Monash University
Nutrition, Dietetics and Food
International Students
Pre-Departure Guide 2018

Adapted from: MUMUS ISC Pre-Departure Guide for International Students 2016
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Congratulations!

You’re in for one great ride! We are delighted you have chosen to begin your studies at Monash University. Before you leave home, there are a number of important arrangements you need to make and things you need to plan for and understand.

As an international student, your journey might be a little more difficult. However, we’ve put together a document for you to gain more insight. If you follow these tips before you arrive in Australia, it will make your journey to Australia as smooth as possible and help you settle into the Monash University community quickly.

This pre-departure guide was written by the International Student Committee Country representatives. It will help you find out more information about your course, services available to you and other useful tips to make your first few weeks in Melbourne as trouble free as possible!

Have a safe trip and we will see you in Melbourne!

Cheers
Department of Nutrition, Dietetics & Food
International Student Mentoring Group
**ACCEPTING THE OFFER**

- Upon receiving your Monash acceptance letter, read the International Student Course Agreement.

- Pay your fees and the Overseas Student Health Cover. Full payment details are indicated in your International Student Course Agreement.

- Return your completed and signed International Student Course Agreement and evidence of payment before the offer lapse date.

- An electronic Confirmation of Enrolment (eCOE) will be emailed to you. This is needed to process your student visa.

- You can now enrol into your first year units online. Follow the instructions available at https://www.monash.edu/get-started/enrolment/international.

- Attend Academic Engagement Day and register your arrival at Monash Connect.

Further information about each of these steps are available at:

- [https://www.monash.edu/study/how-to-apply/international-student-applications/after-you-apply/accept-your-offer](https://www.monash.edu/study/how-to-apply/international-student-applications/after-you-apply/accept-your-offer)

- [https://www.monash.edu/fees/payment/payment-options](https://www.monash.edu/fees/payment/payment-options)

- [https://www.monash.edu/study/how-to-apply/international-student-applications visa-requirements](https://www.monash.edu/study/how-to-apply/international-student-applications/visa-requirements)

- [https://www.monash.edu/get-started/enrolment/international](https://www.monash.edu/get-started/enrolment/international)
TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS AND DOCUMENTS

- Plan your arrival **14 days prior** to your enrolment day. Organise your accommodation and airport pick-up. **Free airport pick-up** service is available for **new** Monash international students.
- Check Australia’s **customs and import requirements** and **identify any items you cannot bring** or that **you will need to declare at the airport on arrival**. You cannot bring fresh foods into Australia. Read advice from the Australian Government on what can be brought or sent to Australia.
- Pack some of your **personal items** such as photos, address books with contact details of family, friends and your country’s embassy in Australia.
- Have some **cash** available for use on arrival in Melbourne. You can exchange most currencies at the airport but you can do this before your arrival.
- **Ensure you bring the following documents with you:**
  - Valid passport and photocopies of passport
  - Student visa and photocopies of visa
  - Travel documents (itinerary, tickets, travel insurance)
  - A list of goods which you are bringing to Australia for yourself and customs
  - All offer letters sent to you by the university and receipts of payments of university fees
  - Certified copies of references, transcripts, work/educational qualifications and scholarship letters (if applicable)
  - Identification such as certified copies of birth certificate, driver’s licence, international drivers licence (if needed)
  - Credit cards, travelers cheques and bank account records
  - Any previous reference letters written by landlords, employers etc. to assist in obtaining accommodation or work (if allowed under your visa)
IMMUNISATIONS

Immunisations are required if you are going on placement to healthcare organisations as part of your studies. This relates to some students of the Bachelor of Nutrition Science in the final year work placement unit and all students of the Master of Dietetics by the end of the first semester of the program (December of your first year).

Please refer to this immunisation website for the most accurate and comprehensive guide, including immunisation compliance forms.

- **Why immunisations?** Clinical or fieldwork placement(s) is a mandatory course requirement if you are undertaking a Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences course. You must comply with the procedures to minimise the risk of cross-infection of communicable diseases during your training.
- Compliance with these procedures can take time, so once you have accepted a place in the course, you can commence the immunisation process in readiness for clinical placements or fieldwork.
- **How long will the immunisations last for?** Once your immunisation records are satisfied, they are valid for the duration of your course (except the annual influenza vaccine). Monash requires proof of your vaccinations at least 1 month prior to your first placement. There is an online system called ‘InPlace’ to upload the documentation as proof of completion of requirements. All documentation is to be taken on placements and produced on request.
- You are encouraged to attend either Monash Infection Assessment Clinic or University Health Services who are the faculty’s preferred providers. Monash Infection Assessment Clinic provides an immunisation passport with benefits of a comprehensive immunisation program aimed at the healthcare industry at minimal cost to students. These two services understand the immunisation requirements for students undertaking placements and provide assistance for students to speak with an immunisation specialist.
- Students can attend their own GP, however will need to advise their GP that all immunisation requirements as listed on the forms are required. If immunisation documentation is incomplete or incorrect, student clinical placements could be delayed or cancelled which means that students will be unable to meet the clinical requirements of the course.
ON-CAMPUS ACCOMMODATION

Living on-campus can be great for students who have never lived out of home before and you are more likely to be supported while living away from home if you need assistance. A range of accommodation options are available on campus, each with their unique character. Room options can be fully-catered (most meals supplied) or with self-catering (cooking for yourself) facilities – some operate dining rooms where meals can be purchased. Rooms are fully-furnished but you may need to supply items such as bedding, rice cookers or table lamps.

Please refer to this website for the most updated and comprehensive guide to on-campus accommodation options.

**Step 1: Before starting your application**
- Check your eligibility and read the regulations and policies. To be eligible you must be a Monash student or applying to be a Monash student. Applications for accommodation are processed on a "first-in-first-served" basis for suitable vacancies.
- Have the following details on hand:
  - Your personal details
  - Your course details
  - Your campus preference
  - Your hall or house preference
  - A recent digital passport-sized photo (only of your head and upper shoulders with maximum file size of 250kb)

**Step 2: Start your application**
- Complete the online application form relevant to you.

**Step 3: Receiving a confirmation of application**
- You will receive an email to acknowledge receipt of your application, providing you with an application number. Make sure you check your emails regularly, including your spam/junk mail inboxes for any updates.

**Step 4: Receiving your offer and confirmation**
- In early December for Semester 1 and June for Semester 2, successful applicants will receive an Accommodation Offer Package via email. Only one offer will be sent to you based on your first preference and subject to the availability of rooms.
- Once you have a confirmed place in a Monash University course, you will need to accept the offer before the deadline advised in your Accommodation Offer email. To accept, you must submit the completed Residency Agreement (via email, mail or in person) and make payment of the $500 rental deposit.
- Older halls tend to have a later confirmation date.

_For rental rates for the various accommodation options, see the [pricing page](#)._  

**OFF-CAMPUS ACCOMMODATION**

Living off-campus can provide more opportunity to learn about living independently and sharing responsibility with other people. Off-campus accommodation options include:

- **Homestay** – where a student stays with a local family. Homestay provides an opportunity to learn about the Australian way of life and culture first hand and is especially popular with first-year students. However, you will need to respect the rules and expectations set by your hosts, e.g. rules about guests and “checking-in” times at night. So if you want to explore your environment in your own way, this option may not be ideal for you!
- **Student hostels** – have familiar facilities to University residences, but are privately owned and off-campus.
- **Private rental accommodation** – includes rooming houses, furnished or unfurnished apartments, and shared student housing. You can have total control over who you will be living with and what suits your needs best. You get to spend time with housemates and share the utility bills too. Private accommodation is usually less competitive, however, you will need to directly deal with a landlord or leasing agent!
- There is information about [off-campus accommodation](#) on the Monash website.
- Good websites to lookout for accommodation would be:
  - realestate.com.au
  - gumtree.com.au
  - flatmates.com.au
  - sharehouses.com.au
  - au.easyroommate.com
  - flatmatefinders.com.au
  - Fairy Floss Real Estate (Facebook page)
GETTING YOUR DAILY LIFE ESSENTIALS

With Clayton campus being the largest campus for Monash University, you may find it hard to find your way to shopping centres for groceries or be unsure where to get your household needs. Therefore, we have put together a list for you!

- **Transportation from Clayton campus**
  - The *Monash University Interchange* (also called the *bus loop*) provides 13 bus routes (updated July 2017), allowing you to travel to and from campus conveniently. Please see attached at the end of this section for the bus loop map.
  - The *Clayton Transport Map* provides details around Melbourne’s train and bus networks, maps for the campus, bike or car parking and tips for taking public transport.
  - The public transport card in Melbourne is called a *Myki Card*. Myki can be purchased at train stations and you can add value to your Myki using any top up machines or at the convenient store in campus centre.
  - You will need a *valid Myki card* to travel around Melbourne and for rail travel in Victoria.

- **Inter-campus shuttle** *(free for students!)*
  - The inter-campus shuttle bus connects Clayton to most other campuses and the Peninsula campus to Frankston Railway Station. You board on a ‘first-come, first-served’ basis. Buses fill quickly at busy times, so don’t be late if you want a seat! Buses generally run on weekdays during semester, but an extended Clayton-Caulfield service operates on a modified timetable outside this period.
  - Shuttle services between campuses:
    - *Clayton-Caulfield*
    - *Clayton-Peninsula*
    - *Peninsula – Frankston Station*

- **Details of public transport buses and timetable** are outlined on the website
  - If you are heading to the city the train is the best option. You have 2 main choices - take the 601 shuttle towards *Huntingdale Railway Station* as it runs frequently on weekdays during semesters; or you can catch the 900 smart bus (towards Caulfield) and it stops at Huntingdale as well. Otherwise, you can either take the 631 (towards Southland), 703 (towards Middle Brighton) or 733 (towards Oakleigh) which will take you to *Clayton Railway Station*.
- **Supermarkets and Fresh markets**
  - Eating out can often be quite expensive in Melbourne (~ AUD 8-10 per meal) so learning how to cook will be handy!
  - The **Monash Merchant** is a modern food and grocery store recently launched at Clayton campus, located opposite to Monash Sports and besides Logan Hall. You can find daily necessities such as vegan or vegetarian meals, fresh produce, kitchen utensils and common household items. It opens every day from 8am to 10pm so it’s really convenient when you need something urgently.

- Local markets usually sell fresh produce at a lower price. Depending on where you live and what transport is accessible, here are a few options for you:
  - **Asian grocers and fresh markets on Clayton Road (Clayton Shopping Centre)**
    - Fresh fruits & vegetables; Meat; Chinese/Japanese/Korean/Thai/Indian groceries
  - **Queen Victoria Market (city)**
    - Fresh fruits & vegetables including Asian ingredients; Meat and seafood; Hot foods (food court & food trucks); Souvenirs; Some clothing e.g. t-shirts, socks, pants; Cafes
  - **South Melbourne Market**
    - Fresh fruits & vegetables including Asian ingredients; Meat and seafood; Hot foods, Sweets & pastries (food stalls); Cafes
  - **Prahran Market**
    - Fresh fruits & vegetables; Meat and seafood; Cafes; General merchandise
  - **Asian grocers in Footscray or Richmond**

- Otherwise, these places would have most of the things you are looking for:
  - **Coles (main supermarket)**
  - **Woolworths (main supermarket)**
  - **Aldi (cheapest, main supermarket)**
  - **Target (for household items e.g. kitchen utensils)**
  - **Big W (for household items e.g. stationery, vacuum cleaners)**
  - **Kmart (for household items e.g. bed linens, pillows)**
  - **IKEA (for household items e.g. study desks, chairs)**
- **Shopping centres**
Looking for places to shop, eat or even hang out with friends but too lazy to get to the city? These might be some options for you:

- **The Glen** (take 737 bus towards Croydon; approx. 15 mins): Coles, Woolworths, Asian grocer

- **Chadstone Shopping Centre** (take 900 towards Caulfield, 802/804/862 towards Chadstone; approx. 20-25 mins depending on traffic): This is the largest shopping centre in Victoria! You can definitely spend a whole day in here. There is Coles, Woolworths, Aldi, Asian grocer, fresh market, Kmart, David Jones and much more.

- **Clayton Shopping Centre** (take 631 towards Southland, 703 towards Middle Brighton or 733 towards Oakleigh): Coles, Asian grocers, Meat deli, Hong Kong Supermarket

- **Brandon Park Shopping Centre** (take 742 bus towards Eastland Shopping Centre at Normanby Road, Clayton campus; approx. 15mins): Coles, Aldi, Kmart
### SEMESTER DATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation week</td>
<td>20 – 24 Feb</td>
<td>19 – 23 Feb</td>
<td>24 – 28 Feb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester one teaching period</td>
<td>27 Feb – 26 May</td>
<td>26 Feb – 25 May</td>
<td>2 Mar – 29 May</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-semester break</td>
<td>14 – 21 Apr</td>
<td>30 Mar – 6 Apr</td>
<td>20 – 24 Apr</td>
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<tr>
<td>*Swot Vac</td>
<td>29 May – 2 Jun</td>
<td>28 May – 1 Jun</td>
<td>1 – 5 Jun</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exams</td>
<td>5 – 23 Jun</td>
<td>4 – 22 Jun</td>
<td>8 – 26 Jun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results published</td>
<td>10 Jul</td>
<td>9 Jul</td>
<td>13 Jul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferred and supplementary exams</td>
<td>7 – 11 Aug</td>
<td>6 – 10 Aug</td>
<td>10 – 14 Aug</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation Week (mid-year)</td>
<td>17 – 21 Jul</td>
<td>16 – 20 Jul</td>
<td>20 – 24 Jul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-semester break</td>
<td>24 – 28 Sep</td>
<td>30 Sep – 4 Oct</td>
<td>28 Sep – 2 Oct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swot Vac</td>
<td>22 – 26 Oct</td>
<td>28 Oct – 1 Nov</td>
<td>26 – 30 Oct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exams</td>
<td>29 Oct – 16 Nov</td>
<td>4 – 22 Nov</td>
<td>2 – 20 Nov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results published</td>
<td>3 Dec</td>
<td>9 Dec</td>
<td>7 Dec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferred and supplementary exams</td>
<td>28 Jan – 1 Feb 2019</td>
<td>3 – 7 Feb 2020</td>
<td>1 – 5 Feb 2021</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: [https://www.monash.edu/students/dates/summary-dates](https://www.monash.edu/students/dates/summary-dates))

# These are the usual University semester dates. **Placement dates for the Master of Dietetics may begin or conclude outside of the usual University semester dates. You will be advised each year.**

*SWOT Vac stands for Study Without Teaching Vacation (Australia)*
INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS SUPPORT SERVICES

Monash has a range of student support services. Our friendly student support staff can help you adjust to your new environment and answer any questions.

Career and Job Advice
- The **Monash University Career Connect** provides career counselling services to currently enrolled Monash students and graduates (Monash University only). Counselling can help in subject and course choice, postgraduate study selection and career options on completion of study.
- Your Student Visa allows you to work for up to 40 hours for every two weeks during semester, as well as full-time hours during holidays in Australia. If you are looking for valuable work experiences, here are some ideas: paid work, volunteer work or internship programs (either paid or unpaid).
- **Clubs and Societies**
  - Engaging in extracurricular activities not only equips you with teamwork and communication skills, but also assists you in building connections and open doors for your future path.
  - A diverse range of clubs operate at Monash including academic, spiritual, performance, general interest, international, cultural and political, as well as societies for halls of residence.
  - You are highly encourage to sign up for different clubs and societies to build up a strong social network. Also, these events are fun! One of the clubs would be the **Monash University International Student Services (MUISS)**, it is run by a committee of international students and they hold regular events to help you with social networking, like weekly free breakfasts during semester! Meanwhile, seek out campus events throughout the year, e.g. orientation welcome parties or host scheme camps during the winter break organized by student councils.
  - All students of the nutrition programs are encouraged to join the **Monash Nutrition and Dietetics Society (MNDS)**. You will be sure to meet students who are studying the same course as you.

Counselling
- The **Monash University Counselling Service** provides a free, professional and confidential psychological counselling service to all Monash students in such areas as exam skills, stress management, assertiveness and communication skills, time management and motivation.
**English Language Support**
- The **Student Academic Support Unit (SASU)** provides language and academic support for students in undergraduate and graduate-entry professional courses within the Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences. Particular emphasis is placed on clinical and professional communication and the needs of international students and students with English as an additional language.
- **English Connect** is a peer to peer program at Monash that aims to enhance your English language skills and cross-cultural communication. It is free and great way to meet with other students undertaking different courses at Monash.

**Family and Child Care**
- The **Family and Child Care Service** assist students to successfully combine their pursuit of education with family responsibilities.

**Financial Services**
- The **Monash University Student Financial Aid office** can assist students with a wide variety of financial matters, including advice and information on personal budgeting, buying a car, financial planning and more.
- Check whether you are eligible to apply for scholarships or student loans. Some students find it better to manage their expenses with working part-time jobs, which helps them to gain work experiences and it looks good on the resume too!

**Medical Services**
- The **University Health Services** provide a broad range of general health and medical services for students, with an emphasis on illness prevention and health education.

You can find out more at https://www.study.monash/student-life/services-for-students/international-students.
Besides on-campus support services, Melbourne also provides other services for international students.

**Study Melbourne Student Centre**
- If you are living in the city, come to the Study Melbourne Student Centre. They provide free access to services for international students, including information and contacts to help you enjoy living and staying in Victoria.

**Studies in Australia – The International Students’ Guide**
- Check out this guide and the blog available at for more support services available. It includes an international student hotline (1300 363 079 for Mon to Fri 8am to 6pm), orientation and study preparation programs, as well as free counselling services to help students cope with any difficulties they encounter.

**IDP Education**
- **Counselling**: Lodge your enquiry at and you will be get in touch to talk about your needs by the IDP Education counsellors.
- **Overcoming language barrier**: Surround yourself with English and don’t be shy. Consider joining language programs as these are great places to enhance your spoken English.
Here are some tips to help you commence or study along your nutrition journey!

- Download the ‘My Monash’ app so that you can access information promptly on your mobile devices, such as campus maps, security contacts and timetables.
- The Department of Nutrition, Dietetics and Food Homepage can keep you updated with undergraduates and post-graduate studies for nutrition & dietetics, and nutrition science.
- Join the International/culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) students mentoring support group where you can improve your interpersonal and communication skills, learn more about Australian’s culture and seek help to assist your academic studies from the seniors (who are also CALD students).
- Moodle This link shows the units that you will be undertaking for each semester, in which the unit guide provides you with details of all assessment tasks and supporting materials. This also includes the Department of Nutrition, Dietetics and Food Moodle page where staff communicate with the all students studying in the department. There is a specific section for International Students with links to many useful resources.
- Textbooks are required for the course but staff try very hard keep this to a minimum. You often use the same textbook for a number of subjects over the course. It is highly encouraged that you buy them or borrow from the libraries to assist with your studying. Depending on your country, if you can get it cheaper there, then you should.
- Your own Monash Nutrition and Dietetics Society Facebook page (MNDS) (will be set up annually by seniors), you are strongly encouraged to attend as many events as you possibly can! Regular seminars are held each year.
- Try some YouTube videos to learn about Aussie slangs and expressions! This will assist you in communicating with others upon arrival and socialising with your new friends. Consuming all areas of English-speaking media and surrounding yourself with English such as movies, music, books, and TV shows will also help. You might also want to change your phone and computer settings to English and avoid viewing websites in your native language.
- Think about what motivates you to study nutrition and dietetics. For example, if you enjoy exploring different food cultures, try experimenting other cuisines as Melbourne is very multi-cultural; if you enjoy cooking, tune in to TV programs for MasterChef or any other Australian cooking shows for some home-cooking ideas.
- Have a look at this link which shows some fantastic apps that are useful for international students, such as the ‘Weather Zone’, ‘Public Transport Victoria’. Also, you can install the ‘Zomato’ app to help explore new restaurants in Melbourne.
- If you use WeChat, follow Monash in your account to keep yourself up to date!
- The IDP blog addresses common issues for international students, e.g. budgeting for accommodation and additional support services.
- The **International Students Online Resources Pack** gives you a comprehensive overview on getting started on studying in Australia, how to manage your life besides studying and tips to help achieve satisfactory grades.

- **Culture shock** might be common for some foreign students when living with locals. If you are in this situation, try to keep calm and take things easy. Accept the cultural differences and keep an open mind to it. This will help you to integrate yourself into the Australian way of living.

- **Homesickness** is very common and is difficult to cope with upon leaving your family behind to study overseas. Do speak to someone in confidence about how you are feeling and don’t be afraid to ask if you need help with anything. You can book an appointment for a counselling service for international students at [http://www.monash.edu/health/counselling](http://www.monash.edu/health/counselling). If you are living on-campus, definitely seek some support from your friendly residential advisors (RAs)!
ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT DAY DAY

(Tuesday February 13th at 10am – Room H7, 20 Chancellors Walk, Clayton Campus)
- It is encouraged for all international students to arrive before this date.
- Your Monash student ID card collection and Register your arrival at Monash Connect
- Documents needed: eCOE, Authority to Enrol and Student Visa.
- There will be a faculty welcome and a campus tour for international students on this day.

ORIENTATION WEEK (19 – 23 FEB 2018)

Use the Orientation E - Planner to find out what compulsory and optional events will be held on campus. It is highly recommended that you take an orientation class and tour around the campus to kick start your university studies, faster and smarter. Save time by learning how to find books, readings and online resources to prepare for academic studies.
WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND POLICE CHECK

The Victorian Department of Human Services requires all students undertaking clinical placements hold a National Police Certificate (annual requirement) and a Working with Children Card.

Students who fail to satisfy the requirements of either the National Police Certificate or the Working with Children Card at any point during their enrolment will be referred to the Professional Behaviour Intervention Procedure and may be excluded from the program.

**Working with Children Checks (WWC)** – This must be completed and sighted by your department prior to the commencement of Year 2 of Bachelor of Nutrition Science and during the 1st semester of Master of Dietetics. It is valid for 5 years.

**Police Check** – This must be completed and sighted by your department prior to the commencement of clinical placement(s) or fieldwork. This is Year 3 for Bachelor of Nutrition Science and during the 1st semester of Master of Dietetics. It is valid for 1 year and needs to be renewed each year that you have placements.

International students must complete an International criminal history check.

Note that you will need to create a Log in account to proceed.
Both the Masters of Dietetics and the Bachelor of Nutrition Science programs will lead you to a prosperous future, with diverse career paths.
STUDENT SHARING (CHINA)

Introduction:
Congratulations on getting into Bachelor of Nutrition Science or Masters of Dietetics. What an achievement! Welcome to the playground of kangaroos. I must admit that studying abroad can be challenging, rewarding and may be sometimes overwhelming. But your fellow countryman is here to help. As someone who has already been on this dazzling ride, we are here to facilitate you to achieve your dream in becoming a nutritionist or dietitian by giving you some important advice.

Academic:
- **Studying**
  - Differences in academic focus can be a challenge for you if you came from a Chinese domestic education system. I strongly recommend you to take some time to be familiar with research paper writing and group projects, as that will be a main focus in your future education. Many major test preparation academy (e.g. 新东方, 昂立, etc.) or English education academy (e.g. 英孚) may offer courses for these. Otherwise, you will be able to find support services to improve your English language proficiency academic skills with assessments from the **Student Academic Support Unit (SASU)**.

- **Textbooks**
  - You shouldn’t worry about textbooks too much. There are alumnus selling hard copies at a cheaper price than market value on Monash Marketplace. It is most important to pay attention to the information given at orientation program as academic staff will be giving information about which textbooks are the most essential ones and which ones are a very good additional information source. So you don’t end up with loads of useless textbook that you wouldn’t read twice.

- **Stationary**
  - Stationary is a big thing! They can be expensive in Australia and the quality/fanciness is no match to your local Chinese stationary shop. My personal strategy is to bring a lot from China, and when I run out I will go to stores like DAIKO (Japanese cheap store) or Officeworks to get some. But this is totally up to you, there are stores like MUJI here in Melbourne but they sell things at a pretty high price.

Cost of Living:
- Exchange rate: 0.2 AUD ≈ 1 RMB
- Grocery and restaurants are more expensive in Australia.
- You should have a habit of budgeting and keep track of your expenses. If you are on your own for the first time, you will be dazzled how easily you can run out of
money. Especially if you just come to a new country, there are so many unexpected expenses that will totally disrupt your plan. I would recommend in a safe means keep a spare couple of hundred dollars. That may be a life-saver sometimes (especially in the first couple of weeks/month).

**Communicating back home:**
- **Phone plans**
  - The three main companies for mobile plans are Telstra, Optus and Vodafone. Telstra and Optus are the higher class one (as in more expensive). The reception is better and faster internet. Vodafone is at a better value, despite the reception can be a little disappointing at places. As we have the benefit of Wechat, I assume calls to China is not as significant to us.
- The standard mailing service to China (by air) is 7-15 days.
- Skype, Wechat, QQ, weibo, RenRen, are all useful.
- Melbourne is 2 hours ahead of Beijing time (April to October). During summer time (October to April) is 3 hours ahead of Beijing time. (So when you are about to go to bed, your family may just finish dinner.)

**Sports & Culture:**
- AFL (Australian Football League) is very popular in the Melbourne area.
- Australians like muscle building. If you are a muscle builder, you can find many friends when you hit the gym.
- Greet people using “Good day mate!” will instantly bring you closer to the person you are talking to. (Though it may be awkward to do it the first time, it will come easier with practice.)

**Things to bring:**
- If you are a big tea fan like I am, you can bring some authentic Chinese tea. That can be both for our own drinking and a token of friendship at many occasions. (Just remember to report and go through at the custom and let them check those to avoid any trouble.)
- Many Chinese dried foods are available in Melbourne, but at a much more expensive price. So if you have room in your luggage, it may be a good idea to bring some with you to reduce your nostalgia. But same as tea, just remember to report and go through at the custom and let them check those to avoid any trouble.
- Charger converter is very crucial. I would advise you to bring many. As many of your Chinese electronics have a charger that cannot be plugged in Australian standard power points, those converters will be incredibly handy and way cheaper in China.

**Flights available:**
- Many airlines offer direct flight or with one transfer. You can either check Ctrip (携程) offers or go directly to the airline websites.
Climate:
- Melbourne is well known for having all seasons in a day. Remember to bring a jacket with you at all times to avoid being frozen at night.
- Melbourne can rain at any time. Having an umbrella, raincoat or a waterproof jacket can be a life-saver when situations present themselves.
- It is much cooler and windier than all southern cities and more humid than many northern Chinese cities. (If you are someone who enjoys cooler weather like me, you shall enjoy it.)

Important notes:
- The Australian accent and local language (slang) can be very confusing when you first arrive. So it will be a good idea to watch some Australians shows before you come to Melbourne. Otherwise, don’t hesitate to ask the locals to repeat at a slower pace. The local people are very nice and they will be willing to help you out.
- Bring with you a good laptop, as your studying may be heavily dependent on that.
- Monash has many Chinese students (especially in commerce degree), though there aren’t many international Chinese in the nutrition and dietetics cohorts, you can easily friend Chinese students on campus.

你好吗
Ni Hao Ma?
How are you?

Sourced from: MUMUS ISC Pre-Departure Guide for International Students 2016
STUDENT SHARING (HONG KONG)

Introduction:
Congratulations on being accepted by Monash University’s Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences! We can’t wait for you to join us here in Melbourne! As a Hong Konger myself, I must say that life in Melbourne is quite different than in Hong Kong. Although travelling around the city may seem to take more effort and a lot of shops close super early, Melbourne is one of the most livable cities in the world and most of us find it very easy to settle in!

Academic:
- **Studying**
  - Studying here in Monash University will be different from when you were studying for the HKDSEs. First of all, the Australian school system focuses more on discussion-based learning rather than rote learning (although there’s quite a bit of rote learning in certain subjects of the dietetics course). Secondly, the way of studying in university is not the same as in secondary school. There is a lot more self-learning involved because you will need to spend time in looking for resources, guidelines and additional papers to read. Extra time is spent occasionally on translation with English being my second language. However, it was overall a good experience and not too challenging for academic work.

- **Textbooks**
  - I suggest that textbooks should be bought after the semester has started, that way you will have an idea of which textbook is worth buying the hardcopy and which ones are better just to have an e-copy of. However, the books were very expensive, so you might want to find places that sell them at a lower cost! The Monash Marketplace sells second-hand books. Otherwise, online sites like Amazon or Booktopia are good places to start looking for cheap textbooks.

Cost of Living:
- **Exchange rate**: 1 AUD ≈ 6HKD (updated in July 2017)
- Generally, the cost of living here in Australia is more expensive than that of Hong Kong. To give you an overall idea, the average costs are:
  - Meals on campus: $6-10 AUD per meal
  - Groceries and eating out: $80 to $200 per week
  - Phone: $20 to $40 per month
  - Internet: $20 per month
  - Accommodation on campus: $220 to $300 AUD
  - Accommodation off campus: $200 per week (living in the city)
  - Public transport: Train from campus to the city: $4.10; Bus; Taxi (very expensive, use as last resort); It’s easier to drive within Melbourne as
timetables for public transport during weekends can be infrequent.

Communicating back home:
- **Phone plans**
  - You can choose from Telstra, Optus, Virgin and Vodaphone
- **Calling home using Wifi**
  - Skype, FaceTime, Whatsapp call etc.
  - The time difference between Hong Kong and Melbourne is 2/3 hours.

Sports & Culture:
- **Aussie rules football** is very popular here in Victoria, the AFL (Australian Football League) is something that a lot of people talk about here!
- **Monash gym membership** = $660 AUD/year (on-campus residents are eligible to get a discount!) Or you could have casual workouts on a single price visit.
- **Cuisines**: I like the diverse food culture in Melbourne! You can find different cuisines not only in the CBD area, but also in some other suburbs, like Korean, Greek, Lebanese, Mexican etc.
- **Alcohol**: For those who do not drink, it is completely fine to stay away from alcohol, no pressure there! But for those who do, there are places that you can explore in Melbourne CBD! Just to be aware that alcohol consumption in certain on-campus accommodations are not allowed.

Things to bring:
- **Clothes**
  - You will need both your summer and winter clothing.
- **Electronics**
  - E.g. Laptops, phones, camera, tablet, hairdryer
  - Australian plugs are different from Hong Kong, so you will need an adaptor. If you have a lot of electronic devices, I recommend bringing a cable extension.
- Things that you enjoy doing! E.g. books, musical instruments

Flights available:
- Flight duration is around 9 to 10 hours.
- Airlines that you can consider: Qantas, Singapore Airlines, Cathay Pacific etc.
- **Note**: If you are taking a connection flight via Brisbane or Sydney, there is a chance that you will miss your second flight, because you are transferring from an international terminal to the domestic terminal and you will need to go through bag-drop again so if you can get a flight directly to Melbourne is saves a lot of trouble.

Climate:
- Many people you speak to will tell you that “Melbourne has four seasons in a day”, and it is!
- The temperature varies quite a lot from day to night. During the summer, it would
be wise to put on a hat, sunscreen and sunglasses, because Australia experiences high UV light levels. During the winter, it rains frequently and is especially windy on Clayton campus.

Religion:
- Australia has a very multi-cultural society, you will find people coming from all over the world. For example Chinese, Japanese, Indians, Siri Lankans etc. and they will have different beliefs. So it is important that we all respect other people’s opinions and culture.

Important notes:
- I recommend completing all vaccinations in Hong Kong before coming to Australia and bring your vaccination card.
- Apply for accommodation EARLY because they are all first-come first-served.
- Get along with your local coursemates and build relationships with them because you will need to support each other in another country for years.
- Try to have access in watching local comedies or TV shows as this will improve your understanding of the Australian culture (slangs) and improve your listening skills.
- Don’t just study - explore and enjoy Melbourne’s culture, scenery and food!

By: (July 2017/ Kathy Leung and Flora Cheung/ Year 4 BND/ Hong Kong)
STUDENT SHARING (INDIA)

Introduction:
Congratulations on choosing to start your nutrition and dietetics education at Monash! Although it’s definitely far away from home, the people you meet will make Melbourne a new home for you in no time. Get excited for the brunch and café culture, the unpredictable weather and incredible multi-cultural environment that awaits you!

Academic:
- **Studying**
  - The Australian teaching style is all about application of knowledge. As opposed to teaching back home, where you may have been spoon-fed the information, the teaching here is delivered and you are tested on how you apply the knowledge in different contexts. (Although there are a few subjects that you need to memorise a lot of concepts!)
- **Textbooks and Stationary**
  - Definitely purchase your stationary and textbooks (if possible) from home. These items are much more expensive in Australia.

Cost of Living:
- Exchange rates: Always variable so it’s best to keep looking it up and watching the trend.
- Consider costs of accommodation, food and fuel when making your weekly budget.
- The average price to eat at a mid-price restaurant would be AUD15-20, not including drinks or desserts.
- If you live at Clayton, there are plenty of Indian restaurants (would recommend Anshumann) and Indian grocery stores where you’ll feel right at home!

Communicating back home:
- **Phone plans**
  - The cost of calling home would depend on the phone company you’re with but most of the popular big brands (Amaysim, Vaya) have great deals per month that give you unlimited calling to a number of countries, including India!
  - The average cost of a call to India, if not covered by your phone plan is about AUD1.2 per minute (as per Optus).
  - The average cost of SMS is 50c per SMS (as per Optus).
Sports & Culture:
- Cricket is definitely part of the sporting culture here so you’ll have a large fan base as well as plenty of opportunities to watch your men in blue play when they’re in Australia.
- The MCG (Melbourne Cricket Ground) is the place to be if you’re after a live cricket match during the season.

Things to bring:
- Melbourne has a large Indian population and so you’re likely to find most of the things you need here.
- Bring some cultural clothing if you plan to attend specific events, would be handy!

Climate:
- It depends where in India you’re coming from but the reliable statement for Melbourne is ‘dress for 4 seasons in a day’. This means carry a jacket, umbrella and wear layers so that you’re always ready for whichever season Melbourne wants to throw at you!
- The sun is particularly intense here so definitely load up on that sunscreen!

Religion:
- Melbourne is incredibly multi-cultural and so there are a number of temples, churches and mosques available to attend depending on where you stay once you’re here.

Important notes:
- MICS (Monash Indian Cultural Society) is the one to join! They host a lot of events such as curry nights, chat nights and Bollywood movie nights where you can meet a host of new people. So look out for their stall during orientation week.

Sourced from: MUMUS ISC Pre-Departure Guide for International Students 2016
Introduction:
Congratulations and welcome to joining us in the nutrition science or dietetics program! Being a Malaysian coming for university studies, I've got a few things to share with you and hopefully you’ll find it easier to settle down in Australia.

Academic:
- **Studying**
  - Communicating with local people while studying in Australia was the greatest issue for me as English was not my first language. I spent a lot of time trying to understand what others were saying at the beginning and I wasn’t confident enough to speak. Secondly, I felt quite lonely when I first moved here. However, after some time, I have managed to meet different friends from not just my home country, but also with different cultural backgrounds because Monash is very culturally diverse! I got more opportunities to practice my spoken English and now I’m much more confident in speaking with others.

Cost of Living:
- Exchange rate: 1 AUD ≈ 3.4 MYR (updated in July 2017)
- Generally, the cost of living here in Australia is a bit more expensive than that of Malaysia. To give you an overall idea, the average costs are:
  - Groceries and eating out ≈ $100 per week (similar)
  - Phone ≈ $30 per month for prepaid plans (much cheaper in Malay!)
  - Internet ≈ $69 per month (this plan has limited data usage of 50GB only)
  - Accommodation off campus ≈ $850 per month (living in the city)

Communicating back home:
- **Phone plans**
  - You can choose from Telstra, Optus, Virgin and Vodaphone
- **Calling home using Wifi**
  - Skype, FaceTime, Whatsapp call etc.
  - The time difference between Malaysia and Melbourne is 3 hours.

Culture:
- Food culture: Melbourne is famous for its coffee and you can easily find a coffee place nearby. There are plenty of cafes for brunch which I enjoy while exploring Melbourne!
- Art culture: There is street art everywhere! You can find them in the city area, particularly near Flinders Street Station, e.g. Hoiser Lane. So if you are an arts
lover, you should definitely explore the arts in Melbourne.

**Flights available:**
- Flight duration is roughly 7.5 hours.
- Airlines that you can consider: Malaysia Airlines, Airasia etc.

**Climate:**
- The weather in Melbourne will surprise you and the first winter is always the worst! So always bring an umbrella even if you find it sunny in the morning because it can suddenly rain during the day.

**Important notes:**
- Rents can be very expensive depending on location.
- Macca’s = McDonald!

By: (July 2017/ Sophie Yew/ Year 3 BNutSc/ Malaysia)
STUDENT SHARING (SINGAPORE)

Introduction:
Hello! First of all, congratulations on getting into Monash Nutrition Science or Dietetics. Your next few years of life are going to be based here in Melbourne. It’s going to be exciting but also quite nerve-wracking. New friends, new environment, new food, new culture or even more! But don’t be afraid, this is all part of the experience which will make you enjoy your life in Melbourne. This document will give you a bit of help with preparing for that transition. Do take this information with a pinch of salt though – after all, the fun lies in experiencing the unknown!

Academic:
- Studying
  - The 1st semester is all about familiarizing yourself! Spend your first semester understanding your study techniques (e.g. hand-written notes? Printed notes? Laptop notes? Using an iPad?) and what suits you best. This is very important because it allows you to study effectively as you progress along your study journey. You can then purchase textbooks from seniors in Monash who are graduating or no longer require their textbooks.
- Stationery
  - Stationery is expensive in Australia so if you intend on doing heaps of drawing or notes, do bring stuff from home.

Cost of Living:
- Exchange rate: 1 AUD ≈ 1 SGD (updated in July 2017)
- The exchange rates have been pretty favourable for Singaporeans over the past few months. There are multiple ways of remitting money (telegraphic transfers vs using banks with a presence in both Singapore & Australia e.g. Citibank).
- Food is very expensive relative to Singapore, which is why most people tend to cook their own meals rather than eating out all the time. However, if you do have some cash to spare, there are many brunch cafes to visit.
- To give you a general idea on the cost of living in Australia, the average costs are:
  - Meals on campus ≈ $6-10 AUD per meal
  - Accommodation on campus ≈ $1000 to 1200 AUD per month
  - Accommodation off campus ≈ $800 to 900 per month

Communicating back home:
- Phone plans
  - You can choose from Telstra, Optus, Virgin and Vodaphone
- Calling home using wifi
  - Skype, FaceTime and even free international calls that you can make if you end
up having certain providers such as Optus (e.g. Optus gives you $5 worth of international calling credit if you purchase a monthly $30 prepaid plan).

Sports & Culture:
- Melbourne is perhaps the most diverse city in Australia. People are very friendly and you will find it relatively easy to strike a conversation with strangers (e.g. at a traffic light). It is also generally a very accepting society, where cultures merge rather than collide.
- Australians are very curious to know more about your culture so it’s merely a matter of being friendly and putting yourself out there!

Things to bring:
- Bring photos or items that remind you of home! It definitely helps having some pictures that remind you of family and friends.
- Traditionally “Singaporean” food and snacks can be found in most shopping centres so there isn’t much of a need to bring your Indomee’s and Milo’s.

Flights available:
- Flight tickets can go as low as $200 (one-way with 20kg of baggage) or $600 to $800 (one-way if you want a more comfortable travelling experience)
- Airlines that you can consider: Emirates, SQ, Qantas

Climate:
- Melbourne is much drier than Singapore. Winters get pretty windy and rainy, so brace yourself for something really different!

Religion:
- Almost every religion has some presence at Monash. A lot of Singaporeans studying have their religious places of worship (churches, temples, mosques etc.) Once you land in Melbourne, you’ll have many seniors to speak with about your options!

Important notes:
- Some Australians do have slightly stronger accents, and it may be difficult to pick it up initially. Don’t be afraid to ask people to repeat themselves and speak slowly if you are worried you may be difficult to understand.
- I would recommend joining local societies during orientation week e.g. Monash University Singaporean Students Society, to surround yourself with people coming from your hometown and make yourself feel like home!
- Do explore more of Melbourne’s culture besides studying, there are many pretty cafes here!

Sourced from: MUMUS ISC Pre-Departure Guide for International Students 2016
STUDENT SHARING (VIETNAM)

Introduction:
Congratulations! You made it into the prestigious Monash University! Having won yourself a spot here means you are awesome. There will be ups and downs but ultimately you will have a wonderful time for growth and enjoyment in Australia.

Academic:
- Textbooks and Stationary
  - You don’t have to buy any textbooks or materials beforehand. Wait until you arrive here and receive more advice from the teaching staff and senior students before buying any books as they can be expensive. You can always borrow any books from the library.
  - Wondering what you can do to prepare for the year? English!! There is a lot of both written and oral communication required in the course and working with other students in teams is essential so you need to be comfortable with your English. If you are not, don’t sit in silence. Ask for help. Both staff and students are generally very happy to help or recommend the services that can help you.

Cost of Living:
- You will need to pay for the following during your time at Monash.
  - Rent: depending on where you rent, price varies from $100-$250/week/person
  - Bills: might be included in accommodation rent but if they are not you should allow $20-30/week/person for electricity, water and gas bills.
  - Meals and groceries: the cost will vary depending on how much you eat and whether you share meals with anyone else. If you cook all your meals (the cheapest option), it will cost you $20-$50/week. If you eat out it will cost about $10 for take-away and up to $30 for a meal in a restaurant.
  - Utensils: find out if your accommodation has enough cooking utensils and cutlery. You can get these from local grocery shops at low prices if you need to. But if you have spare room in your luggage bring over your favorite personal cup. It is nice to have your own familiar things.
  - Clothing: depending where you shop, clothes can be cheap or expensive. If you are going on placements (in Dietetics and 3rd year Nutrition Science) you will need some professional clothes suitable for the workplace so you may want to bring these from home.
  - Overall: the cost of living can be $10,000 - $16,000 a year if you are not working or living with a relative.
Communicating back home:

- **Phone plans**
  - The most expensive form of communication. Not the choice for long family conversations.
  - SIM cards are available from corner stores and post offices ($10-20)
  - International SMS: Lebara mobile, Lyca mobile (8c/min (landline), 9c/min (mobile), flag fall 29c) Visit their websites to find out more about charges
  - Australia Post: easy if have small things to send.

- **Calling home using wifi**
  - The best and cheapest way to keep in contact with family and friends back home is to use internet powered applications such as Skype, Facetime, Viber and Whatsapp.

Sports & Culture:

- Monash has many sports teams and fun/culture/entertainment clubs. You will find out all about these on Orientation week.
- There is a Sport Centre with a gym, swimming pools, basketball, badminton, squash and tennis courts and daily fitness classes. Membership and hiring rates can be found at [http://www.monash.edu/sport](http://www.monash.edu/sport)

Things to bring:

- Most things can be bought here due to the multitude of shops in Melbourne, however items are more expensive in general.
- If you bring any food make sure you declare all food items at customs on entry into Australia to avoid heavy fines!

Flights available:

- Vietnam Airlines has direct flights to Melbourne from Ho Chi Minh City. If you are from Ha Noi or other cities, you will first have to catch a flight to Ho Chi Minh City and from there fly to Melbourne.
- Other airlines might be cheaper but require transit. You can consider: Air Asia, Malaysian airlines, Singapore airlines, Emirates etc.

Climate:

- The temperature varies between 15-40 degrees Celsius in summer and 3-20 degrees Celsius in winter.
- It can be rainy during autumn and winter, but do not bring raincoats (the ones we usually wear in Vietnam). People here use an umbrella with a warm coat. If they don’t use an umbrella when it rains, it means that they have a car or they don’t care about getting wet.
- Rain and wind are synonymous with Melbourne weather and can occur on any day.
- Wear layers of clothing and always have an umbrella and sweater on hand
Important notes:

- SMSV, MAMSA, Hong Kong students, Monash Vietnamese, SAM, MUMSU, MCCC are some of the student clubs that have been set up by students from other countries. Everyone is welcome to join these clubs and they are a great way to make new friends.

- Monash Vietnamese societies include:
  - VSA (Vietnamese Student Association)
  - MVISC (Monash Vietnamese International Student Club) – based at Caulfield campus, composed largely of postgraduate students but their field trips are definitely worth joining if you can find a friend to go with.
  - These clubs both have Facebook pages.

- Bank details: There are branches of the Commonwealth Bank and ANZ Bank in Vietnam. These are popular banks with many branches in Australia. If you register an account with one of these banks before you leave, you can activate the account in Australia and receive your transaction card. Alternatively you can register a new account in Australia.

Sourced from: MUMUS ISC Pre-Departure Guide for International Students 2016
Acknowledgements:

This document would not exist without the work of the Monash University Medical Undergraduate Society (MUMUS) International Student Committee. It was their concept and they created the first version suitable for medical students arriving to commence studies in medicine at Monash University.

A huge thankyou to Kathy Leung, a final year Bachelor Nutrition and Dietetics student who undertook the task of converting the MUMUS document into one that focused more on the issues that International students in the Nutrition Science and Dietetics programs might find useful.

Where possible, Nutrition and Dietetic students from the countries covered have added the things they thought would have been useful to know prior to coming and once you've arrived in Melbourne and at Monash University. Otherwise we have used the information from the medical student version.

Each year the document will be reviewed and your feedback on the information provided and suggestions for improvement are most welcome.