



RTO No. 31529 / CRICOS No. 03384K



LIVING IN QUEENSLAND

A booklet to assist international students transition
and adjust to the Australian culture and lifestyle

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WELCOME FROM THE GROUP CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Welcome.

I congratulate you on your decision to commence your studies with the MTA Institute at the Sir Jack Brabham Centre of Excellence in Brisbane, Australia. Studying and living in a different country and culture to your own is not only a brave decision but is also probably the most exciting memory you will look back on in years to come.

To ensure you fulfill your study ambitions, MTA Institute's staff will guide you and support your skills and knowledge development that will prepare you for the start of your automotive career and beyond. Your responsibility is to be a curious and engaged student; be respectful of the opportunity you have been provided and to those you meet along the journey; and most of all, be an international ambassador for the automotive sector, your country and yourself.

To help you prepare for this daunting but exciting experience I encourage you to read this booklet to plan a safe trip to Brisbane, Queensland,

Australia and prepare yourself for arrival at the MTA Institute campus. Remember studying abroad has personal challenges and it will be natural to feel overwhelmed and isolated. Don't be afraid to ask for help, as MTA Institute staff will assist you with any enquiries as you prepare for this life changing experience.

Welcome to MTA Institute and the Automotive industry.

Rod Camm
Group Chief Executive
MTA Queensland

IMPORTANT CONTACT DETAILS

MTA Institute of Technology trading as MTA Institute

Campus address:
Freeway Office Park, Building 8,
2728 Logan Road, Eight Mile Plains,
Queensland 4113, Australia

Phone: **+61 7 3722 3000**
Email: international@mtai.edu.au
Web: mtai.edu.au/international

Some other useful numbers and web addresses to store in your phone are as follows:

- 1800QSTUDY International Student Support Hotline 1800 778 839
- studyqueensland.qld.gov.au/live-in-queensland/student-support
- Emergency Services: Dial 000 for Police, Fire or Ambulance
- Policelink: 131 444
- Department of Home Affairs: 131 881 homeaffairs.gov.au
- Australian Taxation Office: 132 861 ato.gov.au

SOME FACTS ABOUT AUSTRALIA AND ITS CULTURE

Australia is a unique island continent surrounded by the Indian, Pacific and Southern Oceans. Australia is the 6th largest country in the world, occupying an entire continent of some 7.6 million square kilometres and contains mountains, rainforests, deserts, beaches and an abundance of exotic flora and fauna found nowhere else in the world. With a population of 26 million, Australia is highly urbanised and heavily concentrated, particularly on the eastern coastline.

There are many factors that make Australia unique; from its diverse landscapes to its varied climate, its multiculturalism with over 200 languages spoken, and its distinct indigenous past with 'Dream Time' as the foundation for tens of thousands of years of spiritual aboriginal art, traditions, legends, myths, folklore, and culture. The most common languages spoken other than English are Mandarin Italian, Arabic, Cantonese, Greek and Vietnamese.

Australia is currently the third most popular destination for international students among English-speaking countries. Graduates from Australian education providers are highly sought after by employers due to the impressive global reputation the Australian education system has and the contemporary skills and knowledge that students acquire through hands on training, that makes them job ready.





LIVING IN THE CITY OF BRISBANE

Queensland, known as the sunshine state, is the third most populated state in Australia with a population of over 5 million people. The capital city, Brisbane, has a population of over 2.5 million people. Brisbane, known as 'Brizzie' to the locals, is situated on the Brisbane River and is the gateway to the Gold and Sunshine Coasts.

Brisbane enjoys a subtropical climate with an average of 283 days of sunshine per year. Australia has four seasons throughout the year that vary dramatically from State to State, but in Queensland the climate remains warm to hot for most of the year. In summer, temperatures range from 21-35°C and in winter 11-24°C. On average, humidity ranges from 50% in winter to over 80% in summer.

Brisbane has an abundance of international restaurants, cafes and bars that take advantage of the city's envied alfresco lifestyle by offering open-air dining and entertainment experiences year-round. The public transport system includes buses, trains, and river ferries, which makes getting around Brisbane, cheap, easy, and fun.

Brisbane's nightlife is outstanding, with a variety of venues for all ages providing an exciting mix of music, culture, and live entertainment indoors and outdoors. And there's nothing better than watching live national and international sporting events where you can watch the world's best players in action either courtside, ringside, fieldside or poolside, at world class facilities.

PREDEPARTURE INFORMATION & CHECKLIST

Preparing for your travel to Brisbane, Australia, will require you to attend to some important matters prior to your departure.

STUDENT VISA

You will require a student visa to study, work and live in Australia to complete your courses with the MTA Institute. To apply for a visa, you will need the electronic Confirmation of Enrolment (eCoE) that MTA Institute has provided you, your valid passport, and other Genuine Temporary Entrant (GTE) information required by the Australian Embassy or Consulate or Diplomatic posting in your country.

Many students apply for their visa themselves, however, depending on your familiarity with the visa process and the complexity of the country you are living in, you may require the support and expertise of a migration agent in your country.

On receipt of your eCoE, you shouldn't hesitate in applying for your student visa allowing enough time to be in Brisbane for the commencement of your course. Visas may take up to 2-3 months to process, depending on the thoroughness of your application and your country of origin.

immi.homeaffairs.gov.au

EDUCATION AND MIGRATION AGENTS

Education agents assist students to identify their preferred course and country of preference and apply to enrol with a provider of their choice.

Migration agents assist students to apply for a student visa. Their expertise is understanding the visa process and they work on your behalf with the Australian Department of Home Affairs.

Some education agents offer their services to assist students to apply for their visa. Education agents are not licensed to provide visa advice nor complete visa applications. Only licensed migration agents can perform this task.

TRAVEL TO BRISBANE

Once you have your visa approved, you will need to organise your travel to be in Brisbane with sufficient time to settle into your new environment, prior to commencing your course (preferably one week). Brisbane International Airport is your destination when booking flights. The airport is about 20 kilometres from the Brisbane CBD.

When packing your belongings, ensure you have prepared a folder that contains all your official documents from the MTA Institute, receipts, insurances, and any other personal identification like a driver's license. When you land in Brisbane you will require your passport and travel documents, including your transport and accommodation bookings. Make sure you understand COVID travel requirements prior to departure. The MTA Institute website has up to date information for you to prepare yourself.

mtai.edu.au/covid-19-and-travel-information

When packing your bags, be careful about what you intend to bring to Australia as there are strict

quarantine laws in place and penalties apply. When entering Australia declare what you are bringing in, even if you are not sure if the goods are prohibited or not.

abf.gov.au

LUGGAGE

When purchasing your airline ticket, make sure you have allowed for enough luggage. If you don't then this will reduce the number of personal belongings you can bring into the country. If you can't bring it with you, there's a good chance you can buy it here in Brisbane.

When packing, consider the time of year and read the 'Weather in Brisbane' section in this booklet. This will give you an indication of the temperature range and what you will need to wear and pack.

Standard dress such as jeans and tee shirts, sneakers and sandshoes are all worn by students in Brisbane. You will need a jumper or coat in winter. In summer, shorts, sandals, and tee shirts are very common due to the heat and humidity.

Depending on your lifestyle, you may consider appropriate clothing and footwear for water sports, bush walking, cycling, and other outdoor activities that are the natural way of life, and social activities in Brisbane.

When packing, you may want to consider bringing with you items such as protective boots, workshop wear, and any other protective equipment you may own.





CHECKLIST

MTA Institute has developed a checklist to assist you to prepare:

- Apply for your student visa and once approved let the MTA Institute know straight away.
- Ensure your passport is valid and covers your full study period with MTA Institute which includes any English language training you require.
- Arrange your flights to be in Brisbane with enough days prior to your course commencing and your campus orientation, so you can settle in and familiarise yourself with your new surroundings.
- Arrange suitable travel insurance.
- Look at your options to get you from the airport to your accommodation on arrival.
- It is wise to have a thorough medical check-up with your doctor, dentist, optometrist and any other professional that you may see. For any medications, make sure you have a letter from your doctor in English and your prescriptions.
- You will need to organise your Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) and ensure you have the right cover for your specific needs in Australia. Make sure your OSHC covers you for the full student visa study period that you are in Australia.
- Organise your accommodation for when you arrive. It can be temporary whilst you settle in and once you meet your classmates and make new friends you can look for something more permanent at a later stage.
- Talk to your bank and organise/confirm access to your bank account and a credit card whilst in Australia. For safety reasons, it is important that you ensure you have access to money on arrival and have Australian dollars on you. When you arrive, you may need to pay for taxis or a possible emergency. Allow for \$250-\$500, depending on what you have prepaid for transport and accommodation.
- Research your options for mobile phone and email usage in Australia. The MTA Institute prefers to use mobile numbers and email addresses to communicate with students.
- If you have a driver's license and you want to drive in Australia, you must have your license with you when you arrive. If your license is not in English, you will need to get it translated by an approved translator in Australia. Your license is a useful card to use for identification purposes.
- When packing your bags consider the time of year and the Brisbane climate and the clothes you will be comfortable in. You will also need to bring with you: your Letter of Offer and Confirmation of Enrolment and any other documentation you have received from the MTA Institute; your valid passport; prescriptions and medical documents; travel insurance and OSHC documentation; personal identification documents; credit card and banking details; a list of important contact numbers including your nearest country's embassy.
- Write down all your questions so they can be answered at your induction with MTA Institute's staff on your first day.

Remember to always stay in contact with MTA Institute's staff and keep contact names and numbers for emergency situations.

A LIST OF HELPFUL TIPS TO THINK ABOUT WHEN SETTLING IN BRISBANE, QUEENSLAND

ACCOMMODATION

The MTA Institute can help overseas students to arrange suitable and affordable accommodation, or you can organise your own. Accommodation ranges from basic short-term hostels to specifically designed student accommodation complexes. The prices for these rooms will vary from about \$110 per week per person up to approximately \$200 per week per person.

Brisbane has many options for students including home stay, shared accommodation, serviced apartments, and private leasing. Many of these accommodation options are close to the MTA Institute's training facilities, with the Brisbane CBD only 15-20 minutes away.

Some accommodation options include:

- **Shared Accommodation.** This involves sharing the apartment with one or more adults, you'll have your own bedroom but will share household responsibilities (like cleaning and laundry). You provide your own linen and food and usually pay extra for services such as electricity and telephone.
- **Rental Accommodation.** By signing a legal contract with a landlord or real estate agency, you can rent an apartment or house - choosing

from furnished or unfurnished (although unfurnished is more usual). You will be solely responsible for the cost of electricity, gas, water, telephone, and groceries. Most real estate agencies require a bond equivalent to four weeks' rent, in addition to two weeks' rent paid in advance, and a letting fee which usually equates to one week's rent.

• **Homestay.** Homestay is a network where students choose to live with an Australian family in their private home and it's a great way to use and improve your English whilst experiencing the Australian culture and lifestyle. You are provided with a bedroom and can use the family's home at leisure. Homestay networks provide a furnished private room with an area for study; access to bathroom and laundry facilities; a variety of meals are provided based on your choice. Students need to be aware that you are living in someone else's house and rules will apply that you will need to familiarise yourself with.

Some helpful websites include:

- studyqueensland.qld.gov.au/live-in-queensland/student-accommodation
- homestaynetwork.org
- studentone.com
- urbanest.com.au
- unilodge.com.au/student-accommodation-brisbane





AUSTRALIAN LAW

Applicants applying for a student visa are required to read and sign/accept the Australian values statement. By signing the statement, you agree to respect Australian values and obey Australian laws. By not signing the Australian values statement your application may be refused or delayed in processing.

- [immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/help-support/meeting-our-requirements/australian-values](https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/help-support/meeting-our-requirements/australian-values)

If you fail to meet your visa conditions by not obeying Australian laws, you risk being fined or imprisoned, and your visa being cancelled resulting in your deportation to your home of origin.

- cyjma.qld.gov.au/resources/dcsyw/multicultural-affairs/policy-governance/multicultural-policy.pdf

BANKING

The MTA Institute encourages you to discuss with your bank in your home country the best options for you whilst studying and living in Australia. It is your decision to consider all your options and whether setting up a bank account with an Australian bank is easier for you to manage whilst in Australia.

If you select to open an Australian student bank account, there are many options and benefits, so do your research on who can provide you with the best deal. Most banks provide similar services such

as credit cards, EFTPOS cards, telephone banking, internet banking, over the counter services, ATMs, electronic transfers, mobile apps, currency exchange, and bill paying options like direct debits.

Below is an Australian Government website with information for students who are researching their banking options.

- studyinaustralia.gov.au/English/Live-in-Australia/Plan-your-arrival/Banking

You can set up a bank account before or after you arrive (best done within six weeks of arrival), and it will be necessary for you to provide 100 points of identification.

- To open an account, you will need to have your Electronic Confirmation of Enrolment (eCoE), passport, Letter of Offer and other forms of identification,
- You may also need an Australian Tax File Number (TFN). You can find information about getting a TFN at the Australian Taxation Office website. ato.gov.au/Individuals/Tax-file-number/Apply-for-a-TFN/
- Student support officers at the MTA Institute will be able to guide you to research information on how to set up a bank account.
- You can also read advice from the Australian Government's MoneySmart website. moneysmart.gov.au/

COST OF LIVING

For an international student living in Australia, the cost of living can be expensive compared to your home country. Brisbane is cheaper to live in, compared with other capital cities in Australia, however budgeting carefully is critical.

Your student visa will be granted because you have demonstrated you have genuine access to sufficient funds to cover travel, tuition and living expenses. While international students can supplement their income with money earned through part-time work in Australia, the 'living costs' requirement helps to support the success of students in their studies by ensuring that they do not rely on such work to meet all their expenses.

As a guide, students will need a minimum of \$26,500 (excluding study costs) per year to cover accommodation, daily living costs, health services and other expenses.

When you arrive in Brisbane you will need to consider the costs involved in temporary accommodation; perhaps a rental bond and rent in advance; furniture, linen, and crockery; electricity and internet connections; and other items you need to consider. These items may amount to several thousands of dollars to get yourself established.

Below is an illustration of the typical ongoing costs of living in Brisbane.

Accommodation/Rent (depending on type*)	\$110 to \$225 per week
Utilities (Gas, Electricity etc)	\$35 to \$140 per week
Mobile and Internet	\$20 to \$55 per week
Meals and Food	\$80 per week
Public Transport	\$30 to \$55 per week
Insurances including OSHC	\$30 to \$75 per week
Entertainment	\$80 to \$150 per week

If you are intending to be accompanied by an eligible relative during your stay in Australia, the following approximate costs will be needed to cover living costs and expenses per year:

Student Guardian	\$21,041
Partner/Spouse	\$7,362
Child	\$3,152
Schooling costs	\$8,296 per child

HEALTH, WELLBEING & SAFETY

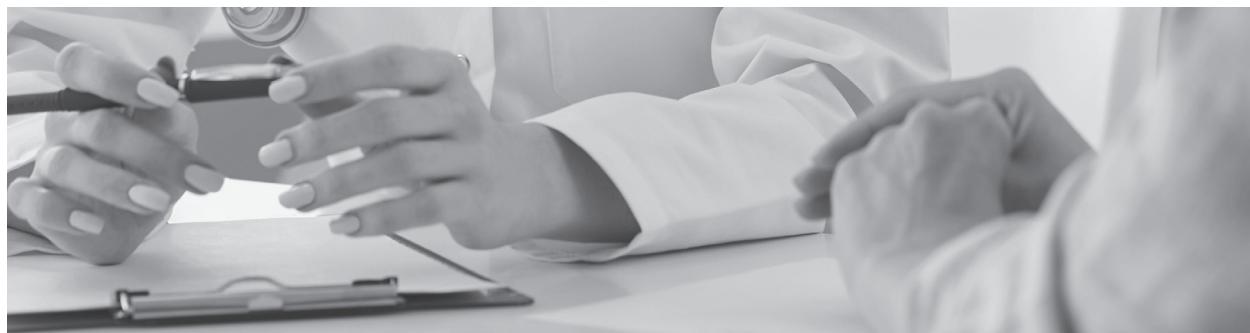
The MTA Institute has a responsibility to meet its duty of care to international students. Living away from home, in Australia and in a different environment, can sometimes cause problems that may affect your personal safety and wellbeing. Don't be afraid to ask for help or advice from MTA Institute's staff.

Your health is covered by your Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) for your entire period studying in Australia. This cover is mandatory for international students and covers the costs of medical and hospital care in Australia.

If you are sick and need to book an appointment to see a doctor you will need to use your OSHC card to claim for some of the service costs. Keep your receipts, especially if your claim is unable to be processed immediately and you need to pay the full invoice. This will enable you to lodge a claim with your OSHC provider at a later date.

MTA Institute staff can help you locate professional care that is suitable for you to make an appointment. If you need to see a dentist or optician, you may need to have extra OSHC cover.

For prescription or over the counter medications, you will need to go to a pharmacy and provide your OSHC card when making your purchase. Pharmacists can provide advice regarding the best medication to suit your symptoms.





Drugs and alcohol in Australia, are readily available and alcohol is legal for those over 18 years of age. Other substances such as marijuana, ecstasy, cocaine, etc are not allowed by Australian law and you run the risk of legal and visa problems as well as health issues if you become involved in using or dealing in drugs. If you have any questions or concerns about these serious matters, please check with the MTA Institute staff.

Emergency services in Australia such as police, ambulance and fire are contactable by phoning 000. An operator will answer your call and ask you what your emergency is. You will then be connected with the right service and assistance will be provided as quickly as possible.

Counselling services such as Lifeline Ph: 13 11 14 and Beyond Blue Ph: 1300 224 636 have staff and volunteers who take calls 24 hours 7 days a week to support individuals with advice and referrals on any personal issues. The advice may range from domestic violence, alcohol and drugs, rape, gambling, and crisis care, to name a few.

Personal safety is highly important especially in your new environment and surroundings. Whether you are travelling to the MTA Institute, work, or going out to explore; you need to be alert and aware of what is happening around you.

Plan ahead and ensure you know where you are going and how you will get home. Take enough money and make sure your mobile is charged. Keep your valuables with you and never leave them unattended.

The best advice is to travel with your friends or in a group and look after each other.

Don't:

- leave your valuables unattended or your bag open, let a stranger use your mobile, let a stranger buy you drinks, leave your drinks unattended, walk down dark streets or alleyways by yourself, hitch hike.

Sun safety is very important when living in Queensland especially if you come from a cooler climate and do not spend a great deal of time outdoors. Sun safety is about protecting your skin to prevent skin cancer. Applying sunscreen (minimum SPF 30+) will help, but also wear a hat, sunglasses and suitable clothing, drink water and, where possible, stay in the shade.

On campus, the MTA Institute is committed to providing you a safe environment in which to participate in training and assessment by providing facilities and a safe and healthy learning environment in accordance with the **Work Health and Safety Act 2011**.

The following guidelines will be discussed with you at orientation and are provided as a basis for safe practice in the training environment:

- Know and observe details of emergency response and evacuation plans. Evacuation procedures are covered during student induction
- No smoking within the MTA Institute facilities. A designated smoking point is provided at the rear of the building
- Report all potential hazards, accidents and near misses to the MTA Institute staff
- No consumption of alcohol on MTA Institute premises or during contact hours

- Keep training and assessment areas neat and tidy at all times
- Seek assistance if you volunteer to lift items eg. move furniture in a training area
- Observe hygiene standards particularly in eating and bathroom areas; and
- Report safety concerns to an MTA Institute staff member immediately

STUDENT SERVICES

The MTA Institute provides a range of student services to all international students ensuring that their education experience at the Campus is fully supported with students being placed at the centre of what MTA Institute does.

At the commencement of all courses, international students are provided with study and orientation support ensuring individuals adapt and make the most of their learning environment.

It is important that students have access to a range of support mechanisms during their study. If students require assistance or counselling related to study or personal difficulties, they should speak initially with their trainer or the senior trainer for referral to our Welfare Counsellor. The Welfare Counsellor can suggest access to specialised support for those who may need further external help. All discussions regarding this are in the strictest of confidence.

The MTA Institute staff provide professional support, personal welfare counselling and medical assistance, academic coaching and support,

general course administration, academic, career and further education pathway advice and support.

The MTA Institute staff have a list of emergency contacts such as legal, accommodation and health related support to help you adjust to living and studying in Australia. Your orientation kit will have these emergency numbers listed. Add them into your mobile contacts.

Additional administration support includes access to language support and study assistance programs, Overseas Student Health Care (OSHC), Accommodation Services, Banking, Airport pickup services.

Provision for first aid facilities is available, on the first floor. All accidents must be reported to MTA Institute staff. The accident and any first aid provided must be recorded by staff involved.

The MTA Institute provides students with access to a comprehensive range of written, video, audio texts and resources. These materials may be borrowed for study use. Trainers will arrange for loans on request. Students are reminded to return the borrowed material by due dates and observe copyright laws when using resources. Students will be required to pay for loss or damage to resources.

The MTA Institute has extensive amenities available for students including close public transport; parking; toilet facilities; tea and coffee kitchenette area; disabled access; photocopying facilities; telephones; quiet study areas; computer room; medical room; counselling and referral facilities.





TRANSPORTATION & PARKING

Public transport is one of the quickest, most efficient ways to get around Brisbane. The most frequently used transportation modes are the:

- Brisbane City Council bus services that run throughout the CBD and suburbs
- CityCat ferries on the Brisbane River
- City trains that run across greater Brisbane and connect with the Gold and Sunshine Coasts as well as the Brisbane International and Domestic Airports

The MTA Institute campus has parking available to all students at no cost.

BRISBANE'S WEATHER

The subtropical climate of Brisbane brings relatively dry but mild winters, and hot, rainy, humid summers that can be affected by tropical cyclones.

- **Summer** (December – February) temperature average from 21-30°C

It is the hottest and most humid time of the year with the highest rainfalls, which can bring thunderstorms and occasional floods.

- **Autumn** (March – May) temperature average from 15-25°C

It is the tail end of summer with temperatures dropping together with lower humidity and less rain.

- **Winter** (June – August) temperature average from 11-21°C

The middle of the year is generally dry and mild with early mornings and nights becoming crisp, but overnight lows rarely drop below 9°C.

- **Spring** (September – November) temperature average from 15-25°C

The spring climate is similar to autumn with warm, sunny days that are tempered by cool sea breezes. With temperatures rising, it signals the start of storm season leading into summer.

WORKING IN BRISBANE & TAXATION

Once you have commenced your studies with the MTA Institute, you are eligible to work in Australia under certain conditions as a student. You can work up to 40 hours per fortnight whilst studying, and unlimited hours during term breaks. Check with the MTA Institute staff to understand if there are any relaxations to these rules.

Combining study and work is a great way to apply the new skills you have acquired through your studies and helps pay for your living expenses while living in Brisbane. The MTA Institute staff may provide advice to you on applying for work in the automotive industry, creating a resume, obtaining a tax file number, paying taxes, and your rights and responsibilities as an employee working in Australia.

Studying with the MTA Institute will provide you with opportunities to meet and talk with employers from the automotive industry who may have employment opportunities available for international students. If you are successful in gaining employment, depending on how much you earn, you will need to pay tax. To do this, you will need to obtain a **tax file number** from the Australian Taxation Office. Your employer will also require you to fill out a tax declaration form with your tax file number before you commence work.

Tax returns are lodged at the end of the financial year (30 June). If you have paid too much in tax, you may be entitled to a refund. However, if you haven't paid enough, you will be asked to pay the correct amount.

Employers will also be required to pay superannuation if you earn more than \$450 per month. When you leave Australia, you may be eligible to claim super back as a departing **Australia superannuation payment** (DASP) if you meet certain requirements.



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