

START SMART



PRE-DEPARTURE TIPS FOR
HEALTH PLACEMENTS



LA TROBE
UNIVERSITY

PLACE
READY



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WELCOME

You've just started an exciting new chapter in your health degree. A placement is a key part of your course that lets you practise what you've learned in class by working in a real workplace, such as a hospital or community service.

① GET READY

Get ready for life and study in Australia – key tasks before and after arrival.

② UNDERSTAND YOUR PRE-PLACEMENT REQUIREMENTS

What to organise and when to start.

③ FIND SUPPORT

Where to go when you need help.

PRE-DEPARTURE

Prepare for your placement before you leave



Starting your study in Australia is exciting, but we know it can feel overwhelming too. For many health degrees, placements start in your first year of study. Preparing early will make your transition to Australia and your degree much easier, ensuring you are ready for placement when the time arrives.

WHAT TO ORGANISE

Packing the right essentials will give you peace of mind as you settle into Australia.



Do you have a valid police check from your home country? If not, we'll show you how to complete one in Australia later in this guide. However, it's best to organise this before you travel.



Check that your vaccines are recognised in Australia and your records are in English.

[Find more information here](#)



If you've had the required vaccines, have your records translated into English in your home country before departing. This can help you avoid extra costs later.

MORE INFO

[Preparing to arrive](#)

Find important information about travelling to Australia, including visa requirements, budgeting, cost of living, accommodation and more tips to help you prepare before you arrive.

OVERSEAS STUDENT HEALTH COVER (OSHC):

What you need to know

As an international student, you're responsible for any healthcare costs you incur while in Australia. OSHC is a requirement for all international students and ensures you have access to medical services.

YOU'LL NEED:



To hold valid OSHC throughout your studies. This will help cover medical expenses such as General Practitioner (GP) visits, hospital care or emergency treatment if you need it.



OSHC AT LA TROBE

[Learn about activating your cover](#)

La Trobe University's preferred OSHC provider is [Medibank](#), making it easy to activate and manage your cover.

STUDY AUSTRALIA

[Learn more here](#)

How the Australian healthcare system works.



A General Practitioner (GP) is a doctor who provides general health care. Students may need to visit a GP for placement-related checks such as immunisations or to obtain medical certificates.

IMMUNISATION REQUIREMENTS



Over the next few pages, we've summarised the key requirements for each vaccine. This includes what it is, what evidence is accepted and how long it takes.

Take a moment to scan through each requirement and check whether you've already received any of these vaccinations in your home country.

If you have, make sure to pack your records or certificates to bring with you to Australia.



Overseas vaccination records are accepted if they are in English.

Check if your vaccine brand is recognised in Australia

NOTE



Wait times and costs may vary depending on the vaccine and provider.

IMMUNISATION REQUIREMENTS

Vaccine	What is it?	How long will it take?	Evidence Accepted	Status
Hepatitis B	A blood-borne viral infection that affects the liver. Learn more here.	Up to 8 months (full course); 2 weeks for serology (blood) test only.	✔ Serology (blood) test showing immunity (HBsAb only). ✔ If your serology shows low immunity, your doctor may recommend a 3-dose catch-up schedule over 6 months, followed by another test four weeks after the final dose to confirm protection. ✔ Hepatitis B serology (blood) test includes key markers such as: ○ Hepatitis B surface antigen (HBsAg), ○ anti-HBs antibody, and ○ anti-HBc antibody (both IgG and IgM). ✔ These tests help determine if a person has a current or past infection, has immunity from vaccination or recovery, or is susceptible to the virus. In some cases, markers like HBeAg, anti-HBe, and HBV DNA (viral load) may also be tested. ✔ La Trobe Immunisation and Health Record Form	
MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella)	Measles: A highly contagious viral illness that typically causes skin rash and fever. Mumps: Mumps is a contagious illness that spreads through close contact. It causes fever and facial swelling, can affect people of any age, and is preventable through vaccination. Rubella: Rubella is a viral infection spread through coughs and sneezes. It's usually mild and clears on its own, it can have serious effects on unborn babies during pregnancy.	Up to 3 months if you need two doses, with each dose given at least one month apart. If you are only completing a serology (blood) test, results are usually available in around 2 weeks. It is recommended that you book a follow up appointment once you receive your test referral.	✔ Vaccination records showing two doses of an acceptable brand(s) or serology (blood) test proving immunity (where there are incomplete / generic records). ✔ La Trobe Immunisation and Health Record Form	

Vaccine	What is it?	How long will it take?	Evidence Accepted	Status
DTPA (Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis)	Diphtheria: Diphtheria is a bacterial infection that can produce a thick membrane in the pharynx, causing severe respiratory difficulties. Tetanus: Tetanus is a serious bacterial disease that causes painful muscle spasms, most often in the jaw and neck (known as lockjaw). Whooping Cough (Pertussis): Whooping cough is a bacterial infection that spreads through coughs and sneezes.	Approximately 2 weeks.	✔ You need to have a Diphtheria, Tetanus and Pertussis (dTpa) booster within the past 10 years. Serology (blood test) results are not accepted as evidence of immunity. ✔ The vaccine brand must be Boostrix or Adacel (ADT is not accepted as it doesn't cover Pertussis). ✔ La Trobe Immunisation and Health Record Form	☐
Varicella (Chickenpox)	Highly contagious viral infection causing chickenpox.	Up to 3 months if you need two doses, with each dose given at least one month apart. If you are only completing a serology (blood) test, results are usually available in around 2 weeks. It is recommended that you book a follow up appointment once you receive your test referral.	✔ Vaccination record with dates/brands; Serology (blood) test results. ✔ Two doses OR serology (blood) test proving immunity. ✔ If you have been infected with Chickenpox, your natural immunity must be confirmed through serology (blood) test. ✔ La Trobe Immunisation and Health Record Form	☐
Influenza (Flu)	Highly contagious viral infection spread by contact with fluids from coughs and sneezes.	Allow approximately 1 week (You can usually book an appointment at a pharmacy, where wait times are often shorter than at a clinic or GP).	✔ Required for placements scheduled between June and October. ✔ The current flu season's vaccine is usually released in March/April. ✔ You can get your flu vaccination quickly and easily in Australia at a local medical clinic, pharmacy, or If you're based at the Bundoora campus, you can also book an appointment at La Trobe Medical Centre. ✔ Placement Host can ask for current year flu vaccination evidence at any time. ✔ Flu vaccines received overseas will not be accepted for placement, as strains can vary between countries. ✔ La Trobe Immunisation and Health Record Form	☐
Tuberculosis (TB)	An infectious disease that primarily affects the lungs but can spread to other parts of the body, potentially causing serious illness or death.	Approximately 2 weeks.	✔ You'll need to provide results from either a TB Blood Test (Quantiferon Gold) or a TB Skin Test (Mantoux). ✔ If your TB test result is positive, you will need a clearance letter from a GP or specialist confirming that you are not infectious and can attend placement. A chest X-ray report by itself is not accepted, but it can be used by your GP to issue your clearance letter. ✔ Your screening results must be interpreted by an AHPRA (Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency) registered medical practitioner. ✔ La Trobe Immunisation and Health Record Form	☐

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS:



OVERSEAS POLICE CHECK

1

Contact the police authority or government agency in the country where you live.

2

Request a National Police Clearance or equivalent certificate.

3

Make sure the document is in English (or provide an official translation).

CAN'T GET ONE?

[More information](#)

If you're unable to obtain an overseas police check before travelling, don't worry. Once you arrive, you'll have the option to complete a Statutory Declaration instead. Please note that this process may take additional time to complete.

ADDITIONAL



Checks such as the [Australian Police Check](#) and [Working With Children Check \(WWCC\)](#) are completed after you arrive in Australia. Make sure you apply for a Volunteer Working with Children Check (WWCC), it's free. The Employee WWCC check has a fee, so choose the 'volunteer' option when applying.



If you already completed an overseas police check as part of your Australian student visa application, you can use the same certificate for your placement as long as it is still valid and in English.

ADDITIONAL CHECKS

In addition to your immunisations and core pre-placement checks, some placements may have extra requirements. These only apply to certain courses. It's a good idea to review your course page to see what's relevant for you. If any apply, your La Trobe Placement Team will guide you through them and you'll be able to complete these once you're in Australia.

NDIS WORKER SCREENING CHECK

[More information](#)

The NDIS Worker Screening Check is required if your placement involves working with people with disability. You can apply once you are in Australia using your Australian address. There is a cost involved, so it's best to plan ahead and apply early.

FIRST AID & CPR

[First Aid & CPR Course](#)

You'll need to complete HLTAID011 First Aid (valid for 3 years) and HLTAID009 CPR. As a La Trobe student, you're eligible for a discounted rate on First Aid training — visit the [La Trobe First Aid Training webpage](#) to book and claim your discount.



REGIONAL PLACEMENTS

Tips to help you navigate regional Australia:

If your placement is near one of La Trobe's regional campuses, such as Bendigo, Shepparton, Albury-Wodonga or Mildura, you'll experience a different side of Australia compared to the big cities.

Regional communities are welcoming and full of character, offering a slower pace of life, a strong sense of community and a close connection to local culture.

Regional connect

Metropolitan & regional campuses



PLAN AHEAD



Australia is large and regional areas can be far apart, so plan your travel early. Regional placements may also incur extra travel and accommodation costs. Factor these into your budget as soon as you receive your placement allocation.

CHECK ROUTES



Travelling between towns can take time, and public transport isn't always available.



If you plan to drive while on placement, it's important to know that you can use your international driver's licence for up to six months after arriving in Australia. After that, you'll need to convert it to a Victorian licence. Learn how to do this on the [VicRoads website](#).

CHECK PUBLIC TRANSPORT



Many people drive, so look into local transport options or arrange to carpool with others if needed.

CHECK CONNECTION



Mobile service is reliable in most towns, but coverage can drop out in smaller areas, so it is recommended to download maps before you travel.

UNDERSTAND THE LAND

[Learn more here](#)

Many areas have a strong Indigenous heritage, and it's important to take time to learn about and acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land where you are placed.

RESOURCES & SUPPORT

Once you receive your La Trobe login details and student email/ ID, you'll be able to access a range of helpful resources to get you started. Below are a few key links.

PRE-DEPARTURE WEBINAR

[Watch now](#)

Learn about enrolment, orientation, and the key support services available to international students.

LIVING IN AUSTRALIA

[Watch now](#)

This webinar covers life in Australia, including accommodation, transport, work, health and safety.

ESSENTIALS

[Uni Essentials](#)[Course Essentials](#)

Access course-specific information, including subject enrolment, and preparing for university life

AUSTRALIAN HEALTHCARE

[More information](#)

This module provides an overview of the Australian healthcare system, OSHC requirements, La Trobe health services and useful resources. Log in once you've received your La Trobe credentials.



YOUR COURSE

ASK La Trobe

Help with offers, enrolment, timetables, systems, fees, exams, results, graduations and more.

International Student Support

Support for international students throughout your studies, including help with academic, cultural and more.

La Trobe Rural Health School

Dedicated to supporting health students undertaking study and placements across La Trobe’s regional campuses.

Student Advising

Personalised advice about your course, study plan, accommodation or accessibility needs.

Study Support

Academic skills, writing help and peer mentoring.

Career Support

Jobs, resume help and career advice.

YOUR WELLBEING & EXPERIENCE

Student Health & Wellbeing

Counselling, medical services, wellbeing programs.

Student Life

Opportunities to get involved, meet others, and make the most of your university experience.

Transition@La Trobe Facebook Group

Connect with e-Friend student volunteers and other new students.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND BURSARIES

Placement Travel Bursary

Support students with placement travel costs.

Industry Placement Bursary

Support students who are experiencing disadvantage and undertaking an internship/ work placement.

ACCOMODATION & TRANSPORT

Accommodation Options

Explore on and off campus accommodation options.

Scam Awareness & Accommodation Safety

Learn how to recognise and avoid rental scams, as well as other common scams targeting international students.

Driving in Australia

Find information on using or transferring your international driver’s license.

YOUR RIGHTS

International Student Employment & Accommodation Legal Service (ISEALS)

Free employment and accommodation legal advice for international students.

YOUR SAFETY

Safer Community Service

Help and support, wellbeing services, health and wellbeing services.

Triple Zero

000 is Australia’s emergency number for police, fire, or ambulance. Call immediately if you or someone else needs urgent help.

EXTERNAL RESOURCES

Study Melbourne Hub

Victorian Government initiative with events, legal support, community activities and resources for international students.

GLOSSARY



AHPRA (Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency)

The national organisation responsible for the registration and accreditation of health practitioners in Australia.

AIR (The Australian Immunisation Register)

A record of all vaccines you receive in Australia, helping you stay up to date with your immunisations for study, work and travel.

Immunisation

A process that helps your body build protection (immunity) against infectious diseases through vaccination.

Mantoux / TB Skin Test

Test to check if you have been exposed to tuberculosis (TB). A small amount of fluid is injected under the skin, and results are read 2–3 days later.

Placement

A supervised learning experience where students work in a professional healthcare environment to gain practical experience.

Placement Host

The organisation or facility where you complete your placement.

Placement Officer

The university team member who manages your placement allocation and is your key contact for any placement-related questions or support.

Pre-Placement Requirements

The checks, documents and tasks students need to complete before starting their placement.

Quantiferon Gold Test

A blood test used to screen for tuberculosis (TB) infection.

Safer Community

A La Trobe service that helps if you experience or witness concerning, threatening or inappropriate behaviour.

Serology

A blood test used to check for immunity to certain diseases or to confirm vaccination results.

Statutory Declaration

A legal document where you declare information to be true and sign it in front of an authorised witness.

Traditional Owners

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are the original custodians of the land where La Trobe campuses are located.

WWCC (Working with Children Check)

A mandatory check for students completing placements in settings involving children. It confirms suitability to work with children by reviewing criminal history and other relevant records.

