



2026

Brisbane City Guide

Your guide to moving to Brisbane



Useful links for students arriving soon

Need assistance getting to your accommodation?

Students may be eligible for an airport pick up service from the airport to their nominated accommodation destination. Get in touch with your University and arrange an airport pickup service.

- What you can/cannot bring into Australia: Can you bring it | Australian Border Force
- Learn about driving with an overseas licence or permit in Brisbane: Requirement for overseas license holders | QLD
- For more information, head to the Study Brisbane website.



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Global centre for research and innovation

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Welcome To Brisbane

Your guide to moving to Brisbane

A modern, welcoming, and multicultural city,

Studying in a new country is both exciting and challenging! This guide will help you get the most out of your time in Australia, from getting to know the lifestyle, fun places to visit, accommodation, how to find a casual job and more.

Our friendly IDP Brisbane Counsellors are here to support you on your study journey too. If you have questions about life in Australia, course/university opportunities or visas, we're here to help.

Don't be shy, call, email us or book a counselling appointment online.

Queensland Government

idp





Accommodation Options

Settling In

Accomodation

Depending on your lifestyle and budget, you will be able to find the right place to suit you. It all starts with knowing the options...

University-Managed Accommodation

Live on or near campus in accommodation operated by your university. It's a convenient option if you'd like easy access to classes, campus facilities and student life. Prices vary depending on the university, room type and whether meals are included.

Typical room options

- Shared room: AUD $250–$400 per week
- Single room: AUD $320–$500 per week
- Studio: AUD $450–$700 per week

Purpose-Built Student Accommodation

Purpose-built student accommodation is designed specifically for students and is usually located close to universities and public transport. Prices vary depending on the provider, room type, lease length and included amenities.

Typical room options

- Shared room: AUD $220–$380 per week
- Single room: AUD $300–$500 per week
- Studio: AUD $400–$700 per week



Choosing a place to live is an exciting part about studying overseas



Private rental

Rent a house or apartment on your own or share with friends or other students. This option offers more independence and flexibility. Prices vary depending on the suburb, property type and whether you rent a room or an entire apartment.

Typical rental options

- Shared house or apartment: AUD $220–$420 per week
- One-bedroom apartment: AUD $450–$700 per week
- Two-bedroom apartment: AUD $550–$850 per week

Homestay

Stay with an Australian host family while you study. Homestays offer a supportive environment and are a great way to experience Australian culture. Utilities are usually included, and many homestays also provide meals. Prices vary depending on the location and meal plan.

Typical option

- Private room: AUD $330–$480 per week



Overseas Student Health Cover

Settling In

Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)

Why do I need Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)? It helps cover you for medical expenses whilst you're studying in Australia, including:





GP/Doctor or Specialist visits (e.g X-rays and blood tests)



Emergency ambulance services



Hospital visits



Some of the cost of prescription medicines

If you have a medical emergency

If you have a life-threatening medical emergency, go to your nearest public hospital emergency department or call 000 (Emergency Services) immediately for help. All public hospitals have a
24-hour emergency and casualty department, so you will always be able to get help.

If it's not an emergency, locate your nearest GP by visiting the official website of your OSHC provider, book an appointment with a doctor by phone or online. The doctor will treat you and determine if you need medicine or need to see a specialist. Alternatively, you can also visit your university's clinic.

Learn more about Overseas Student Health Cover in Australia from these commonly asked about topics at our website.



Australian Health Care system



Common healthcare words



Getting started with your Student Health Cover



Health and safety tips



Banking

Settling In

One of the most important things to do when you arrive in Australia is to open a bank account. Learn how to make international money transactions, pay bills and manage everyday expenses.

Getting started >



1. Choose your bank

Australia offers various banks for international students to choose from

2. Choose an account

1. Everyday Account

The most common bank account type, used for day- to-day expenses.

2. Savings Account

This is where you can store money that you don't need to use straight away.



3. Opening a Bank Account

Take your passport into the bank, as well as your tax identification number from your home country (if you have one).

Often, there are discounts available for students, make sure you bring student ID and letter of enrolment when you visit the bank to access these

commbank.com.au
nab.com.au
anz.com.au
westpac.com.au

4. Tips

Mobile banking is popular in Australia, making it easy to do online banking via mobile, like paying your friends or paying at supermarkets or cafes by tapping your phone

Common bank words:

BPAY - Popular bill paying service allowing you to pay bills online

Direct debits:

Transfers money from one account to another. Can be commonly used for paying health insurance or any kind of recurring payments internationally and online.



Food & Shopping

Settling In



Food & Shopping

Shopping in Brisbane offers a mix of modern malls, boutique stores, and vibrant markets. Popular spots include Queen Street Mall, Fortitude Valley for unique finds, and South Bank for arts and crafts. With everything from luxury brands to local artisans, Brisbane caters to every shopper's taste.

Brisbane CBD:
Queen Street Mall: The main shopping precinct with major retailers, boutiques, cafes, and entertainment options.

Fortitude Valley:
James Street: Known for its trendy boutiques, cafes, and restaurants.

Chinatown:
Offers a range of Asian grocery stores, markets, and eateries.

South Bank:
South Bank Parklands: Features weekend markets, cafes, and cultural attractions.

West End:
Boundary Street Markets: Offers a variety of local produce, crafts, and food stalls.

Major Supermarkets

coles

woolworths
Australia's fresh food people

IGA

ALDI

COSTCO WHOLESALE

Major Department Stores

1. Major Department Stores

MYER DAVID JONES

2. Sporting Goods

rebel JD

3. Everyday Clothing

ZARA H&M COTTON:ON

4. Homewares (Everday Essentials)

Kmart BIGW

TARGET

5. Electronics, Stationery & Appliances

JB HI-FI Harvey Norman THE GOOD GUYS

Officeworks

6. Hardware Store (DIY)

BUNNINGS warehouse





Transporation

Exploring Brisbane

Getting Around

Getting around Brisbane is easy with its efficient public transport network, including buses, trains, ferries, and the CityCat. **Enjoy 50 cent fares for rail, bus, and ferry services with TransLink**, making travel even more affordable. The Go Card offers seamless access across all modes of transport, while cycling paths and walkways further enhance the city's accessibility.

TransLink

Manages buses, trains, ferries, and trams. Tickets can be purchased via go cards for discounted fares.

Buses

Extensive network covering Brisbane and surrounding suburbs.

Trains

Six lines connect Brisbane to outer areas, including the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast.

CityCat Ferries

Operate along the Brisbane River, providing a scenic mode of transport.

Trams

The G tram operates on the Gold Coast.

Bike Lanes & Paths

Brisbane has a growing network of bike lanes and paths, including along the Brisbane River.

CityCycle

A bike-sharing program with numerous stations around the city.

Ridesharing

Uber, DiDi, and Ola are available in Brisbane.

Taxis

Can be hailed on the street, booked via phone, or through taxi apps.

Car Rentals

Available from companies like Hertz, Avis, and Budget.

Car Sharing

GoGet and Flexicar offer car-sharing services.





Popular Day Trips From Brisbane

Exploring Brisbane



1. Moreton Island

75 Mins Via Ferrie

Moreton Island, near Brisbane, is a sandy paradise with pristine beaches, snorkeling at Tangalooma Wrecks, wild dolphin feeding, and adventure activities like sand tobogganing.



2. Sunshine Coast

1.5 Hours Via Car

The Sunshine Coast, north of Brisbane, boasts stunning beaches, lush hinterlands, vibrant markets, and attractions like Noosa and Australia Zoo, perfect for relaxation and adventure.



3. Gold Coast

1 Hour Via Car / Train

The Gold Coast, south of Brisbane, is famed for its golden beaches, surfing, vibrant nightlife, theme parks, and lush hinterland, offering excitement and relaxation.



4. Scenic Rim

1-2 Hours Via Car

Known for its stunning landscapes, including national parks, rainforests, and mountains. Popular activities include hiking, wine tasting, and hot air ballooning.



Events & Festivals

Exploring Brisbane

Events & Festivals In Brisbane

These events and festivals reflect Brisbane's diverse cultural scene and ensure there's always something exciting happening in the city.





Brisbane Festival

September

A major arts festival featuring theatre, music, dance, and visual arts. The festival includes the famous Riverfire fireworks display.



Ekka (Royal Queensland Show)

August

An annual agricultural show with livestock competitions, rides, showbags, and entertainment, offering a taste of country life in the city.



Queensland Music Festival

March

Music festivals that brings together local and international artists for performances across the state.



Brisbane International Film Festival

October

Celebrates the best of Australian and international cinema with screenings, workshops, and special events.



Brisbane Comedy Festival

Feb-March

Features local and international comedians performing stand-up, sketch, and improv comedy.



Paniyiri Greek Festival

May

A vibrant celebration of Greek culture with traditional food, music, dance, and activities.



Brisbane Asia Pacific Film Festival (BAPFF)

November

Showcases films from across the Asia-Pacific region, highlighting diverse stories and perspectives.



Riverfestival:

September

Part of the Brisbane Festival, featuring river-based events, fireworks, and performances.



Make New Friends

Exploring Brisbane



Being in a new city, away from your family and friends, you will want to meet like-minded people. Follow our tips for socialising and you will be surprised in how making friends is easier than expected!

- Sharing accommodation is a great way to make friends. In student accommodation, you'll often be living with students who study nearby or even at the same institution.
- Student clubs - Many institutions have their own clubs or societies. You can find clubs with specific interests like Harry Potter, badminton, Mahjong, debating, beauty, getting fit and many more.
- Meetup.com and Eventbrite.com.au make it easy to find people who share the same interests/hobbies. It's fun to keep up your hobbies in your new city, and even better to find friends to share the experience with.
- Volunteer in the community - Volunteer organisations are always on the lookout for eager volunteers. This is also a great way to meet other like-minded people. Go volunteer is also a popular platform to find volunteer work.
- Join the IDP Student Community - Connect with current international students, ask questions, and hear real experiences about studying and living in Australia. You can get practical advice on everything from finding accommodation and part-time work to settling into student life, while building friendships before and after you arrive. Best of all, it's free to join.



Work While You Study

Build a Career In Australia

Work While You Study

As an international student on a student visa, you're able to work a certain number of hours a week in Australia.

Casual employment while studying is a good way to learn about Australian culture and meet people.

Take a look at our Careers and Employability page for more information and download a complimentary copy of IDP's LinkedIn Guide for students.





Be mindful if you have any work restriction on your visa and ensure to check your visa conditions.

- If you are a member of the family unit of a primary student visa holder, you must not work in Australia until they have started their course.
- You must not work in Australia before your course of study commences.
- Looking for a job in a new country can feel daunting, but don't hesitate to drop your resume and ask.
- The hospitality industry is a great place to start and many popular venues will welcome international students. Don't be afraid to drop your resume or ask directly at shops and restaurants.
- You can also use popular online job search websites like LinkedIn, Seek, Jora or Career One.

For more valuable advice on working in Melbourne or in Australia, check out the Study Melbourne website.

Applying for an internship is another way to gain work experience. If you're looking for an internship opportunity, speak to one of our counsellors for ongoing opportunities or visit our website.

Join IDP Thrive

Are you an international student who's recently arrived in Australia? IDP's Got You!

The Thrive Program focuses on delivering a range of support services and benefits to our students. These services provide invaluable information and skills to our students while guiding them to success at every step of their study journey in Australia.

Join the Thrive Program to gain access to a range of exciting offers including exclusive events, reward programs, internships, referrals, and network support.

Download the IDP Live App

IDP Live app features loads of helpful tips, advice, personal stories and videos from international students and institutions around the world to help you prepare for your own overseas adventure.

Available on the App Store

GET IT ON Google Play

Follow our socials





Migration & Visa Services

Are you an international student or migrant who dreams of studying, working or even settling permanently in Australia? If so, you are in the right place!

IDP can help you with every step of the visa application process, from understanding the requirements to submitting your application.

Scan the QR code to book a consultation with our migration agents.

We offer a wide range of visa services:

- Student Visa
- Temporary Graduate Visa
- General Skilled Migration Visa
- Partner and Family Visa
- Employer Sponsored Visa
- Other Visas



Get To Know The Brisbane Team

IDP Brisbane

Get To Know Our Local Team And Services

IDP is a global leader in international education services that helps people study abroad.

As experts in international student placements, our key services include:

- Course selection & guidance with the application process
- Visa help & assistance with preparation of necessary documents.
- Consultation with registered migration agents.
- Help with choosing the right student health cover, accommodation, banking options & money transfer.
- IELTS test booking
- IELTS preparation

IDP is a lively network of students and alumni buzzing across Australia. When you arrive, get in touch with us and we'll help you settle in.





IDP helps ambitious students reach their dream destination and thrive on arrival.

Office location

- Level 3, 99 Creek Street, Brisbane QLD 4000

Phone

- +61 7 3020 6101

Opening hours

- 10:00AM - 5:30PM

If you have questions about how to navigate through all that's happening in Australia, course opportunities or visas, speak to us.

Call, email us or book a counselling appointment online.




idp