



FRESHMAN SURVIVAL GUIDE 2019



Table of Contents

1. Welcome to UNSW	3
2. About Singapore Students' Association	4
3. Pre-departure	5
Pre-departure Checklist	6
Accommodation	7
Packing	9
Healthcare	10
Driving in Sydney	11
4. Upon Arrival	12
Arrival Checklist	13
Financial Matters	14
Mobile Phone	15
Transportation	16
Activities in Sydney	17
5. Upcoming Events	19
6. Useful Links and Contacts	20



If you're reading this, you're probably a Singaporean on your way to study in UNSW.

As international students, it can be quite overwhelming as you prepare for your journey to Sydney. We understand. That is why we have created a guide just for you.

This document consists of information collected from various seniors specially prepared as a guide to UNSW for Singaporeans.

This is the 2019 Freshman Survival Guide. It has everything (almost) you need to know to make Sydney your home away from home.



About Singapore Students' Association

The UNSW Singapore Students' Association (SSA) is an organisation that aims to unite all Singaporeans studying in UNSW. SSA also acts as a link back home through partnerships with organisations such as the Overseas Singaporean Unit and Contact@SG. Membership is free and we hope to see you at our activities!

Our Vision

A caring community that contributes.

Our Mission

As the principal representative body for Singaporeans in UNSW, we aim to provide a wholesome and holistic experience for our members away from home.

Pre-departure

Pre-departure Checklist

- Accept your offer of admission
- Arrange passport and student visa
- Finalise travel arrangements for O Week (11-15 Feb)
- Consider accommodation options
- Read through the Getting Started UNSW website and this guide
- Arrange traveller's cheque or money
- Photocopy your essential documents (Passports, eCOE, etc.)
- Ensure you have the following documents to bring with you
 - Your UNSW Letter of Offer
 - Your electronic Confirmation of Enrolment (eCOE)
 - Copies of your previous Qualifications (Diplomas, Certificates etc.)
 - Driver's License and Passport
 - Other Legal Documents you might need
- Attend pre-departure briefing (13 Jan) and Camp Boomerang (19-20 Jan)

Pre-departure: Accommodation

Some considerations when choosing an accommodation (both on and off campus) should include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Rent (if utility bills are included)
- Food (Catered vs Self-catered)
- Location (On-campus or Off-campus)
- Internet access
- College life vs. Self-supported
- Ensuite toilet or shared facilities

On-campus

Brief Overview of prices and amenities:

	UNSW	UNSW Colleges	UNSW Terraces
Rent/Weekly (Price range)	\$280 - \$315	\$400 - \$650	\$300 - \$500
Room type	Shared Apartments Single room	Single room	Single room
	Shared kitchen	Shared kitchen Or Meal provided depending on college chosen	Personal kitchen
Toilet	Shared	Ensuite/Shared	Ensuite

*Please note that UNSW Villages requires additional payments for Internet

All accommodation prices (estimated) listed are inclusive of utility bills.

There are many other on-campus accommodations for you to choose from depending on your individual needs and preferences. These websites can help you in making better-informed decisions before your arrival in Sydney:

<https://www.accommodation.unsw.edu.au/compare>

<https://www.accommodation.unsw.edu.au/affiliates>

Pre-departure: Accommodation

Off-campus

Many students also choose to live off-campus – this could involve sharing an apartment with other students or tenants in the nearby suburbs (e.g. Kensington, Randwick and Kingsford).

These websites and links will offer you a wider variety of off-campus accommodation (student-based inclusive*) to choose from before your arrival in Sydney:

[*http://www.iglu.com.au](http://www.iglu.com.au)

[*https://unilodge.com.au](https://unilodge.com.au)

[*http://urbanest.com.au](http://urbanest.com.au)

<https://studystays.unsw.edu.au>

<https://www.domain.com.au>

<https://flatmates.com.au>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/278776358905533/>

It is essential to factor in other considerations such as travelling time and cost, and to ensure the rooms are furnished before signing the lease with respective parties. Some of the apartments also exclude furniture, so please remember to consider the additional costs and labour associated if you decide to get your own.

Ensure all parties fully understand the bond, lease, allocation of rooms, splitting of bills and utilities before signing the lease. The bond should be held by a legal entity.

In addition, you should also make sure that you sign either a *Share House Agreement* or the *Standard Residential Tenancy Agreement*, and are aware of your rights as a tenant. This can be found at:

www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/ftw/Tenants_and_home_owners/Renting_a_home.page

Pre-departure: Packing

In general, you should pack items that that you need immediately and cannot readily/practically buy in Sydney. This would include personal belongings like clothes, electronic devices and medication. Prescriptions might not be recognised in Sydney, unless specifically noted.

Stationery

Stationery is more expensive in Sydney, thus we recommend packing pens, pencils, highlighters, correction tape, and a good eraser. If you run out of supplies, a good place to purchase stationery is Officeworks (the one nearest to school is at Alexandria).

Utensils, Electrical appliance, Furniture

Home appliances can be found at hyper-marts (K Mart, Big W, Target, Ikea) which are a short bus ride away. Printers are affordable, but the cheaper ones tend to exclude a USB-cable, which you may want to bring from home.

RELATED GOOGLE SEARCH TERMS

1. "Officeworks Sydney"
2. "K Mart (Eastgardens)"
3. "Big W (Eastgardens)"
4. "Westfield (Eastgardens)"
5. "Ikea (Tempe)"

A note on baggage allowance: If you're flying with a full service airline, you may wish to send them an email asking for extra baggage allowance, citing your overseas student status.

Pre-departure: Healthcare

Overseas Student Health Cover

The Australian government requires international students and their dependents to purchase OSHC for the full duration of their studies. UNSW's partnered supplier is **Medibank Private Limited**, which you can find on campus.

See <https://www.medibankoshc.com.au/oshc/unsw> for more details on eligibility and plan coverage. You may also opt for dental coverage, which is more expensive than in Singapore.

Upon your arrival on campus, you can bring your **eCOE** and **identification documents** down to the Medibank branch on lower campus to request for your OSHC card.

Visiting Doctors

If you require medical attention, **University Health Service** located at the Quadrangle Building provides healthcare services on campus. It would be advisable to make an appointment online as walk-in services are not always available. This is available on <http://www.healthservices.unsw.edu.au/> or you can download Appointuit (Application) to book your appointments.

For more serious and urgent medical issues, the nearest hospitals are the **Prince of Wales Private Hospital** at Randwick, and **St Vincent's Hospital** in Darlinghurst.

Pre-departure: Driving in Sydney

Singaporean Driver's License

Overseas students (on student visa) are considered visiting drivers and are allowed to drive with their English driver's license. Your driver's license is also more widely accepted as proof-of-age compared to your identity card (IC).

Australian Driver's License

If you intend to get your license in Australia, note that under the new Driving System, you can drive upon passing the practical and theory (touch-screen test at the RMS) after 6 months at minimum, but you are still required to various other tests before you qualify for a full license. This takes ~3 years. To convert your Singapore license to an Australian license, you're required to have been in the country for 6 months straight before converting. Check out <http://www.drivelessons.com.au/> if you are keen on obtaining your license in Sydney.

Getting a car

Cars in Australia are generally cheaper than in Singapore, and you may consider purchasing a second-hand car from graduating seniors who often post advertisements on Facebook or from <https://www.carsales.com.au/>. However, parking spaces are scarce both on campus and in the city, which results in expensive parking. An alternative would be car rental options like **GoGet** which has car stations located all around Sydney as well as different cars to suit your needs.

Upon Arrival

Arrival Checklist

- Phone Home - Let your family and friends know you've arrived safely
- Apply for your bank account, card and TFN number
- Tour the surrounding suburbs
- Attend O week – Campus Tours (Yellow Shirts)
- Get your student card (at the library **BEFORE O WEEK**)
- Register for ARC, this allows you to join clubs and societies (outside the library)
- Visit SSA at our O Week Booth
- Find a long-term accommodation if you're in a short-term stay
- Obtain your OSHC card

Upon Arrival: Financial Matters

Opening a bank account and getting a bank card

Documents Required:

- University Offer letter
- Student Card
- Passport
- Cash for deposit



Banks generally offer a free student checking account after verification of student status.

Bank branches (Kensington campus):

- Commonwealth Bank (Next to Library, Upper Campus)

Other branches like ANZ, Westpac, St George are readily found in the surrounding suburbs (Randwick or Anzac Parade)

Tax File Number

You are able to sign up for a TFN once you reach Australia and have a permanent address. TFN is required if you are working or have interest bearing accounts to avoid hefty taxes.

Visit <https://www.ato.gov.au/Individuals/Ind/Apply-for-a-TFN-on-the-web/>.

After receiving a TFN, update it with your bank to avoid the charges. Do note that you will need a student visa before applying for the TFN.

Upon Arrival: Mobile Phone

Mobile Plans

Most phone companies give out subsidies for phones with a 12 or 24-month contract. However, most students bring their own phone and purchase prepaid or post-paid plans.

The major players in Australia are Vodafone, Telstra and Optus, where they offer more competitive prices. Plans are diverse and vary greatly. These websites will allow you to compare the different plans (prepaid) offered at respective prices:

<http://www.optus.com.au/shop/mobile/prepaid/plans>

<https://www.vodafone.com.au/prepaid/plans>

<https://www.telstra.com.au/mobile-phones/prepaid-mobiles/offers-and-rates>

<https://www.finder.com.au/mobile-plans>

Remember to bring your personal identification documents (passport, student ID, drivers' license) when signing up for a plan.



Upon Arrival: Transportation

Bus/Rail Services

Scheduled bus and rail services are generally reliable and comparatively affordable, though it is advisable to check

www.transportnsw.info/en/transport-status/ for any scheduled rail works.

All bus, train, light rail, and some ferry services utilise Opal cards (much like Ez-Link cards in Singapore). Opal cards can be purchased at convenience stores or online. Check out www.opal.com.au/ for more information.

* *Opal Travel (Application)* is useful for tracking the amount of money left in your card and for adding value.

* *TripView, NextThere and Tripgo (Applications)* are useful when planning your trip beforehand

Taxi

Travel by taxi is usually quick and easy but expensive. Taxi operate on a meter system and tipping is not required. Taxis can be hailed on the street, by calling 13 2227, or by using the 13CABS app. Approximate cost for a journey from campus to city is about \$20 and can cost up to \$30 from the Airport.

Ridesharing

Compared to Taxi, ridesharing apps such as **Uber** or **Ola** are much cheaper options to get around Sydney.

Concession

Please note that international students are not eligible for concession fares, unless your studies are fully funded by specific Australian Government scholarships. Please check

<http://www.transportnsw.info/international-students> for more information.

Upon Arrival: Activities in Sydney

Sydney is a great place to be in, with events and festivals all year round. Broadsheet.com.au and Concreteplayground.com are great sites for you to find out what's on everyday of the week in Sydney - from the International Food Safari to the Magnificent Seven events to aboriginal cultural attractions and the annual Vivid Sydney. We are sure you will find at least one event to capture your attention in the weeks to come.

Food

UNSW is situated in Kensington, minutes away from the vibrant food scene in Kingsford, Anzac Parade. Various cuisines ranging from Singapore to Italian to Japanese to Malaysian await your choosing. The campus is also 20 minutes away from the city, where food choices are aplenty. For more ideas, head to **Zomato** to find the best food Sydney has to offer.

Movies

Ritz Cinema Randwick is situated just 15 minutes away from campus with Arc membership discounts (Weekday rates of \$14), while movies cost \$6 on Mondays and \$10 on Tuesdays. If you have a post-paid phone plan with Optus, you may also purchase HOYTS movie tickets at discounted prices.

Upon Arrival: Activities in Sydney

Nature

Those out to catch some sun, some of Sydney's most popular tourist beaches are just a short distance away from UNSW. For instance, Coogee Beach is just one bus ride away! Home to the Coogee-Bondi beach walk, it is a great place to see the sights, surf and swim. If mountains and hiking is your cup of tea, check out the Blue Mountains, a 2-hour train ride west of Sydney. There you will find the iconic Three Sisters sandstone formation, and can hitch a ride on the steepest incline railway in the world.

Upcoming Events

Camp Boomerang (19th to 20th January 2019)

Join us for 3 days of fun and games in Singapore, with unique and exciting opportunities for you to meet and get to know your fellow Singaporeans studying in UNSW.

UNSW O-Week (11th to 15th February 2019)

O-Week marks the start of your journey as a student in UNSW! Grab all the freebies you can carry, go on campus tours, and most importantly, come to the SSA booth and have a chat with us!

Other things:

- UNSW gym membership (cheaper year-long membership)
- Sunblock (skin cancer rate in Australia is pretty nasty)

Semester 1 SSA Welcome BBQ (9th March 2019, TBC)

Our annual BBQ aims to welcome friends to the SSA family, and for everyone to know each other over a sausage sizzle and fun activities.

Useful Links & Contacts

WEBSITES

UNSW Main Webpage: <http://www.unsw.edu.au>

UNSW Arc: <http://arc.unsw.edu.au>

Getting around:

<http://facilities.unsw.edu.au/getting-uni/campus-maps>

Singapore High Commission: <http://www.mfa.gov.sg/canberra>

CONTACTS

Singapore High Commission, Canberra: +61(2)6271-2000

UNSW International: +61 2 9385 5333;
international.student@unsw.edu.au

YOUR SSA

SSA Website: <http://www.unswssa.com/>

Email Us: mail@unswssa.com

Find us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/unswssa
www.facebook.com/groups/156634201390265/

Find us on Instagram: [@UNSWSSA](https://www.instagram.com/UNSWSSA)

