

*Many pathways ~ No limits*

**BENOWA**  
STATE HIGH SCHOOL

# International Student Handbook 2026



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## PRINCIPAL WELCOME

We are a community that encourages excellence, applauds achievement and celebrates diversity. True to this belief, our school is a community of learners driven by an excellence that encompasses academic, cultural and sporting achievement. Our student numbers include some sixty international students from Asia, Europe and the Americas, each of whom adds to our celebrated intercultural diversity. We are proudly a member of the Council of International Schools and I invite you to read more to appreciate our commitment to internationalism. Our academic programs in the middle and senior phase of learning are nationally lauded and our sporting achievements rank on both the Australian and World stage. Our links in the Pacific and France through French immersion provide an exciting curriculum in French language that attracts academic achievers to our community. I encourage you to look into our website to see and read of the exciting learning opportunities that our school provides. Indeed, we are a school of "Many pathways - No limits

## SCHOOL DETAILS

Mediterranean Drive, Benowa, QLD 4217

PO Box 5733, Gold Coast Mail Centre, QLD 9726

Office Hours: Monday – Friday 8:00 am – 3:30pm (weekdays, excluding public holidays and school holidays)

Telephone: 07 55827333

Fax: 07 55827300

Absence line: 07 55827360

Administration Email: [office@benowashs.eq.edu.au](mailto:office@benowashs.eq.edu.au)

Website: [www.benowashs.eq.edu.au](http://www.benowashs.eq.edu.au)

Facebook (if applicable) [www.facebook.com/benowashs](https://www.facebook.com/benowashs)

## School Leadership

| Executive Leadership |                  |                |
|----------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Alison Fahlbusch     | Principal        | Administration |
| Anthony Larkin       | Deputy Principal | Administration |
| Sarah Douglas        | Deputy Principal | Administration |
| Glenn Chippendale    | Deputy Principal | Administration |
| Cameron Murray       | Deputy Principal | Administration |
| Lieve Rimbaut        | Deputy Principal | Administration |
| Michelle Black       | Business Manger  | Administration |

| Student Support  |                          |                |
|------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| Tania Feveyear   | Homestay Coordinator     | J Block        |
| Judi Goldfinch   | Homestay Coordinator     | J Block        |
| Janneke Pigolet  | Industry Liaison Officer | Library        |
| Suzanne Thwaites | Wellbeing HOD Support    |                |
| Liz Kong         | Student Support          | Administration |
| Frances Widdison | Student Support Hub      | W Block        |

| Heads of Department / HOSES |                                                       |             |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Ben Callum                  | HOD Mathematics                                       | B Block     |
| Cathryn Cooper              | HOD - Humanities & Languages                          | J Block     |
| Ron Eyre                    | HOSES                                                 |             |
| Adrian Hays                 | HOD – English and Enrichment                          | W Block     |
| Justin Hinton               | HOD Business and Hospitality                          |             |
| Mandy Howden                | HOD – Wellbeing and Engagement Year 7                 |             |
| Schinead Johnston           | HOD – Science                                         | N Block     |
| Amanda Kellow               | HOD – Wellbeing and Engagement Year 9                 |             |
| Tina Mackay                 | HOD – Wellbeing and Engagement Years 10 – 12          | Library     |
| Anj Malhotra Dillon         | HOD – International Program and Professional Practice | V Block     |
| Matt Pickersgill            | HOD – English and Accessible Pedagogy                 | W Block     |
| Sarah Price                 | HOD – Senior Schooling                                | W Block     |
| Braiden Ruge                | HOD – HPE                                             | Sports Hall |
| Dwayne Scicluna             | HOD – Technologies                                    | F Block     |
| Bettianne Stuart            | HOD – The Arts                                        | K Block     |

# SCHOOL VALUES

Integrity, Respect, Diligence, Compassion

# INTERNATIONAL TEAM

The International Team are here to guide you with your studies and support you during your time at Benowa State High School. The following staff are specialised in all aspects of the international program:

| Head of Department        | International Student Coordinator | International Homestay Coordinator |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Ms Anjuli Malhotra Dillon | Mrs. Judi Goldfinch               | Mrs. Tania Feveyear                |
| Telephone: 5582 7333      | Telephone: 5582 7359              | Telephone: 5582 7361               |

The international office is located within J Block



### Emergency contacts (during school hours)

An emergency is a situation that may/ does affect your health, safety or welfare. In the event of an emergency during school hours please contact any of the people below immediately.

| Name           | Role                     | Contact    |
|----------------|--------------------------|------------|
| Judi Goldfinch | Int. Student Coordinator | 0437236667 |
| Tania Feveyar  | Int Homestay Coordinator | 0437239314 |

### Emergency contacts (after school hours and on the weekends)



## 1800QSTUDY

Your safety is our number one priority. Because of this, we work with our partners to ensure you enjoy a safe and high-quality study experience. All Overseas students studying an international program at an accredited International Student Program (ISP) school can use our student support service called 1800 QSTUDY (1800 778 839).

The 1800QSTUDY service provides support for you, your authorised contacts and Education Queensland International (EQI) homestay hosts and responds to incidents that involve Overseas students outside school hours.

You can call 1800 QSTUDY before 9.00am and after 3.00pm on school days, and 24 hours a day during weekends, public holidays and school vacations.

For more information on 1800 QStudy please go to the following link [1800QStudy](#)

What is the free call 1800 QSTUDY? 1800 QSTUDY

1800 QSTUDY (+61 1800 778 839) is a free support phone service for Overseas students studying in state schools in Queensland. The service provides access to advice and assistance 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This also includes an emergency after-hours service which manages incidents for Overseas students participating in the International Student Program, Exchanges and Study Tours.

When should I use the 1800 QSTUDY service?

During school hours, school staff are your main point of contact but when school is closed and you would like to report an issue or you need urgent assistance, then phone free call 1800 QSTUDY.

At these times:

- Monday to Friday before 9am and after 3pm.
- Any time on the weekends (Saturday and Sunday).
- Any time during school holidays and public holidays.

## Critical or life-threatening situations DIAL Triple Zero (000)

A critical or life-threatening situation includes:

- immediate danger
- physical or sexual assault
- serious injury or illness
- student threatened with violence
- there has been a death.

You can download the [Emergency+](#) application (app) from the Apple, Google and Microsoft app stores. The [Emergency+](#) app helps provide critical location to emergency services.

## SCHOOL EMERGENCY AND LOCK DOWN PROCEDURE

\*If the bells stop ringing in an emergency, this DOES NOT indicate all clear\*

Evacuation “All Clear” – When given advice from Executive Principal or Deputy Principal

|                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| EVACUATION<br><br>Continuous Bell | Cease activity and secure area before exiting<br>Move quickly and calmly to the Emergency Assembly Area<br>Gather in House groups in Emergency Assembly Area<br>Follow instructions from Teachers, Support Staff, Executive Principal, Deputy Principal and/or Emergency Services<br>Remain in area until directed by Executive Principal, Deputy Principal and/or Emergency Services                |
| LOCKDOWN<br><br>On/Off Bell       | Cease activity immediately and listen to instructions from staff members<br>Lock doors, close windows/blinds. Turn off lights, projectors, fans<br>Move yourself to the floor and out of sight<br>Follow instructions from Executive Principal, Deputy Principals and /or Emergency Services<br>Remain in lockdown until directed by Executive Principal, Deputy Principal and/or Emergency Services |

## SCHOOL MAP



## ORIENTATION

The Benowa State High School [Overseas student orientation](#) has been designed to have been designed to:

- support your wellbeing
- help you adjust to study life in Australia
- support your academic success.

Before you arrived in Queensland you would have been provided with a pin code to download your [Passport to Queensland](#).

The Passport to Queensland is a mobile app exclusively developed for you as an Overseas student studying an EQI high school program. This unique app contains lots of fun games, videos, activities and information designed to help you settle into your new life and school in Queensland, so you can focus on enjoying your study experience. It also includes modules showing you how to stay safe at the beach, in the bush and in the city.

You can learn more about the app on at the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) page. Alternatively, you can email any questions about the app by emailing [yourpassport@ged.qld.gov.au](mailto:yourpassport@ged.qld.gov.au).



## ORIENTATION

### Daily timetable

|                                                                    |                  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
|                                                                    | Monday to Friday |
| 8:40am                                                             | Warning Bell     |
| 8:45am                                                             | Care class       |
| 8:46am detention unless Judi or Tania have been texted by homestay |                  |
| 8:55am                                                             | Period 1         |
| 10:05am                                                            | Period 2         |
| 11:15am                                                            | Lunch 1          |
| 11:55                                                              | Period 3         |
| 1:05pm                                                             | Lunch2           |
| 1:35pm                                                             | Period 4         |
| 2:45pm                                                             | School finishes  |

### Orientation Timetable Day 1

| Date          | Time            | Venue   | Orientation topic                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|---------------|-----------------|---------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Day 1         | 8.40am - 8.50am | Library | Welcome & Introductions:<br>International Student Coordinator<br>Homestay Coordinator                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Guest Speaker | 9.15am          |         | Principal's Welcome<br>Expectations and Concerns School values                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|               | 9.30am          |         | Collect – Students Forms.<br>Visa, Passport, Enrolment, Subject Selection,<br>Code of Behaviour, Homestay Code of Conduct<br>Hand out – ISP Student Handbook<br>Go through handbook/PowerPoint presentation<br>Students go in pairs to purchase uniforms<br>International Ambassadors join the group |
| Morning Tea   | 11.15am         | Library | Morning Tea (provided by school) -<br>School Tour with current International Students                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

|               |         |               |                                                                                                     |
|---------------|---------|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Guest Speaker | 11.55am |               | Guest Speaker – Guidance Officer<br>Guest Speaker – YODA officer (Youth Outreach, Drug and Alcohol) |
| Guest Speaker |         |               | Guest Speaker – Librarian                                                                           |
|               | 12.30pm |               | Welcome Booklet continued                                                                           |
| Lunch         | 1.05pm  | School campus | Student provides own lunch                                                                          |
|               | 1.30pm  |               | Students to have photo taken<br>Obtain Timetable<br>Hand Out Evaluation<br>Question Time            |
|               | 2.45pm  | Home Time     |                                                                                                     |

## Orientation Timetable Day 2

| Date  | Time    | Venue   | Orientation topic                                                                                                                                         |
|-------|---------|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Day 2 | 9.00am  | Library | How to change subjects<br>Assessment                                                                                                                      |
|       | 10.00am |         | Visa conditions<br>Attendance<br>Course progress<br>Behaviour<br>Deferral, suspension and cancellation of enrolment<br><br>Complaints and appeals         |
|       | 10.15am | Library | Staying in a Homestay PowerPoint<br>Communication<br>Homestay adjustments<br>Local map and transport<br>Money and banking<br>Health and safety PowerPoint |
|       |         |         | Personal safety plan<br>Medication<br>Details of doctors and prescription<br>Emergency services<br>Banking                                                |

|             |         |               |                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-------------|---------|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Morning Tea | 11.15am | School campus |                                                                                                                                                                            |
|             | 11.55am | Library       | EQI travel policy and travel forms Transfers<br>SEQI holiday programs<br>School Excursions<br>Personal safety                                                              |
| Lunch       | 1.05pm  | School Campus |                                                                                                                                                                            |
|             | 1.30pm  |               | Local area and activities<br>Getting around<br>Banks<br>Legal services<br>Emergency services<br>Hospital<br>Medical services<br>Shopping<br>Community facilities<br>Events |
|             | 2.45pm  | Home Time     |                                                                                                                                                                            |

Orientation handouts  
 International Student Handbook  
 Homestay Booklet  
 Email and Phone List  
 Emergency contact details  
 Recreational Sport Selection  
 Orientation evaluation  
 Timetables

## **WHAT TO DO WHEN**

### **Late for school or class**

If you are late for class, you must collect a “return to class” slip from the Student Services window, located on the outside of the Administration block. If you do not do this and you have missed roll call, you will be marked absent. It will be your responsibility to reconcile any absences

### **Leaving school during the day**

You will need to bring a note from your host parent/natural parent and present this to the Student Services window. This will need to be approved by a Deputy Principal at the beginning of the day. Once approved, the Student Services window will issue you a “leave pass” which you will then show to your classroom teacher. Alternatively, your parents can download the “Compass” app on to their mobile phone which will allow them to request a leave pass directly.

### **Feeling sick or unwell**

Sign in at the administration student counter. They will advise Judi and Tania and they will call a host parent/natural parent to pick you up. If no host parent /parent is available to pick you up, you will need to remain in the sick bay.

### **Wanting to change subjects**

You must wait 2 full weeks before changing subjects. Then you will come to see Judi in the International Office and make your request. You may text Judi to check on options or vacancies first.

You must continue with the timetable you have until you receive a new timetable. Do not assume that the requested change will be possible.

### **Changing address or contact details**

You must always keep International staff updated with change in address and contact details. All contact details and address changes must be notified in writing to the International Coordinators.

### **Wanting to see a Guidance Officer**

You may submit a “Bluey” form to the guidance office independently, requesting an appointment. Blueys can be obtained from the Guidance Office.

Alternatively, you can ask Judi or Tania to make an appointment for you.

### **Lost property**

First check where you left your property, and ask if any friends have picked it up for you. Ask at the Student Counter and the Student Services Window, located at the Administration block. Let Judi and Tania know, so that they can assist you in locating your items.

If you have left an item in a public venue or on a bus, you can google the venue and call them. Judi and Tania can help you with this.

If you are sure that your bank cards are gone, you should contact your bank to put a stop on them so that no one else can use your money.

### **Toilet access during class time**

Raise your hand and ask the teacher for a leave pass to use the bathroom.

## ACCOMMODATION AND WELFARE

### Care arrangements

While studying you must live with:

- a parent, legal custodian or Department of Home Affairs (DHA) approved guardian; or
- an approved homestay provider, if you are enrolled in high school, even if you turn 18 before completing your course.

You must not change these arrangements unless we give you written approval.

You must report any serious or urgent threat to your welfare to us immediately.

If you live with a Department of Home Affairs approved guardian to provide for your accommodation and welfare, we will communicate with that guardian on all matters to do with your enrolment and schooling (including welfare matters) as if the guardian is your parent. You can read more about EQI's Welfare and accommodation in the following documents:

[Standard terms and conditions](#)

[Accommodation and welfare](#)

## LIVING WITH A HOMESTAY FAMILY

Your homestay family plays an important part in your time in Australia. They have been carefully selected and will be eager to welcome you into their home. It may take some time for both yourself and your homestay family to settle in, so please take the time to develop this relationship as it will play a very important part in your happiness and success.

It is important to establish clear expectations from the beginning. If you are unsure about how things are done or what to do, make sure you ask. Your homestay family is there to give you the opportunity to learn about Australian culture and assist you in any way that they can.

Following are some suggestions on what to ask your homestay family.

- What would you like me to call you?
- What do you expect me to do daily?
- Where do I put my clothes that need washing?
- Can I use the washing machine or iron at any time?
- Can I help myself to food and drink at any time?
- Can I move my bedroom furniture around if I wish?
- Is there a special getting up time on weekends?
- Is there a bedtime?
- Can I invite friends around?
- What are the rules for using the telephone?
- What are the rules for using the internet?
- What time am I expected home on the weekends?
- Can I use household appliances when I wish?
- When and how loud can I play music?
- What are the general procedures in the household?

The way of life in Australia may be different from how you live in your country. Expectations and the degree of independence may differ and your homestay family will try to understand these differences. You also need to try and understand the differences so that you all have a good homestay experience. If you feel you are being asked to do too much or that rules are unreasonable in your homestay, talk to the International Student Coordinator, who will discuss your concerns with the family.

When living in a homestay you must:

- respect members of the family, their property and the home environment;
- participate actively as a member of the household;
- take responsibility for your own behaviour;
- comply with the household rules;
- comply with the homestay provider's decisions about your actions and welfare, including outings and curfews;
- have a mobile telephone and carry it on your person when traveling; and
- keep the homestay provider informed of your whereabouts, and remain contactable by them, at all times.

If you fail to meet these standards, we may consider your conduct to be unsatisfactory behaviour and may cancel or suspend your enrolment, or we may withdraw approval of your welfare arrangements. This may affect your student visa.

If you want to live with a different homestay provider, you should talk to the Homestay Coordinator and the school Guidance Officer. We will not approve new homestay arrangements within the first four weeks of your stay unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If we are required to move you to a different homestay, we will generally give you at least two weeks' written notice. In exceptional circumstances (for example, if we are concerned about your safety), we may move you immediately.

If your homestay provider is temporarily unable to provide homestay for you, we will arrange for you to be temporarily placed with another homestay provider.

## CURFEWS

You are required to comply with curfew times set by EQI while living in your homestay. Failure to do so will incur warnings.



### Curfew - Sunday-Wednesday

#### Junior High School (Years 7 to 10) –

No later than 6:00 pm, unless for a pre-arranged and approved extra-curricular activity

#### Senior High School (Years 11 & 12) –

No later than 7:00 pm, unless for a pre-arranged and approved extra-curricular activity

### Curfew – Thursday

#### All year levels – (Years 7-12)

No later than 9.30pm \*

\*Students can go to late night shopping on a Thursday but they can only visit Pacific Fair, Robina Town Shopping Centre and Australia Fair shopping centres and must be home by 9.30pm. Students cannot simply hang around with friends outside of the above-mentioned areas.

### Curfew - Friday/Saturday

#### Junior High School (Years 7 to 10) –

No later than 9:30 pm unless for a pre-arranged and approved extra-curricular activity

#### Senior High School (Years 11 & 12) –

No later than 10:30 pm, unless for a pre-arranged and approved extra-curricular activity

### Curfew - School Holidays – Everyday but only with the consent of your homestay family

#### Junior High School (Years 7 to 10) –

No later than 9:30 pm unless for a pre-arranged and approved extra-curricular activity

#### Senior High School (Years 11 & 12) –

No later than 10:30 pm, unless for a pre-arranged and approved extra-curricular activity

**NO INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SHOULD BE IN BURLEIGH TOWNSHIP, SURFERS PARADISE TOWNSHIP, ON ANY BEACH OR PARK AFTER DARK WITHOUT A RESPONSIBLE ADULT. STUDENTS CAUGHT BREAKING THESE RULES WILL RECEIVE A BEHAVIOUR WARNING LETTER AND MAY NOT BE PERMITTED TO PARTICIPATE IN FUTURE OVERNIGHT TRAVEL REQUESTS FOR THE DURATION OF THE TERM**

Homestay parents can reduce the curfew at any time, but may never extend the curfew without prior approval from the school.

UNLESS THE BUS STOP IS CLOSE TO THE FAMILY HOME, THE STUDENT SHOULD NOT BE WALKING HOME ALONE AFTER DARK AS IT IS NOT SAFE. IN THIS INSTANCE, THE STUDENT MUST USE A TAXI/UBER TO GET HOME SAFELY. IF A STUDENT REFUSES TO USE AN UBER/TAXI THEN THE STUDENT SHOULD NOT GO OUT IN THE FIRST PLACE.

## CULTURE SHOCK

Culture shock refers to the emotional and psychological reactions to an unfamiliar culture and environment.

For Overseas students, culture shock is often uncomfortable and disorienting. Although culture shock can be positive in some ways, it's important for students to understand what culture shock is, what causes it, and how to manage its effects.

Some of the signs of culture shock include:

- feeling isolated
- increasing frustration with your host country, the school and host family
- irregular sleep patterns
- spending a lot of time alone in your room
- you are easily upset and can't concentrate at school.

Culture shock can be described as consisting of at least one of four distinct phases: [honeymoon](#), negotiation, adjustment and adaptation.

### Honeymoon phase

The first stage of culture shock is usually positive. During the honeymoon phase the differences between the old and new culture are seen in a romantic light. For example, in moving to Australia to study, you might love the new food, the pace of life, and the locals' habits. During the first few weeks most students are fascinated by the new culture.

### Frustration/ Distress phase

After some time (usually around three months, depending on the individual), differences between the old and new culture become apparent and you may feel uneasy. Excitement may eventually give way to unpleasant feelings of frustration as a person continues to experience unfavourable events that may feel strange. Language barriers, traffic safety and food differences may heighten the sense of disconnection from the surroundings.

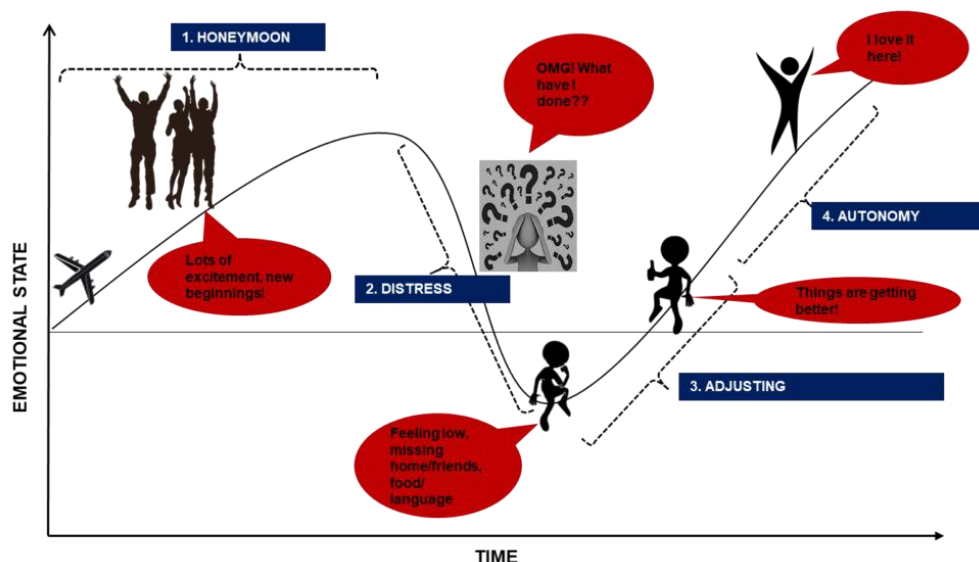
During this phase students adjusting to a new culture may feel [lonely](#) and homesick because they are not yet used to the new environment and new people they are meeting.

### Adjusting phase

After some time (usually 6 to 12 months), a person grows accustomed to the new culture and develops routines. During this phase a person knows what to expect in most situations and the host country no longer feels very new. During this phase people develop problem-solving skills for dealing with the culture and begins to accept the culture's ways with a [positive attitude](#). The culture begins to make sense, and negative reactions and responses to the culture are reduced.

### Acceptance/ Autonomy phase

Individuals in the acceptance phase are able to participate fully and comfortably in the host culture. Mastery does not mean total conversion; people often keep many traits from their earlier culture, such as accents and languages.



If you think you are feeling culture shock, here are some things that you can do:

- Be patient with yourself as culture shock is a normal reaction to a changed environment.
- Talk about how you are feeling with your host family, friends or a member of the international team.
- Keep in contact with your loved ones back home.
- Socialise and make new friends.
- It is important to remember the following:
- Culture shock is a perfectly normal part of the study abroad experience.
- It is important to remember that it will pass.
- Use the experience as an important learning opportunity, helping you to become versatile and adaptable to change. It will equip you with valuable life skills that are some of the greatest benefits of studying abroad.
- Step outside of your comfort zone, make new friends, and take full advantage of the once-in-a-lifetime experiences while you can.

Once your study abroad experience is over, your family and friends will be ready and waiting to hear all about your adventures.

The international team are here to support you so that you meet your academic goals and have a wonderful study and homestay experience while at Benowa State High School

## CONTACT DETAILS

You must let your school know your residential address in Australia within seven days of arriving in Australia. You must also tell the school of any changes of residential address within seven days. Failure to do this may affect your student visa.

We also need your current telephone number and email contact details, as well as the contact details of your parent/s/legal custodians and emergency contact person/s. Any changes need to be given to us within seven days.

## EQI STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Before you arrived in Australia you were provided with a copy of the [EQI Standard Terms and Conditions](#). The Standard Terms and Condition outline EQI policies that relate your responsibilities and rights and EQI's responsibilities and actions required to be taken during your course of study in Queensland.

If you have not read the Standard Terms and Conditions please do so. The Standard Terms and Conditions are available in the following languages:

[Simplified Chinese](#)

[German](#)

[Italian](#)

[Japanese](#)

[Vietnamese](#)

## VISA CONDITIONS

### Attendance

Benowa State High School's attendance policy,

<https://benowashs.eq.edu.au/SupportAndResources/FormsAndDocuments/Documents/Forms%20and%20policies/attendance-policy.pdf>

aims to ensure students are actively engaged in school and attend every day to ensure optimal individual outcomes and student engagement. We have high expectations of student attendance. Once you have enrolled at Benowa State High School it is your responsibility to ensure that you are at school every day and that you arrive on time, ready to start class at 8.45am.

You are expected to maintain 100% attendance unless you are sick. You should always tell the school if you cannot attend for all or part of the day.

In the event that you are going to be absent from school ask your homestay parent or natural parent to notify the school on the day of the absence via the absentee line, 07 55827360 stating your name and class, the name of the person reporting the absence, the reason for the absence and the expected return date.

The school will record your attendance or absence every day. All absences are recorded on your school report. Electronic rolls will be marked every period. An SMS message will be sent to your homestay parents/carers of an unexplained full day absence.

It is a condition of your Sub-class 500 (schools) visa that you maintain satisfactory attendance during your period of study. Commonwealth law requires EQI to be proactive in notifying and counselling Overseas students who are at risk of failing to meet attendance requirements. EQI is required by law to report Overseas students who have breached attendance requirements.

### Important information about attendance

Start and finish times 8.45am/2.45pm

### Late arrival process

Present to Student Services window immediately upon arrival to school. Host

parent/natural parent must call the school to advise them of the reason you were late or provide a note. If a parent does not notify the school, a detention could be issued. A parent may also note an intended late arrival through Compass parent portal.

School absence telephone number 07  
55827360

### Serious, injury or incident process

If you incur a serious injury or incident, you must notify a teacher/administration immediately who will then provide support. The teacher/administration will also notify Student Services so that your parents/host parent can be advised.

**Table 1 – Absence codes for full or part day absence**

| Type of Absence    | Code | Explanatory notes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|--------------------|------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Entire day         | A    | Student was absent entire day.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Early (No Penalty) | E    | Student left early, but within the final two hours of scheduled schooling. This will not count as an afternoon/half day absence.<br><br>If the student left earlier than two hours prior to the end of the scheduled school day, this will count as an afternoon/half day absence (see “P” code). |
| Late (No Penalty)  | L    | Student arrived late, but within two hours of scheduled schooling. This will not count as a morning/half day absence.<br><br>If the student arrived after the first two hours of the scheduled school day, this will count as a morning/half day absence (see “M” code).                          |
| Morning            | M    | Student was absent for the morning. This will count as a half day absence.                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Afternoon          | P    | Student was absent for the afternoon. This will count as a half day absence.                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

At risk of failing to meet attendance requirements

In the EQI Standard Terms and Conditions you are considered to be at risk of failing to meet attendance requirements if:

- you are absent for five consecutive days or more;
- your attendance falls to 90% of your course contact hours in any school term; or
- if the school has concerns about your attendance record.

Your International Student Coordinator will require you to meet with them about your attendance record and provide evidence explaining your absences (such as medical certificates) if they are concerned.

If your attendance falls to 85% of your course contact hours in any term, we will give you and your parents/legal custodians and your Department of Home Affairs approved guardian (DHA approved guardian) a written warning.

### **Unsatisfactory attendance**

If you do not attend at least 80% of your course contact hours, EQI will notify you in writing of their intention to report you to authorities for not achieving satisfactory attendance. EQI may exercise discretion not to report you if:

- you provide evidence of compassionate or compelling circumstances explaining your absences;

EQI are satisfied that, in all the circumstances, it is reasonable not to report you; and your attendance record is at least 70% (if your attendance falls below 70%, EQI is required to report you).

If you receive a notice of EQI's intention to report you to authorities, you have the rights set out under the Appeals Policy section of the EQI Standard Terms and Conditions.

You can read in more detail about your attendance requirements at:

EQI

### **Standard Terms and Conditions**

**EQI Attendance – Subclass 500 (schools) visa procedure**

<https://benowashs.eq.edu.au/SupportAndResources/FormsAndDocuments/Documents/Forms%20and%20policies/attendance-policy.pdf>

Managing student absences and enforcing attendance at state schools Recording of part day absences at Benowa SHS

## COURSE PROGRESS

You must maintain satisfactory course progress for each study period as required by us and outlined in the Entry and course requirement standards. Maintaining satisfactory course progress is a condition of your student visa. If your course progress is not satisfactory, EQI report it to authorities and your student visa may be cancelled. At Benowa State High School, we provide written reports to you and your parents or legal custodians every semester as per the [P-12 curriculum assessment and reporting framework](#) available on the Queensland Department of Education website.

You must complete your course within the time set out in the Confirmation of Enrolment that EQI sent you.

EQI may extend the time to complete your course only if:

- there are compassionate or compelling circumstances;
- your course load is reduced because you are having difficulty making satisfactory course progress; or
- a deferral or suspension of study is approved (see the [Deferral, Suspension and Cancellation Policy](#) section of the [EQI Standard Terms and Conditions](#)).

Where there is an adjustment to course length you must contact the Department of Home Affairs to seek advice about any potential impacts on your visa, including the need to obtain a new visa.

### Unsatisfactory course progress

Benowa State High School will monitor your workload and your results to ensure you complete the course on time. We will also assist you if you are having difficulties. If you are at risk of not meeting course progress requirements, we will implement suitable intervention strategies with enough time for you to achieve satisfactory course progress.

### Formal intervention

If you are not making satisfactory course progress, the principal will give you and your parents or legal custodians a written warning. You will be required to meet with the Principal to develop a plan to improve your performance.

If your next study period report indicates continuing unsatisfactory course progress, EQI will notify you in writing of our intention to report you to authorities for breaching the requirement of your visa to achieve satisfactory course progress.

EQI may notify you earlier if, in their opinion, you will not be capable of meeting the course requirements. If you receive a notice of EQI's intention to report you to authorities, you have the rights set out under the Appeals Policy section of [EQI Standard Terms and Conditions](#)

You can read in more detail about your attendance requirements at:  
[EQI Standard Terms and Conditions](#)

## [Course progress – Subclass 500 \(schools visa procedure\)](#)

### Behaviour

Benowa State High School is committed to providing a safe, respectful and disciplined learning environment for students and staff, where students have opportunities to engage in quality learning experiences and acquire support of their lifelong wellbeing.

The Benowa State High School Responsible Behaviour Plan [Student Code of Conduct](#) is available on the school website. The Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students is designed to facilitate high standards of behaviour so that the learning and teaching in our school can be effective and students can participate positively within our school community.

[EQI Standard Terms and Conditions](#) state that at school you must:

- participate actively at school;
- take responsibility for your own behaviour and learning;
- respect other members of the school community and the school environment and property;
- cooperate with staff and others in authority; and
- comply with your Benowa State High School rules – student code of conduct and school policy and procedures [Student Code of Conduct](#)

At all times you must

- comply with Australian laws and with the conditions of your student visa;
- not drink alcohol, smoke, misuse prescription medication or use illegal drugs;
- not do anything that endangers your safety or the safety of other people; and
- not do anything that may bring your school or the International Student Program into disrepute.
- If your behaviour is unsatisfactory, EQI may cancel or suspend your enrolment. This may affect your student visa.

Our school has the following study programs to support you in your studies:

| Activity      | Time and Location                      |
|---------------|----------------------------------------|
| Homework Club | Monday, Thursday, 3pm to 4pm (library) |

### Academic policy

You must maintain satisfactory course progress for each study period as required by us and outlined in the Entry and course requirement standards,

<https://eqi.com.au/ISP%20PP%20PDFs/entry-and-course-requirements-standard.pdf>

Maintaining satisfactory course progress is a condition of your student visa. If your course progress is not satisfactory, we must report it to authorities and your student visa may be cancelled. <https://ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/pp/course-progress-subclass-500-schools-visa-procedure>

## Legal services

There are a variety of legal services in the community around our school. If you need to access legal services please see the International Student Coordinator.

[Legal Aid Queensland](http://www.legalaid.qld.gov.au) can help with free advice about most personal legal problems including civil law problems such as consumer issues. You can contact Legal Aid Queensland at [www.legalaid.qld.gov.au](http://www.legalaid.qld.gov.au) or call 1300 651 188 Monday to Friday 8:30am to 5:00pm.

For legal advice you can also contact a private solicitor or a [Community Legal Centre](#).

## Emergency and health services

If you have a medical emergency or need assistance with a medical matter you can call 1800

QSTUDY (1800 778 839). You can also call your Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) provider.

## OVERSEAS STUDENT HEALTH COVER (OSHC)

OSHC is insurance to assist Overseas students meet the costs of (Public) medical and hospital care that they may need while in Australia. OSHC will also pay limited benefits for pharmaceuticals and ambulance services.

Details and costs of policies, including what an OSHC policy will and won't cover, and any waiting periods that may apply to certain treatment types, can be obtained by contacting each insurer directly.

OSHC is considered adequate health insurance, however, if you find your OSHC policy does not cover you for everything you want, you can take out additional private health/travel insurance.

Your OSHC provider can help you with a range of medical advice. You should check with your OSHC provider website as the services and support provided can vary from provider to provider.

Common advice and support OSHC providers may provide include:

- medical assistance
- referral to a doctor for medical treatment
- getting access to an interpreting service
- counselling services
- referral to a legal service
- family and friends messaging services in the event of an emergency
- personal safety

OSHC fees are determined by the OSHC provider and are subject to change. For further information on OSHC, please refer to your OSHC provider.

## Health information

To help us support you, we need you to tell us everything we might need to know about your physical and mental health, including your medical history, conditions and allergies, and all medications you use so we can organise anything you might need and (if you are living with a homestay provider) approve and monitor your support and general welfare arrangements as required by your student visa. This applies before you arrive in Australia and during your stay.

## Visiting a doctor

If you need to visit a doctor ask your homestay family to help you make the arrangements. The closest affiliated surgery is very close to the school.

☎ (07) 5539 2362 📄 (07) 5597 7195

21 Carrara Street  
Benowa QLD 4217

## Medication

If you need to take medication while at school, the medication needs to have a pharmacy label and be handed in to administration. Your homestay family will need to complete a consent to administer medical form. You will need to come to the office at the time the medication is required.

## Medical treatment

If you need medical or other health care (other than routine care for minor illness or injury), we will use our best endeavours to contact your parents, legal custodians and homestay provider as soon as reasonably possible.

We may, as we think appropriate and in your best interests:

- provide or administer over-the-counter or prescribed medications; and
- administer first aid.

If we think you need treatment from a health care professional, we may authorise any medical and other professional treatment that we believe to be in your best interests. This includes hospital transfers, emergency procedures, and administering drugs and medications. To do this, we may sign consents to medical and other health procedures on your behalf.

You must reimburse us for all costs associated with medical or other treatment that we authorise for you.

For further information please see the [EQI Standard Terms and Conditions](#)

## FEES

### Tuition

Tuition fees for EQI (CRICOS Provider Code: 00608A) cover:

- all curriculum schooling and
- teaching costs curriculum-related excursions

### Non-tuition fees

Some non-tuition fees may also apply for items such as school uniforms and non-curriculum activities. Please check with your International Student Coordinator.

## TRANSFER POLICY

You may apply to transfer between Queensland Government schools, a non-government school or another institution registered under Australian law to provide education to overseas students.

Additional tuition, homestay or other non-tuition fees may apply for the new school, depending on the school and course chosen.

Before applying for a transfer, you should talk to your International Student Coordinator and school guidance officer and consider any relevant enrolment deadlines at other schools or institutions.

For more detailed information please see the following documents. [Entry and course requirements](#)  
[Standard Terms and conditions](#)

## COMPLAINTS

Before you lodge a customer complaint with the department, you are encouraged to contact your school to try to resolve your issue. If you have an issue with your course, your living arrangements or your welfare, you should discuss this with your International Student Coordinator.

If you have an issue relating to your International Student Coordinator or a decision they have made, you should discuss this with your school Principal. You can bring a support person to help you at any meeting.

Customer complaints are managed in accordance with the Department of Education's Customer [Complaints Management Framework](#) and the [Standard Terms and Conditions](#) you were provided with prior to commencing your course.

You can make a formal complaint if you are dissatisfied about the service or action of a school, the department, its staff, or education agents with which EQI has arrangements to deliver your course-related service. EQI does not charge a fee for accessing the complaints process.

You can ask for help writing your complaint (for example, from your parents, your

homestay provider or a lawyer) and can bring a support person to help you at any meetings we have to discuss your complaint.

## APPEALS

You can appeal a decision EQI makes (Internal Appeal):

- to report you to authorities (see the [Attendance – Subclass 500\(schools\) visa procedures](#) and [Course progress – Subclass 500 \(schools\) visa procedure](#)
- not to defer or suspend your enrolment, as requested by you – please see the [Cancellation of Enrolment Procedure](#);
- to suspend or cancel your enrolment, as initiated by us – please see the [Cancellation of Enrolment Procedure](#);
- to refuse your request for a transfer – please see [Transfer – Subclass 500 \(schools\) procedure](#); or
- as a result of your complaint to us – please see the [Complaints and appeals – Subclass 500 \(schools\) visa procedure](#).

EQI does not charge a fee for using the appeals process.

### External appeal

If you are not satisfied with the decision, you can lodge a complaint (External Appeal) with the Queensland Ombudsman by email to [ombudsman@ombudsman.qld.gov.au](mailto:ombudsman@ombudsman.qld.gov.au) or by post to Queensland Ombudsman, GPO Box 3314, and Brisbane Qld 4001 within 10 working days of receiving our decision.

EQI will comply with any decision the Ombudsman makes.

## TRAVEL AND ACTIVITIES

### Routine activities for homestay students

While living in homestay you must discuss routine activities with your homestay provider and comply with homestay provider decisions. Routine activities include travel to and from school or off-site school activities, everyday travel with the homestay provider, and normal domestic activities such as shopping, entertainment, sports, visiting friends and health care consultations. It does not include overnight stays away from your homestay address.

### Non-routine activities for homestay students

You must obtain our permission for all non-routine activities. This includes overnight travel away from your homestay provider's residence (with or without your homestay provider), activities where the Department of Education, trading as Education Queensland sports, leisure and recreation provider requests parental consent or activities that require supervision other than your homestay provider.

To request permission to participate in non-routine activities, please complete the Travel and activities request form (link below) and submit it to your International Student and/or Homestay Coordinator.

In assessing your request, will consideration will be given to all relevant circumstances including the nature of the activity, the arrangements for supervision, your welfare and your age and maturity. We may also consider the views of your parents, legal custodians and homestay provider but we will not necessarily grant permission even if they consent.

Related documents

- [Non-routine travel and activities for homestay students – Subclass 500 \(schools\) procedure](#)
- [Travel and activities request form](#)

## No high-risk activities

You must not undertake high-risk activities, even if you have the permission of your parents, legal custodians or homestay provider, unless the activities are approved by EQI.

“High-risk activities” means any activity which inherently poses an increased risk of harm, illness or injury. Examples of high-risk activities are extreme sports, water activities and recreational activities with dangerous elements.

## REFUND POLICY

Your rights

If you do not complete your course, you may apply for a refund of some fees already paid by you (in certain circumstances). Some tuition and non-tuition fees charged by EQI are not refundable.

EQI will also pay any other refunds required by Australian law. If you demonstrate compassionate or compelling circumstances, EQI may agree to refund other unspent fees at their discretion.

Refund requests for OSHC fees must be made to your Overseas student Health Insurance (OSHC) provider.

The right to make complaints and seek appeals of decisions and action under various processes, does not affect the rights of the student to take action under the Australian Consumer Law if the Australian Consumer Law applies.

More detail regarding refunds can be accessed at:

[Standard Terms and Conditions](#)  
[Refund request form](#)

## SCHOOL POLICY AND PROCEDURES

To access all the school policy and procedures, please visit:

## Student Code of Conduct

<https://benowashs.eq.edu.au/our-school/rules-and-policies>

## Anti-bullying policy/Code of Conduct/Responsible Behaviour Plan

The student code of contact can be found by visiting the school website page, <https://benowashs.eq.edu.au/SupportAndResources/FormsAndDocuments/Documents/Forms%20and%20policies/Student%20Code%20of%20Conduct%202022-2024.pdf#search=code%20of%20conduct>

## BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE

BYOD stands for Bring Your Own Device. This model allows students to bring an IT device to Benowa SHS that best supports their learning needs (within specifications).

Benowa State High School is committed to moving students and staff forward in a contemporary learning environment.

IT devices are a powerful means of differentiating and personalising a student's education, and student-owned devices facilitate student choice over which application best suits their learning and communication style.

Teachers will work with students to ensure everyone can access and view a student's final work in appropriate formats as necessary.

We are giving families control over the choice of IT device to bring to school as their primary device (within specifications). With this primary device we will continue to support students by diagnosing IT issues and consulting with families if further action is required. We make the following recommendations around device specifications and software that students bring to school.

Please visit the school [website page](#) to find information relating to Bring Your Own Device and [specifications](#).

## UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS

The uniform policy can be found on the [school website page](#),



Examples of Shoes not permitted to be worn on school days OR sport days (these are eKamples only limited to the pictures detailed below.)



and not

The uniform shop can be located in G Block, next to the Canteen. For a copy of the uniform price list [click here](#).

Opening hours are:

- Monday – Thursday 8.00am - 12.00pm
- Friday 8.00am - 9.00am

The uniform is to be worn in its complete form at school and when travelling to and from school. Dress Uniform is to be worn on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday.

Sports Uniform is to be worn on Wednesdays, cluster days and for practical HPE lessons.

Fully enclosed, all black, leather or imitation leather shoes are required to comply with workplace safety regulations for practical lessons. Students will be excluded from classes in these areas if they are not wearing adequate foot covering

For Physical Education Classes students are required to wear a school authorised sports uniform. This includes track & field team shirts. Sports uniform is not to be worn to other classes.

## BANKING

To open and operate bank account the following information is offered as a guideline as practice may vary from bank to bank.

If you are experiencing difficulties please see the International Student Coordinator. To open an Australian bank account you will need to present your passport and possibly additional information.

The majority of banks and building societies have internet banking, telephone banking, Automatic Teller Machines (ATM's) and branch access.

Some banks are now offering an app that you download to your smartphone to do your banking.

Once your account is opened you will receive in the mail a card and a pin code Personal Identification Numbercode (PIN Code). You should NEVER disclose your PIN code to anyone.

For your parents to transfer funds into your account you will need to provide them with the local branch identification number, your account number, bank contact details and swift code. Check with your bank as to their process and requirements).

Credit cards such as Visa, MasterCard and American Express are widely accepted across Australia.

Check with your bank as to opening hours during the week and on weekends.

Do not carry large sums of money at school or when out in public.

## TRANSPORT

Please find listed below the link to Translink Journey Planner as this will allow you to access the public transport timetables:

<https://jp.translink.com.au/plan-your-journey/journey-planner>

The screenshot shows the TransLink Journey Planner website. At the top is a navigation bar with links like 'Manage go card', 'Pick my region', and 'Contact TransLink'. Below this is the TransLink logo and the Queensland Government logo. The main heading is 'Journey planner'. Underneath, there's a 'Plan your journey' section with input fields for 'Enter a start location', 'Enter an end location', and a date/time selector set to 'Today (Tuesday)' and '1:05pm'. There are buttons for 'Leave after', 'Arrive before', and 'Find a journey'. To the right, there's a 'How to get started' section with instructions and a 'Related links' section with links to 'Journey planner help', 'About our maps', and 'Non-TransLink services'.

## DRIVING

You must refer to the [Standard terms and conditions](#) and contact your International Student and/Homestay Coordinator for further advice and approvals when considering:

- driving a vehicle
- becoming a passenger in a vehicle driven by a driver with a learner (L plate) drivers license or provisional (P plate) driver's license.

## HOUSE STRUCTURE

| House Name | Element      | Word Origin                                                                        | Symbolism                                                                             | Tagline             |
|------------|--------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Solaris    | Fire / Light | From Latin 'sol' meaning sun, and 'Arius' meaning pertaining to or connected with. | Represents radiance, leadership, and brilliance, shining with courage and positivity. | Shine without fear. |

|                |       |                                                                                                 |                                                                                             |                           |
|----------------|-------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Torrent</b> | Water | From Latin 'Torrens', meaning rushing, boiling, or roaring stream.                              | Symbolises power in motion, adaptability, resilience, and unstoppable collective strength.  | Unstoppable force.        |
| <b>Gaia</b>    | Earth | From Ancient Greek 'Γαῖα' (Gaia), the personification of Earth and mother of all life.          | Represents grounded strength, balance, and connection, the life force that sustains growth. | Strength through harmony. |
| <b>Zephyr</b>  | Air   | From Greek 'Ζέφυρος' (Zephyros), meaning the west wind, associated with gentleness and renewal. | Embodies freedom, agility, and clarity, swift in thought, movement, and purpose.            | Swift and steady.         |

## SCHOOL LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

### Junior council

In 1993 the Rotary club of Ashmore approached the Gold Coast City Council with a proposal to form a junior council that would serve as a forum for young people from secondary schools on the Gold Coast.

Junior council aims to provide an opportunity for students to:

- gain an understanding of local government
- present any issues from the student body of their school to local council
- express their opinions on issues that concern and are important to young people, to various levels of Government and community organizations
- raise public awareness of young people's concerns and of their contribution to the local community
- foster leadership potential
- promote active participation in developing ideas and solutions for youth issues
- develop civic knowledge and pride

Students from Years 10 and 11 are eligible to participate in junior council and interested students are selected by each school. School coordinators attend meetings with students, ensure the students are receiving information from council staff and deal with administrative requirements at school. Students from participating schools (state and private) meet approximately five times per year at the Gold Coast City Council (GCCC) chambers at Bundall.

Council staff and school coordinators work with students when meetings are held. Students discuss items on the meeting agenda and make their own decisions regarding the issues raised or on any requests from community groups, who wish to be involved with or publicise their objectives to junior council.

Benowa State High School students have participated in junior council from its inception and continue to enjoy the experiences and friendships gained from being involved with other high school students from across the Gold Coast. Students in Year 9 or 10, who may be interested in participating in junior council in future should approach

current junior councilors for information or ask at the library about becoming involved.

## AUSTRALIAN FAMILIES

In Australia there is no typical family and families differ widely from each other in many ways. This is in part due to Australia being a multicultural society i.e. many cultures from all over the world choose to settle in Australia.

Australian families usually have a mother and a father, children and pets. It is also common to find single parent families with either the mother or father responsible for keeping the home and caring for children.

It is expected in most Australian homes that people living in the home help with household tasks. These tasks may include helping with food preparation and cleaning up, keeping their own bedroom clean, washing and ironing their own clothes.

### Australian teenagers

Australian parents expect to be told where their teenagers are going, who they are going with, what they will be doing and the time they will be done. Homestay parents expect the same courtesy from their Overseas student. It is extremely important that international students let their homestay parents know these things also. This will avoid a lot of worry.

It is also polite to tell homestay parents in advance if you will not be home for dinner. Most parents set a time by which their children must return home, and also usually set a time for going to sleep. Some Overseas students find this difficult because they usually stay up very late. Australians generally get up early in the mornings. Australian teenagers participate in a wide range parties, using the computer, visiting friends and shopping.

## Mealtimes

### Breakfast

You will be expected to make your own breakfast with food provided by the homestay family. In Australia, the typical breakfast can include;

- Cereal (a carbohydrate consisting of grains such as wheat, oats or corn) served with milk
- Toast (sliced bread that is heated in an electrical appliance called a toaster) with toppings such as peanut butter spread, Vegemite or cheese
- Eggs that are cooked and served with toast

Ask your homestay family what food is available for breakfast and ask them to show you how to prepare it. Let your homestay know if there are certain foods that you like or dislike so that they know what to buy when shopping. Please wake up early enough to allow yourself time to prepare a nutritious breakfast before leaving for school, and remember to clean up afterwards.

### Lunch

It is most likely that you will also be required to make and pack your own school lunch

using food provided by the homestay. In Australia, it is common for lunches to consist of sandwiches (two slices of bread with fillings such as spreads, cooked meats or salads), something sweet like biscuits or cake, a piece of fruit and a cold drink. Sometimes families give students leftover food from dinner and it can be heated up using the microwave at school. Talk to your homestay family about the choice of foods available for lunches, and if you have any problems please see the Homestay Coordinator.

### **Dinner**

Dinner time varies depending on the age of the children living in the home and the hours the parent/s work until, but generally dinner is served anywhere between 5.30pm and 7.30pm. Food that is served for dinner varies greatly, however dinner usually consists of a kind of meat (such as chicken, fish, beef, lamb or pork), a variety of vegetables (potato, beans, peas, broccoli, carrots) and a serve of a carbohydrate (rice, pasta, potato, couscous or bread).

Food is usually served on an individual plate, rather than shared dishes in the centre of the table. People eat off their own plate. Generally, all members of the family sit to eat the meal together and talk about the day's events. It is important to participate in table conversation as this is an excellent chance for you to improve your conversational English and get to know your homestay family better.

### **Expected table manners**

Do:

- Wait until everyone is seated before eating
- Eat with your mouth closed
- Make a positive comment on the meal

Don't:

- Talk with your mouth full
- Eat noisily – Try not to slurp your food
- Leave the table without asking, or thanking the cook

Food customs vary greatly between cultures, so ask your homestay parent if you are unsure about what is expected at the dinner table. Eating dinner with your family should be an enjoyable experience. Remember, it is okay to ask for more food if you are still hungry.

### **Socialising with friends**

Hopefully you will make many friends while you are in Australia, and want to go out with them on the weekends. Please be considerate of your host family and always ask for permission, let them know where you are and when you will be home. As a general rule, socialising should be limited to weekends, as week nights are for study and to spend with your host family. If friends ask you to stay over, discuss this with your host family. They may also allow you to have friends to stay, but remember not to inconvenience your

host family by always having your friends in the house. Please ask your homestay parent before inviting friends over to your homestay.

Please remember to complete a travel form for overnight travel.

## **Expressing emotions**

Australians tend to express their emotions openly and are not usually embarrassed about showing others that they are happy, sad, etc.

Many Australians find it quite acceptable to openly disagree with another person's opinion, as long as this is done in a non-aggressive and reasonable manner. In most cases, it is also considered acceptable to discuss personal problems with other people, especially friends, family and trained professionals (i.e. guidance officers in schools).

## **Communication**

It is normal to feel nervous when you first meet your homestay family. You will begin to feel happier when you get to know the family better. Talking to your homestay family about any worries or questions you have when you first arrive will help you adjust to living in a new country.

If you do not speak English well, you can still communicate by using the following;

- Use Google Translate or an electronic dictionary
- Draw a picture of what you want to say
- Use hand gestures or mime
- Ask another student to interpret for you

Spend some time each day with your homestay family. You can do this by watching a TV show with them, helping with dinner preparation, asking questions about Australia or talking about your home country. Don't spend all of the time in your bedroom on the computer. It is very important to make the effort to get to know your family and build a friendship with them. If you have difficulty communicating with your family please see the Homestay Coordinator for some advice and guidance.

## **Manners**

Manners are very important in Australian culture, and parents encourage their children to say "please" and "thank you" when they ask for something. They also encourage them to apologise (say "I am sorry") when they have done something wrong, or have upset someone. When asking for something, please remember to say, "Can I please have ..." and say "thank you" when you receive it.

## **Transport to school**

If you live close to school, you may walk to school or ride a bike (please remember you are required by law to wear a helmet whilst riding a bike). Before you ride a bike to school, first ask your homestay parent to show you the designated bikeway to ensure this travel is safe. If you live further away, you can catch a bus or your host parent may drive you. Overseas students are not eligible for a bus pass, so you will have to pay the bus fare to and from school.

## Swimming

Before engaging in water sports (for example swimming and surfing) all international students are required to complete a water skills assessment. Please contact your International Student Coordinator to arrange a water skills assessment.

Please also see the EQI [Non-routine travel and activities for homestay students – Subclass 500 \(schools\) visa procedure](#)

## SURF AND BEACH SAFETY

Queensland has some of the most beautiful beaches in the world. However, they can be dangerous for people who are not used to the ocean. Understanding the ocean is very important – the more you know about how waves, wind and tides affect conditions in the water, the better able you are to keep yourself safe.

### Surf Life Saving Australia's 10 Surf Safety Hints

- Always swim or surf at places patrolled by surf lifesavers or lifeguards.
- Swim between the red and yellow flags. They mark the safest area to swim.
- Always swim under supervision or with a friend.
- Read and obey the signs.
- Don't swim directly after a meal.
- Don't swim under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- If you are unsure of surf conditions, ask a lifesaver or lifeguard.
- Never run and dive into the water. Even if you have checked before, conditions can change.
- If you get into trouble in the water, don't panic. Raise your arm for help, float and wait for assistance.
- Float with a current or undertow. Stay calm. Don't try to swim against it. Signal for help and wait for assistance.



### Useful links

[Queensland Surf Lifesaving](#)

<https://beachsafe.org.au/> at this link you can download their Beach Safe app.

## Sun safety

Most of the sun's dangerous UV radiation (as much as 70%) occurs in the middle of the

day, so if you are heading outside then you need to take particular care to seek shade, cover up, wear a hat and use sunscreen.

Drink plenty of water in hot weather so as not to become dehydrated. Be sun safe by:

- avoid direct sun when possible
- drink plenty of water
- wear a long-sleeve shirt, wide brim hat and sunglasses
- regularly apply an SPF 30+ high protection sunscreen.

## ROAD SAFETY

Australian roads can be quite busy during peak time (mornings and afternoons) It is important to take care when crossing roads, and always cross at intersections with traffic lights and/or pedestrian crossing zones. In Australia we drive on the left-hand side of the road and as such, you will need to look right, look left, and then look right again before crossing.

