

YOUR GUIDE TO *student exchange*



University of
South Australia

Study
Overseas

unisa.edu.au/exchange



The experience of a lifetime

Congratulations! You've been accepted into the UniSA International Student Exchange Program.

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.

To help you we have designed this booklet to answer many of your questions and to give you a clear overview of the issues you need to consider – leading up to your departure, while on your exchange and when you return home. Take this guide with you when you go – you will find it useful. You can also download a copy from the UniSA International Exchange website: unisa.edu.au/exchange

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

This booklet is also designed 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 phases 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 and signing:

- » An application form for the university you will be exchanging to. Your Student Exchange Officer (SEO) will advise you about this.
- » A UniSA Course Approval Form (CAF).
- » An Exchange Participation Agreement and Talent Release Form.

You will also be asked to provide some basic information about your travel plans with UniSA's Insurance team.

Applying to the host university

Completing your host university application form

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. While your SEO will provide you with initial guidance, it is your responsibility to look closely at the partner university web site 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 letter you receive from UniSA setting out the travel grant amount and/or scholarship you will receive. You may need to show documentary proof of the funds required at the time of submitting your application to the partner university. Funds required can range from AUD\$7000 - \$10000.

Partner acceptance

The partner institution will review your application and make a decision regarding your admission. Turnaround time differs from one institution to another and notification of your acceptance can be as fast as one week, or take as long as twelve weeks.

The partner institution will advise us once you have been accepted and they will then send you further information regarding your exchange (important dates, visa information, health insurance requirements etc). Your Student Exchange Officer will contact you as soon as they have received confirmation of your acceptance. If your host university sends the acceptance material direct to you please send a copy of the acceptance letter to your SEO.

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 institution 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.

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.

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.



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
- » 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 your SEO to all correspondence (Contact Details are on the back cover of this booklet).

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 may result in you not receiving credit for your exchange.
- » Return the signed form to your SEO as soon as possible. Your SEO needs 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 Office will enrol you into the Exchange Program at UniSA (see previous), it is your responsibility to liaise with your partner 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 letter for you to take to Centrelink if required.
- » A Talent Release Form.

Send the signed agreement form to student.exchange@unisa.edu.au.

If your host university sends your acceptance material direct to you, PLEASE NOTIFY your SEO as soon as possible and send your SEO a copy of your acceptance letter, so they can send your contract to you.

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. 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.



Preparing to go

Congratulations

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

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/Student-Life/Global-opportunities/study-overseas/Hear-from-our-returned-students/

You may also wish to join the Global Society: <https://forum.globalsociety.com.au/> to network with other Australian exchange students.

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.

Pre-departure workshop

There will be a mandatory 2 hour workshop for you to attend before you leave on exchange. Your Student Exchange Officer will advise you of the date and time. This workshop offers the opportunity to meet other students going on exchange and to learn about the types of cultural adjustments you will need to make as well other important information about your exchange.

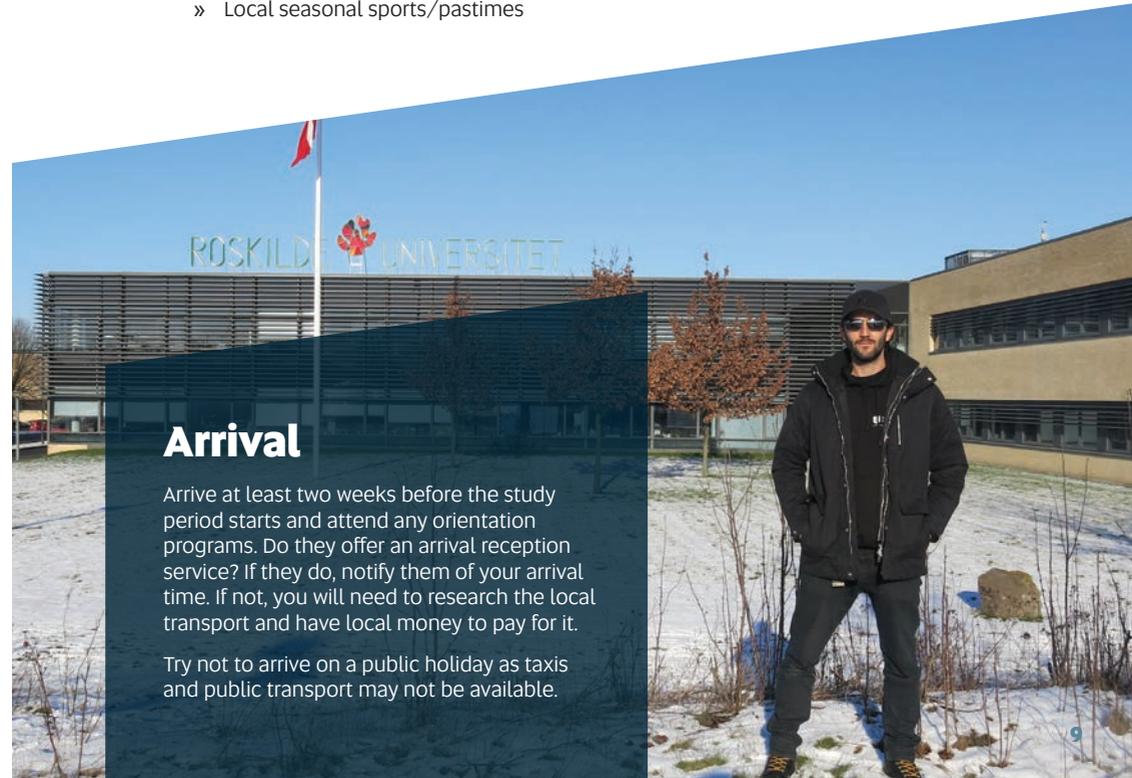
Destination research

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 vaccines
- » Language
- » Local transport
- » Currency and shopping
- » Food
- » Accommodation tips
- » Local seasonal sports/pastimes

Where's the information?

- » Buy a current guide book
- » Buy a pocket size language phrase book
- » DFAT website for travel warnings and links to consulates
- » Lonely Planet website
- » OANDA currency converter
- » www.worldweather.org
- » Partner University website



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.

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

Travel essentials

Document Safety

Photocopy or scan documents to your email including your airline ticket, passport, visas, credit cards, 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

Validity: 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

- » 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 of your host country.
- » 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.

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

You should do this immediately after you receive your letter of acceptance as visa turnaround times vary and can sometimes take several weeks 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.

Remember you must attach your host university acceptance to your visa application. Make sure you include any other attachments required. Forgetting to do so could delay your visa.

Working while on exchange: 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 a student visa 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, eg the USA.
- » Health check-up? You may need a health check-up and proof of vaccination to obtain your visa.
- » 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.

For further information please go to: www.border.gov.au

Country-specific visa information

This information is for frequently visited destinations - if your host country is not listed here it does not mean that you don't need a visa. Make sure you check on current visa retirements at the relevant embassy or consulate.

» Students applying for the United States

Students exchanging to the US will need to attend a compulsory visa appointment at the US Consulate in Melbourne. Details on how to book your compulsory appointment are available at: www.ustraveldocs.com/au

» Students applying for Canada and travelling via the US

If you are stopping over in the US in transit (without going through immigration) on your way to Canada, your transit visa starts on this day even though you may not have left the airport. You will not be able to stop over again or travel in the US after this 29 day period has expired – you will be deported!

- » If the above scenario describes your situation, you need to apply for a US tourist visa before you leave and attend a compulsory visa appointment at the US Consulate in Melbourne. Details on how to book your compulsory visa appointment are at: www.ustraveldocs.com/au

» Students applying for the United Kingdoms

Students exchanging to the UK must also provide biometric data to obtain their visa. This process requires taking a digital photo and ten finger prints of each applicant and it means you will have to do this in person at the UK Consulate office in Sydney, Melbourne, Perth, Brisbane or Canberra. Details on how to book your compulsory visa appointment to submit your biometric data are at: www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/countries/australia

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.

International Students

Should you need it, your Student Exchange Officer will provide a letter confirming details of your exchange. You may have to present this letter to the Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection prior to your departure.

Tickets

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

- » Your host university acceptance, and
- » Your 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.

Luggage & packing

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 ultimate destination, be sure to enquire about baggage regulations for your intermediate stops.

Never carry items for strangers. Make sure you pack your own luggage and know what it contains.

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: www.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: www.casa.gov.au/operations/standard-page/can-i-pack-dangerous-goods-app There are strict rules for taking liquids, aerosols and gels on flights into and out of Australia in carry on baggage: www.travelsecure.infrastructure.gov.au

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.

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. Your travel agent may be able to direct you to the information you need.

It is also important to be aware of Australian customs quarantine and other restriction. More information about customs matters can be found on the Australian Customs Service website www.customs.gov.au - click on "travellers".

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

Money matters: credit cards, cash, cheques & banking, insurance

You will need to think about how you are going to access your money while you are overseas. We recommend you take 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.

Find out what services are available with your Australian credit cards (eg 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.

Notify your financial institution that you will be using your Australian account while you are away. Have sufficient local currency when you arrive for immediate expenses (eg bus to accommodation) and for start up costs such as bond etc. These can be considerable so be prepared.

You might want to open an overseas bank account. 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.

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

Ask your local branch in Adelaide about procedures for wiring money to an overseas account. Alternatively consider using transfer services provided by companies such as Western Union: www.westernunion.com.au

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. Automatic teller machines (ATM's) 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 (www.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'.

How much money will you need?

Use the budgeting guide to help calculate how much you will need. Remember, you may need to buy furniture and utensils (try the secondhand shops). Read the Returned Student Reports online for tips from past exchange students.

Check the exchange rates and cost of living in your host country using the OANDA currency converter: www.oanda.com/currency/converter

Learn the currency rate and carry a small calculator with you to aid in conversions. Do not carry large amounts of cash with you.

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.

Budgeting guide

Funds Available	AUS	Estimated Expenses	AUS
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	
Total funds available		Total estimated expenses	

Financial assistance

Centrelink

If you receive Austudy/Youth Allowance, you may still be eligible to receive this while overseas.

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, UniSA will provide 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: www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/subjects/payments-students-and-trainees

Telephone: 131673 if you are calling from Australia. Free call numbers if you are calling from outside Australia can be found at: www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/contact-us

OS-HELP

You may be eligible to receive 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.

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/help-paying-my-fees/os-help-overseas-study/pages/os-help-loans-and-study-overseas

Insurance

UniSA provides eligible students with Travel Insurance for study related travel. Information is on the Student Insurance website: w3.unisa.edu.au/fin/commercial_support/insurance/Student_Insurance/student_insurance.asp.

Travel Insurance cover is provided automatically and free of charge if

- » Your trip does not exceed 180 days.
- » You do not have any pre-existing medical conditions.
- » You are not adding any personal travel.
- » Your age while travelling does not exceed 74 years.
- » You are receiving academic credit for the overseas activity.

Even if you qualify for automatic cover you need to contact the Insurance Office to activate your cover. The Student Mobility Office will advise the Insurance Office of your details.

If your circumstances are different to the above

You may still qualify for UniSA travel insurance but your individual circumstances will need to be assessed. Please complete and return the UniSA Travel Insurance Student Assessment Form (which can be found in the link above) so that the Insurance Office can advise you on cover and (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 in the link above).

You should note many partner universities (particularly those in the USA) require you to purchase their compulsory health insurance. You will have to comply with their requirements even though you are covered by UniSA Travel Insurance.

All questions to insurance@unisa.edu.au

Student Finance will assess a student's eligibility for an OS-HELP loan no earlier than 6 months before the commencement of their international exchange.

All questions to UniSA Student Finance: StudentFinance.Enrolment@unisa.edu.au

Health & medical matters

- » 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 continuing health problems, 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.
- » If taking large amounts of medication with you, check with the consulate to see if there are customs limits at your destination.
- » 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.

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: www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/medicare/travellingoverseas-pbs-medicine

Tying up loose ends

List the things that will need to be addressed while you are away. Find out whether a family member or friend can manage them for you and what consents they will need. 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: www.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 (eg gas, phone and electricity).

UniSA

- » Return UniSA library books and materials and pay any monies due.
- » Clear out your email in-box, just in case you can't access it as frequently while you are away.
- » 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.

Mail forwards

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



When you are there

Career benefits

Remember to keep in mind that your exchange experience can serve as a tool for you to improve your career opportunities. Here are some ways you can make the most of your overseas experience:

- » Keep a 'careers focused' blog/journal, highlighting any employability skills that you pick up while overseas.
- » Join LinkedIn to keep in touch with people you meet whilst studying overseas. They may well become very influential in the future.
- » Get involved with your host university community by participating in social and professional clubs.
- » Speak to as many people as possible - this can change your whole perspective on your career.

You should use this exchange experience as a means to set yourself apart from other job applicants once you return. Employers look favorably upon students who have experienced an exchange as it demonstrates independence, adaptability, cultural knowledge and an ability to work in a global environment. Visit UniSA's Careers Services w3.unisa.edu.au/career-services/index.html when you return to assist you to maximise these career benefits, and be sure to register for job opportunities.

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 institution. Ask for advice on how people manage their general living costs.
- » 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 a fellow student 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 institution.

Communication with home

Contact home

Sounds a little obvious, but phone home when you first arrive. It is a good way to familiarise yourself with the international dial codes of your destination. 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.

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.
- » Keep your UniSA in-box accessible by deleting unnecessary items.
- » Share your experiences on the UniSA Instagram [@unisaoverseas](https://www.instagram.com/unisaoverseas)
- » Like our page and share photos/videos/updates about your trip with us.

Getting to know the place

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. Do they play any of your favourite sports/pastimes?
- » Give yourself time before making any 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.
- » 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.

Support while you are overseas

- » If you continue to experience physical or emotional responses which are difficult to manage, seek advice from a health practitioner or staff at the host institution.
- » Visit the International Centre at your host university to find information about help from counselling services or similar support.
- » UniSA offers a professional and confidential counselling service w3.unisa.edu.au/counselling/index.html 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 Student Exchange Office at any time: student.exchange@unisa.edu.au

A cultural shift

Things that help intercultural adjustment

Source: Worldwide Classroom: Consortium for International Education & Multicultural Studies, www.worldwide.edu/travel_planner/culture_adjusting.html

- » 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 for 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.



Your studies; you may have to make changes

Remember that you may have to make some changes to the courses you study while on exchange. If you do need to make changes you must obtain approval for those changes from your UniSA Program Director. You can do this via email. Copy all correspondence to your UniSA SEO. If you do make changes without approval or without keeping UniSA International informed, there may be difficulties transferring your exchange credits. It could also delay your graduation.

Safety, security & 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 which 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.

Safety & security tips

- » 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 shortly after you arrive.
- » 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 not feel so uncomfortable 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 15 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.

Check the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) Smartraveller web site: www.smartraveller.gov.au or download the Smartaveller app, www.smartraveller.gov.au/resources/app.html 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 web site 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: www.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/consular-services-charter.html

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.

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

Copy, complete and cut out the emergency card. Leave a copy with your Australian emergency contacts, with your overseas emergency contacts and keep a copy with you at all times (fold twice). 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 Kate Toone Tel: +61 432 751 725 (All Hours)	Health & travel insurers' emergency contact
Date of Birth		
Citizenship	Host university emergency contact	Australian embassy or high commission emergency contact in host city
Passport number	Family emergency contact	DFAT Consular emergency centre Tel: +61 6261 3305
Blood type		
Special medical conditions	Equivalent of OOO in host city	Missing credit card contact

fold

fold

Coming home

Well done. You've lived and studied a whole semester in a foreign country at another university. You have adapted your lifestyle and your study to a different set of rules and, perhaps, another language. Coming home will have its challenges, but you can manage it with support from UniSA: unisa.edu.au/StudentServices

Practical arrangements

Travel and living

There are many practical issues to deal with before you join your return flight. Remember to confirm your flight home with the airline and check airport arrival times. Ask your friends how long it will take to get to the airport. How long does it normally take to check-in?

Basically, you need to undo everything you did when you arrived. The attached checklist will help you organise this.

Host institution arrangements

- » Towards the end of your exchange, organise to receive several copies of your academic transcript. Should your transcript be sent directly to you please ensure you send a copy to UniSA, so we can finalise your credit transfer.
- » Pay any monies due to the institution so that your transcript can be released.
- » Finalise all arrangements and payments to move out of your accommodation.
- » Return all library books and institution equipment, including keys.
- » Consider how you will transport artworks and materials home.

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 institutions 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 your SEO 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 institution, 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 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.
- » Become a Study Overseas Student Ambassador!

Links and urls

Introduction

UniSA International Exchange website: unisa.edu.au/exchange

Applying for exchange

Returned Student Reports: unisa.edu.au/Student-Life/Global-opportunities/studyoverseas/Hear-from-our-returned-students/

Credit Equivalency Table: unisa.edu.au/Credit-Equivalencies

Preparing to go

Returned student experiences: unisa.edu.au/student-exchange/testimonials and www.studyoverseas.gov.au

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade: www.dfat.gov.au

Lonely Planet website: www.lonelyplanet.com

OANDA currency converter: www.oanda.com/currency/converter

World Weather: www.worldweather.org/en/home.html

International students visa information: www.border.gov.au

US visa contact information: www.ustraveldocs.com/au

UK visa contact information: www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/countries/australia

TSA approved luggage locks: www.tsa.gov/travel/travel-tips

Airport security requirements: www.casa.gov.au/operations/standard-page/cani-pack-dangerous-goods-app

Airport baggage requirements: www.travelsecure.infrastructure.gov.au

Australian Customs Service: www.customs.gov.au email: information@customs.gov.au

Western Union: www.westernunion.com.au

International Student Identity Card (ISIC): www.isic.org

Human Services: Payments for students and trainees: www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/subjects/payments-students-and-trainees

Centrelink contacts: www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/contact-us/

UniSA Student Finance department email: 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

UniSA Travel Insurance: w3.unisa.edu.au/fin/commercial_Support/insurance/Student_insurance/student_insurance.asp

Health Insurance services for travellers: www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/medicare/reciprocal-health-care-agreements

Human Services 'Travelling Overseas' information: www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/subjects/payments-students-and-trainees

Medicare email: medicare@medicareaustralia.gov.au

PBS medicines overseas: www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/medicare/travelling-overseas-pbs-medicine

Australian Taxation Office: www.ato.gov.au

UniSA facebook page: www.facebook.com/UniSA

UniSA Student Counsellors: w3.unisa.edu.au/counsellingservices

Worldwide Classroom: www.worldwide.edu/travel_planner/culture_adjusting.html

Australian Embassy overseas posts: www.dfat.gov.au/missions

DFAT's Consular Emergency Centre (CEC): smartraveller.gov.au/services/consular-services-charter.html

Worldwide Classroom: Consortium for International Education & Multicultural Studies, www.worldwide.edu/travel_planner/culture_adjusting.html

Coming home

Student Services and Support: w3.unisa.edu.au/current-students/StudentServices/StudentServices/html

UniSA Career Services: w3.unisa.edu.au/career-services/index.html

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 your Student Exchange Officer.
- 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 your Student Exchange Officer receives a copy (email is fine).
- Once you receive your Travel Grant Scheme Participation Agreement and Talent Release Form, sign and return one copy to your Student Exchange Officer.

2. Preparing to go

Travel paperwork

- Make sure your passport has at least 6 months validity after your date of return.
- Investigate travel arrangements. Do not book your flights until you have your host university acceptance and visa.
- Apply for your visa. Check with your host country's consulate office in Australia. Your travel agent may be able to advise.
- Check that your travel and health insurance covers your entire period of travel.
- Attend a 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 from your host university.
- A list of important contact numbers in Australia and your host country.
- 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.
- 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.
- Copies of traveller's cheques.
- 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 your Student Exchange Officer.
- 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. When you are there

Communication with home

- Set up your blog/journal
- Join LinkedIn
- Buy a phone 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 in box regularly.
- Share your exchange experiences, photos, videos on the UniSA instagram: [@unisaoverseas](https://www.instagram.com/unisaoverseas).
- Set up a blog, travel journal, or Facebook site, and/or start a print journal.

Staying safe

- Register your journey on www.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.

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.

4. Coming home

Host institution

- Arrange for your academic transcript to be sent to your UniSA Student Exchange Officer.
- If it is sent directly to you, forward a copy to your Student Exchange Officer.
- Complete your UniSA Returned Student Report.
- Let your Student Exchange Officer 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

UniSA contacts

General Enquiries: student.exchange@unisa.edu.au

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- » Asia

Kat Della Flora

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