

2020 Student Exchange Pre-departure guide

Everything you need to know before you go on exchange





Congratulations on being accepted to participate in a Student Exchange global experience.

The Global Experiences Team, within the Student Employability Centre, has developed this guide to assist you with preparing for your experience and to provide some useful tips when planning your travel.

We encourage you to read this guide carefully and contact the Global Experiences Team if you would like any additional information.

We wish you all the best for your global experience!

Good luck and stay safe.

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Preparing
to go



1 Learn about your destination

Knowing more about your destination and preparing yourself for the cultural differences will help you settle into your new surroundings. Have you found out a little about the country and city that you will be studying in?

- Google Maps can show you where the host university is in relation to the city centre.
- Host university information pages on the Global Experiences website can give you useful information about the cost of living, what to do on arrival and where to get more information.
- Guidebooks such as Lonely Planet can give you a feel for your host city and country.
- Chat with returned and current exchange students through the

UQ Abroad - Student Exchange Facebook group.

- Find out if your host university provides a greeting service at the airport on arrival. If not, you will need to check out the local transport and have small change in the local currency to pay for it.

2 Travel documents

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

Passport

You need to ensure that your passport has adequate validity to meet the entry requirements of the countries you intend to visit or travel through.

Some countries require travellers to have at least six months validity remaining on their passports beyond the period of intended stay. Immigration authorities may refuse entry if you arrive with less time than this.

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

Make a copy of the ID page of your passport and ensure you always have access to that copy – scan it to your email account, leave a copy with your family or a friend in Australia, and have it hidden somewhere in your hand luggage. If you lose your passport and you don't have access to your passport number, the renewal/replacement process will take much longer.

Student visa

Check with the host country's consulate/embassy here in Australia or a travel agent to find out about the visa requirements and costs.

Don't leave your student visa until the last minute as it can take up to 90 days to process. As soon as you have received your acceptance letter from the host university, you should apply for a student visa.

You may also need a visa for any other countries you plan to travel to or through while you are overseas (particularly the USA), so make sure you check out those embassy/consulate websites as well.

If you want to work while you are studying overseas, please check with the host country's embassy/consulate whether it is possible to work on a student visa.

UQ is unable to provide visa advice as we are not a visa issuing authority. Please contact the consulate/embassy of your host country if you have any specific questions about getting a visa.

Tickets for travel

Check out your flight options but do not confirm or pay for tickets until you have received your:

- full acceptance from the Global Experiences Team (including faculty-approved study plan)
- host university acceptance
- student visa

Refer to the Host University's recommended arrival date. Note that services/offices/shops may be closed if arriving at on-campus housing before the recommended arrival date, or if arriving on a public holiday or Sunday.

Recent academic transcript

Make sure that you take a copy of your most recent official academic transcript, as results from the latest courses you have taken may fulfil the prerequisites of your selected courses at the host university.

You can order an academic transcript online through **academic-records.uq.edu.au/order**

Voting from overseas

When you go overseas you must meet certain requirements to stay on the electoral roll, and, in some cases, avoid a fine.

Familiarise yourself with these electoral responsibilities by visiting the **Australian Electoral Commission website**.

Bulletins are published on **Smartraveller** to advise of state and federal elections, including information for Australians who choose to vote while overseas.

International students

As you will be leaving Australia for more than 30 days to participate in the exchange program, you will be eligible for Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) overseas credit. You must apply for this credit within 28 days of returning to Australia on the completion of your exchange.

As proof of your overseas studies, please take a copy of the identification page of your passport and a copy of the Australian Immigration departure and arrival stamps in your passport to the OSHC desk in the Student Centre.

You can then apply for a full refund of the unused portion of your OSHC policy on the completion of your degree program at UQ.

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

3 What to take

When they return, many exchange students comment that they took far too much, so think carefully when packing.

- Check your airline for regulations on baggage weight and the number of bags you can take.
- Look up the weather of your host city and pack appropriately. If you are travelling to a colder climate, take enough clothes (especially a jacket) to make sure you will be warm when you first arrive. Other clothes can be bought once you settle into your new surroundings.
- Bring a few mementos from home so you won't be too homesick – family photos, Vegemite or a farewell gift with messages from home.

Essential items in your hand luggage

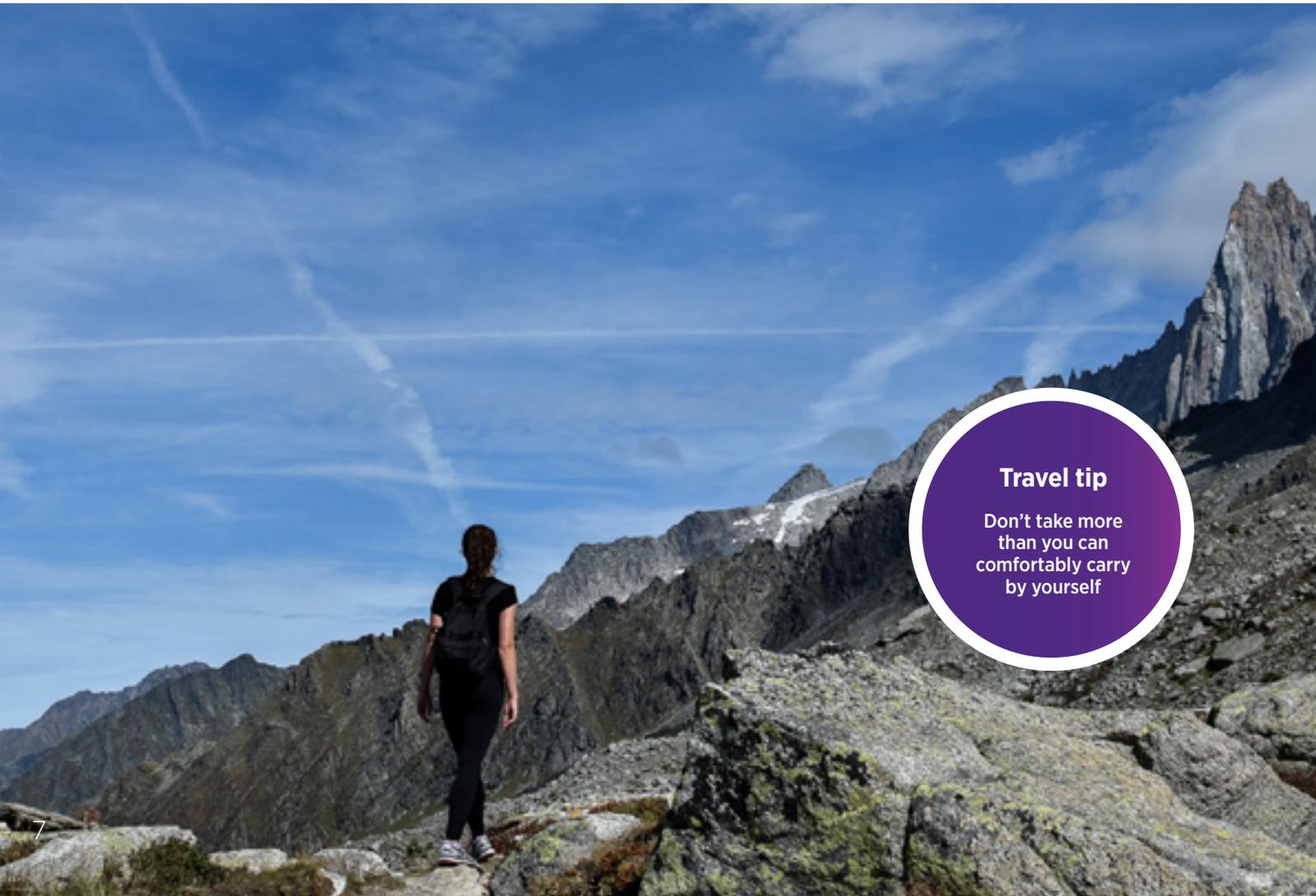
- Air ticket and evidence of return ticket
- Passport and visa
- Official acceptance letter from the host university
- Financial statement (e.g. bank statements)
- Immunisation document
- Letters from doctors about medical conditions and related medication
- Any electronic equipment (laptop, phone, camera), power cords and foreign power adaptors
- Passport and visa

Useful items to pack in your checked luggage

- Guidebooks
- Sleeping bag/bed linen
- Over-the-counter medication
- Australian souvenirs for gifts
- Australian power board

Useful items to organise before you go

- Hostel membership (YHA or IH) for cheap accommodation
- International Student ID Card (ISIC) for discounts on flights or tourist activities



Travel tip

Don't take more than you can comfortably carry by yourself



4 Financial planning

Preparing financially for your exchange is important. Make sure you are aware of all of the costs involved in a student exchange program and plan ahead to consider how you will fund your experience.

Budget

Know how much you have to spend while you are on exchange and create a budget based on suggested costs of living.

Consider using a budget tool such as **Money Smart**.

Keep in mind the exchange rate and how it might fluctuate during your time on exchange.

Remember you may need to purchase household items upon arrival - check out local markets, charity shops and ask local students about cheap buys.

Banking

Notify all financial institutions in Australia (banks, credit card companies) about your travel plans if you plan to use your Australian account/cards while overseas.

Be aware of any fees associated with international withdrawals/purchases etc. from an Australian account/card.

Check out the local banks in your host city if you wish to open an account once in the country - they may have lower fees and special student deals.

How to take your money overseas

Travel Cards are pre-paid debit cards for travellers and some do not have any exchange rate or withdrawal fees.

Electronic transfers from your Australian account to a local bank are useful for transferring large amounts of money, but can be costly.

Traveller's cheques may not be that common any more, but they are a safe way to travel with money.

Debit and credit cards are useful when making larger payments for travel bookings. Visa and Mastercard are more widely accepted than American Express.

OS-HELP

The Commonwealth Government loan scheme, known as **OS-HELP**, assists eligible Australian and New Zealand students to study overseas as a part of their degree.

Handy cultural tips

- In Germany, a comma (when used in monetary values or numbers) is equivalent to an Australian decimal point.
- In order to access Google, Instagram and Facebook, students in China require a VPN: UQ students can download a free UQ VPN for fast and reliable access.

CENTRELINK

If you receive assistance from Centrelink, it may be possible to continue to receive these payments while you are overseas as a UQ exchange student. Centrelink requires written confirmation from UQ that you are enrolled in a full-time study load at the host institution. If you require a Centrelink letter, please fill in the **online form**.

Contact your **Centrelink** Officer for eligibility information or for details concerning your payments. It is your responsibility to understand the rules and regulations of Centrelink.

5 Enrolment and tuition fees

Enrolment at UQ

During your exchange, you will remain enrolled as a student at UQ. The Global Experiences Team will automatically enrol you in four, 2-unit exchange codes (EXCHXXXX) before your exchange starts (8 units per semester).

If you are in the final semester of your degree program and have only 6 units left to complete, or if you have received prior special permission to be enrolled in only 6 units, you will need to withdraw yourself from one 2-unit EXCH code before the appropriate census date (March 31 for Semester 1 or August 31 for Semester 2).

It is your responsibility to make sure that you are enrolled correctly at UQ for the duration of your exchange. If your circumstances change, and you need to return home before the completion of your exchange, contact the Global Experiences Team for advice about withdrawing from the exchange codes (EXCH).

Tuition fees to UQ

As an exchange student, you still pay your tuition fees or student contributions (HECS) to UQ. You will be enrolled in 8 units per

semester (a standard full-time load) at UQ while on exchange (unless otherwise pre-arranged), so you will be charged tuition fees for 8 units of study per semester.

If you happen to fail or drop any courses while overseas and cannot get the full 8 units per semester of credit towards your UQ degree, you will still be charged for the full 8 units of tuition.

For information about the tuition you will be charged while on exchange, please refer to the **Fee Schedules**.

Domestic students: Click on Domestic and check the fees for Exchange Studies (EXCH).

International students: Click on International and refer to the relevant fee schedule.

Please note that tuition fee and student contribution rates increase each year.

Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) at UQ

While on exchange you will be exempt from paying the SSAF.

Tuition fees to host institution

As an exchange student, you

pay no tuition fees to your host university. If you have been asked to pay tuition fees, contact the Global Experiences office and we will discuss the matter with the host university.

Some host universities require exchange students to pay additional fees to cover student services, public transport, sports and amenities, technology, laboratories, field trips, etc.

For more information about possible host university fees, please see the Accommodation and Costs tab of the individual host university web pages on the **Global Experiences website**.

If you are taking a language course outside the university, you may be asked to pay an additional fee.

Enrolment at the host university

As an exchange student, you must complete the standard full-time study load at the host university during your exchange, unless otherwise prearranged.

Find the required full-time load for your host university on the individual university web page via the **Global Experiences website**.

More details on enrolment at the host university can be found on **page 16**.





6 Health and safety preparations

Register with Smartraveller

Registering with Smartraveller will help you gain access to consular services should you need help while overseas.

Non-Australian citizens should register with consular officials from their home country.

Check **Smartraveller** for the travel situations for your destination. If the security situation increases to level three or four while in the country, the exchange program to that region may be cancelled.

Power of Attorney

It might be worth considering giving a family member or trusted friend **Power of Attorney** before you leave for your exchange, so that they can sign important documents while you are overseas or take action if an emergency arises.

Update your address in mySI-net

As you won't be in Queensland during your exchange, please ensure that your postal and residential address is updated in mySI-net.

Privacy of information

The University of Queensland complies with Australian and Queensland privacy laws and guidelines. The University of Queensland treats information it collects as confidential. Information supplied by you will only be used for the administrative or educational purposes of The University of Queensland or in accordance with a specific consent given by you.

Keep Global Experiences informed

If you have any concerns or worries before, during or after your exchange, please do not hesitate to contact Global Experiences. Email uqabroad@uq.edu.au or telephone **+61 7 3365 2852** during Brisbane business hours.

Medical tips

- Arrange to have a check-up with your doctor, dentist and optometrist before you leave.
- If you have a medical condition, carry a doctor's letter that lists your medications (the trade and generic names) and the dosages.
- Carry an adequate supply of medications to cover the period you are away, as it may be difficult to obtain similar medication in your host country.
- Ensure that you are up-to-date with routine immunisations, such as tetanus.
- If you require travel immunisations for the region you are visiting, have them administered at least six weeks before you leave.
- Carry your Medicare card with you, as the countries you visit may have **reciprocal healthcare agreements** with Australia.
- Make up a small first-aid kit. Include headache tablets, tissues, antiseptic cream, bandaids, hand sanitiser, condoms, a thermometer, tweezers, anti-diarrhea medication and electrolyte sachets.

7 Travel and health insurance

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

International SOS

UQ has recently entered into a partnership with **International SOS** to strengthen our capabilities to meet the University's duty of care while offering support when students are undertaking University approved travel.

International SOS will offer UQ travellers 24/7 pre-departure medical, safety and security information and advice.

International SOS will also provide both routine and emergency assistance when UQ's people are travelling. In addition, International SOS will help UQ locate and confirm the safety of its travellers in times of crisis both domestically and internationally. There is no additional cost to UQ travellers to access International SOS.

In order to be covered by **UQ's Corporate Travel and Health insurance** and access International SOS (ISOS), you must complete the following steps:

- Complete the **Travel Details Form**
- **Create an account/register** with ISOS
- Create your profile
- Create new trip and enter your travel details

A detailed step-by-step user guide from ISOS can be found **here**.

UQ Corporate Travel and Health Insurance

UQ exchange students are covered by UQ's Corporate Travel Insurance:

- only in the country of their global experience
- or direct travel to/from the host country for the duration of the program

To access the Student Travel

Insurance Summary see **UQ's Corporate Travel and Health Insurance**. Please note this page is password protected and you will be required to log in using your UQ username and password.

If you have a pre-existing medical condition, you must complete the 'Fit to Travel Report' found in the **Policy Summary**.

Field trips

If you are participating in a field trip outside of your host country as part of a course you are taking at the host university, you must:

1. Write to **insurance@uq.edu.au** to confirm that you will be covered for the trip; and
2. Enter your trip details into your International SOS account.

Failure to inform UQ of this travel may result in not being covered by UQ's insurance.

Making a travel insurance claim

If you need to make an insurance claim:

1. Complete a **Travel Insurance Claim Form**.
2. Obtain the relevant supporting documentation (e.g. police report, carrier document, invoices, medical reports, proof of ownership etc.).
3. We recommend you lodge your claim within 30 days of the incident/illness/loss to ensure you have the opportunity to obtain any additional supporting documents required by the insurer.
4. Email your claim to **insuranceclaims@uq.edu.au**.

Additional private travel insurance

Taking out additional coverage with UQ's insurer, Chubb Travel Insurance, is possible and up to you to organise through **Chubb's website**.

If you take out cover with a different insurer you will have to check their terms and conditions, as some insurers will only provide cover if they are insuring the whole trip.

Please note: Students travelling in a country where they also have citizenship may not be covered for medical expenses while overseas or medical evacuation.

Mandatory host university/country health insurance

Despite already being covered by UQ's insurance, some programs or countries require students to purchase a mandatory local health insurance package to meet student visa requirements.

If your host university/country does not need you to purchase additional insurance, you may be required to present proof of what is covered in the UQ policy (a Certificate of Currency) in order to be exempt from purchasing your host university's insurance policy. If you require a Certificate of Currency or insurance waiver, please:

1. Request a **UQ Global Experience Confirmation Letter**
2. Email **insurance@uq.edu.au** and request a Certificate of Currency or for the waiver to be completed, attaching the Confirmation letter to the email.

In the event of a medical or other emergency overseas, contact International SOS.

Phone: **+61 2 9372 2468**
(reverse charge available)

Email: **sydney@internationalsos.com**

You will need to provide UQ's Membership Number **12AYCA778031**.

Please save this phone number in to your mobile phone.



Arriving and Settling in

1 Communication with home

Let your family and friends know that you have arrived safely in your host country and where you are.

- Give your friends and family your new contact details - phone number, email address and physical address.

- Skype/call home when you feel the need.
- Keep in touch with The University of Queensland. Check your UQ email account regularly - this is our primary method of contacting you.

2 Culture shock

When going overseas, you will experience differences in all aspects of life: food, manners, beliefs, customs, laws and language. Although coming into contact with new cultures is very exciting, it can also be overwhelming and can affect you physically and emotionally.

Symptoms of culture shock

- Feeling isolated, alone, unable to make friends
- Unable to sleep or sleeping too much
- Feeling irritable and angry, especially with the local culture and people
- Aches and pains - sore neck and shoulders, stomach ache
- Unable to concentrate on your studies

If you are experiencing any of these symptoms, please remember that these reactions are normal.

You are probably not ill (although you might like to see a doctor, just in case). More likely, you are suffering from culture shock or homesickness.

This is a temporary situation for people adjusting to life in a new environment.

What you can do to prevent/overcome culture shock

1. Attend the orientation program offered by the host university

This is a great way to familiarise yourself with the university, city and country of your exchange. Often there will be lots of social events organised for new students and it is a great way to meet other new people like you.

2. Find an 'informant' (someone from the foreign-to-you culture)

This can be the most important thing for thriving in another culture, especially if this person becomes a close and trusted friend. The informant is the go-to person when something happens that you can't make sense of or if you have questions about what's appropriate or not. It's like having a 'local culture walking dictionary' and can be vital for settling in.

3. Find a same culture friend (someone from your own culture)

It helps having someone who either is going through or has recently gone through a lot of the shocks you are currently enduring. You can vent with someone who knows where you are coming from. Just be careful not to let it slide into a 'hate everything about this country' session.

4. Find something you like about the new culture every day

Celebrating the good of the new

Counselling services

If you are still feeling isolated and unwell after trying some of the techniques listed below, we recommend:

1. Complete the **UniWellbeing course**
2. Book a **one-on-one counselling session** with a UQ counsellor via skype.

culture can help take some of the edge off the things you see as bad. Think of it as the things you'll miss when you go back home, even though it might be hard to believe when you are in the midst of culture shock.

5. Be a tourist

Plan time to do the cheesy touristy things. It helps to be an outsider sometimes, because you can find wonder in things the locals don't even notice anymore.

6. Do something that takes courage every day

Take adventures (big and small) and surround yourself in another culture. Being courageous can simply mean going to the market by yourself, but if you see it as an adventure, rather than a chore, you may actually find yourself having fun.

7. Do something familiar

Figure out how to make your favourite food and do so often. Watch your favourite movies. Listen to music that makes you feel good in your own language. Have people over to celebrate your home culture's holidays your way.

8. Go for walks

Spend time exploring on foot. Take time in this new culture to figure out how the minutiae of life gets done. Being on foot helps you to notice the little details, plus it gets you out of the house for some fresh air and exercise.



Tips for Tipping (USA)

In the USA, most waiters and bartenders are paid well below minimum wage, so they make up the difference in tips! How much do you tip?

A general guide:

10% = 😞 15% = 😐
20% = 😊 25% = 😄

tripadvisor.com

9. Keep a journal or blog

There's no better place to get it all out than on the pages of a book that no one else will see. It will also help for you to look back and see how far you've come, the humour in situations that weren't humorous at the time, and how you can help other students when they have the same problems. Consider taking this journal and sharing it in blog form to help others as they transition, but be careful to gain some perspective before doing so.

10. Ask for packages from home

Ask someone from home to send you the things that you can't find in your host country. It's amazing how great it is to get a care package with a few of your favourite things.

11. Do your research

Know what you're getting into before you go. Research the web,

buy some books, watch local movies and learn the language. It will help you have some idea of what to expect when you arrive at your host country. Learning the language will be hard at times, but you will gain a lot of insight into the culture and daily way of life

Reference

gadling.com/2010/05/24/ten-ways-todeal-with-culture-shock



3 Keeping safe overseas

You need to make sure that you take every precaution to keep safe while overseas. It is important that your family, your government representative, your host university and UQ know how to contact you.

Please ensure that you complete the following checklist

- Register with your nearest government representative. Australia citizens can register online at **Smarttraveller**.
- Update your address in **mySInet**.
- Register for International SOS and submit your travel itinerary.
- Download the **International SOS Assistance App**.
- Register your address with the exchange office at the host university.

On-Campus

- Familiarise yourself with the security systems on campus.
- Found out whether your host university has a campus security bus system, security escorts and security call points.
- Find the number of the security office and save this to your mobile phone.
- Find out what number you should call in an emergency.

Off-Campus

- Keep valuables out of sight, avoid displays of wealth and be vigilant about your personal security in public places.
- Take particular care when travelling after dark, especially if you are alone. You should avoid places known for criminal activity and avoid deserted areas.
- Take advice from locals about the unsafe areas of their city.
- Consider making a list (including model and serial numbers) and keeping photographic records of your valuable possessions. When reporting a stolen mobile phone, you may need your IMEI number (15-digit serial number). This can be found by dialing #06# on most mobile phones or by looking behind the battery. Never leave your mobile phone or laptop unattended.

Lost or stolen passports

- If your passport is lost or stolen, you must report it to the nearest Australian consulate and/or local police as soon as possible.
- You can report the loss online at **passports.gov.au/lost-and-stolen-passports**.
- Get a copy of the police report or report number.
- To get a replacement, you must

complete an application and have proof of your Australian citizenship.

- Remember, your passport is your most important legal document while you are overseas. Guard your passport carefully.

What to do in an emergency

- In the event of an emergency overseas follow the instructions of the local authorities in the first instance.
- Contact your family, UQ's Global Experiences Team and your host university to inform them of your wellbeing, whereabouts and plan of action.
- Contact International SOS on **+61 2 9372 2468** or **sydney@internationalsos.com** with UQ Membership Number **12AYCA778031**.
- In an emergency where an operator or message taker is involved, please be prepared to provide the following information:
 1. Your name
 2. Where you are
 3. Nature of the emergency
 4. Telephone number and where administrator(s) can contact you
 5. How long you will be in that location
 6. When you will call back if you have not been called.

In the event of an emergency Global Experiences will follow The University of Queensland's Critical Incident Management Policy (**PPL.7.60.01**)

4 Finding accommodation

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

- Make sure you arrange some

form of accommodation before you arrive in your host city, even if it is only temporary.

- Allow one to two weeks before Orientation or the beginning of classes to find suitable accommodation.
- Familiarise yourself with rental

procedures and tenancy rights. The host university should be able to provide this information to you.

- If possible, take a local buddy along when you view accommodation or interview housemates.

5 Studying at the host institution

Teaching styles

The method of teaching and assessment may be different at your host university.

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

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

Attendance at classes

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

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

Full-time study load per semester

While studying at the host university, you are expected to be enrolled in the standard full-time load for that institution. In order to receive a full-time semester of credit (8 units) towards your UQ degree, you must successfully complete the full-time study load

(according to the Host University page on UQ's Global Experiences website) as approved by your UQ faculty.

At most Canadian and American universities, the full-time load for a semester is 15 credits or five courses.

In the UK, the typical full-time load is 60 credits, usually three to six courses per semester.

At European universities, a full-time load is usually 30 ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) which could mean as many as eight courses per semester.

If you are not sure how many courses you should be taking while on exchange, refer to the **Global Experiences** website or contact the Global Experiences office.

Withdrawing from a course

If you wish to withdraw from a course while on exchange it is your responsibility to check if there will be any academic penalty and if the withdrawal will be noted on your transcript. Please be aware of the implications of having a withdrawn course or academic penalty on your transcript.

What if my pre-approved courses change?

It is quite common for students to have difficulties getting into the courses they have had approved for their exchange.

In some universities, courses fill up very quickly and extra lecture hours are not added. In others, programs change and the courses you selected may no longer be offered.

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

1. Gather information about the new course, including a description of the topics covered, contact hours, methods of assessment, texts used, the credit value of the course and the level of the course (introductory vs advanced).
2. Email the new course information to the contact at your UQ faculty (details on **page 17**), copying in your Global Experiences adviser.
3. If the course is approved, keep all communication you have had with the faculty to ensure ease of credit transfer upon return to UQ.

Do my grades at the host university affect my UQ GPA?

The grades you receive on exchange are not transferred to your grade point average (GPA) in your current program. However, the grades received on exchange are part of your academic record and will be considered in the determination of University Medal

calculations in accordance with **UQ policy and Senate Rules.** Results received from a global experience may also be taken into consideration when applying for medical school, honours, and postgraduate studies.

Students planning to do honours: If you are taking compulsory courses overseas and wish to do honours on your return from exchange, please check with your academic adviser before your exchange whether the grades you receive on exchange will be counted towards your acceptance into honours.

Students planning to apply for postgraduate study or medical school: The grades that you receive while on exchange may be taken into consideration as part of your application or by future employers.

For information about obtaining your host university transcript, please see page 23 of this guide.

Accessing UQ's online resources

While on exchange you will have access to the resources available at your host university's library, as well as access to UQ Library's online resources. You will still be able to use your existing UQ login to access UQ's databases, catalogue and document delivery. Additionally, you will also still have access to your UQ download quota (10GB per month) if you connect

through Eduroam.

While libraries in the UK, USA and Europe will be very similar to what you are used to, libraries in other countries can operate differently. Some libraries have closed 'stacks' that you are not able to browse. Some libraries close for lunch or do not open on weekends or evenings. Other libraries charge for services such as internet access and database searching.

Your host university library may have special orientations and information sessions for exchange students. Libraries in non-English speaking countries may also provide information in English.

Can I alter my time on exchange?

The period of your exchange is clearly stated in your acceptance letters from both Global Experiences and your host institution, and cannot be altered.

Coming home early

Sometimes things don't go as planned and you may need to come home early. If this does occur, please contact your Global Experiences adviser for further information.

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

Abroad and at the host university:

- Does your host university have a withdrawal fee?

- What financial penalties are there for your accommodation?
- Will you be subject to any fees to reschedule return flights?

In Australia and at UQ:

- Have you passed the financial liability for withdrawal date for enrolled study?
- Will you be able to return to study at UQ in the current semester? Please note that if you return prior to the census date for that semester (31 March for Semester 1 and 31 August for Semester 2), you will need to remove the exchange enrolment codes on your mySI-net.
- Have you received a scholarship that you will need to pay back?
- Do you have to advise Centrelink of your change of circumstances?
- For those who are on a full-year exchange, if you are withdrawing from a semester early you will not be eligible for your second OS-HELP payment.
- **Important:** Consult with your Global Experiences adviser before you withdraw from courses on mySI-net if it is after the Census date.

Extending your exchange

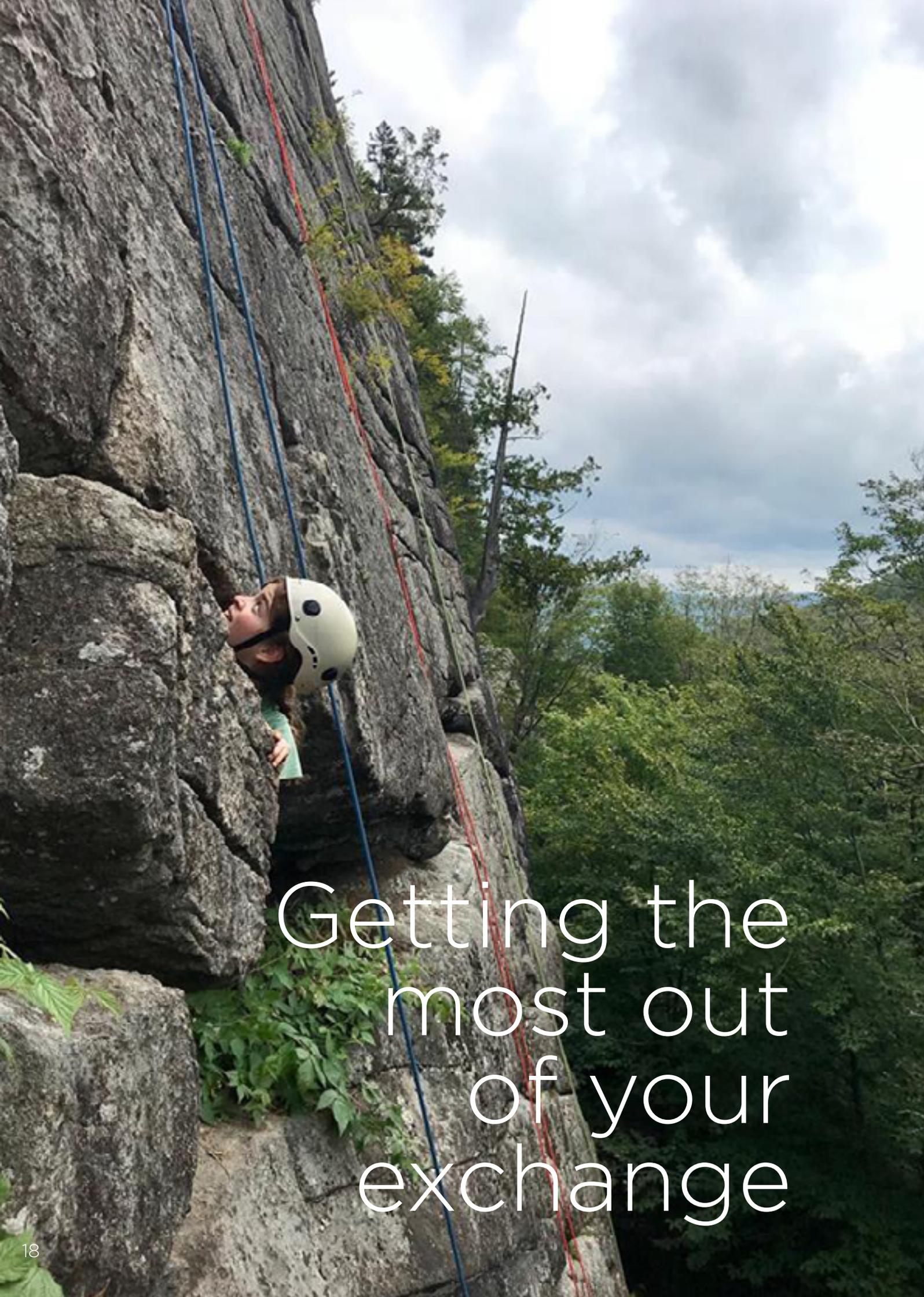
You will not be able to stay on exchange longer than indicated on your acceptance letter.



UQ faculty contacts

If you have any questions or concerns about faculty-related issues (including course approvals, enrolment, credit transfer, graduation dates or enrolment in honours), please contact your faculty representative listed below.

OFFICE	NAME	EMAIL
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences	Multiple advisers	exchange@hass.uq.edu.au
Faculty of Business, Economics and Law	Ms Erin de Lacy	exchange@bel.uq.edu.au
Faculty of Science	Multiple advisers	enquire@science.uq.edu.au
Faculty of Engineering, Architecture and Information Technology	Multiple advisers	enquiries@eait.uq.edu.au
Faculty of Health and Behavioural Sciences	Multiple advisers	habs@enquire.uq.edu.au
School of Nursing, Midwifery and Social Work	Ms Carla Cravaliat	mmsw@uq.edu.au
Faculty of Medicine	Multiple advisers	med.enquiries@uq.edu.au



Getting the
most out
of your
exchange

1 Representing UQ

Conditions of Participation

Please revisit the **UQ Global Experiences: Terms and Conditions** and remember that while on exchange, you must abide by the standards, policies and rules of the host university and by the **UQ Student Charter**.

Going on exchange is a privilege, not a right. Please remember that as a representative of UQ, your behaviour can have a significant effect, both positive and negative,

on the image of the University and its students, and, in turn, the exchange relationship with your host university.

Being a UQ Ambassador

An important part of an exchange program is the reciprocal exchange of students. Your job, as an ambassador for UQ, is to encourage more students from the host institution to come to UQ on exchange.

Participate in promotional events

for the host university's exchange program (e.g. Study Abroad fairs, pre-departure seminars, Australia nights etc.).

Give a presentation about UQ. For a copy of a promotional PowerPoint presentation, please email **Global Experiences**.

Brisbane Marketing has an excellent website for international students thinking of coming to **Brisbane to study**.

2 The UQ Employability Approach

Learning from your exchange experiences

The University of Queensland has adopted a strategic approach to support student employability development. This approach is based on learning from experiences, and understanding how these experiences have helped you to develop skills and attributes that employers look for. Your global experience is hugely valuable for your personal and professional development, but to make the most of it, take some time to reflect on what you have learnt. The best learning comes from experiencing new things and facing challenges.

The following questions will guide your reflections:

Culture shock/settling in

- Have you experienced culture shock? If so, how have you adapted to your new surroundings?
- Have your initial expectations been met and, if not, what are the gaps between your expectations and your experience so far?
- What have you done to

ease yourself into a new environment?

Activities outside of the classroom

- What goals have you set for yourself for your time abroad and what strategies are you implementing/going to implement that will help you achieve them?
- What are you doing outside attending class in order to make the most of your experience?
- What are you learning from these experiences?

Highs and Lows

- What challenges have you faced during your time away so far, and how have you dealt with these? What have you learnt?
- What would you have done differently?
- What are the best moments so far and how do you think these achievements and experiences will benefit you in the future?

Personal and professional growth

- Think about the person you were when you first stepped off the plane - how have you grown during your time away and how

has the experience added to your personal and professional growth?

- What will you do differently in the future, based on your learning from your global experience? What can you now do, or do more effectively, as a result of your experience?
- How have your experiences changed the way you view the world or enhanced your understanding of human behaviour and interactions?

Employability Award

Register for the **Employability Award** program to extend yourself beyond the classroom, gain a better understanding of the world and develop key competencies that employers value. You can participate in the program at any stage of your undergraduate or postgraduate coursework studies.

Your global experience will be counted as one of the five supplementary activities required for the award.

By participating in the Employability Award program, you will be required to communicate your employability in an Award interview. This opportunity will establish your ability to articulate how you have developed personally and professionally through your engagement.



“The personal skills I gained through my semester exchange are innumerable. Exchange is a fantastic way to test and develop your confidence and independence in a situation that is wholly unfamiliar.”

Jasmine, University of Vienna, Austria

It doesn't matter how you reflect on your time away, as long as the learning process happens so that you make the most out of your overseas study experience.

The SEAL method

If it helps you can use the SEAL method to structure your reflections, which you can apply to any situation or experience.

The acronym stands for:

Situation: What was the event, incident, activity, task or experience?

Effect: What were the challenges you faced as part of the experience? What impact did they have on you?

Action: What action did you take or what strategies did you employ to deal with the challenges you faced, and why did you do this?

Learning: What did you learn from the experience and how might you do things the same or differently in the future? What can you now do as a result of the experience, or do more effectively, and how has it added to your overall development?

An example

Situation

This was the first time that I had lived away from family and friends and I was taking a little while to find my feet and get over the initial shock of being in a completely new environment.

Effect

I was feeling quite out of my depth and isolated, which was making me feel quite homesick. I was worried that I wouldn't settle in enough to make the most of my experience.

Action

To deal with the isolation and problems with settling in, I knew that I had to meet new people to help me feel more a part of my new environment. This was a daunting prospect for me as I don't usually initiate contact with people, especially in a new place. I joined two campus clubs and made an effort to talk to people in tutorials or after lectures and in my student accommodation.

Learning

This experience made me more self-aware in terms of assessing a situation, identifying the problem or issue, and taking steps to improve things. I realise it takes time to settle in, but you really have to move out of your comfort zone to do it and it helps improve your confidence if you can put yourself 'out there'. I know that I need to make adjustments in the way I operate in order to connect with people in new situations. Now that I have had that experience, I feel more confident about taking initiative in the future.

Application to employability

In the example, the student has reflected on how they felt about being abroad and how it made them feel a bit out of their depth. This shows that they have developed the personal quality of self-awareness as they acknowledged this feeling and did something to address it.

Self-awareness is a key part of employability, as it allows you to monitor your own behaviour and attitudes at work and adjust according to the context and the requirements of the task at hand.

It also helps you better cope with constructive criticism and learn from your mistakes.

This student also developed confidence as they stepped out of their comfort zone and made new friends. Confidence is also a key part of employability as it allows you to tackle new things and be able to put forward your opinion in an appropriate way.

Self-reflection is a vital skill to develop for workplace success, as it gives you the opportunity to think through experiences, situations and events, and identify what you have learnt and how this learning may guide your behaviour or approach to things in the future.

Once you have returned from your exchange, we will be offering a workshop to help you draw out the learning from your experience and relate it to your employability development.

Further information on the workshop will be given at the return home event.

If you would like further information, please don't hesitate to contact Anna Richards at arichards4@uq.edu.au.

If you would like to know more about how to translate your experiences into employability development you can enrol in **EMPLOY101x – Unlocking your Employability**. This free self-paced massive open online course (MOOC) is based on UQ's employability approach and will help you to understand how to develop your employability through engaging in, and learning from a range of experiences.

To sign up, register on edx.org using your UQ email address and then enrol in **EMPLOY101x**.



Stay smart online

Treat your personal information as you would treat your money – don't leave it lying around for others to take.

Your identity and personal information are valuable. If criminals find out your personal details, they can use them to open bank accounts and obtain important documents (e.g. credit cards, passports) in your name. If you use mobile banking on smartphones and tablets to check balances and transfer funds, check with your bank (especially if you open a new bank account in your host country) about online security. Don't let your phone be

a potential cash point for a clever thief!

If possible, avoid using public computers or Wi-Fi hotspots to access or provide personal information.

Here are a few quick steps you can take to stay safe and smart when using social networking sites:

- Adjust your privacy settings to control the amount and type of information you want to share online.
- Be wary of strangers. Limit the number of people you accept as friends to people you know well, or have met in real life, and trust.
- Think before you post – expect

that people other than your friends can see the information you post online. If you give away your whereabouts or holiday plans online, you may risk being burgled or being followed.

- Don't post photos or comments that may be offensive, inappropriate, obscene or unlawful

Remember, your online reputation is important. Any information available about you online is potentially there forever.

References

Stay Smart Online



Returning Home



The semester will be over before you know it and you will leave your host country with mixed emotions - glad to be going home but sad to be leaving the new friends you have made.

Graduation

All credit transfer from your exchange must be completed before you can graduate. Therefore, your faculty must have the official transcript from your host university well before the graduation ceremony. Please be aware that it can take at least two months to receive host university transcripts, so plan your graduation accordingly.

Going on exchange in the final semester of your degree will most likely delay your graduation.

1 Tying up loose ends

Travel and living arrangements

- Pay all outstanding bills (including housing).
- Close your account.
- Confirm your travel arrangements home.

Host institution Requirements

Return library books and pay any outstanding library fines. Unpaid university fines or university accommodation fees will result in the delay of your transcript being forwarded to UQ and the credit transfer process.

mySI-net address

When you are back in Australia, please change your address in **mySI-net** back to your Australian address.

2 Host university transcript and credit transfer

Transcript

At the end of your exchange studies, you will be issued an official transcript from your host university. Some host universities will automatically issue the transcript, while others require the student to request a transcript. Check with your host university regarding the procedure of receiving the transcript.

If you receive the transcript directly from the host, please provide a copy to Global Experiences at uqabroad@uq.edu.au.

Make sure you keep a copy of your original host university transcript for applications for future study or employment.

Credit transfer

The Global Experiences team will send an electronic copy of the transcript to your faculty for credit transfer.

To facilitate credit transfer (particularly for any courses that were not pre-approved), it is very important that you:

- Keep copies of any correspondence between you

and your UQ school or faculty regarding approval of additional courses.

- Keep copies of the syllabus, course details, reading list and assessment, as well as any assignments and exams for courses you have taken.

Please check mySI-net to ensure that your credit has been transferred. If you have any questions about your credit transfer, please contact your faculty.

3 Reverse culture shock

Many students experience 'reverse culture shock' upon returning home after a period overseas.

What is reverse culture shock?

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

Symptoms of reverse culture shock?

You may have feelings of alienation and mutual misunderstandings between you, your friends and your family.

These feelings are brought about by the inconsistency between your expectations of home and the reality, plus the lack of interest from your family and friends in your period overseas (everyone wants to tell you about the

Neighbours episodes you've missed out on in the last six months but no one wants to listen to your stories from overseas!).

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

4 Get involved at UQ

If you are having difficulty adjusting to life back at UQ, here are some suggestions which may help:

- Get in touch with **Student Services** to make an appointment to discuss your concerns with a student counsellor if you need.
- Come to the Global Mixer event. You will be invited to attend a Global Mixer event in the first few weeks of your first semester

back from exchange. This event provides an opportunity to get together with other returned students to talk about and compare experiences.

- Join the **UQ Exchange Student Society (QUEST)** and participate in activities to help international students acclimatise to Brisbane.
- Register for the **Employability Award**. The Employability award program encourages students to participate in extra-

curricular activities and further develop their skills to become well-rounded, highly sought-after graduates. This structured program recognises the personal and professional development students gain from involvement in activities that go above and beyond their academic studies.

- Join the **UQ Abroad Facebook group** to stay in touch with other exchange students, past, present and future.



"The overall experience, both in the new skills learnt to complete the more strenuous academic courses and the development of new networks – both professional and with other students – was an excellent opportunity and one that has contributed substantially to my professional development."

Jarrod, Purdue University, USA

Appendix i: useful websites

The University of Queensland
uq.edu.au

UQ's Global Experiences
employability.uq.edu.au/student-exchange

Student Employability Centre
employability.uq.edu.au

Australian government organisations

Australian Electoral Commission - Voting overseas
aec.gov.au/enrolling_to_vote/overseas

Australian Taxation Office
ato.gov.au

Centrelink
humanservices.gov.au/customer/dhs/centrelink

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)
dfat.gov.au

Department of Immigration and Border Protection
immi.gov.au

DFAT Passport Service
passports.gov.au

Medicare
humanservices.gov.au/individuals/medicare

OS-HELP
my.uq.edu.au/information-and-services/manage-my-program/financial-matters/fees-and-loans-domestic-students/os-help

Travelling with prescription medicine
humanservices.gov.au/customer/subjects/australians-overseas

Smartertraveller
smartertraveller.gov.au



EDUROAM

While on exchange, you can still be connected via Eduroam (education roaming). Eduroam is the secure worldwide roaming access service developed for the international research and education community. Eduroam allows students, researchers and staff to securely access the internet from any Eduroam-enabled universities and colleges around the world, including many of UQ's exchange partners.

Find out more about setting up and connecting to **UQ campus wireless via Eduroam.**

See where you can **Eduroam.**

Appendix ii: pre-departure checklist



Study

- I am enrolled in the exchange codes (EXCH) in mySI-net at UQ before I leave to go on exchange.
- I have received full acceptance for my exchange from the Global Experiences Team (including a faculty-approved study plan).
- I have received a host university acceptance letter.



Documents

- I have a current passport that is valid for at least six months after my return date.
- I have a student visa or know what is necessary for residency permit/study requirements.
- I have two copies of each of the following documents (one in my hand luggage and one scanned to my email):
 - Airline ticket/e-ticket/travel bookings
 - Passport ID page
 - Student visa
 - Credit/debit cards
 - Accommodation address
 - Letter of acceptance from the host university
 - Certified copies of ID-related documents such as my birth certificate, proof of citizenship
 - Any required prescriptions and a doctor's letter for each
 - Bank details
 - Extra passport photos.



Travel

- I have registered with International SOS and submitted my travel details
- I have adequate travel and health insurance that covers me for item loss, theft or natural disaster, and I have looked into purchasing additional travel and health insurance for the entirety of my trip.
- I have arranged how I will get from the airport/train station upon arrival.
- I have organised somewhere to stay (e.g. a hotel/youth hostel/university residence) for my first few days in my new city.



Health

- I have identified any required immunisations for my destination and have had them administered.
- I have had a medical, dental and optical check-up before I leave.
- I know what kind of health insurance coverage is required by the host university. I have made sure that I am adequately covered for all eventualities.



**Stay safe
and have a
great time!**



Finances

I have authorised someone (parent, guardian or relative) to act on my behalf for financial matters through a Power of Attorney.

I have notified my bank to let them know I will be using my credit card overseas.

I have sufficient local currency to pay for my transport and tip from the airport to my accommodation on arrival.

I have returned all documents related to OS-Help and scholarships by the set deadlines (if applicable).

I have applied for Centrelink payments to continue while I am overseas (if applicable).



Other important steps

I have an appropriate adapter so that I can use my Australian appliances overseas.

I have checked whether global roaming can be activated on my phone (and what the additional charges may be).

I know what options I have in my host country for mobile phone communications.

I will update my new postal address, residential address and contact number in mySI-net once I have settled in.

I have registered my travel on DFAT's Smartraveler website.



CREATE CHANGE

Student Employability Centre

Phone: +61 7 3365 9075

Email: uqabroad@uq.edu.au

Web: employability.uq.edu.au/global-experiences

Please note that this guide is subject to change
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