

A Guide to Studying & Living in Cairns

A GUIDE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS



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Cover image: Cairns Esplanade at dusk

WELCOME TO CAIRNS

Congratulations on choosing Cairns as your study destination. When you arrive, you will join students from over 60 countries already taking advantage of Australia's world-class education system.

In Cairns you will have a unique kind of education experience encountering a learning style that encourages innovative, creative and independent thinking. You will build valuable skills to give you academic, personal and professional advantages.

This guide has been prepared to help you as you make your transition to student life in Cairns. It provides practical information about moving to and living in Cairns. For further information visit **www.studycairns.com.au**

We wish you every success with your studies and hope you enjoy your time in Cairns – it will be a life changing experience!



Cairns City

BEFORE YOU LEAVE

If you are considering Cairns as a possible choice to further your study overseas there will be many things to plan and prepare for. We hope this guide helps you to plan your trip and prepare you for the many wonderful and exciting opportunities ahead of you.

A few weeks before you leave you should contact the International Student Advisor at your educational institution. They can assist and advise you on airport arrival details, temporary accommodation, orientation sessions and other services.

Take copies of all documentation with you, including your passport, visa, travellers' cheque receipts, flight tickets, insurance documents and credit cards. Pack copies safely in your luggage where they can be located in an emergency, and keep originals in your hand luggage. Leave a copy of all of your important documents with someone at home.

There are important things you should know before applying for, or being granted, an Australian visa.

This includes information about:

- ▶ applying for the right type of visa
- ▶ application requirements
- ▶ your obligations while in Australia
- ▶ the importance of complying with visa conditions.

The video 'Coming to Australia' will provide you with helpful information regarding your visit. To watch video visit:
www.immi.gov.au/immigration/coming-to-australia/

PREPARATION CHECKLIST

Print the *Before You Leave* checklist. Please check on the last page of this brochure to ensure important documents are prepared for the trip.

PACKING

When packing your luggage, keep the items you might need to declare at customs easily accessible. Keep in mind the check-in weight for your luggage allowance on your ticket. Clearly label your luggage with your name, contact address and the address of your institution.

It is recommended to lock your luggage, however if a search of your luggage is necessary due to security issues the lock may be broken.

NEVER AGREE TO BRING A BAG OR OTHER ITEMS TO AUSTRALIA FOR SOMEONE ELSE AS IT MAY CONTAIN SOMETHING ILLEGAL AND YOU WILL BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR IT.

Keep your passport and the Notice of Arrival or Confirmation of Enrolment from your institution with you at all times, along with the contact details of the International Office of your institution. If you are unsure of what to do at the airport, ask an official for help.



Palm Cove Esplanade

INSURANCE

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Make sure you have enough cover for yourself and your possessions, especially while travelling. Check that your policy covers you if you intend to work overseas.

To compare travel insurance offered in Australia visit:

- ▶ www.travelinsurancecompared.com.au
- ▶ www.comparetravelinsurance.com.au
- ▶ www.travelinsurancequotes.com.au
- ▶ www.covermore.com.au/compare-travel-insurance
- ▶ www.travelinsurancedirect.com.au/easy-guide-to-travel-insurance/compare-travel-insurance



Four Mile Beach, Port Douglas

CAR INSURANCE

Collect a no claim letter from your insurance company before you leave your home country if you intend to buy a car. Car insurance is expensive in Australia, particularly for young people. Most no claim bonuses are transferable to Australian insurance companies. This letter will ensure that you get no claim benefits.

To compare car insurance in Australia visit:

- ▶ www.iselect.com.au/car
- ▶ www.thebuzzinsurance.com.au/Car-Insurance/Compare-Car-Insurance.aspx
- ▶ www.captaincompare.com.au



Students snorkelling

MONEY (PLANNING YOUR FINANCES)

Make sure you bring enough Australian currency in cash for your first few days and have access to \$1,500 to \$3,500 via a debit card or in bank drafts/travellers cheques to help you settle.

REFERENCES FOR ACCOMMODATION

If you plan to rent accommodation, it is recommended that you bring references from your previous landlords. This will make signing a tenancy agreement a lot easier. Make sure that you have some current bank records to help prove that you can afford paying the rent.

HEALTH RECORDS

Bring your medical records and medical prescriptions with a letter from your doctor if you need to take medication. If records are in another language a translated copy to English is recommended.

ARRIVING IN CAIRNS

There are certain items which need to be declared in the first airport of arrival in Australia. Whether you are directly arriving at Cairns International Airport or connecting to Cairns through another Australian city.

IMMIGRATION

Have your passport and *Incoming Passenger* card ready to go through immigration. You will proceed to the baggage examination area after collecting your luggage from the baggage hall.



The Cairns region offers many recreational activities including scuba diving



Cairns Airport

CUSTOMS & QUARANTINE

To help protect Australia's agricultural industries and unique environment, customs officers screen all incoming air and sea passengers, baggage, mail and cargo using x-ray machines, detector dogs, physical inspection, questioning and profiling.

You must declare all food, plant material and animal products when you arrive in Australia. You make this declaration on your Incoming Passenger Card, which is handed to you by the airline before you land. You must complete this card truthfully – it is a legal document.

Declared items are inspected to ensure they don't bring any pests or diseases into Australia.

If you have items you don't wish to declare, you can dispose of them in quarantine bins in the airport terminal. Some products may require treatment (at a cost) such as fumigation or gamma irradiation to make them safe. Items that cannot be treated will be seized and destroyed by quarantine.

All luggage is x-rayed or screened. If you fail to declare or dispose of any quarantine items, or make a false declaration:

- ▶ You will be caught:
- ▶ You could be fined on-the-spot: or
- ▶ You could be prosecuted, fined and risk jail time.

Note: the information provided above regarding prohibited and restricted goods is a guide only. We recommend that you seek more detailed information to ensure that you comply with legislative requirements before arrival in Australia.

For more information visit:

- ▶ www.customs.gov.au/site/page4224.asp

DUTY FREE GOODS

Duty Free concessions in Australia are different to those in other countries. Most personal items such as new clothing, footwear and articles for personal hygiene and grooming (excluding fur and perfume concentrates) may be brought into Australia in your baggage, free from duty and tax. For other goods limit apply. Be aware that if you exceed Australia's Duty Free concession items you will be charged duty and tax on all items of that type, not just the items which exceed the limits.

For a full list of Duty Free concessions visit:

- ▶ www.customs.gov.au/site/page4354.asp
- ▶ www.customs.gov.au/webdata/resources/files/guidefortravellers.pdf



Cairns Airport

LEAVING THE AIRPORT

Many institutions provide airport reception services for students who will be living on campus or in homestay.

Contact your education institution a few weeks before you leave home to make these arrangements.

Make sure you put the name and phone number of your reception officer and the place and time you have arranged to meet in your hand luggage so you can find it quickly.

TRANSPORT FROM THE AIRPORT

Public transport runs from and to the domestic and international airports, buses and taxis are available at both terminals.

CONTACT HOME

Once you arrive at your accommodation make sure you contact your parents or relatives and let them know that you have arrived safely.

ON ARRIVAL CHECKLIST

- ☐ Contact the International Office at your institution
- ☐ Obtain a student card and concession cards
- ☐ Enrol and attend the orientation session provided by your institution
- ☐ Open a **bank account**, if you have not already done that
- ☐ Arrange permanent accommodation

ATTEND YOUR INSTITUTION'S ARRIVAL SESSIONS

It is important to attend **Welcome Sessions** organised by your institution.

For some institutions the **Welcome Sessions** are compulsory for all new international students. It provides useful information to assist with your settlement in Cairns and your institution.

SETTLING IN CAIRNS

Explore Cairns and identify places such as your institution, shopping centres, and public transport points close to your main places of your living, studying and shopping.

The local paper can provide you with ideas on the community, sporting and cultural clubs in your area. Joining clubs is a great way to meet new friends and become part of the community. Information on community events, concerts and markets can be found in the newspaper. The website **www.gumtree.com.au** is a great source of general information on buying cars, finding accommodation, jobs and events.



Cairns Esplanade Lagoon

ACCOMMODATION



Cairns Esplanade at sunrise

FINDING ACCOMMODATION

There is a variety of accommodation types available to suit different budgets and needs, including on-campus accommodation or a homestay with an Australian family. Shared accommodation with other students is a popular option. Student notice boards and newspapers often advertise rooms, apartments, and houses for rent. Some institutions also post accommodation vacancies on their website.

The International Office at your institution can provide you with advice on accommodation options. Temporary accommodation can be arranged for you before you leave home so that when you arrive you have some time to consider your long-term options.

The major sources of accommodation information are:

- ▶ Advice from your education provider or agent
- ▶ The noticeboard at your education provider
- ▶ Internet
- ▶ Noticeboards around the city
- ▶ Word-of-mouth – where other students are staying
- ▶ *The Cairns Post* classified section, especially Saturday's and Wednesday's editions.

HOMESTAY

Costs between \$200–\$300 a week. Homestay is popular with younger students and those studying short-term English courses. Single or shared rooms are available and the costs vary accordingly. Meals are usually included, but cheaper self-catering homestay is available. Educational institutions maintain a register of reputable families prepared to board international students during the academic year.

Rent payment and deposit is required on arrival. Make sure you get a receipt each time you pay the rent.

You are expected to clean up after yourself, especially in shared areas. You should seek your host's approval before you install any equipment, such as a television, in your room. If you have any questions talk to your host and they will try to help you. If there is still a problem, contact your institution for assistance.

Issues you may need to discuss with your host family when you first arrive:

- ☐ When should I pay my contribution to broadband access?
- ☐ What are the rules about using the kitchen, washing my clothes, going out and having my friends over?
- ☐ What time at night should I stop receiving telephone calls?
- ☐ When is the latest I can return home after school? (for high school students, or under the age of 18).
- ☐ How much notice should I give it if I decide to move out? When can I get my deposit returned?



Cairns housing

For home stay, see the following websites:

- ▶ www.homestaynetwork.org
- ▶ www.aussieinteract.com.au
- ▶ www.homestaybooking.com
- ▶ www.edrec.com

SHARE HOUSE ACCOMMODATION

Share house accommodation provides the student with a furnished room to rent and the ability to meet and share the communal areas with other students and share house mates.

The room can be either a single private room or the student can share for a lower rate with a friend or partner in a twin or double room.

The room is lockable and fully furnished with everything they need.

The remaining apartment is completely furnished. The student does not need to supply anything.

All bills are included but there **could** be a small additional cost for:

- ▶ Air conditioning
- ▶ Internet
- ▶ Washing machine

Some or all of the above bills may be included in the rent.

Usually the minimum stay is 4 weeks; a small security deposit is taken and returned on departure if the room is returned in the same condition as on entry.

Share house accommodation rates

Share with a friend or partner in a twin or double room from \$80–\$130 per person per week.

Private single room from \$130–\$200 per week.

Finding share house accommodation

The main source of finding accommodation is:

1. Advice from the school or their agent
2. The school notice board
3. Internet (key words: *Share house in Cairns*)
4. Notice boards around the city
5. Word-of-mouth... ask where other students are staying
6. *The Cairns Post*



Cairns Esplanade at dusk

HOSTEL AND GUEST HOUSES

Costs about \$80–\$135 a week. Hostels are usually run by organisations such as Youth Hostels Australia (YHA) and the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA). Students share kitchen and bathroom facilities.

For more information check **Cairns Accommodation & Hotels**.

RENTAL ACCOMMODATION

Students sometimes rent a house or apartment with other students. When renting a house, apartment or bed-sit, the landlord (the owner of the property) will require rent to be paid in advance together with a security bond equal to four weeks' rent. Make sure you get receipts of these payments. This bond is refundable at the end of the lease, provided that no damage has been done to the property and appropriate notice has been given to the landlord to vacate the premises.

If you intend to rent, check prices with your education institution International office, real estate agents, university noticeboards, student and local newspapers and your institution's website. Take into consideration the cost of electricity, telephone and gas.

Real estate websites include:

- ▶ www.realestate.com
- ▶ www.domain.com.au
- ▶ www.homehound.com.au
- ▶ www.rent.com.au
- ▶ www.myhome.com.au



Cairns City Place

GETTING CONNECTED – UTILITIES

If you intend to rent a house or apartment you will generally be responsible for connecting service utilities yourself. The websites of the major utility companies for electricity and gas and (broadband) internet connections are as follows:

- ▶ **Ergon Energy** www.ergon.com.au
- ▶ **Origin Energy** www.originenergy.com.au
- ▶ **Elgas** www.elgas.com.au

Like other businesses, rates and discounts vary between the companies and it is wise to compare the services being offered. Before entering into a contract use these online tools to compare prices:

www.switchselect.com.au or www.goswitch.com.au

GETTING AROUND

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Once you have arrived in Cairns, getting around consists of a combination of public and private transport depending on how long you intend to stay.

From Cairns International Airport, visitors can choose to take a bus or a taxi (cab). Accommodation providers, particularly backpacker hostels, also provide bus transport from the airport. It is only about 10–15 minutes from the airport to the city centre.

USEFUL NUMBERS

SERVICE	WEBSITE	TEL
Cairns Taxis	www.blackandwhitetaxis.com.au	131 008
Sunbus (city bus)	www.sunbus.com.au	4057 7411
Australia Coach (airport bus)	www.australiacoach.com	4048 8355
Sun Palm Transport Group (Cairns to Port Douglas/Daintree)	www.sunpalmtransport.com	4087 2900
Whitcar Coaches (Cairns to Tablelands)	www.atherton-tableland.com	4050 0599
Country Road Coaches (Cairns to Cooktown)	www.countryroadcoachlines.com.au	4050 0599
Greyhound–Pioneer (interstate)	www.greyhound.com.au	132 030
McCafferty's (interstate)		131 499
Premier Motor Service (interstate)	www.premierms.com.au	133 410
Queensland Rail (trains)	www.qr.com.au	4036 9250



Sunbus – Cairns' bus service

ROAD CONDITIONS

RACQ road condition reports (recorded) 1300 130 595.

LOCAL BUSES

Cairns is serviced by a wide reaching network of buses, which is owned and operated by **Sunbus**. The bus system operates within 12 zones across Cairns.

Sunbus – travel around the city of Cairns and to all suburbs including the northern beaches and Palm Cove. There are also public buses to the smaller towns including Kuranda and Port Douglas, the Atherton Tablelands, Mission Beach and Cooktown.

All information about these zones, timetables, services, ticketing and fares can be found at:

► www.sunbus.com.au

► www.tmr.qld.gov.au

Tickets can be bought for a single journey or on a daily, weekly or monthly basis. Check out 'hail'n'ride'.

A 50% concession on *Connect* tickets on bus services throughout Queensland is provided to **full-time** tertiary students attending Queensland registered training organisations. Your education provider can help you obtain a valid concession card.



Cairns Esplanade



Cairns walking and cycling circuit

CYCLING & WALKING

Cairns is a relatively flat city and many visitors enjoy hiring bicycles for the duration of their visit to get around the city and to nearby attractions like the Cairns Botanic Gardens, the Esplanade and shopping centres. Bicycles can be hired from hire companies or bought second-hand via the local newspaper, *The Cairns Post*.

A Cairns walking and cycling circuit has been developed to provide enjoyable recreation activities within central Cairns through off-road walking and cycling paths.

It is a legal requirement to wear a helmet when riding a bike. You will be fined if you do not wear a helmet.

For more information on cycling in Cairns visit:

► www.cairns.qld.gov.au/facilities-and-recreation/parks/cycle

To download a cycling map follow the link: **Cairns Walking & Cycling Circuit**.



Cairns Taxis

TAXIS

Taxis can be hired by hailing, on city ranks or by phoning **Cairns Taxis** on 131 008.

Taxis are relatively expensive for long journeys outside of Cairns city centre, but reasonable for short jaunts in the city itself. The major taxi rank is located on Lake Street in the centre of Cairns city. Taxis can also be picked up from most hotels or called to order on 131 008. Taxis tend not to pick people up in the street unless dropping off another passenger.

CAR HIRE

Many visitors choose to hire a car or 4WD vehicle, particularly if they plan to stay for an extended period and/or visit other towns in the region. There are a number of international car hire companies in the city as well as cheaper options with older cars available.

BUYING A CAR

A popular choice is to hire or buy a van, which has been converted into a mini caravan, and use it as a base of operations, camping and travelling around the area. These vans can be found in the pages of the local newspaper, *The Cairns Post*, or from advertisements at various backpacker accommodations around the city.



Cairns has a diverse dining precinct

TOUR BUSES

It is not necessary for visitors to hire a car as most towns, tours and attractions can be reached via tour operators. These tours will pick visitors up from their accommodation and return them at the end of the tour.

INTERSTATE PUBLIC BUSES

Visitors can travel to other states in Australia via 'coaches' leaving from a central depot at the Reef Fleet Terminal on the Cairns Esplanade. There are two major companies, Greyhound-Pioneer and McCafferty.

TRAINS

Trains are another way to travel into the region from other states, however there is no light rail in the Cairns region apart from the tourist attraction of the Kuranda Scenic Railway. Queensland Rail operates from the Cairns Central Railway Station at the rear of Cairns Central Shopping Centre.

FOOD AND SHOPPING

Cairns' diverse culture has facilitated the availability of ingredients from different cultures. For cooking at home, you will find a mixture of international ingredients at major supermarkets, and speciality food stores.

There is also a wide range of foods available for people with special diets, such as gluten, or dairy-free products, vegetarian and vegan products and halal meats.



Rusty's Markets – held each week from Friday to Sunday

EATING OUT

In Cairns you will find a huge array of mouth-watering and tempting foods. Flavours from all over the world are at your fingertips or choose from innovative Australian Cuisines such as Emu, Crocodile and Kangaroo.

All budgets are catered for with dining and there are plenty of local restaurants offering the freshest in local produce for great prices.

For information on **Cairns Dining** visit:

► www.cairnsweb.com.au/cairns_dining

MONEY

CHANGING MONEY

Australia's currency is the Australian dollar that comes in plastic notes and metallic coins. Notes come in the denominations of 5, 10, 20, 50 and 100 dollars and coins in 5, 10, 20 and 50 cents and 1 and 2 dollar coins.

Use a currency converter to convert your country's currency into Australian currency: www.xe.com/ucc



Australian currency, coins and notes



Visitors can choose different methods of exchanging and using money while visiting Cairns.

It is recommended before arriving in Australia that you change over a small amount of money before entering the country.

There are lots of places that you can exchange money in Cairns. There are foreign exchange companies found all over Cairns. These include numerous locations along the Esplanade, the Pier, shopping centres and near most major tourist destinations.

As Cairns is a major tourist destination you will find that accommodation properties and all major tourist destinations will also accept travellers cheques. Remember that you will need to show your passport for identification when cashing in travellers cheques.

If you decide that you would like to use your debit or credit cards to purchase or withdraw money from Automatic Teller Machines (ATM) in Australia, make sure that you inform your bank before travelling overseas. The last thing you want when travelling overseas is your bank to freeze or cancel your cards! Visa and MasterCard credit cards are accepted Australia wide, and some businesses also accept American Express cards. ATM's are located all over Cairns and are not hard to locate.

Useful links:

- ▶ www.cairnsweb.com.au/cairns_general_information
- ▶ www.cylex.com.au/cairns/money%20exchange.html



Banking in Cairns

BANKING & INSURANCE

Opening a bank account or credit union account is one of the first things you should do after arriving in Australia.

1. Be sure to enquire about **student accounts** as they generally attract lower fees than other accounts.
2. Be sure to update your banking details each year or it may revert to normal account and fees can be charged.
3. Provide your Tax File Number (TFN) to the bank or credit union when you obtain it (information on TFN page 35).

Obtain a bank card linked to your account so that you can withdraw funds from Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs).

COMMUNICATION AND TECHNOLOGY

Most international students have mobile broadband for internet and mobile phone connection. There are websites that allow you to compare availability, costs, and obligations offered by major providers:

► www.broadbandexpert.com.au

Cairns offers a strong support network to international students



HEALTH & WELLBEING


STAYING HEALTHY

Staying healthy is more than just being physically fit. It involves leading a balanced lifestyle that makes you happy. A big part of staying healthy involves eating healthy foods and exercising for both fitness and relaxation.

Cairns Regional Council provides a diverse range of sport and recreation opportunities for residents and visitors in Cairns:

► www.cairns.qld.gov.au/facilities-and-recreation/sport-and-recreation

Your educational institution may also offer sport and recreation facilities.



Living and studying in Cairns is complemented by a relaxed, tropical lifestyle



Sculpture on Cairns Esplanade

MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

High quality medical and health services are available throughout Cairns. When visiting a doctor in Cairns, you will need to have your Overseas Student Health Cover card and passport with you.

If you are attending a university, it may have a medical centre on campus. If not, your university, school or college may be able to recommend a suitable local doctor for an appointment.

Other important related support services are:

Domestic and Family Violence	1800 811 811
Sexual Assault Helpline	1800 010 020
Sexual Health Services	4050 6025
Gambling Helpline	1800 858 858
Lifeline (Counselling services)	131 114
Alcohol and drug information services	1800 177 833

PERSONAL SAFETY

- ▶ Always tell someone when and where you are going and expect to return
- ▶ Take care travelling at night on your own and stay in well-lit areas
- ▶ Do not display expensive items (eg. computers) in public
- ▶ Never leave personal belongings unattended
- ▶ Always carry either a mobile phone, change for a pay phone or a phone card
- ▶ It is always wise to take note of any security guidelines provided by your place of study
- ▶ Avoid giving your personal information to strangers.

If you feel you are being discriminated against, contact

Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland: www.adcq.qld.gov.au

OVERSEAS STUDENT HEALTH COVER

All international students are required to have Overseas Student Health Cover and maintain this cover for the duration of your stay in Australia.

International students considering studying in Australia should be aware that the Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship requires overseas students to buy and maintain **OSHC** (Overseas Student Health Cover) for the duration of the time they're in Australia. OSHC assists students with the costs of medical and hospital care. It also provides limited coverage for ambulance and pharmaceuticals.

As a visa requirement, you must purchase OSHC before you initially enter the country.



Remember to bring your OSHC card and passport to medical appointments

Keep in mind that OSHC doesn't include extras such as optical, dental and physiotherapy. If you think you may need these treatments consider talking to your private health insurer about taking out *Extras* cover. Not all private health insurers in Australia offer OSHC.

Throughout your time in Australia, you must maintain your OVHC or OSHC if it is a requirement of your visa. If you allow your coverage to lapse and you then need medical assistance, you'll be responsible for the full cost of all the hospital and medical treatment for both yourself and any dependents. This can be extremely expensive. Similarly, if you allow your OVHC or OSHC to lapse you could face the situation where your visa is found to be no longer compliant and is cancelled.

The Major providers are:

- ▶ **Medibank** www.medibank.com.au
- ▶ **OSHC Worldcare** www.oshcworldcare.com.au
- ▶ **AHM** www.ahm.com.au
- ▶ **BUPA** www.bupa.com.au

SEXUAL HEALTH

Sexually Transmissible Infections (STIs), Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and Viral Hepatitis are significant public health issues for Queenslanders.

To learn how to reduce your risk of catching STIs and blood borne viruses (BBVs):

- ▶ Have a **sexual health check**
- ▶ Practice **safe sex**
- ▶ Practice **safe injecting**

Visit: www.health.qld.gov.au/sexhealth/adults

To know where to get help visit: www.health.qld.gov.au/sexhealth/help



Cairns Base Hospital – Cairns offers high quality medical and health services



Cairns Base Hospital

CAIRNS EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBER IS 000

It is a free call from every phone in Australia, including mobile phones.

You should call 000 if you are in a life-threatening situation and need the help of the police, fire brigade, or ambulance service. This includes if you are witnessing a crime in progress. Do not call 000 if it is not an emergency, for example if you have a cold and need to see a doctor, if you are lost and need directions, or if you are locked out of your house.

When you call 000, you will be connected to an operator who will help progress your request for help. You will need to tell them which services you need – police, fire or ambulance. It is important that you try to stay calm and give the operator clear information on what the emergency is. Answer any questions as best you can. It is extremely important that you tell the operator where you are, and any landmarks that are nearby (a statue, bridge, street name, store, etc.).

While you are waiting for help to arrive, try to stay calm and don't do anything that will put yourself or others in danger. Generally, help will arrive very quickly and it is best to leave these situations to the people who are trained to deal with them.



In an emergency, dial 000

EMERGENCIES/HOSPITALS

Major public hospitals and services in Cairns are:

- | | |
|---|---|
| ▶ Cairns Base Hospital | The Esplanade, Cairns
Tel: 4226 0000 |
| ▶ Cairns Day Surgery | 156–160 Grafton Street, Cairns
Tel: 4051 5454 |
| ▶ Cairns Private Hospital | 1 Upward Street, Cairns
Tel: 4052 5200 |
| ▶ Queensland Ambulance Services | Tel: 131 233 |
| ▶ 13Health is a 24-hour a day telephone service which provides qualified health advice | Tel: 13 432 584 |



Lifesavers patrol the Cairns Esplanade Lagoon and beaches

BEACH AND WATER SAFETY

Every year, hundreds of swimmers are rescued on Queensland beaches. Others are not so lucky.

ALWAYS SWIM BETWEEN THE RED AND YELLOW FLAGS.

- F Find the flags and swim between them.** The red and yellow flags represent the area patrolled by lifesavers and lifeguards.
- L Look at the safety signs.** Safety signs help you identify potential dangers and daily conditions at the beach and are located at beach access points and at the flagged area. These signs also indicate the possible presence of crocodiles or marine stingers.
- A Ask a lifesaver for some advice.** Surf conditions can change quickly (water depth, currents, wave size and type). Talk to a lifesaver or lifeguard before entering the water.
- G Get a friend to swim with you.** Always swim with a friend so you can look out for each other's safety and get help if needed. Children should always be supervised by an adult.
- S Stick your hand up for help.** If you get in trouble in the water, stay calm. Raise your arm to signal for help. Float and wait for assistance. Float with a current or rip. Don't try and swim against it.

NEVER:

- ▶ **Swim at unpatrolled beaches or swim alone**
- ▶ **Swim at night, under the influence of alcohol or directly after a meal**
- ▶ **Run and dive into the water.**

Further valuable information about water safety and membership of surf lifesaving clubs can be found at: www.public.lifesaving.com.au

Check daily weather as it happens at: www.bom.gov.au



Talk to a lifesaver or lifeguard for advice



Cyclones are simliar to hurricanes

CYCLONE PREPAREDNESS

Every year Cairns feels the effects of Tropical Cyclones. These are in principle the same as hurricanes, typhoons and monsoons. Basically a tropical cyclone is a huge mass of low pressure air that forms over warm tropical water swirling in a clockwise direction, as the air mass grows strong winds and torrential rain result. If large enough, the winds can be very destructive.

The cyclone season in Cairns lasts from November to May. Whilst cyclones can produce strong winds they rarely do more than disrupt traffic and boat movements for a few days.

For more information visit:

- www.cairns.qld.gov.au/community-information/cyclone-emergency-information

MULTI-LINGUAL CYCLONE GUIDES

Council has multi-lingual cyclone guides which provide information on how to prepare for a cyclone. Guides are available in Arabic, French, Italian, Japanese, Chinese, Tagalog, Hmong, PNG Pidgin, Swahili and Nepalese. To view copies visit:

- www.cairns.qld.gov.au/community-information/cyclone-emergency-information/multi-lingual-cyclone-guides



The cyclone season lasts from November to May

FIRE & HOME SAFETY

Every year people die as a result of fires in the home. The majority of fires occur at night when people are asleep. Most fatal fires are preventable, take precautions to protect yourself, your family, and your home.

Queensland Fire Safety offers a wide range of information on safety aspects at home. For more information visit:

- www.fire.qld.gov.au/communitysafety/home

LIVING IN CAIRNS

CAIRNS RADIO, TV STATIONS AND NEWSPAPERS

To view information on radio, TV and newspapers in Cairns visit:

- ▶ www.cairnsconnect.com/cairns/tvradio.php
- ▶ *The Cairns Post*: www.cairns.com.au
- ▶ *Cairns Sun*: www.newsspace.com.au/cairns_sun

Cairns is a cosmopolitan city



Crocodile farm

AUSTRALIAN ETIQUETTE

Australia is a multicultural society and therefore Australian customs may differ depending on the individual's background.

ADDRESSING PEOPLE

Australians usually have a first or given names and a family name or surname. People of your own age or younger are usually addressed by their first names. When speaking to people older than you, call them Mr, Mrs or Ms followed by their surname until you know them well, or they ask you to address them by their first name.

BARGAINING

You can't bargain in Australian shops for food items. Goods are sold according to the prices at which they are marked. However, for larger items, for example, washing machines and motor vehicles, you may be able to negotiate a cheaper price and some shops will offer discounts for payment in cash. However, in some street and weekend markets you may be able to bargain.

BEHAVIOUR IN PUBLIC

It is against the law to be drunk, to swear, talk indecently, urinate or behave in a sexually indecent way in a public place. There are also local council regulations against spitting. If you need to clear your throat or nose, use a handkerchief or tissue.

Spitting in public is illegal and can cause offence.

DIRECTNESS

It is considered quite normal in Australia to discuss issues, events and ideas openly with other people. Australians might bring up in conversation issues, which you may consider sensitive, embarrassing, or rude.

More about slang language visit:

► www.alldownunder.com/australian-slang

GREETINGS AND COURTESY

Men usually shake hands (firmly) the first time they meet. Women may or may not shake hands. "How do you do", "Good morning" and "Good afternoon" are formal greetings. Usually students and young people just say "Hello" or "Hi". People often appreciate it if you add their name, eg. "Hi, Peta".

"Thank you" is a phrase used often in Australia. It is usual to say thank you even for small favours done by people who are just doing their jobs (eg. shop assistants or waiters).



There is a network of walking and cycling pathways to get around Cairns

PUNCTUALITY

You are expected to be punctual (*"on time"*) in Australia. If you have an appointment at 10.30am with the dentist, be there at 10.30am – no later. If you are invited for dinner at 7 o'clock, try to be there at 7.00pm or no later than 20 minutes (but not much earlier than 7.00pm). If you can't keep an appointment or if you can't avoid being late, it is best to telephone and explain. Most lectures, church services etc. begin on time.

SMOKING AND ALCOHOL

If you are at someone else's home and you wish to smoke, it is common practice to go outside, as many Australians find cigarette smoking offensive. Smoking is forbidden in all University buildings, government buildings, public transport, restaurants, shops and indoor venues in Australia.

In Australia, people under the age of 18 years are not allowed to buy alcoholic drinks. There are also heavy penalties for people who drink and drive. If you are drinking in a pub/club, you should pay for each drink as soon as you receive it, and not when you are about to leave the hotel. The Australian custom of 'shouting' means that if someone buys you a drink you are expected to 'shout' them back by buying their next drink.



Cairns offers a bustling nightlife

TABLE MANNERS

Australians usually use cutlery for meals at home or in restaurants. If you don't know which utensils to use for a particular course, ask first or watch and follow what others do. You can eat with your fingers at informal meals such as a picnic or barbeque.



Cairns is a diverse and multicultural city

MULTICULTURAL COMMUNITY AND GROUPS

MULTICULTURAL CAIRNS

Cairns has a proud and vibrant multicultural heritage, and our diversity is one of our greatest strengths.

At the time of the 2006 census, 18.2% of the population was born overseas and 9% of the population spoke a language other than English at home.

For more information on Cairns' demographic information visit:

- ▶ www.cairns.qld.gov.au/community-information/multicultural-information/communities
- ▶ www.cairns.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/8928/2006Census.pdf
- ▶ www.cairns.qld.gov.au/community-information/multicultural-information

For information on multicultural information in Queensland visit:

- ▶ www.multicultural.qld.gov.au/multicultural/multicultural-affairs-queensland
- ▶ www.facebook.com/multiculturalqld

For information on the Queensland Multicultural Policy visit:

- ▶ www.multicultural.qld.gov.au

WORSHIP AND RELIGION

In Australia, people are free to follow their own beliefs and religion. Various religious organisations provide a caring and supportive environment for the sharing of life experiences and spiritual concerns.

In Cairns there are Hindu Temples, Christian Churches, Buddhist Temples, Muslim Mosques & Masjids, Sikh Gurudwaras and Jewish Synagogues.

To find places relevant to your religious affiliation visit:

- ▶ www.cairnschurches.net.au/index.php/church-directory
- ▶ www.cairnsmosque.com/
- ▶ www.yellowpages.com.au/find/churches-mosques-temples/cairns-qld
- ▶ www.yellowpages.com.au/find/organisations-church-religious/cairns-qld



Cairns celebrates a diversity of cultures

LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATIONS

TIS National is an interpreting service, provided by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship for people who do not speak English and for the English speakers who need to communicate with them. This service has access to over 1900 contracted interpreters across Australia, speaking more than 170 languages and dialects. TIS National is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week for any person or organisation in Australia requiring interpreting services. It provides immediate telephone interpreting services, as well as pre-booked telephone and on-site interpreting.

If you need an interpreter call TIS national and the staff will connect you to the service that you need.

PHONE 131 450

"What language please?"

State your preferred language to the operator.

Wait to be connected to an interpreter.

Tell the interpreter which office you want to call.

For more information on Translations and Interpretation services visit:

► www.immi.gov.au/living-in-australia/help-with-english/help-with-translating/about-tis

CAN I GET AN INTERPRETER?

Staff of the following government services are required to provide interpreters free of charge when requested:

► Local Government Offices

(Council service centres, libraries and community centres)

► State Government Offices

(Community health, hospitals, schools, police services, housing, emergency, disability, courts, main roads and transport offices)

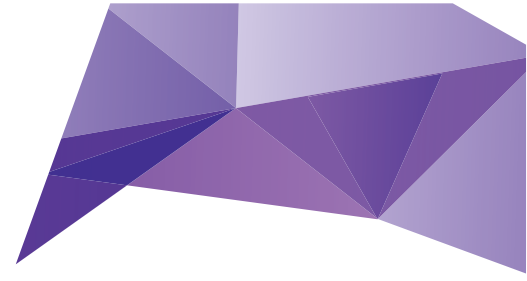
► Federal Government Offices

(Immigration office, members of Parliament, Centrelink, Fair Work, Tax Office and Medicare)

► Government funded organisations

(Job services, legal services, counselling and other government funded community programs)

LEGAL INFORMATION



Local police patrol the Cairns area to keep the community safe

AUSTRALIAN LAWS

In Queensland there are laws that protect people from discrimination, sexual harassment and several other kinds of unfair treatment. If you believe you've been treated unfairly because of your race, sex, age or any other reason, you may be able to lodge a complaint to the Queensland Anti-Discrimination Commission.

For more information about your rights and responsibilities, call the Commission on 1300 130 670 or you can make an appointment to talk to someone about it in the local Cairns office. You can also find out lots of information about your rights and how to make a complaint of unfair discrimination or sexual harassment by visiting the Commission website at www.adcq.qld.gov.au

For legal information visit:
► www.legalaid.qld.gov.au



Students studying in Cairns

LEGAL AGE

The legal age in Australia is 18. At 18, you are legally considered an adult and able to consume and purchase alcohol and cigarettes, and Australian citizens are required to vote.

The legal age of consent is 16. It is illegal to have sexual intercourse with someone under the age of 16; penalties are severe and fully enforced.

ILLEGAL DRUGS

Use, possession and dealing of drugs such as marijuana, cocaine, heroin and amphetamines are illegal in Australia. For international students, this may have serious implications for your enrolment and visas.

AUSTRALIAN LEGAL SYSTEM

The Queensland Police Service is efficient, fair and will enforce the State laws completely. If you break any Australian laws you will have to face the consequences.

POLICE AND EMERGENCIES

REPORTING A CRIME

If you need police assistance and it's not an emergency, for example for non-urgent property crime phone Police Link on 131 444 (all hours) or visit your nearest police station.



Students enjoying time off from studying on the Great Barrier Reef

EMERGENCY SERVICES

State Emergency Services (SES) is a volunteer organisation that assists police, fire and ambulance services in the event of severe floods, storms, bushfires etc. They also assist in emergency evacuations, search and rescue, and mass casualties.

Should your home be damaged in a storm and you need assistance from SES you can call them on 132 500.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Ambulance, Fire and Police	000
Digital mobile phone emergency services	112
Poison Information Centre	131 126
Queensland Police	4030 7000
State Emergency Services	132 500
Phone Directory Assistance	1234
Water and Sewerage Emergencies	4044 8200
Translating and Interpreting Services	131 450
International Students Hotline	1300 363 079



Cairns is host to a number of sporting competitions

TENANCY LAW

Several agencies can provide information on your legal rights as a tenant and offer advice and support:

- ▶ **Rental Protection Agency** www.rta.gov.au
- ▶ **Office of Fair Trading** www.consumer.qld.gov.au
- ▶ **Real Estate Institute, Qld** www.reiq.com.au
- ▶ **Tenant Union of Qld** www.tuq.org.au

NEED LEGAL ADVICE?

If you need help with a legal problem Legal Aid Queensland can offer you advice.

CALL 1300 651 188.

For more information about their free services visit:

- ▶ www.legalaid.qld.gov.au

What's the law? Australian law for new arrivals: An education kit about common legal issues in Australia for Adult ESL (English as a Second language) to get a copy visit:

- ▶ www.legalaid.qld.gov.au/publications

Cairns – a vibrant, cosmopolitan city



WORKING IN AUSTRALIA

VISA ESSENTIALS


There are conditions on your visa you must follow:

- ▶ Maintain satisfactory attendance at classes and achieve satisfactory academic results.
- ▶ Continue to be enrolled in a registered course
- ▶ Notify your institution of your address within seven days of arrival and within seven days of changing address.
- ▶ Notify your original provider if you change to a new provider within seven days of obtaining your new certificate of enrolment.

***IF YOU BREAK THESE CONDITIONS YOUR VISA
MAY BE CANCELLED!***

For more information visit:

- ▶ www.immi.gov.au/students

A photograph of a person standing in a large, industrial-style art gallery, looking at a painting on a white wall. The gallery has high ceilings with exposed beams and large windows. Other art pieces are visible on the walls and floor.

Cairns has a significant creative arts industry



Many students find work in Cairns

EMPLOYMENT ELIGIBILITY

To work part-time in Australia you will need approval from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC). You should complete a form from DIAC (Form 157P) available online at www.immi.gov.au. A fee is payable for this service.

Under current regulations, all international students and their dependants are allowed to work a maximum of 20 hours a week during semester and full-time during vacation.

You have to pay tax if you earn over \$6,000 in a year.

To work in Australia you must have a Tax File Number (TFN) and this must be given to your employer.

TAX FILE NUMBER (TFN)

To apply for a TFN, go to:

► www.ato.gov.au

Call 132 861 or visit an Australia Post Office.

TAX RETURNS

Generally, if you're an overseas student enrolled at an Australian institution in a course that is more than six months long, the Australian Taxation Office regards you as an Australian resident for tax purposes. You pay tax on your earnings at the same rate as other residents.

Overseas students may need to pay tax on income they earn in Australia. For more information visit: www.ato.gov.au.

SUPERANNUATION

Superannuation is money saved during your working life for you to live on when you retire. When you start working, your employer pays money towards your superannuation generally into an account of your choice. You should remember:

- It is compulsory for employers to pay super contributions into your account of at least 9% of your wages.
- The money is not taken from your wages, but is a benefit paid on top of your wages.

If you have worked in Australia and are now returning home, you may have superannuation money that you can claim and take with you. You can apply for this money as soon as you have left Australia.

For more information on superannuation follow the link:

► www.ato.gov.au/individuals/pathway.aspx?pc=001/002/064&alias=super



Cairns Esplanade Lagoon at dusk

FINDING WORK

Queensland has the perfect combination of excellent educational facilities, job opportunities for skilled workers and a climate that provides great lifestyle options. Many international students take the opportunity to work in Australia while they are completing their studies at university or an institute of technical and further education (TAFE).

More information:

Job Service Australia

► www.deewr.gov.au

How to find jobs in Queensland, Australia

► www.workliveplay.qld.gov.au

Department of Education – International Students

► www.education.qld.gov.au/international

Department of Immigration and Citizenship

► www.immi.gov.au

APPLYING FOR A JOB

Cairns is a great destination for those holding a student or working holiday visa and looking for casual work, especially in the tourism and hospitality industries.

For those looking for work, Cairns provides a range of opportunities in industries such as hospitality, retail, tourism, building and construction, farming and agriculture, business and accounting, and mining and mineral processing.

The Queensland Government's Work Live Play website also provides information on how to find jobs in Queensland.

YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE WORKPLACE

Australia's workplace relations system, Fair Work, officially came into effect for employers and employees across Australia from 1 July 2009.

The system is designed to balance the needs of employees, employers and unions and will allow workplaces to become more productive and competitive without taking away workplace rights and basic conditions.

► www.deewr.gov.au/International

BRINGING YOUR FAMILY



Most student visas allow you to bring family to Australia

VISA FOR FAMILIES

Most student visas allow you to bring your family members to Australia as your dependants if you are:

- ▶ eligible for streamlined visa processing;
- ▶ assessment level 1 or 2; or
- ▶ assessment level 3 or 4 and your course is longer than 12 months or you have been in Australia for 12 months or more.

For more information visit:

- ▶ www.immi.gov.au/students/students/bringing_family/

USEFUL WEBSITES

- ▶ www.mystudentguide.com.au
- ▶ www.studycairns.com.au
- ▶ www.cairnsinfo.com
- ▶ www.cairns.com.au
- ▶ www.thinkbefore.com

Also contact **Study Cairns:**
PO Box, 1575, Cairns Qld 4870
Phone 07 4080 2902
Fax 07 4031 3994
Email info@studycairns.com.au



Cairns offers high quality educational facilities

CHECKLISTS



Cairns Airport

BEFORE YOU LEAVE CHECKLIST

Use this checklist to make sure you have all the documents you'll need:

- ☐ Airline tickets and valid passport with student visa
- ☐ Letter of offer from your study institution or a confirmation of enrolment slip issued by the institution
- ☐ Receipts of any related payments you have made including tuition fees, health cover, etc
- ☐ Letter of scholarship award (if applicable)
- ☐ Original or certified copies of your academic transcripts
- ☐ English translation of prescriptions for any medications you are carrying
- ☐ Personal identification such as a driver's licence, or identity card, including an English translation
- ☐ Health insurance details (refer to *Insurance* page 6)

HOW TO CONTACT COUNCIL

If you would like to contact Council or would like more information on Council's services you can contact us:

Online www.cairns.qld.gov.au

Email us council@cairns.qld.gov.au

Call us **+61 7 4044 3044**

Mail us **PO Box 359, Cairns, Qld AUSTRALIA 4870**

