validity after your date of return
- ☐ Apply for your visa. Check with your host country's consulate office in Australia. Your travel agent may be able to advise
- ☐ Investigate travel arrangements. Do not book your flights until you have your host university acceptance and visa
- ☐ Check that your travel and health insurance covers your entire period of travel
- ☐ Attend the mandatory pre-departure workshop

### Travel arrangements

- ☐ Have you made arrangements for temporary accommodation?

- ☐ Plan how you will get from the airport to your accommodation
- ☐ Check and confirm your travel arrangements

### Documents to take with you

- ☐ This UniSA booklet!
- ☐ The information pack and acceptance letter from your host university
- ☐ A list of important contact numbers in Australia and your host country
- ☐ ISOS contact details and your Emergency Card
- ☐ The phone number of the Australian Embassy in your host country
- ☐ Photocopies of (and/or scan to your email) the ID and visa pages of your passport. Leave one copy of each at home and take one with you. Do the same for other documents listed below
- ☐ Extra passport-sized photographs. Just in case you need to make other applications or lose your passport
- ☐ Copies of your airline tickets and itineraries
- ☐ Student Visa
- ☐ Copies of your medical/vaccination documents if they were required for your visa application
- ☐ Copies of all insurance policies - health, travel
- ☐ Copies of your credit card details
- ☐ International Student ID Card
- ☐ Guide and phrase books

### Packing your suitcase - lightly!

- ☐ Check carry-on luggage restrictions with the airline
- ☐ Suitcase or large backpack and small daypack
- ☐ Medication, prescriptions and first aid kit
- ☐ Money belt or Ziplock bags
- ☐ Toiletries and personal items

- ☐ Camera and memory cards
- ☐ Clothing appropriate to climate, including one set of good clothes
- ☐ DO NOT agree to carry parcels for anyone

### Money

- ☐ Investigate living costs and prepare a budget for the semester
- ☐ If eligible, apply for Centrelink payments using the verification letter from the Study Overseas team
- ☐ Arrange how you will access your money with your financial institution
- ☐ Take a small amount of cash in local currency
- ☐ Spread the risk by carrying a balance of cash, traveller's cheques and credit card. Remember cash is not covered by traveller's insurance
- ☐ Consider applying for an OS-HELP loan

### Health

- ☐ Visit your doctor, dentist and optician before you leave, for a health check-up
- ☐ Check that your health insurance meets host university requirements and is for the correct period
- ☐ See a travel doctor for any vaccinations you may need at least 6 weeks before you leave

### Tying up loose ends

- ☐ Arrange to store your belongings, including your car
- ☐ If renting, arrange for final inspections and return of bond
- ☐ Advise utilities providers - gas, phone, electricity - of the date you will be leaving
- ☐ If leaving employment, be sure that your final pay cheque is going into an account you can access
- ☐ Deal with any outstanding Medicare claims
- ☐ Return UniSA library books and materials and pay any moneys due

## 3. Arrival and settling in

### Communication with home

- ☐ Buy a local SIM card and/or set up a Skype account. Contact home as soon as you can
- ☐ Give UniSA, family and friends your new contact details
- ☐ Check your UniSA email and clear your inbox regularly
- ☐ Share your exchange experiences, photos, videos on the UniSA instagram: @unisaoverseas

### Staying safe

- ☐ Download the International SOS App and carry an International SOS contact card with you
- ☐ Register your journey on smartraveller.gov.au
- ☐ Be careful with your money and passport. Know who to call if your credit card or your passport is stolen or lost
- ☐ If you are mugged, hand over your wallet, it's not worth being hurt for
- ☐ Keep UniSA and host university emergency contact details with you at all times
- ☐ Avoid wearing expensive jewellery or showing off anything you think someone else might want to steal
- ☐ Make a note of emergency phone numbers shortly after you arrive
- ☐ Immediately report any incidents to your host university's International Centre and any relevant local authorities. Follow this up by contacting the UniSA Study Overseas Office as soon as you can
- ☐ Familiarise yourself with campus security at your host university
- ☐ Consult reliable local people about safety in their city



## 4. Coming home

### Travel and living

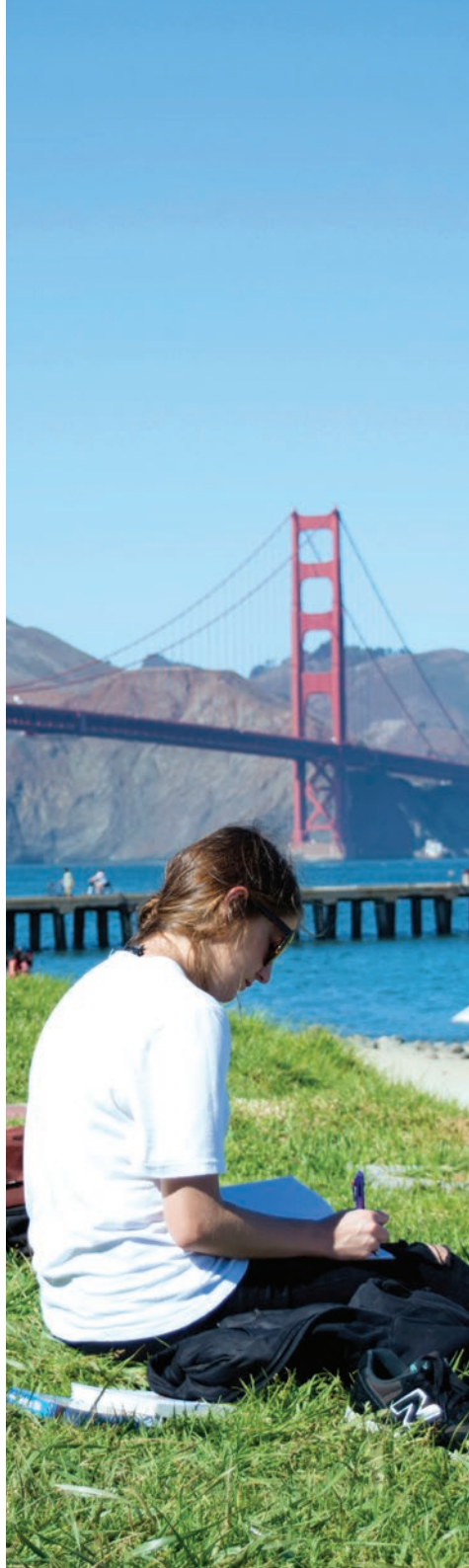
- ☐ Confirm your flight/s home and the airport check-in time
- ☐ Organise how you will get you and your luggage to the airport
- ☐ Re-check luggage and carry-on baggage requirements
- ☐ Check Australian customs requirements, in case some of your souvenirs are not allowed back into Australia
- ☐ If your accommodation requires inspection before you leave, try to arrange it for a day or two before you leave
- ☐ Pay any rent and other bills
- ☐ Be sure to give your new friends your home contact details

### Host university

- ☐ Arrange for your academic transcript to be sent to the UniSA Study Overseas team. If it is sent directly to you, forward a copy to UniSA Study Overseas team
- ☐ Complete your UniSA Returned Student Report
- ☐ Let the Study Overseas team know if you intend to graduate soon after returning home

### A cultural shift

- ☐ Read back through your journal/blog
- ☐ Catch up with other students who have exchanged to your host university
- ☐ Remind yourself what you love about being home
- ☐ Give yourself time to re-adjust





University of  
South Australia

Study  
Overseas

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