



COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

General Advice	2
COVID-19 Border Measures.....	2
What are the border protection measures for COVID-19?.....	2
When can international students return to Australia?.....	3
Individual exemption process for international students.....	3
Year 11 and 12 student exemptions	3
I’m an international student. If I believe I am exempt, how long until I can come to Australia?	4
I am worried about not being able to start class on time due to being overseas. Will this affect my Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE), what should I do?.....	4
These changes may mean I incur costs because I cannot attend my course on time. Is there insurance or compensation available?	4
Accommodation.....	4
Employment.....	5
Can I work more than 40 hours per fortnight?.....	5
Where can I get further information on study options and assistance?	5
I am currently in Australia, can I travel overseas?	5
Visas.....	6
If I have a student visa, can I still come to Australia?	6
I can’t access my VEVO status, does it mean my visa is cancelled?	6
I have a student visa but am not in Australia what are the current arrangements and conditions?	6
Mental Health and Translation Support	7
I am experiencing mental health difficulties as a result of COVID-19, where can I go for help? Will it cost anything?.....	7
How do I know what mental health services and other support I’m covered for?	8
Translation services	8

General Advice

The latest information on COVID-19 can be found on the Department of Health website at www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert. The COVID-19 Health Information Line - **1800 020 080** operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

You cannot come to Australia unless you are in an exempt category or you have been granted an individual exemption to travel restrictions.

Information on current travel restrictions are available at: <https://covid19.homeaffairs.gov.au/travel-restrictions>. Unless arriving on a [quarantine-free flight from New Zealand](#), all travellers arriving in Australia, including Australian citizens, must quarantine for 14 days at a designated facility, such as a hotel in their port of arrival. To stay up to date with travel and visa matters visit the Department of Home Affairs: <https://covid19.homeaffairs.gov.au/>.

Each state or territory Health Department may issue additional advice. You can contact your state or territory public health agency through the following channels:

- Australian Capital Territory
www.health.act.gov.au
- New South Wales
www.health.nsw.gov.au
- Northern Territory
www.health.nt.gov.au
- Queensland
www.health.qld.gov.au
- South Australia
www.sahealth.sa.gov.au
- Tasmania
www.dhhs.tas.gov.au
- Victoria
www.health.vic.gov.au
- Western Australia
www.healthywa.wa.gov.au

Your education provider may also have further information on their website.

The Australian Government is taking a precautionary approach based on the latest and best medical advice. Australia remains vigilant about this virus and how it is developing, and we are very well prepared. Australia's response arrangements are flexible and scalable, and will be tailored to respond to the situation as we learn more about the virus and how it spreads.

COVID-19 Border Measures

What are the border protection measures for COVID-19?

You cannot come to Australia at this time unless you are in an exempt category or you have been granted an individual exemption to the current travel restrictions. Unless arriving on a [quarantine-free flight from New Zealand](#), all travellers arriving in Australia, including Australian citizens, must quarantine for 14 days at a designated facility, such as a hotel in their port of arrival. International students should monitor the advice on the [Department of Health](#) and [Department of Home Affairs](#) websites.

When can international students return to Australia?

Bringing Australians home, especially vulnerable Australians, is the Australian Government's priority. This means international student arrivals can only be considered when Australians wishing to come back to Australia have returned in substantial numbers.

Australia's *Framework for National Reopening* makes clear however, that the Government supports the return of international students, when conditions allow.

The Government is working closely with the states and territories to plan for the return of students to Australia in a way that protects the health of international students and Australians.

International students are encouraged to contact their education provider in the first instance to express interest in participating in any program that the relevant state or territory may choose to bring forward to return international students to Australia.

The broader return of international students will occur once there has been significant progress made on the return of Australians and when other circumstances allow.

Individual exemption process for international students

You cannot come to Australia unless you are in an exempt category or you have been granted an individual exemption to the current travel restrictions.

You need to apply for an exemption at least two weeks, but not more than two months, before your planned travel. Information on **travel restrictions and exemptions and how to apply** is available at: <https://covid19.homeaffairs.gov.au/travel-restrictions>.

You must hold a visa and an exemption to Australia's travel restrictions before you travel. You can request an exemption online and must provide appropriate evidence to support your claims. Requests may be finalised without further consideration if insufficient evidence is provided. All documents need to be officially translated into English.

The Commissioner of the Australian Border Force and decision makers may grant an individual exemption for international students if you are:

- a student completing year 11 and 12, with support from the relevant Australian State or Territory government health authority and education department;
- a student in your final years of study of a medical, dental, nursing or allied health profession university degree, where you have evidence of a confirmed placement in an Australian hospital or medical practice which commences within the next two months; or
- travelling for compassionate and compelling reasons.

Year 11 and 12 student exemptions

State and territory governments can seek exemptions for, and on behalf of year 11 and 12 international school students.

Students and schools can not apply directly to the Australian Border Force or to Commonwealth Department of Education, Skills, and Employment. All exemptions for year 11 and 12 international

students must be made through the state or territory government and must have support of the relevant state or territory health authority and education department.

Schools should contact their state or territory authority for details as to how this process is applied in their jurisdiction and to determine students' eligibility.

International students should contact their education provider in the first instance if seeking an exemption.

I'm an international student. If I believe I am exempt, how long until I can come to Australia?

Decisions to exempt international students are at the discretion of the Australian Border Force Commissioner and will be treated on a case-by-case basis, informed by advice from state and territory health and education agencies. In the first instance, you should discuss options with your education provider.

I am worried about not being able to start class on time due to being overseas. Will this affect my Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE), what should I do?

For questions about your start dates, attendance, fee matters, CoE and other issues relating to your study, you should contact your education provider.

If you are not able to return to Australia in time for the start of your classes, you should notify your provider or student services contact officer to determine whether alternate arrangements, such as remote learning, can be temporarily put in place.

If due to COVID-19, adjustments to courses are made such as extended duration beyond standard full-time CRICOS registration, your education provider should consider extending the course duration under Standard 8.16 of the National Code.

These changes may mean I incur costs because I cannot attend my course on time. Is there insurance or compensation available?

If you have taken out travel or other insurance, you should discuss this with your insurance provider.

For questions about your start dates, attendance, fee matters, CoE and other issues relating to your study, you should contact your education provider.

If you are not able to return to Australia in time for the start of your classes, you should notify your provider or student services contact officer and discuss with them how your course fees will be affected.

Accommodation

For questions about your accommodation, you should discuss this with your accommodation provider in the first instance. You may also wish to discuss this with your education provider, such as the student services contact officer.

Employment

If you have a part time job that you cannot attend while in self-isolation or unable to travel, you should contact your employer, advise them of your circumstances and your compliance with advice from the Department of Health.

Can I work more than 40 hours per fortnight?

Due to exceptional circumstances during the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to ensure the supply of critical services, the Department of Home Affairs and Australian Border Force will take a flexible approach to student visa holders working beyond their usual work limitations, but only in specified industries.

You can work more than 40 hours a fortnight if you are:

- employed by an aged care Approved Provider or Commonwealth-funded aged care service provider with a RACS ID or a NAPS ID, before 8 September 2020;
- employed by a registered National Disability Insurance Scheme provider; or
- enrolled in a health care related course and you are supporting the health effort against COVID-19, as directed by health officials.

You cannot work more than 40 hours if you are employed in a supermarket. This measure ended on 1 May 2020.

Further information is available on the Department of Home Affairs website at <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-listing/student-500/temporary-relaxation-of-working-hours-for-student-visa-holders> or by calling the Global Service Centre on 131 881.

Where can I get further information on study options and assistance?

In the first instance, we recommend contacting your provider for assistance and information regarding your studies. In addition, you may refer to the Department of Education, Skills and Employment's website www.dese.gov.au/covid-19 for regularly updated factsheets.

You may also wish to visit Study Australia's website www.studyinaustralia.gov.au for more information on support services available to international students.

I am currently in Australia, can I travel overseas?

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) has updated its travel advice to all international destinations as "level 4 – do not travel overseas at this time." In line with the World Health Organization (WHO) declaration of COVID-19 as a pandemic, DFAT now advises all Australians: do not travel at this time. Regardless of your destination, age or health.

If you are a foreign national and travelled overseas after 20 March 2020, you will not be able to re-enter Australia. International travellers should check the latest Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) travel advice on the Smart Traveller website <https://www.smartraveller.gov.au/>.

Overseas school students who are considering their options for staying in Australia or returning to their home country during the December 2020 -January 2021 holidays should speak with their

education provider. Consideration should also be given to whether you will be able to obtain a travel exemption to return, and obtain a flight.

Information for visa holders and applicants is available from the Department of Home Affairs at <https://covid19.homeaffairs.gov.au/>.

Visas

If I have a student visa, can I still come to Australia?

You cannot come to Australia at this time unless you are in an exempt category or you have been granted an individual exemption to the current travel restrictions. Further information on travel restrictions, including information about the exemption process, is available at:

<https://covid19.homeaffairs.gov.au/travel-restrictions>.

If you have enquiries about your visa you should check your ImmiAccount or visit the Department of Home Affairs website for further information: <https://covid19.homeaffairs.gov.au/>.

You should contact your education provider for information about flexible course delivery options and refunds.

I can't access my VEVO status, does it mean my visa is cancelled?

The Visa Entitlement Verification Online (VEVO) system replicates information held in Departmental system to help visa holders comply with conditions attached to their visa.

It is **NOT** used by airlines as a primary tool to establish the visa status of travellers. You should refer to your ImmiAccount for information.

I have a student visa but am not in Australia what are the current arrangements and conditions?

Information on student visa conditions are available at: <https://covid19.homeaffairs.gov.au/student-visa>

On 20 July 2019 the Government announced a number of changes to student visa arrangements to support international students, including:

- Recommencment of granting student visas in all locations outside Australia. This means when borders re-open, students will already have visas and be able to make arrangements to travel.
- Eligibility requirements for a post-study work visa (Temporary Graduate visa (subclass 485) will be relaxed for applicants who are enrolled with an Australian education provider and have been impacted by COVID-19 and associated travel restrictions. Under these arrangements:
 - Existing and new student visa holders who undertake online study outside Australia because of COVID 19 will be able to count this towards the Australian Study Requirement.

- Eligible graduates affected by travel restrictions will also be able to apply for and be granted a Temporary Graduate (subclass 485) visa outside Australia.
- Additional time will be given for applicants to provide English language results where COVID-19 has disrupted access to these services. Additional time will also be provided for biometric collection and health checks where COVID-19 has disrupted access to services

Mental Health and Translation Support

I am experiencing mental health difficulties as a result of COVID-19, where can I go for help? Will it cost anything?

There are a number of support services available to you. In the first instance you should seek help from your education institution or overseas student health care provider.

Your insurance provider may be one of the following:

Health Insurer	Insurers website
ahm OSHC	134 148 www.ahmoshc.com
Allianz Global Assistance	13 67 42 www.allianzassistancehealth.com.au/en/student-visa-oshc/
BUPA Australia	1300 884 235 www.bupa.com.au/health-insurance/oshc
CBHS International Health	1300 174 538 www.cbhsinternationalhealth.com.au/overseas-students-oshc
Medibank Private	1300 561 012 www.medibank.com.au
NIB OSHC	1800 775 204 www.nib.com.au

One Door Mental Health - One Door Mental Health offers bilingual support services for anxiety and emotional support. Services available in Mandarin. www.onedoor.org.au/services/bilingual-support-service Phone: 02 8737 5566 (Monday to Friday 9am-5pm AEST). Email: auburn@onedoor.org.au

If your overseas student health care provider or institution are unable to help, you can seek help from the following places:

Lifeline – 13 11 14

MensLine - 1300 789 978

Beyond Blue – 1300 22 4636

ReachOut <https://au.reachout.com/>

Kids Helpline – 1800 55 1800

These services are free of charge.

How do I know what mental health services and other support I'm covered for?

If you are on a student visa you should contact your Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) insurance provider for advice on your health cover and services available to support you.

Your insurance provider may be one of the following:

Health Insurer	Insurers website
ahm OSHC	134 148 www.ahmoshc.com
Allianz Global Assistance	13 67 42 www.allianzassistancehealth.com.au/en/student-visa-oshc/
BUPA Australia	1300 884 235 www.bupa.com.au/health-insurance/oshc
CBHS International Health	1300 174 538 www.cbhsinternationalhealth.com.au/overseas-students-oshc
Medibank Private	1300 561 012 www.medibank.com.au
NIB OSHC	1800 775 204 www.nib.com.au

Translation services

If you need help with translation services while seeking help, you can contact the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) on 131 450 or www.tisnational.gov.au.