Pre Departure Guide
for Tasmanian Government School Students

www.study.tas.gov.au
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Congratulations on deciding to study in Tasmania! We are proud to welcome you to Tasmania and we are committed to supporting you during your studies. The GETI team works closely with your agent, your teachers and the international student advisor at your school to ensure that your experience is successful. We hope your study experience will empower you to develop the skills and knowledge for you to achieve your aspirations.

Please contact the GETI team if you have any questions or concerns. We are here to help you.

Useful phone numbers:

• GETI can be contacted Monday to Friday 9:00am-5:00pm on +613 6165 5727. For after-hours emergencies only phone +613 6231 1003
• Translator service 131 450. Please note charges apply per minute.
• The number for police, fire and ambulance in case of an emergency is 000

We recommend you save these contact details to your phone. GETI can also be contacted by email at info@geti.tas.gov.au

This guide has been designed to prepare you for your arrival in Tasmania and life as a Tasmanian Government School student. Please read it carefully.
Before you leave your home country

Here is a check list to use before you leave:

☐ Your passport is valid for your entire stay
☐ Flight bookings
☐ Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) and Travel Insurance (please contact the GETI office if you need help with this)
☐ Your visa is finalised
☐ Up to date medical prescriptions and records of immunisations
☐ Medical, optical and dental check before you leave to avoid any urgent treatment
☐ Make spare copies of your identification documents including your passport and visa

Essential items to pack in hand luggage

☐ Valid passport and visa
☐ Letter of offer
☐ Medical prescriptions and records of immunisations
☐ Accommodation details (you will need to provide a contact address on the immigration form).
☐ Language dictionary
☐ Travel adaptor
☐ Phone and charger
☐ Warm clothing for your arrival in Tasmania

Essential items to pack in main luggage

Clothes including a mix of warm clothes (jackets, enclosed shoes and sweaters) and casual wear for every day in class. Toiletries – all aerosols, razor and shaving products.

Clothing

If you are studying in year 7-10 there is a school uniform, which you will get once you arrive in Tasmania. If you are studying in year 11 and 12, there is no school uniform. When no uniform is required, Australians usually wear casual clothes when studying, such as jeans, t-shirts, pullovers/jumpers, sweaters, casual shirts and enclosed sports shoes. Jeans are usually acceptable to wear unless an event has a specific requirement.

Customs restrictions

To protect Australia’s borders, there are restrictions on some items. You must have documentation for any medication that you bring with you. Fruit, plant and animal products are prohibited and must also be declared.

The quantities of alcohol and cigarettes that you can bring in are restricted. Large amounts of cash (equivalent to AU$10,000 or more) are restricted.

Find out more information about what you can bring to Australia here: www.border.gov.au/Trav/Ente/Brin

Airport pickup

If GETI has arranged your accommodation, when you first arrive in Tasmania you will be picked up from the airport and taken to your accommodation. We provide this service free of charge.
Weather
The weather in Tasmania can change quickly and locals say you can experience ‘four seasons in one day’. Climate requires a flexible wardrobe. During summer the sun is extremely strong, even if it does not feel very hot, so use ‘SPF 30+’ sunscreen lotion and wear a hat when you are outdoors to protect your skin.

Students will need clothing and footwear suitable for warm and cool daytime temperatures ranging from 7–30 degrees Celsius.

Summer
December, January, February
Warm days, long daylight hours, strong sun.
11°C - 24°C

Autumn
March, April, May
Temperate days and cool wind in afternoons, cooler nights.
10°C - 22°C

Winter
June, July, August
Clear days, occasional snow on mountain.
Wear a warm coat, enclosed shoes and gloves.
3°C - 14°C

Spring
September, October, November
Cool wind in mornings, warm afternoons.
5°C - 16°C
**Australian Law**

### Alcohol and Tobacco
Consumption and purchase of alcohol and tobacco / cigarettes is illegal for people under the age of 18. You may be required to show your identification to prove you are 18 years old.

It is also against the law to smoke indoors in any public place including workplaces and public transport. For more information on where people cannot smoke, please visit: [http://www.tobaccoinaustralia.org.au/chapter-15-smokefree-environment/15-7-legislation](http://www.tobaccoinaustralia.org.au/chapter-15-smokefree-environment/15-7-legislation)

### Drugs
In Australia it is illegal to possess drugs without a medical prescription. However the emergency services are available to help regardless of circumstances. If you suspect someone has overdosed on a drug, telephone 000 immediately and ask for an ambulance and provide the operator with as much information as possible.

### Police
In Australia, police officers are trusted and their role is to protect people. Most police officers wear a uniform. All police carry identification whilst on duty. The police are a public service and are not part of the military.

Corruption is extremely rare. It is illegal to try to bribe the police with gifts or money. They will never ask for money and you must never offer money or any other gift.

If you are questioned by the police, you have the right to seek legal advice and ask for an interpreter. It is important to remain calm and cooperative.

If a police vehicle (or any other emergency vehicle such as an ambulance or fire truck) has its lights flashing and siren sounding in traffic, you must give way to them, even if you are a pedestrian. If you are driving, you must pull over to allow the emergency vehicle to pass, until it is safe and clear for you to continue driving.

### Driving
Students under the age of 18 studying in Tasmanian Government schools are not permitted to drive. Students over the age of 18 must contact GETI to request approval.
Health & Safety

Overseas Student Health Cover

Overseas Student Health Cover is compulsory for all international students. It is a condition of all student visas that medical insurance is maintained. If you allow your cover to lapse and you require medical assistance you could incur significant expenses – Please contact the GETI team if you need assistance with your Overseas Student Health Cover.

Health Services in Tasmania

Tasmania has an excellent health care system, including clinics and hospitals funded by the Australian Government. There are also excellent specialised public health facilities for women and children in major centres. If you miss class due to illness, you may be required to provide a doctors certificate. This means you will need to make an appointment to visit a doctor. These doctors are called general practitioners (GP's) or 'local doctors'. GP's are qualified medical doctors and are your first point of contact for non-emergency health problems. The role of GP's include: diagnosing and treating health problems and prescribing medications. If you explain your symptoms to the GP, the doctor may provide you with a medical certificate to excuse you from regular duties. If you are sick on a day you have class, you must see a GP on that day, as they cannot write a medical certificate for a past date. It typically costs $70 for an appointment with a GP. This cost may be reimbursed by your health insurance provider.

It is important to understand the difference between GP's and the hospital. The hospital should only be used in a life threatening emergency and urgent immediate medical care is needed.

Mental wellbeing

While living in another country is exciting, it can also be challenging. If you start to feel sad or flat, there is a qualified counsellor at your school, who you can always talk to. In addition, Headspace is a free mental health facility staffed with counsellors and psychologists in both Hobart and Launceston.

Headspace - Launceston
Cnr Brisbane & Wellington Street, Launceston, TAS 7250
P: (03) 6335 3100
headspace@csys.com.au

Headspace - Hobart
49 Liverpool Street
Hobart, Tasmania 7000
P: (03) 6231 2927
headspace@thelink.org.au

Sexual Health Service Tasmania

Sexual Health Service Tasmania is a free and confidential service with clinics in Hobart, Launceston and Devonport. The service is staffed by doctors, nurses, counsellors and psychologists. These professionals are trained to help with anything related to a person’s sexual health, gender identity, sexual orientation, or any other questions you might have.

For more information visit http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/sexualhealth/sexual_health_service_tasmania

Safety & security

Take care of your own personal safety and security including your belongings. Do not carry large amounts of cash with you in public places. If you do need to carry large amounts of cash be careful and make sure that it is not visible and do not show it to anyone.

Make sure that you carry identification with you at all times in case of an emergency, with a contact name, address and phone number for people to contact.

Do not carry your passport with you, unless it is required. Always keep a copy of your passport for identification purposes.

If you have any problems with theft or are harassed in any way, speak to someone urgently (e.g. GETI, teachers, homestay) so that you can receive immediate help. The Tasmania Police will assist you in any situation.

Medications

Painkillers, allergy medication and skincare products are widely available at chemists throughout Tasmania. You may find that medications available over the counter in some countries are not available in Australia without a prescription including all antibiotics. This means you will need a doctor, who will provide the prescription.

Feminine hygiene products (tampons and pads) are readily available at chemists, petrol stations, corner stores and supermarkets. It is not something that you need to be embarrassed about asking for in Australia.
Australian Government protection for international students

The Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act) is a legislative framework that protects people who are on a student visa. The ESOS Act sets a consistent standard across Australian education providers and protects all international students. Ethical standards include marketing, Agent behaviour, student support and education delivery.

Education providers who disobey ESOS regulations risk deregistration and prosecution.

The ESOS Act imposes visa related reporting on both students and education providers. It also prevents education providers from offering advice on migration.

For more information, visit the Australian Government’s Department of Education website at https://internationaleducation.gov.au. The ESOS Framework information sheet is also on the GETI website.

Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP)

The DIBP is the unit of the Australian Government, overseeing and enforcing conditions on visas.

You must abide by your visa conditions, including:
- Work restrictions
- Meet course requirements
- Maintain required health cover
- Completion of your course of study before your Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) expires
- Apply for a renewal before the expiry of your current visa
- Notify DIBP and GETI of any changes to your course, contact details or ability to attend class.

Work conditions for student visa holders

Students are limited to working 40 hours per fortnight during teaching semesters. The working hours are calculated from Monday to Sunday.

During school holidays when no classes are scheduled, longer hours may be worked.

You must get a Tax File Number to be able to work in Australia. This is available from the Australian Tax Office.

Visit the DIBP website for more information: https://www.border.gov.au/Trav/Stud/More/Work-conditions-for-Student-visa-holders
Living in Tasmania

Cost of Living
The annual cost of living is lower in Tasmania than other Australian states. Students should budget AUD$19,000 to AUD$26,000 per year to cover accommodation, transport, food, electricity and entertainment.

Indicative costs of living
Sample weekly budget (please note all prices are approximate)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Homestay fees</th>
<th>$252 (Years 9-12); $272 (Years 7-8)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public transport</td>
<td>$30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>$30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toiletries</td>
<td>$20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>$15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$367 (approximate)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Family visiting Tasmania
While your family may wish to visit you in Tasmania, it is unlikely that your homestay host can accommodate them. Your family will need to arrange their own accommodation and there are many options available to them such as a hotel. For more information, visit http://www.discovertasmania.com.au/where-to-stay

Places of Worship
Hobart and Launceston are multicultural cities. Information on places of worship in Hobart can be found through the following link:
Adjusting to life in Australia

This is not meant to be a list of rules, rather a guide for helpful cultural insights that will make your Australian experience enjoyable.

Equality – an important Australian value

Men and Women are equal in Australian society. Tasmania is considered a very safe place. You can and should expect to be respected and feel safe, regardless of your race, gender, sexual orientation, or religion. If you ever feel intimidated, it is important to tell someone and report it. You can talk to the International Student Advisers, teachers, homestay, and the GETI team. In the case of an emergency, phone 000 for police.

Money

Australia has a large middle class society, without the defined social classes that exist in many other countries. Australians do not place great importance on levels of wealth, status and occupation. For this reason, most Australians do not discuss income or wealth. For example, it is considered impolite to ask someone how much money they earn. It would also be considered rude to talk about how much money you have. For example, if you received a gift or the Lunar New Year, it would be rude to boast about this money or show it to your classmates.

Food

It is polite for you to chew food with your mouth closed. Generally you should avoid slurping. Do not place food (including bones) directly on the table. It is impolite to spit, even when you are eating. It is also illegal to spit in public. While cutlery (knives, forks, spoons) are used in most households and restaurants, chopsticks are widely available and very common; it is acceptable to request them if you feel more comfortable with them.

Smoking cigarettes (tobacco)

If you are under 18 years of age, it is illegal for you to buy or smoke cigarettes in Australia. You will notice that smoking is far less common in Australia than many other countries. This is because of strict laws and the high cost of cigarettes. If you are over 18 and you do smoke, it would be very unlikely that a rental property or other accommodation will allow you to smoke indoors. If you do smoke, it is important to check where you can smoke outside your accommodation. If you are outdoors and wish to smoke, it is best manners to ask the people you are near whether they would mind.

Household chores

Very few Australians have servants, most Australians do their own housework. Men, women and children share jobs in the household like cooking, cleaning and washing dishes. This is important to note for your accommodation. If you make a meal in your accommodation, it is expected that you clean up everything you used. In your accommodation, whether homestay or renting with other students, you will be expected to contribute to household chores. For example, if a homestay host cooks a meal for you, it is polite to offer to clean up afterwards.

Water usage and showers

Most Australians are conscious of how much water they use because it is a limited resource. It is important to keep showers short (normally 5 minutes). Most Australian people shower in the morning, and you will be expected to shower daily. It is important to prioritise washing yourself and your hair, and shaving as soon as you start your shower.

Using the toilet

Toilets in Australia are western style. Squat toilets are very rare. Usually Australian toilets do not have bidets. Most toilets have toilet paper, to use for bodily waste. The used toilet paper is flushed down the toilet, not put in a bin.

All feminine hygiene products must be placed in a bin, not flushed down the toilet.
General manners – do’s and don’ts

Do’s

• Stand in a queue to wait to purchase something or ask a question
• Say ‘thank you’ when someone has given you something, cooked for you, or tried to help
• Saying ‘excuse me’ is polite when you speak to someone who is not expecting you to speak to them
• Be on time – In general, Australians are easy going, however they do expect people to be on time. It is expected that you arrive at your class at least 5 minutes early.

Don’t

It is considered bad manners to:

• Spit in public
• Put your feet on a table or anywhere where food is ever prepared or served
• Cut your finger or toe nails at a table or anywhere in public
• Don’t go into other people’s bedrooms or rooms without knocking and saying, ‘excuse me’. For example, it would be bad manners to go into the bedroom of a housemate without their knowledge or permission
• Smoke indoors.

Finally!

The GETI team is well travelled and many of us are from different countries. This guide covers things we have experienced to be different when we have travelled overseas. We understand that there is a lot to learn and many differences between countries. You can ask us if you are ever unsure about anything. We are here to help you.

Studying overseas is a great challenge but an incredibly rewarding experience. You will learn lots about yourself and about other people. The best advice we can give, is to ask questions and remember a sense of humour so you can have fun throughout your journey of learning. We wish you the best of luck and look forward to welcoming you to Tasmania.