



INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ORIENTATION HANDBOOK



School Contacts

School name: Birrong Girls High School

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Birrong, NSW, 2143

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Email: birronggir-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au

Website: <https://birronggir-h.schools.nsw.gov.au/>

CRICOS Provider name: NSW Department of Education

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INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ORIENTATION HANDBOOK

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About the School

1. Principal's Message –

Zena Dabaja



Welcome to Birrong Girls High. We are a school that takes pride in its longstanding reputation for providing quality education through a holistic approach that incorporates promotion of wellbeing, work ethic and positive and respectful relationships with all members of the community and the environment. We embrace your daughter and your family into our school community and offer unbending support for the duration of your child's enrolment with us.

For a school community to be effective, it needs to share a common commitment and to inspire active involvement from students, staff and parents. Accordingly, there are mutual expectations of each of these groups.

Students are expected to be involved in, and to take responsibility for their own learning. They need to come to school regularly and to be prepared for the day's lessons. Work also needs to be revised every night and students need to be well-organised so that they are able to complete homework tasks, assignments and assessments on time. Beyond the classroom, students are encouraged to widen their skills and experiences by taking advantage of the opportunities offered through diverse extra-curricular activities run at lunchtime or after school. Active participation, taking responsibility, and having a positive attitude, will allow students to encounter stimulating and rewarding school experiences.

Parents also have an important role to play in overseeing homework, in parent/ teacher activities, and attending the Parents and Citizens Association or volunteer programs in the school. Our parent body also endorses the wearing of uniform and has been integral to the development of the current uniform and uniform policy. Legally, parents also need to ensure that their daughters are attending school regularly and that they inform the school via text message or provide notes to explain any absences. We encourage your interest in all aspects of school life and value the perspectives and skills that you can contribute.

Our staff have a successful and celebrated reputation for their provision of quality teaching and promoting all girls to become successful life-long learners. Our teachers are experts in identifying the different needs of students in their care and work together

with other specialist staff to ensure that each student is developed to her potential. They will provide formal progress reports to parents twice per year on each girl in the school. Student Advisers and the Counsellors are also available to support parents if you have any concerns by telephoning for an interview or they in turn may contact you if a problem arises. All staff at the school have high expectations of their students in terms of effort, participation, behaviour, presentation of work and progress. We encourage all parents to work in a respectful partnership with our staff to achieve what is ultimately our shared priority – achieving the best possible outcomes for your daughter.

A strong partnership between the home and the school has proven benefits to a student's educational progress. We warmly invite you and your daughter to be strong and positive participants in the learning experience. I wish you and your daughter well in your years at Birrong.

2. School Profile

BIRRONG GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

To achieve personal excellence and success in a safe learning environment.

Birrong Girls' High School is a large comprehensive and culturally diverse school that places a strong emphasis on quality teaching, values and academic excellence. Our motto, **ad astra** (reaching for the stars) emphasises our high expectations for both teaching and learning. In acknowledgement of its achievements the school was the recipient of the Australian Government National Award for Quality Schooling.

There is strong community support and a consistent demand for places because of its reputation as a safe, caring and happy school. Most students plan for university study or TAFE at the completion of Year 12. The school offers a broad curriculum and encourages participation beyond the classroom.

Gifted and talented classes operate in Years 7 and 8 whilst opportunities to pursue excellence in the academic, sporting, technological, creative and performance areas cater for a broad spectrum of interests from Years 7 to 12. Girls have been very successful in national and state academic competitions as well as receiving awards for debating, drama, art, sport, citizenship and environmental protection. The Student Representative Council and prefects are provided with training and have distinct roles in promoting unity, raising issues and developing initiatives.

SCHOOL VALUES

<p>PERSONAL EXCELLENCE ('Ad astra')</p> <p>This means we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn to the best of our ability • Communicate and pursue our high expectations • Value original ideas and achievement in academic, creative and sporting pursuits • Model and value intellectual curiosity, creativity and critical thinking • Celebrate our achievements 	<p>RESPECT</p> <p>This means we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are honest and courteous and use appropriate language • Understand and value the social and cultural backgrounds of students, staff and the wider community • Care for our community and create an environment that fosters appropriate behaviour • Value experience, expertise and authority
<p>RESPONSIBILITY</p> <p>This means we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think before we act • Accept the consequences of our actions • Take our work seriously and allow all lessons to proceed without interruption • Arrive to school and class punctually and bring our equipment for all lessons • Encourage others to follow our school Code of Behaviour 	<p>COOPERATION</p> <p>This means we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work together towards common goals • Support each other as learners • Follow our school Code of Behaviour • Share our ideas and value the contributions of others • Negotiate with others to resolve issues and conflict
<p>UNDERSTANDING, TOLERANCE AND INCLUSION</p> <p>This means we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value and respect cultural diversity and individual difference • Treat others with fairness, impartiality and respect • Participate in the range of individual and group experiences offered by our school • Develop harmonious relationships within & between groups 	<p>INTEGRITY</p> <p>This means we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are honest, trustworthy and reliable • Display strength of character • Have pride in all we do • Value others and their positive contributions

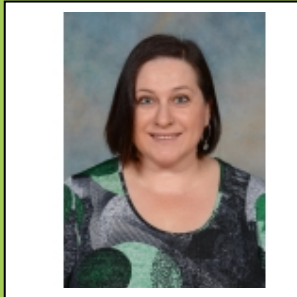
CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

- ❖ Learn to the best of our ability
- ❖ Take pride in our school and ourselves
- ❖ Be courteous to all staff and students
- ❖ Be honest and fair
- ❖ Wear the school uniform with pride
- ❖ Respect people, property and the environment
- ❖ Value individual differences - be tolerant
- ❖ Maintain a good name for our school
- ❖ Be punctual to all classes

Developed by the students and ratified by all members of the school community.

3. School Directory

School Staff



Maria Parmaxidis
International Student Coordinator (ISC)

Ms Parmaxidis can speak to you regarding any concerns you may have about your school, health, homestay issues or if you require a leave request or change of address form. She is located in the History/LOTE staffroom



Renee George
Deputy Principal

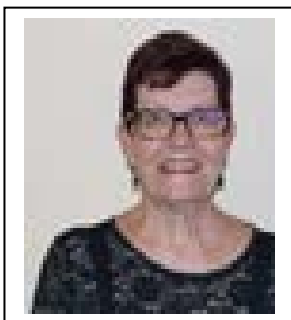


Kelly Andrews
Deputy Principal



Athena Tselepi
School Counsellor

S Tselepi can speak to you if you have concerns, feel unhappy or are homesick. She/he is located next to the support staffroom



Barbara Sutton
School SAM-School Administrative officer

Ms Sutton can help you if you are trying to find your International Student Coordinator or counsellor, or need help in the absence of the International Student Coordinator.

Year Advisers

If you need help with a problem or feel unsafe at school at any time, go and see your International Student Coordinator or one of the staff listed here 😊

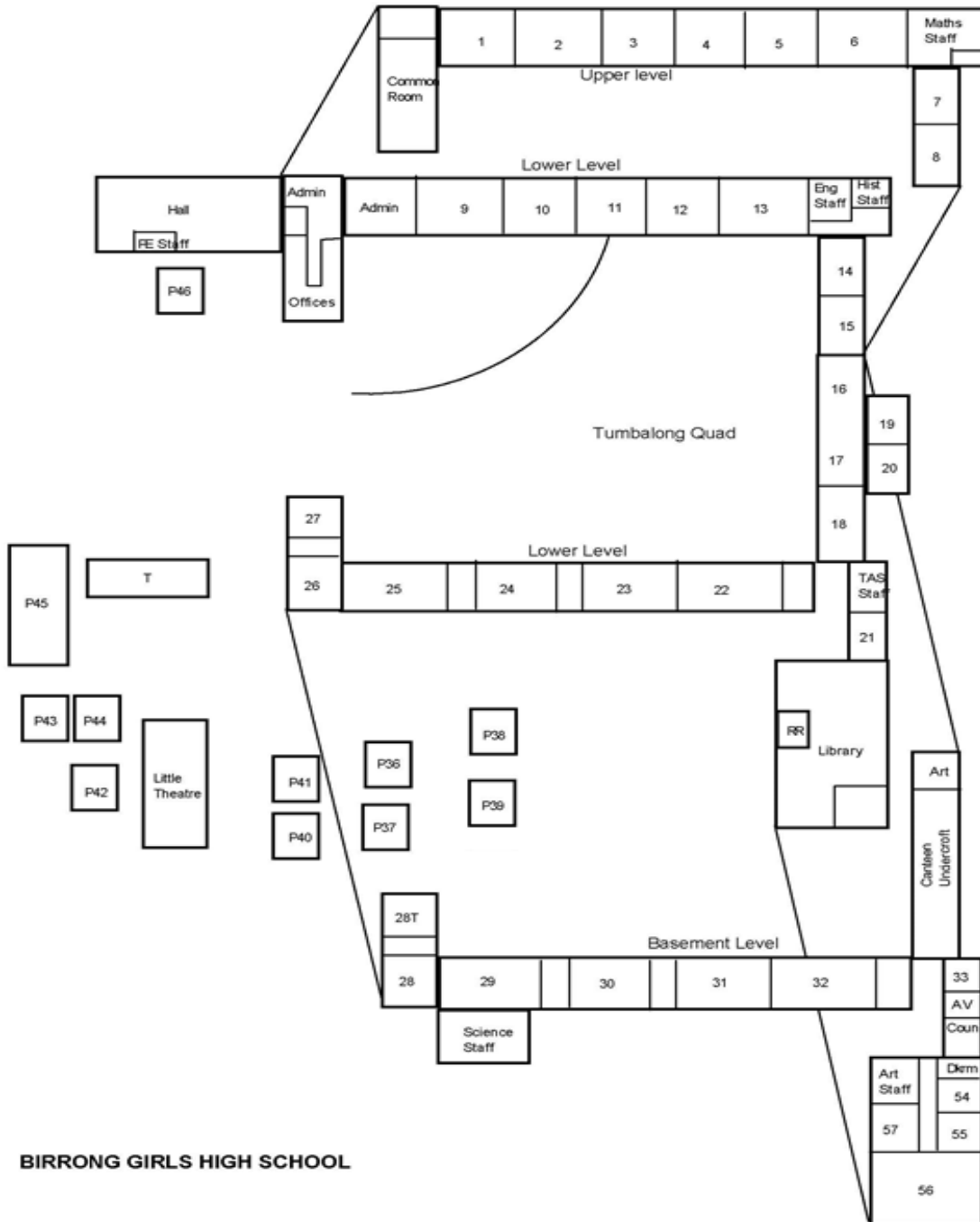
Your Year Adviser can speak to you if you have any concerns about your school work.

Year 7	Ms R. Caravas and Ms M. Legg
Year 8	Ms A. Morozov and Ms E. Nixon
Year 9	Ms N. Shinas and Ms M. McEwen
Year 10	Ms C. Anthony and Ms C. Moxon
Year 11	Ms C. Rothwell and Mr P. Farrugia
Year 12	Ms V. Lazarevski, Ms M Parmaxidis and Ms D Waltho

Head Teachers

English	Ms L. Bolanca (Relieving)
History/LOTE	Ms L. Hawk (Relieving)
Mathematics	Ms A. Atteya (Relieving)
Science	Mr E. Saule
Social Science	Ms Samar Elmir
TAS	Mr M. Da Cunha
CAPA	Ms T. Winchcombe
PDHPE	Ms C. Lord
Welfare, ESL and Support	Mr Ali
Female Students	Ms Salvagio
Administration	Mr Clark

4. School Map and facilities



Computers: You can use the computers in the library and get help from Mr Scott Boner if you have problems with the computers.

First Aid: Ms P. Paul is located in the Science staffroom and Ms Russell is located in the Finance office.

The counsellor: Ms Tselepi is available in the counsellor's office next to the the support staffroom.

School location: Cooper Rd Birrong 2143
Closest train station is Birrong. Walk along Teresa Street, turn right onto Marmion Street and Left onto Cooper Road.



SCHOOL BUS TIMETABLE

T: (02) 8700 0555
www.transdevnsw.com.au



Opal, the only way to travel to and from school!
 Although some might have a free pass,
**all students must tap on and tap off, every time
 to validate their trip.**

Report lost, stolen, or damaged card immediately.
 While waiting for the replacement Opal card, students must
 use a Child/Youth Opal card or purchase a Single Trip ticket.
 Visit transportnsw.info/school-students or call **131 500**

Birrong Girls High School (Birrong)

T: (02) 9644 5057

Route Number	Departure Time	MORNING Route Description
908	07:22	From Guildford Station via Railway (R) Mountford (R) Talbot (L) Guildford (R) Excelsior (L) Rawson (L) Clyde (R) Mona (L) Cumberland (R) Normanby, Queen (L) Park (R) South (Auburn Station 07:50) (R) Auburn (R) Queen (L) Harrow (R) Mary (L) Park (L) Clarke (L) Graham (R) Vaughan (R) Woodburn (L) Kerrs (R) Brixton (R) Hyde Park (L) Fourth (L) Kibo (R) Nottinghill (R) Amy (L) Auburn (L) Bagdad, Cooper to School (08:13)
S401	07:46	From Buist & Hector St via Buist (R) Rose (L) Brodie (L) Auburn (R) Ferrier, Bruncker (L) Cooper to School (07:58)
909	07:57	From Bankstown Station (South Tce) via (R) Overbridge (R) North Tce (L) Fetherstone (R) The Mall (L) Jacobs (R) Bankstown Central (08:00) (R) Jacobs (L) Rickard (R) Meredith, The Boulevarde (L) George (R) Avoca (L) Palomar (R) Woodbine (R) Ashby (L) Bruncker (R) Cooper to School (08:08)

Route Number	Departure Time	AFTERNOON Route Description
S500	14:55	To Bankstown North via Cooper (L) Bruncker (R) Ashby (L) Woodbine (L) Palomar (R) Avoca (L) George (R) The Boulevarde to Highway (15:10)
908	14:55	To Guildford Station via Cooper (L) Rodd (R) Auburn (R) Amy (L) Nottinghill (L) Kibo (R) Fourth (R) Hyde Park (L) Brixton (L) Kerrs (R) Woodburn (L) Vaughan (L) Graham (R) Clarke (R) Park (R) Beatrice (L) Susan (L) Queen (R) Civic (L) Kerr (R) Auburn (L) South (Auburn Station 15:25) (L) Park (R) Queen, Normanby (L) Cumberland (R) Mona (L) Clyde (R) Rawson (R) Excelsior (L) Guildford to Guildford Station (15:50)
S406	14:57	To cnr Buist & Hector St via Cooper (L) Rodd (L) Auburn (R) Brodie (R) Rose (L) Buist to Hector St (15:12)

5. Support Services

Counselling

Ms A. Tselepi is the School Counsellor and she is located next to the Support Staffroom.

What is a School Counsellor?

In all New South Wales government schools, there is a counsellor who is a qualified teacher and educational psychologist with special training to help students with any problems they are having, or to help them get information they may need.

This service is free and confidential.

Why do students see the Counsellor?

Academic problems

- Worries about progress
- Indecision about staying at school
- No quiet place to study at home

Personal problems

- Sadness in missing your country/friends
- Feeling lonely at school
- Home problems such as not getting along with family members
- Feeling anxious about making friends

Appointments:

- You can ask your International Student Coordinator (Ms Parmaxidis), your Year Advisor or the front office staff to help you make an appointment.
- You can go the counsellor's office at recess or lunch to make an appointment.

ESL Support

- You can go to the Learning Support Staffroom to make an appointment for additional ESL assistance
- English as an Additional Language/Dialect teachers provide support for the ongoing English language development of students whose first language is not English
- Ms Trinh, Ms Lee and Ms Athos are ESL teachers who can help you with your school work

Year Advisers

- Your Year Advisers can help you any welfare issues or concerns that you may experience

Subject Head Teachers

- Head Teachers can provide you with additional curriculum support.

Head Teacher Female Students

- Our Head Teacher Female Students can also help you with any welfare and wellbeing issues.

Career Advisers

- The careers adviser has information about a variety of jobs and courses which are available to young people leaving school.
- The careers adviser, Kirby Wailes, organises the School to Work program, work experience and work placement programs which have proved to be of great benefit for our students.
- The careers adviser also organises Vocational Education and Training (VET) and other TAFE courses.
- The Careers Office can be found in the school library.
- Students are encouraged to see the careers adviser when they begin thinking about a possible future career or path for study.

Homework Centre

- The Homework Centre is a place where you have access to computers, the internet, books and teachers to help you complete your homework and assessments. You can complete homework in a quiet area free from distractions.
- The Homework Centre is open Monday to Thursday from 2:50 to 4:50 pm. Remember that the Centre is closed on Wednesdays of Week 3 and Week 8 because of staff meetings and also when there is a parent teacher interview afternoon.
- Please get a permission slip from Mr Ali and return it before you attend the Homework Centre

ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT

Students in our classes who experience difficulties in basic areas of learning are provided additional support.

- Learning and Support Teachers work collaboratively with classroom teachers to provide direct support for students through a range of strategies including the areas of social integration, language and communication, literacy, numeracy and behaviour.
- School Learning Support Officers (SLSO's) provide specialist assistance to enable students identified as having special learning needs to perform tasks on the same basis as other students.

6. Rules and Policies

Bell times

When D.E.A.R. is held

Mon., Wed., Thurs., Fri.

Period 1	8.30	-	9.45
Roll Call) D.E.A.R.)	9.45	-	10.05
Recess	10.05	-	10.25
Period 2	10.25	-	11.40
Period 3	11.40	-	12.55
Lunch	12.55	-	1.35
Period 4	1.35	-	2.50

When **no** D.E.A.R.

Tuesday

Period 1	8.30	-	9.45
Roll Call	9.45	-	9.55
Scripture) Assembly)	9.55	-	10.35
Recess	10.35	-	11.00
Period 2	11.00	-	12.15
Lunch	12.15	-	12.55
Period 3	12.55	-	2.10
Period 4	2.10	-	2.50

Note: D.E.A.R. = **D**rop **E**verything **A**nd **R**ead

Homework Policy

All students from Years 7-12 are expected to regularly complete homework.

Homework usually consists of:

- reading silently and/or aloud
- assignment work/essay writing
- completing short answer questions
- discussing issues and events with family or community members



It is expected that students in Years 7 and 8 should be spending **ONE HOUR** on homework per night and that students in Years 9 and 10 should be spending **TWO HOURS** per night on homework.

Students should be aware of the date due for homework and present work on time.

If a student knows that she is going to be absent on a particular day, every effort should be made to have the work ready on the day she returns.

HOMework CENTRE

- The Homework Centre provides students with a supportive learning environment where trained teachers assist students with homework and study skills.
- The library facilities, including access to technology, are available to students attending to further support skill development.
- The Homework Centre operates Monday to Thursday from 2.50pm to 4.45pm. A permission slip is available from Reception.

UNIFORM POLICY

As stated in the school's Code of Behaviour, all students are expected to “wear the school uniform with pride.”

Junior Uniform – Years 7, 8, 9

Summer

- School dress in maroon, navy and white check and of approved length
- Approved white shirt with navy trim and BGHS logo or white polo shirt with school crest
- Navy tailored pants
- White ankle length socks
- Black leather lace up shoes to comply with the DoE's safety requirements

Winter

- Navy tailored pants
- Approved white shirt with navy trim and BGHS logo or white polo shirt with school crest
- Approved navy jumper with BGHS logo or sloppy joe with school crest
- Navy blazer with school crest (optional)
- White ankle length socks
- Black leather lace up shoes to comply with the DoE's safety requirements

Senior Uniform – Years 10, 11, 12

Summer

- Navy pleated school skirt or navy tailored pants
- Approved white shirt with navy trim and BGHS logo
- White ankle length socks
- Black leather lace up shoes to comply with the DoE's safety requirements

Winter

- Navy pleated skirt or navy tailored pants
- Approved white shirt with navy trim and BGHS logo
- Approved navy jumper with BGHS logo or sloppy joe with school crest
- Navy blazer with school crest (optional)
- White ankle length socks or black stockings
- Black leather lace up shoes to comply with the DoE's safety requirements
- Prefects are issued with a maroon school blazer

Variations for students of Muslim faith include:

- A navy or white hijab and approved long sleeved white shirt with navy trim and BGHS logo or approved long sleeved white polo shirt with school crest. A navy knee length skirt with loose black tights.

Sports/PE Uniform

- Maroon track pants or maroon shorts
- Short or long sleeved gold polo shirt with school crest
- Joggers and white ankle length socks

All items of clothing are available from Berelle School Wear, 3 Bellona Avenue, Regents Park, Phone: 9738 1264.

Jewellery

Jewellery is not part of the school uniform. However, the following items are permitted:

- a watch
- stud earrings
- a small signet ring

Any problems with compliance with this policy should be referred to the relevant Year Adviser or Head Teacher Female Students.

UNIFORM



Junior Girls' Uniform – Years 7, 8, 9



**Senior Girls' Uniform - Years 10, 11, 12
(Prefects in maroon school blazer)**



Sports Uniform

Approved Footwear
for Birrong Girls High School



Policies and procedures on absences, lateness or leave requests

ATTENDANCE

What do I do if I come late to school?

- School starts at 8.30am
- If you are late you must go to the late desk (near the Main Office) and get a blue late note.

What do I do with the blue late note?

- Show the blue late note to your class teacher and then see Mr Clark at Recess
- Take the blue late note home to your parents and ask them to complete the reason for your lateness
- Return the blue late note the next day by placing it in the blue letterbox on the Reception door.

What do I do if I know I will be late to school?

- You should bring a note from home explaining why you are late
- Hand this note in at the late desk (near the Main Office)
- You will be given a blue note
- Show this blue note to your class teacher and see Mr Clark at Recess.

What do I do if I come to school after roll call is finished?

- If you arrive late to school, no matter what time, you must always sign in at Reception
- Do not just go to class. The school must know that you are here and you must see Mr Clark at Recess.

What do I do if I am absent from school (text messaging)?

- Your parents are asked to ring and notify the school before you receive a text message
- Your parents are to reply to the text message on the day of your absence
- The text reply should include your name, roll class, date/s of absence and reason for absence
- The phone call or text reply explains the absence and there is no need to write an absence note
- If you are away for a few days your parents are to ring or reply via text and send a Doctor's Certificate to school when you return

What do I do if I am going on a holiday?

- You **must** inform the school that you are going on a holiday.
- Your parents must complete a Leave Approval Form (available from Reception) explaining where you are going, your reason for leave, your date of departure from school and your date of return to school
- If you are travelling by plane, you must provide a photocopy of the plane ticket with your Leave Approval Form
- **Please note: family holidays are no longer an accepted category for exemption from school attendance.**

Attendance requirements for student visa holders

- All students are expected to attend class every school day.
- International students are on a student visa and have additional attendance requirements as a condition of your student visa.
- International students must attend at least 80% of classes each term or you may be reported to Immigration.

What if my attendance falls below 80%?

- A **warning letter** will be sent to you, your parents and your carer in Australia.
- You will have to attend an interview and explain why you have been away.
- If you have any supporting documentation such as **medical certificates**, present them as evidence.
- Your attendance will continue to be closely monitored. If your attendance does not improve, you will be sent a **second and final warning letter**.

What if my attendance falls below 70%?

- An **Intention to Report** letter will be sent to you, your parents and your carer in Australia. This letter tells you the school's intention to report your low attendance to Immigration because you have breached your student visa condition.
- You will be given 20 school days to **appeal** to the Principal and explain why the school should not report you to Immigration.
- If your appeal is unsuccessful, you will be contacted by Department of Education International to let you know about your further appeal rights.
- If all your appeals are not successful, you will be reported to Immigration and they may decide to cancel your visa.

Policy on misbehaviour, suspension and expulsion

Suspension allows time for the issues that have led to this action to be explored and resolved. It also provides time for the school to plan appropriate support for (student's name) to assist with a successful and safe return to school.

Long suspension and expulsion

International students will be reported to Immigration if they are:

- suspended for 5 days or more;
- expelled from school because of serious misbehaviour/ involvement in criminal activities.
-

What happens if I am suspended or expelled from school?

- You will be given an **Intention to Report** letter and will be given 20 school days to appeal to the Principal and explain why the school should not report you to Immigration.
- If your appeal is unsuccessful, you will be contacted by Department of Education International to advise you of your further appeal rights.
- If all your appeals are unsuccessful, you will be suspended or expelled depending on the case. You will be reported to Immigration and they may decide to cancel your visa.
- Accommodation and welfare arrangements will be monitored for students under 18, during periods of suspension and DE International will be advised accordingly.

Policy on anti-bullying

Birrong Girls High School is a positive, inclusive and supportive learning environment where a culture of harmony and appreciation of difference is fostered. NO FORM of bullying, whether it be physical, verbal or psychological, instigated person to person or electronically will be tolerated at Birrong Girls High School.

All members of the school community have the right to a safe environment where they can work without fear of victimisation, intimidation or harassment from other members of the school community.

Understanding Bullying

Bullying is not an argument, fight or conflict between individuals where both parties are equally argumentative and aggressive with one another.

Bullying can be defined as intentional, repeated behaviour by an individual or group of individuals that causes distress, hurt, exclusion or undue psychological pressure. Bullying involves the abuse of power in relationships.

Bullying is a very serious issue for the perpetrator and for the victim. For the victim it is recognised to be the cause of truancy, school avoidance, unhappiness, underachievement, a decline in learning and a possible precursor to mental health issues. For the perpetrator, or bully, there is an increased probability that she will be an adult bully at home and in the work place. There is an increased probability that she will be a perpetrator of violence, such as domestic violence, and or be involved in criminal offences.

Bullying:

- devalues, isolates and frightens
- affects an individual's ability to achieve
- has long-term effects on those engaging in bullying behaviour, those who are the subjects of bullying behaviour and on onlookers or bystanders.

Bullying can be seen through actions such as:

- Harassment (related to one's gender, race, disability, sexual preferences, appearance or social or financial status), humiliation, domination, intimidation and victimisation of others.
- **Verbal behaviours** including:
name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, gossiping, spreading rumours, sarcasm, insults, intimidation or threats
- **Physical actions** including:
hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting;
invading personal space in an inappropriate manner;
interfering with another's property by touching, stealing, hiding, damaging, destroying property or using it without permission, forcing others to act against their will;

making inappropriate gestures and giving dirty looks;
recording an individual without her permission.

- **Social actions** including:
ignoring, excluding, isolating, ostracising, alienating or making inappropriate gestures.
- **Use of communication technologies** including:
malicious SMS, malicious email messages, malicious information, rumour, gossip or images placed on internet social sites such as Snapchat and Instagram, inappropriate use of camera phones, unauthorised use of photography or videoing, malicious creation of website, sending emails using another person's password.

Students, teachers, parents, caregivers and members of the wider school community have a responsibility to:

- promote positive relationships that accept and respect individual differences and the diversity of cultures within the whole school community
- actively work together to resolve incidents of bullying behaviour when they occur.

Students have a responsibility to:

- behave appropriately in accordance with the Birrong Girls High School Code of Behaviour and the School Values.
- report incidents of bullying to school staff whether as a victim or bystander (a person witnessing the bullying of another person)
- behave as bystanders in a supportive way to students who are being bullied, and to intervene where feasible. Bullying will continue to happen if good people do nothing.
- stand up for another student who is being bullied and seek the assistance of teachers immediately if the bullying doesn't stop.

Parents and caregivers have a responsibility to:

- support their children in all aspects of their learning
- assist their children in understanding bullying behaviour
- support children to deal effectively with bullying by developing positive responses to incidents of bullying
- report incidents of bullying to the Head Teacher Female Students, Year Advisers, School Counsellors or the school Deputies.

Reporting Incidents of Bullying:

It is important to report incidents of bullying behaviours immediately so that intervention can be implemented before the bullying behaviours escalate. The victim will be interviewed and supported and the perpetrator will be interviewed, monitored, counselled for behaviour modification and depending on the seriousness suspended from school.

Students

Depending on where the bullying takes place students need to report incidents of bullying immediately to the closest adult who is able to assist the student. This may be

to a staff member at school, to a parent or guardian if the incident occurs after she arrives home, to the bus driver or rail security officer if bullying occurs in transit.

At school students should report incidents of bullying to the **CLOSEST TEACHER TO THE INCIDENT**. THIS MAY BE THE classroom teacher, the teacher on playground duty or their Year Adviser.

Parents

Parents should contact the school **AS SOON AS** they become aware that their child is being bullied. Parents need to report the details to the Head Teacher Female Students, Year Adviser or Deputy Principal.

MOBILE PHONE POLICY

Birrong Girls High School is committed to the pursuit of excellence in education and equity of opportunity for every student, reflective of their capacity and respondent to their needs.

The new mobile phone policy has taken into consideration consistent findings in research, the recent NSW DoE recommendations from the review into the non-educational use of mobile devices and student engagement with the pre-existing mobile policy and its impact on the learning and teaching environment.

In principle, the school does not support the presence of mobile phones on the premises of BGHS and/or as part of the school day. The school day includes any school coordinated activities including excursions, field trips and activities in non-school settings or on site at other schools. Any amendment to the policy related to a specific school activity will be determined by the Principal at her discretion and will follow explicit guidelines. Students bring phones onto the BGHS grounds at their own risk and we do not take responsibility for loss, theft or damage that occurs as a result.

During the school day, parents and students are required to communicate directly with the relevant school personnel to discuss emerging issues, concerns or urgent needs. Once inside the school gates, all communication between students and parents must go through the school. Parents can do so by calling our front office on (02) 96445057 and the proper communication channels will be activated.

The expectations related to mobile phones on the school premises are as follows:

- Students may carry their mobile phones to and from school in order to communicate with their parents before or after the school day.
- Phones must be switched off and secured in school bags at all times for the duration of the school day and/or the presence of the student on the school premises.
- Phones must not be on the physical person at any time.
- Students attending the Homework Centre will be permitted to check their

phones from 4.15pm for the purpose of communicating about parent pick-up.

- Apple watches or similar devices are no longer allowed at school.
- Earphones, blue tooth ear pieces or headsets cannot be used and must be packed away with the phone.

Students who do not comply with school expectations face a series of consequences that include:

- Immediate confiscation of the phone.
- Phones will only be returned to a parent, guardian or emergency contact. This will occur the next afternoon for the first breach of school rules. For a second offence, the phone will be returned two days later. On the third offence, the student will have their phone returned three days later in addition to suspension. Weekends are not counted in the days of confiscation.
- Persistent disobedience around complying with this policy will result in suspension. This includes refusal to follow staff instructions to hand over a phone.
- Additional consequences as determined by the Principal.

This policy has been ratified by the P&C and is supported by staff.

The implementation of this policy will be reviewed in December 2019 to evaluate the correlation between policy and behaviour.



ACCEPTABLE USE OF THE INTERNET AND EMAIL POLICY

The Internet allows students and staff to access and use information source the globe, to significantly expand their knowledge base and to communicate and share information with individuals and groups through email. The Internet and email are tools for life-long learning but their applications must be governed by safe practices, procedures and ethical behaviour.

CONDITIONS AND RULES FOR USE

1. Acceptable Use

- (a) The purpose of the Internet and Email Services is to facilitate communications in support of research and education by providing access to resources and people not otherwise available. The use of the Internet and email services by staff and students of the school must be consistent with the educational aims of Birrong Girls High School.
- (b) Responsible use by students with guidance from teaching staff, will provide a secure and safe learning environment.
- (c) Transmission of any materials in violation of any Federal or State regulation is prohibited.
- (d) Use for commercial activities, product advertisement, political lobbying or personal (as opposed to educational) communications is also prohibited.

2. Privilege

The use of the Internet and Email Services is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate use, including any violation of these conditions, will result in the cancellation of the privilege and may result in disciplinary action consistent with the school's discipline policies.

Students should be aware that audits can trace e-learning accounts of specific users.

3. Responsibilities

Students are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of the Internet as well as rules which ensure that the integrity of the school's computer system is maintained. These include, but are not limited by the following:

- (a) not disabling settings for virus protection, spam (unsolicited emails) and filtering
- (b) ensuring that all communication through Internet and Email Services is related to learning and curriculum areas
- (c) keeping passwords confidential
- (d) never allowing others to use personal e-learning account
- (e) logging off at the end of each session for security purposes
- (f) promptly alerting teachers if they suspect they have received a computer virus or spam or if they receive an inappropriate message
- (g) seeking advice if another user seeks excessive personal information, asks to be telephoned or offers gifts by email or seeks personal contact with a student
- (h) never knowingly initiating or forwarding emails that contain messages sent in confidence, viruses, chain letters and hoax emails or spam
- (i) never sending or publishing unacceptable, inappropriate, defamatory or unlawful material or remarks including offensive, abusive or discriminatory material or material intended to threaten, bully or harass
- (j) never downloading unauthorised software, graphics or music or accessing unauthorised material – Internet and Email Services should only be used for educational purposes
- (k) never damaging or disabling computers or computer systems
- (l) observing privacy and confidentiality by not disclosing email addresses of staff and student users without explicit permission
- (m) not giving out personal details or the personal details of other students or teachers. This includes such things as addresses, phone numbers and Bankcard numbers.
- (n) never plagiarising information; sources of any information must be acknowledged appropriately
- (o) assuming that all communications and information accessible via the Internet is private property and covered by copyright laws.

Merit system

Our merit system encourages students to have a positive attitude and participate in learning and extra-curricular activities to the best of their ability. We celebrate student involvement, achievement and success in the following ways:

1. Achievement Award

This is awarded by the class teacher to any student deserving recognition.

2. Recognition Award and Postcard

This award acknowledges attendance and progress as well as achievement in extra-curricular activities. It can also be awarded to students representing the school in a knockout competition and those selected for a Zone team. It is awarded to coaches at swim school, field days and Jump Rope for Heart and to any student with 100% attendance each term.

It is awarded by Year Advisers, the Head Teacher Administration and the Head Teacher PDHPE.

Recognition Awards and Postcards are worth 2 achievement awards.

3. Certificate of Merit

This is awarded when a student submits the equivalent of 5 achievement awards to a Deputy Principal.

A Certificate of Merit is also awarded to a student who has demonstrated excellence in a sporting event; is an age champion at school carnivals; is selected in teams at regional level and above.

Certificates of Merit are also awarded on Presentation Day for outstanding achievement in academia, sport and service to the school.

4. Medallions

A bronze medallion is presented at assembly when a student submits 5 Certificates of Merit to the Deputy Principal.

A silver medallion is presented at assembly when a student submits a further 5 Certificates of Merit to the Deputy Principal.

A gold medallion is presented at assembly when a student submits a further 5 Certificates of Merit to the Deputy Principal.

5. Ad Astra Award Pins

A bronze *Ad Astra* pin is presented at assembly when a student submits a further 6 merit certificates to the Deputy Principal.

A silver *Ad Astra* pin is presented at assembly when a student submits a further 7 merit certificates to the Deputy Principal.

A gold *Ad Astra* pin is presented at assembly when a student submits further 8 merit certificates to the Deputy Principal.

6. Silver goblet

This is the highest award, achieved after receiving a further 10 merit certificates.



7. School Curriculum

Year 7-10 subjects

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Geography
- History
- Australian Studies
- Commerce
- Creative and Performing Arts
- Information and Software Technology
- Languages Other Than English / LOTE
- Personal Development, Health and Physical Education / PDHPE
- Physical Activity and Sports Studies / PASS
- Dance Elective
- Technology and Applied Science / Food Technology and Textiles
- Work Education

Year 11-12 subjects

- Drama
- English; Standard, Extension 1 and 2, English EAL/D, English Studies ATAR eligible
- History; Ancient History, Modern History and History Extension
- Languages Other Than English; Beginners Course, Continuers Course and Extension HSC Course
- Mathematics; Standard 1 and 2, Mathematics Advanced, Extension 1 and Extension 2
- Music; Music 1
- Personal Development, Health and Physical Education
- Sciences; Biology, Chemistry, Investigating Science, Physics
- Social Sciences; Business Studies, Economics, Geography, Legal Studies
- Society and Culture
- Studies of Religion I and II
- Technology and Applied Studies-Community and Family Studies, Food Technology, Textiles and Design
- Visual Arts
- Vocational Education and Training (VET); Business Services, Hospitality, retail

Board Endorsed Courses: Content endorsed and School Designed

- Ceramics
- English Studies
- Exploring Early Childhood
- Photography, Video and Digital Imaging
- Sport, Lifestyle and Recreation

Assessment Policies

Year 10, 11 and 12 students have their own Assessment Policies provided by their Year Advisor that contains:

- NESA course requirement
- Assessment Tasks
- Students responsibilities and
- Instructions regarding illness/misadventure/zero awards

Course progress requirements for student visa holders

There are additional course progress requirements for international students.

- If you fail to meet the NSW Education Standards Authority's (NESA) course progress requirements for at least 6 units (50%) of your all your subjects, an **Intention to Report** letter will be sent to you, your parents and your carer in Australia. This letter tells you the school's intention to report your unsatisfactory course progress to Immigration because you have breached your student visa condition.
- You will be given 20 school days to **appeal** to the Principal and explain why the school should not report you to Immigration.
- If your appeal is unsuccessful, you will be contacted by Department of Education International to let you know about your further appeal rights.
- If all your appeals are not successful, you will be reported to Immigration and they may decide to cancel your visa.

8. School Activities

International students can involve themselves in the following school activities:

- Amnesty Team
- Anime Club, Chess Club
- Dance Display
- Debating
- Environment Team
- Little Theatre Company
- Media, Publicity and Website Team
- Premiers reading Challenge and the Principals Reading Challenge
- Spelling Bee Team
- Swimming Athletics and Cross Country
- Sport Knockout teams; volleyball, touch football, lawn bowels, soccer, softball, netball, basketball, table tennis, Oz tag
- SRC

The Student daily Notices make announcements about how students can volunteer in the activities listed above.

Living in Sydney

9. Staying Safe

9.1 Emergency Services

Ambulance, Police or Fire Brigade



In case of an emergency or if you are in danger, call **000** and tell them:

- Type of emergency (ambulance/police/fire brigade)
- Your location or location of the emergency
- Your full name and contact number (if possible)



The local police station is **Bankstown Police Station**

Address: 14 Meredith Street
BANKSTOWN NSW 2200

Phone: 9783 2199



The nearest medical centre is **Regents Park**

Address: 3 Amy Street
REGENTS PARK NSW 2143

Phone: 9644 2392



The nearest hospital to the school is:

Address: Hargrave Road
AUBURN NSW 2144

Phone: 8759 3000

Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital

Address: Eldridge Road
BANKSTOWN NSW 2200

Phone: 9722 8000

9.2 Homestay 24 Hour Hotline

If you are living in homestays, you can contact your homestay host and/or parent nominated carer when you need help.

Your homestay company will also have a 24 hour hotline that you can call. Contact your International Student Coordinator if you do not know which company is your homestay provider.

Auzzie Families Homestay Care

Contact: Ms Gloria Wang
Phone: (+61 2) 9804 4700
Mobile: 0419 628 168 (24 hours)
Email: jun@auzziefamilies.com

Website: www.auzziefamilies.com

Oz Homestay

Contact: Ms Sarah Walmsley
Phone: (+61 2) 9325 6988
Mobile: 0421 556 374 (24 hours)
Email: info@ozhomestay.com.au
Website: www.ozhomestay.com.au

Global Experience

Contact: Agnes Ong
Phone: (+612) 9264 4022
Mobile: 0420 530 112 (24 hours)
Email: agnes@globalexperience.com.au;
Website: www.globalexperience.com.au

StayDownUnder

Contact: Mr Gerard and Mrs Rachel Whyte
Phone: (+61 2) 8901 4499
Mobile: 0410 761 499 (24 hours)
Email: info@staydownunder.com.au
Website: www.staydownunder.com.au



9.3 Important Safety Tips

When you are out with friends or by yourself, here are some simple things to remember:

- Always **plan your trip** home, especially at night. You may want to pre-book a taxi or arrange transport with a friend. Always make sure you have enough money to get home.
- **Avoid staying out past 8pm.**
- If you have a part-time job, **do not work during school nights** Monday – Thursday and return home by 9pm on weekends.
- Try to **travel with a friend** or in a group at night.
- **Keep your bag** and belongings **close to your body** and where you can always see them.
- **Leave valuables at home** if you don't need to take them with you. This includes jewellery, electronic equipment such as your laptop and your passport.
- **Do not carry large amounts of money** with you. You can take money out at ATMs found in shops, supermarkets, petrol stations, shopping malls, shop fronts and many other public places.
- **Do not accept parcels** that do not directly belong to you. You will be held legally responsible for the contents of the parcels.
- **Do not pay for school fees through people who offer discounts.** This is a SCAM.
- **Call 000 in the event of an emergency.** Remember, calls to 000 are free of charge.

Did you know?

You must let your school know of **any change of your address and contact details as soon as possible and within 7 days**. It is a student visa requirement, and will help to keep you safe if the school knows where you live and how to contact you in case of emergency.

9.4 Cyber Safety

When using the internet, like anywhere in the world, you should protect yourself against spam, online scams, identity theft and online bullying. Protect yourself by following these tips:

- If you are using a public computer, make sure you **log out of your online accounts** such as your social media account, bank or email accounts, and log out of your computer account before you walk away.
- **Do not give away your personal information.** This includes your name, phone number, address, email address, date of birth, usernames and passwords, and bank details.
- If you think you're being harassed or bullied online, **report the person being abusive** to the website or social media administrators and talk to someone you trust straight away — such as a parent, teacher or friend, or contact **Kids Helpline (1800 55 1800)**
- **Ignore, block or mute** the person being abusive online and do not engage with them



You can find more information on the Kids Helpline website at:
<https://kidshelpline.com.au/teens/issues/online-harassment>

9.5 Road Safety and Public Transport Safety

- Where available, use pedestrian walkways and only cross the street at pedestrian crossings or lights.
- Watch for traffic before you cross by looking left and right for oncoming cars.
- Do not use your mobile phone or put on your ear phones when you are crossing the road.
- Avoid isolated bus, rail and light rail stops.



Public transport is reliable and widely used in Australia, particularly in metro and urban areas. A number of security measures have been implemented to maximise the safety of public transport users including security officers and guards, help points, good lighting and security cameras. However you should still use caution when travelling on public transport:

- Check transport timetables to avoid long waits, particularly at night. You can download an app on your mobile phone such as **TripView**, **TripGo** or **TransitTimes** to view timetables of public transport and plan your trip.
- If you find yourself left in a train carriage on your own or with only one other person you may feel more comfortable moving to another carriage closer to the guard or driver.



Train carriages nearest to the driver or guard have a blue light on it and are safest at night.

9.6 Safety Apps

The **Emergency Plus app** is a national emergency app that you can use to get help as soon as possible in an emergency situation.

It tells you the exact location on the map and the GPS coordinates that you can read to the operator when you call the emergency service.



9.7 Water Safety

- Only **swim between the red and yellow flags** on the beach. This is the area where lifeguards and lifesavers patrol to keep you safe. No Flags = No Swim
- Look for, read and **obey water safety signs**.
- **Never swim alone** at the beach.
- Check water conditions and water depth before swimming – never dive head first.
- Never bathe and swim directly after eating or under the influence of drugs including alcohol.
- Learn how to spot a **rip current** and keep clear of the area.
- Always **use sunscreen** to protect exposed skin, put on a shirt, wear sunglasses and a hat when not swimming, and drink plenty of water.



Spot and Survive a rip current

Rip currents are the number one hazard on Australian beaches. The things to look for are deeper, dark-coloured water; fewer breaking waves; a rippled surface surrounded by smooth waters; and anything floating out to sea or foamy, discoloured, sandy, water flowing out beyond the waves.

If you are caught in a rip: **stay calm, float with the current, call out HELP** and **raise an arm** to gain attention of nearby surfers or lifeguards.



Learn about how to spot a **rip** and what to do when you are caught in a rip from the videos (multi-languages) on the **Beachsafe** website: <https://beachsafe.org.au/surf-safety/ripcurrents>

10. Reporting Incidents and seeking help

Bullying, assaults and harassments of any forms are not tolerated in Australia. If you have experienced any form of assault (either sexually or physically), harassment or any abuse, or think you are in danger of being assaulted, use the following services:

1. If you are in immediate danger, or wish to report an incident:

Police/Ambulance/Fire Brigade at 000

2. If you need help at school:

- Your **International Student Coordinator MS M. Parmaxidis** at History/LOTE Staffroom
- **School Counsellor** Athena Tselepi next to the Support Staffroom

3. If you are concerned for your safety, and you feel you need to speak to someone for support, or for information on any support services that you can use:

- **Kids Helpline** is a free, private and confidential 24/7 phone line and online counselling service for young people. Call **1800 55 1800** or email counsellor@kidshelpline.com.au or visit www.kidshelpline.com.au for more information.
- **Bullying. NoWay!** provides information and helpful ideas about bullying: <https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/>
- **1800RESPECT** is a confidential information, counselling and support service for sexual assault victims and domestic violence. Call 1800 737 732 (24 hours) or visit their website at www.1800respect.org.au Ask for an interpreter if you wish to speak in your own language that is not English.



11. You and the Law

The laws in Australia can be very different from your home country.

For example:

- It is illegal to consume alcohol if you are under 18 years of age
- It is illegal to purchase cigarettes if you are under 18 years of age
- Possession and use of illegal drugs is a criminal offence

Visit the website www.lawstuff.org.au for information about laws relating to you.

11.1 Driving

You need to be at least 16 years old to be a Learner (L Plater) for driving a car. For car drivers, you can attempt a Driving Test to get your P1 (red) licence once you have turned 17 and you:

- have been on your L's for at least 12 months
- have logged at least 120 hours driving time which includes 20 hours night-time driving.

If you are driving a car on a Learner (yellow) or P1 (red) licence:

- You must not drive faster than 90 km per hour
- You must have a zero blood alcohol limit
- You must not use any functions of a mobile phone including hands-free devices while driving.
- You must not drive with more than one **passenger** under 21 between the hours of 11pm and 5am.
-

If you are driving a car on a P2 (green) licence:

- You must have a zero blood alcohol level
- You must not exceed a maximum speed limit of 100 km/h



- ***Driving without a licence is illegal***
- ***Seatbelts are compulsory for drivers and passengers in Australia.***
- ***Speeding and drink driving are dangerous and are against the law.***
 - ***You could lose your licence or go to jail if you are caught speeding or drink driving.***

12. Taking a Part-time Job and Your Work Rights

12.1 Allowable Work Hours

In order for you to work part-time, you **MUST**:

- **Not** be enrolled in an Intensive English program
- have been **enrolled for at least six months in your current high school**
- have a satisfactory attendance record
- provide your school with a letter of consent from your parents.

Students enrolled in an Intensive English program are not permitted to work.

If you are taking a part-time job, remember:

- Any part-time work during school term must not interfere with your school studies
- You must **NOT** work more than 40 hours per fortnight (14 days) which is a mandatory student visa condition
- You should not work more than 10 hours per week in school terms
- You should not work during school days (Monday – Thursday) as this may impact on your learning
- You should not work past 8pm during the weekend.

12.2 Tax File Number

You must obtain an Australia Tax File Number (TFN) in order to work part-time. Your TFN is your personal reference number in the Australia tax system and you will be asked to provide your TFN to your employer at the workplace. If you do not have a TFN, you will be taxed at a higher rate.

You can apply for a TFN online at the **Australian Taxation Office** website at www.ato.gov.au.

12.3 Know Your Work Rights

Workplace rights

Pay rates and workplace conditions are set by Australian law. All people working in Australia, including those from overseas, have rights and protections at work. These cannot be taken away by contracts or agreements. These rights protect:

- entitlement to a minimum wage and superannuation
- challenge of unfair dismissal from the job
- leave, breaks and rest periods
- a healthy and safe work environment

Getting help to resolve a workplace issue will NOT automatically affect your student visa.

If you have questions about your pay and conditions while in Australia, you can contact the **Fair Work Ombudsman** for free information, resources and advice.

Visit www.fairwork.gov.au for information for visa holders and international students. This includes information in 27 languages. There are also a range of helpful videos available at www.youtube.com/fairworkgovau about working in Australia in many languages.

You can also contact the Fair Work Ombudsman by phone within Australia on **13 13 94 (Translating and Interpreting Service 13 14 50)**.

Pay

Your minimum pay rate can come from an award, enterprise agreement or other registered agreement, or the national minimum wage. Employees have to be paid the right pay rate for all hours they work including training, team meetings, opening and closing the business and doing a trial shift.

National minimum wage

Certain employees may have different pay entitlements depending on whether they have a reduced work capacity because of disability, if they are under the age of 21 or if they are an apprentice or trainee. You can calculate your correct pay and entitlements using the Pay and Conditions Tool at www.fairwork.gov.au/pay

More information on employment in Australia is available on our website at www.homeaffairs.gov.au and on the website of the Department of Employment at www.employment.gov.au



Always ask for a payslip to keep track of your hourly rate, penalty rates, superannuation contributions and tax details, especially if you are getting paid with cash in hand. This is a mandatory requirement for an employer in Australia.

13. Transport and Travel Concession

Children 4 to 15 years of age are automatically entitled to a child's half fare concession and are required to carry a **Proof of Age Card** to be entitled to the concession fares.

School students **16 years of age and older** are entitled to a half fare concession but are required to carry a **NSW Senior Secondary Student Concession Card** as proof of their eligibility. This will allow you to travel on public transport at concession fares.



Please see your office staff to apply for a Proof of Age Card (under 16 years old) or a NSW Senior Secondary Student Concession Card (16 years old and over). You must carry this card with you at all times and present it to ticket inspectors when required.

Opal card is the smartcard ticketing system used to pay for travel on public transport in Sydney, the Blue Mountains, Central Coast, the Hunter and the Illawarra.

You should get a **green CHILD/YOUTH OPAL CARD** by applying online at the Opal website: www.opal.com.au/ordercard. If you lose your card you can report it as lost or stolen.

You can also get an **unregistered Child/Youth Opal card** from your nearest newsagent or opal retailer over the counter. However, this card is not registered and therefore cannot be reported as lost or stolen.



You must have and maintain your Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) while you are in Australia. This allows you to access medical services at an affordable cost while you study in Australia. It is also a student visa requirement.

Activate your OSHC membership

You would have already purchased an OSHC membership before you arrive. **It is important that you activate your OSHC as soon as possible if you have not already done that.**

Medibank OSHC members

If your OSHC policy is provided by **Medibank OSHC**, activate your membership by following the steps below:

1. Go to <https://www.medibankoshc.com.au/oshcactivate/>
2. Search the student profile using personal details including membership number, birth date, and name.
3. Then fill the next page with student information and click “submit” when completed.

Obtain your OSHC membership card

Once you have activated your membership, it is important that you obtain your membership card. Different providers may have different forms of membership card (electronic or plastic card).

If you are **Medibank OSHC member**, you can download your **Digital Membership Card** through the Online Member Services on the Medibank website.

1. Log in to Online Members Services at www.medibankoshc.com.au
2. Once logged in, select ‘My Account’ in the top menu
3. Select ‘View Digital Card’
4. Once completed, save a copy of the card to your mobile phone and computer or tablet so that you can access it at all times.

Know your cover

It is important that you know what is covered and what is not covered in your policy, how much you can claim and how to make a claim if you do have to visit a doctor.

If you are a **Medibank OSHC member**, you can access the following **Online Member Services** on www.medibankoshc.com.au:

- Activate membership for new members
- Access digital member card
- Update membership details (including bank details for refund)
- Get policy information
- Make online claims

If you have a problem with your OSHC, you should contact your insurer in the first instance. If you are insured with Medibank OSHC, call 134 148.

*If you are **NOT** a Medibank OSHC member, ensure that you check with your OSHC provider to find out how to activate your cover, obtain your membership card and how to make a claim online.*

15. Accommodation

15.1 Homestay for under 18 students

If you are living in a homestay approved by DE International, your accommodation has been arranged by one of the four approved homestay providers.

Rules and expectations

Homestay is a great way to learn about the Australian culture and to improve your English. However, living with a new family in Australia can be quite challenging at first, and you need to follow **some rules on how you are expected to behave in a homestay family**:

✓ Follow the rules

Because your accommodation has been approved by DE International, it is important that you follow the rules to make sure you stay safe during your stay in Australia:

- **Come home for dinner every day** – you are expected to come home after each school day. You cannot stay overnight at a friend's or relative's place without approval from DE International
- **Follow the curfew time** – on special occasions when you have to come home late, you should be home by 8 pm on weekdays and 9pm during the weekends if your host is ok with it
- **Stay in a homestay arranged by one of the four approved homestay providers** (see 9.2) and seek approval from DE International if you want to move
- **Do not invite friends to stay at your homestay overnight** without your host's consent.

Your homestay will also have house rules that you must follow, but a lot of them are just common sense. For example,

- keep your room clean and tidy during your stay
- do not eat in the bedroom for hygiene reasons
- tidy up or clean up after yourself around the home
- call your host if you are running late
- turn off the lights and appliances when you are not using them to avoid wasting energy
- take short showers no longer than 15 minutes to save water, especially during drought season
- switch off your devices by 11 pm
- Internet should only be used for school purpose, and not playing games until early hours of the morning.

*Remember that things will be different from what you are used to at your home overseas and it may take some time for you to adjust – this can be the food, culture, language, food and people in the home. Be **flexible and open-minded**, and don't be afraid to try new things!*

✓ **Be respectful and considerate**

Always show respect and be polite to your homestay family. Treat them the way you would like to be treated. Be aware that what you do in the home may affect others. For example, watch the volume when you play music or watch TV, and clean up after yourself, especially in common areas such as kitchen and bathrooms.

✓ **Take time to know and talk to your homestay family**

Don't be shy! Instead of going into your own room when you come home, hang out with your host family. It's always good to start the day with "good morning" and start a conversation with "How was your day?" when you come home.

Also, don't be afraid to ask questions when you are unsure, and talk to your host if you want to be heard, such as if you want more food at dinner time or if your room is too warm. Just be respectful and reasonable.

Similarly, **your homestay host** also has to follow rules when they are hosting you. For example, they must:

- welcome you into the home and include you in family activities
- give you a key and any passcodes required to access the residence
- provide you with a safe and secure bedroom with storage space for your personal items, and facilities including a bed, desk, chair and adequate lighting
- live in the residence with you at all times, including holiday periods; and inform DE International if there's any change to the accommodation and welfare arrangements
- give you access to heating in winter and cooling in summer
- provide three meals per day, including food for making lunch
- attend school meetings and communicate with the school about your studies.

If there are problems in your homestay and they are not resolved after you speak to your host, or if the matter is sensitive and you prefer to speak to someone else, don't be afraid to speak to your International Student Coordinator. They are here to help you.

15.2 Renting or Sharing an Accommodation (over 18 students)

If you have turned 18 and decided to rent or share an accommodation, make sure you know your rights and responsibilities as a tenant.

The **Fair Trading NSW** website provides useful information on renting:

<https://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/>

Under the law, your landlord must give you a copy of the New Tenant Checklist:

Here are some general **Dos** and **Don'ts** when you are renting on your own:

DOs:

- ✓ **Let your school know your new address within 7 days (a student visa condition)**, and let them know of an emergency contact – this person should be a trustworthy adult friend or relative in Sydney, and preferably over 21.
- ✓ Make sure you **sign a lease agreement**, and read and understand the terms. The agreement will protect you if there are problems with your landlord. Remember you cannot be charged for the preparation of the agreement. **Keep a copy** of the agreement and all other related documents.
- ✓ **Check your agreement carefully** so you understand what you are signing up for. A few common things to look for are:
 - **Rent:** Check that the weekly rate is what you have agreed to and the time period of the contract. You have to pay your rent in advance. Your rent can only be increased after the specified period of time.
 - **Bond:** this is a deposit that you pay to cover any damages or if you end the lease early. The maximum you can be asked to pay is 4 weeks of rent. This bond should be refunded to you at the end of your tenancy.
 - **Any other fees** such as administrative fees, utilities (except water) etc
- ✓ **Get a receipt** for any rent or fees that you have paid and keep them for your records. Avoid paying in cash if possible, and make sure you ask for a receipt.
- ✓ **Respect and follow the house rules**, especially if you are sharing the accommodation with others. However, if the house rules are unreasonable, refer to your lease agreement and talk to your landlord.

Keep the accommodation tidy and in good condition. Your landlord has the right to inspect the accommodation but they cannot show up without giving you notice.

DON'Ts:

- × **Move into an accommodation without an inspection or a key.** You should only move into a place after checking that it is in good condition.
- × **Pay a large deposit for a cheaper rate, or more than you need to.** For example you do not need to pay more than 4 weeks of the rent for the bond.
- × **Rent a place without signing a lease agreement.** It is illegal and is a clear warning sign of scam or subletting. Subletting is illegal in Australia and it will leave you unprotected if something bad happens.
- × **Let your landlord keep your passports, ID document or personal belongings.** While they may ask for copies of your passport or ID documents, they cannot keep them. They also cannot keep your personal items.

Problems with Your Lease

If you think you are being treated unfairly by your landlord, or if you have any unresolved problems:

- talk to your **International Student Coordinator** immediately for help and advice
- make a complaint to **NSW Fair Trading** at:
<https://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/help-centre/online-tools/make-a-complaint>
- talk to the **police** in some cases, such as when you are scammed.

Visa Requirements You Should Know

Australia's laws promote quality education and consumer protection for overseas students. These laws are known as the ESOS framework and they include the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 and the National Code 2018.

For a summary of the ESOS framework see: <http://www.internationaleducation.gov.au>

For information about student visa requirements refer to the Department of Home Affairs (HA) website: www.homeaffairs.gov.au

Contact the **International Student Coordinator** at your school if you have any concerns or questions about your school, personal issues or other problems. The Coordinator will assist you or refer you to the appropriate staff member.

Your student visa

As an international student on a student visa, you must:

- comply with your student visa conditions
- ensure you have and continue to maintain your Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) for as long as you stay in Australia on a student visa
- tell your school if you change your address or other contact details
- maintain satisfactory course progress and attendance.

Information about visa conditions for student visa holders is available on the Department of Home Affairs website at <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/trav/stud/more/visa-conditions/visa-conditions-students>, or call 131 881.

The following regulations apply to your studies at a NSW government school:

16. Attendance and Course Requirements

- You must **attend a minimum of 80%** of all scheduled classes. If you do not meet attendance requirements you may be reported to Immigration, unless there are compassionate or compelling circumstances (refer to guidelines below).
- You must provide a doctor's certificate for any absences of 3 days or more. The doctor must be a registered medical practitioner. If you are absent for 1 or 2 days, a letter of explanation must be provided by your carer or if you are over 18 years, you can provide your own written explanation to the principal.
- You **must meet course progress requirements**. Your school will provide you with information about course requirements as outlined by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA). Further information about course requirements is available at: <http://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au>
- If you fail to meet the 80% attendance requirements or the course progress requirements, and fail to appeal or do not receive a successful school appeal outcome, you will be reported to the Department of Home Affairs and this may impact the status of your student visa. An **Intention to Report** letter will be issued to you and your parents and you will have 20 school days to appeal internally then externally. If all your appeals are unsuccessful, you would be reported to Immigration and your visa may be cancelled.

17. Accommodation and Welfare Arrangements

- All students must be accompanied to their approved accommodation upon arrival in Australia.
 - If you have requested a Homestay family be arranged, then a compulsory airport transfer will be arranged for you.
 - If a relative or close family friend has been approved as your carer then arrangements must be made for them to meet you at Sydney International Airport.
- If you are under 18 years, you must **maintain your approved accommodation, support and welfare arrangements**. If these arrangements are approved by the DE International, **you must not change those arrangements without prior written approval**. Requests to change the arrangements must be made in writing to DE International and signed by your parents.
- If you want to **change your Homestay**, you should contact the International Student Coordinator at your school.
- NSW Department of Education recommends that students over 18 continue to live with relatives or Homestay families. Changes to accommodation should be within reasonable travelling distance to your school.
- Your parent or relative (approved carer) must **notify your school** of your residential address **within 7 days of arriving in Australia** and notify any changes of address and contact details within 7 days. Students over 18 years who change address must also notify their school within 7 days.

18. Conditions of Enrolment

- You must commence school enrolment on the date stated on the **Confirmation of Enrolment** (CoE) and if this is not possible, notify DE International in writing within 24 hours of the start date on the CoE.
- You must adhere to school rules and the terms and conditions of enrolment as stated on the international student application form. You will receive information about school rules and expected behaviour at orientation.
- Your school may suspend or cancel your enrolment on grounds of misbehaviour. For further information about student behaviour and suspension and expulsion of students, refer to the International Students Coordinator at your school.
- Travel during school holidays, other than returning to your home country, is only permitted if you are travelling with your carer or relatives or on an approved school excursion. Written permission from your parents is required.
- If you want to transfer to another government school you must provide a written request to your school signed by your parents.
- If you want to change provider you must provide a written request to your school signed by your parents. For further information concerning visa regulations about change of provider, refer to the Department of Home Affairs website and the coordinator at your school.

18. Taking Leave

If you are going to be absent for **a week or more** during school term, or plan to take extended leave, your parents **must request approval** from the principal and **DE International** prior to taking leave or booking flights. Approval is only granted on compassionate or compelling grounds (refer to guidelines below).

19. Deferment of Course Commencement Date

Any request for a deferment must be submitted in writing and signed by your parents to DE International. A request for deferment after your student visa has been issued will only be approved where evidence of compelling and compassionate circumstances can be provided. A deferment may affect your visa so please consult the Department of Home Affairs before submitting a request.

20. Guidelines for Compassionate or Compelling Circumstances

Leave approved on grounds of compassionate or compelling circumstances is not counted in attendance records. Compassionate or compelling circumstances are generally those beyond your control and which have an impact upon your course progress or wellbeing. These could include, but not limited to:

- illness, where a medical certificate states that you are unable to attend classes
- bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents (where possible a death certificate or other evidence should be provided either prior to departure or on return)
- major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring their emergency travel and this has impacted on your studies
- a traumatic experience which could include, but is not limited to:
 - involvement in, or witnessing of an accident
 - witnessing or being the victim of crime and this has impacted on you (these cases should be supported by police or psychologists' reports or advice)
- inability to begin studying on the course commencement date due to delay in receiving a student visa.

21. Suspension of Studies

If you are required to take leave for **longer than 5 days** from school due to compassionate or compelling circumstances, a suspension of your studies may be possible, whereby your absence is not counted towards your attendance rate.

Prior to taking leave, a signed request from your parents must be submitted to DE International along with evidence of compassionate or compelling circumstances.

A suspension of studies may affect your visa so please consult the Department of Home Affairs before submitting a request.

22. Complaints and Appeals

NSW Department of Education has a complaints and appeals process which is available on the website. If you wish to make a complaint or appeal a decision made concerning your enrolment, course progress or other decision, you should contact the International Student Coordinator at your school. Your carer (if you are under 18) or support person (if you are over 18) must be present with you in any appeal interviews.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of internal complaint and appeal process, you will be given access to the external appeals process through the NSW Ombudsman.

You must maintain your enrolment throughout any appeal process until the process has been completed.

23. Work

- Students attending an Intensive English program are not permitted to work part time.
- To work part-time, DE International requires that you must have been enrolled for at least six months in your current school, have a satisfactory attendance record and provide your school with a letter of consent from your parents before beginning part-time work.
- Any part-time work during school term must not interfere with your school studies and must not exceed 40 hours per fortnight. You should not work more than 10 hours per week in school terms as any more hours may impact on your learning.

Arrival Checklist

Here are some useful tips on what you should do during your first few weeks in Australia:

On arrival

- Let your family know that you have arrived safely in Australia and provide them with your contact number and address
- Learn your address
- Remember that in Australia, the emergency phone number is **000**. Also note your relative/homestay host/homestay 24 hour hotline)
- Get a mobile phone (or an Australian SIM card) and remember your number
- Tell your International Student Coordinator immediately if you change your mobile number
- Open a bank account
- Activate your OSHC and download your digital membership card on your mobile phone; and learn about what is covered by your policy and how to lodge a claim

At School

- Provide your address to school and let them know immediately and no later than 7 days of any change of address and contact details
- Provide emergency contact details in Australia and overseas to your school at enrolment
- Apply for a **Proof of Age Card** (if under 16 years old) or a **NSW Senior Secondary Student Concession Card** (if 16 years old or above) at school
- Read your international orientation booklet so that you know what to do and what not to do during your study and your stay in Australia
- Learn about the school rules, student visa conditions, and your rights and responsibilities as an international student
- Find out where your International Student Coordinator is and say hello regularly 😊
- Find out what clubs and teams you can join (Sports or hobbies)
- Actively seek help if you have any problems or questions by speaking to your International Student Coordinator, School Counsellor etc

At Home

- Get a **Child/Youth Opal Card** with your Proof of Age Card/ NSW Senior Secondary Student Concession Card
- Learn how to use the public transport system, how to go to school from home
- Download a transport app on your smart phone to help you use the public transport system and look up timetables
- Get familiar with the area of your suburb such as the local shops, clinic, hospital and police station
- If you are staying with a homestay family, learn about the homestay rules and spend time to know your homestay family

Here are some useful forms that you may need to use later:

1. Under 18 Request to Change Welfare Arrangements form

Complete this form to let the school know if your accommodation or welfare arrangements have changed, or if you have changed your address.

2. Over 18 Request to Change Welfare Arrangements form

Complete this form if you are over 18 years old, and have moved out of your homestay or are changing your address.

You **MUST** provide details of an emergency contact person **IN AUSTRALIA**. This person can be your relative, parent or friend but they must be over 21 years old.

3. Leave Request form

Complete this form if you are requesting extended leave for 5 days or more or travelling overseas.

Your leave will only be approved if there are compassionate or compelling reasons.

You may be asked to provide documents to support your reasons.

Make sure you apply for the leave at least 4 weeks before the planned departure date.

4. Leave Requests Flowchart

This step-by-step chart helps you understand the Leave Request process.



DE INTERNATIONAL

UNDER 18 - REQUEST TO CHANGE WELFARE ARRANGEMENTS

Student Family Name Student Given Names.....

Student Reference No SO..... Passport No..... Date of Birth.....

Student's New Address

..... Postcode:.....

Student's Personal Email Telephone No.....

School (or school preferences if school not confirmed).....

Please indicate if accommodation is:

- Living with direct relative (approved by Immigration)
- Homestay family
- Shared accommodation
- Parent with a guardian visa

Reason for changing address

.....

Name, age and gender of people residing at this address

Name..... Age..... M/F Name..... AgeM/F

Name Age M/F Name..... AgeM/F

Name..... Age..... M/F Name..... AgeM/F

CARER CONTACT DETAILS

Given Name Family Name.....

Address

..... Postcode.....

Email Address.....

Telephone: Home Mobile..... Work.....

Carer Signature..... Date.....

ADDITIONAL EMERGENCY CONTACT (over 21 years old)

Name: Home/Work: Mobile:

Name: Home/Work: Mobile:

Student's Signature:



DE INTERNATIONAL

OVER 18 - REQUEST TO CHANGE WELFARE ARRANGEMENTS

Student Family NameStudent Given Names.....

Student Reference No SO..... Passport No..... Date of Birth.....

Student's New Address

.....Postcode:.....

Student's Personal Email Telephone No.....

High School (or school preferences if school not confirmed).....

Please indicate if accommodation is

- Living with direct relatives (approved by Immigration)
- Homestay family
- Shared accommodation
- Other _____

Reason for changing address

Name, age and sex of people residing at this address

Name.....Age..... M/F Name..... AgeM/F

Name Age M/F Name..... AgeM/F

EMERGENCY CONTACT DETAILS

(Must be completed and signed by contact person over 21)

Given Name Family Name (Mr/Mrs/Ms).....

Address

.....Postcode.....

Email Address.....

Telephone: Home Mobile.....

Signature..... Date

ADDITIONAL EMERGENCY CONTACT (over 21 years old)

Name: Home/Work: Mobile:

Name: Home/Work: Mobile:

(MUST BE SIGNED BY STUDENT)

Student Signature..... Date



DE INTERNATIONAL

LEAVE REQUEST

Student visa conditions require that you must attend school every day during the school term. All **unapproved** short or extended leave is recorded as non-attendance and **may affect your visa**.

All leave requests must:

- be submitted **at least 4 weeks prior** to planned departure date
- be submitted to **DE International for approval prior to booking flights**
- have attached **signed parent consent letter**
- provide evidence of **medical** or **compassionate / compelling circumstances** if applicable

Travel during school holidays (other than returning to your home country) is only permitted if you are accompanied by a parent, guardian, homestay carer, close relative or on an approved school excursion.

You must submit a **copy of your flight ticket** to DE International, if approval has been granted by DE International.

School _____

Student reference no: **SO** _____ DOB: _____ Date: _____

Student given name: _____ Known as: _____ Family name: _____

Student mobile number: _____ Email: _____

Parent mobile number: _____ Parent email: _____

Expected **departure date**: _____ Expected **return date**: _____

Total number of schools days that you would be missing: _____

Reason for leave request: _____

ATTACH WITH APPLICATION

- Signed parent letter
- Translation of letter
- Supporting documents

Signature - **International Student Coordinator**

*Attendance rate at date of application ____%

Principal Recommended Not Recommended

Comment _____

Leave Requests Flow Chart

STEP 1

A letter signed by parents must be provided

STEP 2

Submit completed form and any supporting document to School
(International Student Coordinator)

STEP 3

School forwards request to DE International

STEP 4

DE International Assess request

If approved:

Purchase flight ticket and send
a copy to school



School forwards flight ticket to
DE International

If declined:

Leave is not approved.
Attendance will be affected if
you leave school



AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL ANTHEM

Australians all let us rejoice,
For we are young and free;
We've golden soil and wealth for toil;
Our home is girt by sea;
Our land abounds in nature's gifts
Of beauty rich and rare;
In history's page, let every stage
Advance Australia Fair.
In joyful strains then let us sing,
Advance Australia Fair.

Beneath our radiant Southern Cross
We'll toil with hearts and hands;
To make this Commonwealth of ours
Renowned of all the lands;
For those who've come across the seas
We've boundless plains to share;
With courage let us all combine
To Advance Australia Fair.
In joyful strains then let us sing,
Advance Australia Fair.

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