Pre-Departure Information Booklet for International Students
TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION – WELCOME!  3
PRE-DEPARTURE CHECKLIST  4
AUSTRALIAN IMMIGRATION  5
STUDENT VISAS  5
TRAVEL TO AND ARRIVAL IN AUSTRALIA  5
CLEARING CUSTOMS IN AUSTRALIA  5
SAFT ORIENTATION DAY  6
COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH YOUR COURSE  7
ENGLISH LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS, SUPPORT AND PATHWAYS  7
ENGLISH LANGUAGE PATHWAYS  8
EDUCATION AGENTS  8
WHAT TO BRING  9
SEASONAL CONSIDERATIONS  9
CLOTHING  9
OTHER ITEMS  9
AUSTRALIAN POWER VOLTAGE  10
MOBILE PHONES & LAPTOPS  10
PHARMACEUTICAL GOODS  10
OVERSEAS STUDENT HEALTH COVER (OSHC)  11
ESOS FRAMEWORK  11
ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS  12
Introduction – WELCOME!

Thank you for choosing to undertake your courses with Soar Advanced Flight Training (SAFT).

This guide is designed for international Student Visa holders preparing to travel to Australia to commence aviation courses with SAFT. It contains important information to assist you prepare before you leave home, what to expect when you first arrive and what help SAFT can provide.

You will undertake your course with us at fully functioning airport locations. SAFT have training sites in NSW and Victoria. This provides maximum opportunity for you to be surrounded by aviation professionals and experience the day to day life of the aviation industry.

If this is the first time you have moved to live in another country you probably feel excited but also a bit anxious and apprehensive. That’s normal—most students feel that way. Preparing yourself will make the transition smoother. Our team at SAFT will help and support you to settle into your new environment. Always ask us any questions.

If possible, talk with friends or relatives who have been to Australia about their experiences and try to learn a little about our country. Visit a library to read books and newspapers or listen to broadcasts by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC), which has short wave, satellite, cable, and FM transmissions. SAFT have also created a ‘Life in Australia’ PDF which is available for download from our International Student page on www.saft.edu.au

The Australian Government also provides very helpful information about studying in Australia at www.studyinaustralia.gov.au.

Good luck with your preparations. We look forward to flying with you soon!

Neel Khokhani and the Team at SAFT
Pre-Departure Checklist

To better prepare you for your arrival in Australia and avoid any unwanted complications, we have compiled a list of things you will need to consider and complete before departure:

- **Enrol**: Ensure your enrolment has been confirmed with SAFT. If you have not received your Confirmation of Enrolment, please contact our Student Support Administrator by phone +61 3 9487 5020 or email admin@soaraviation.com.au
- **Visa**: Organise your Student Visa. Refer to the Student Visa section of this booklet.
- **Passport**: Ensure your passport is valid for the intended length of your study period in Australia.
- **Medical care**: Have medical, optical and dental check-ups and organise any prescribed medication you may require to bring to Australia, including a letter from your doctor (in English) detailing any prescribed medicines.
- **Health Cover**: All students studying in Australia must have Overseas Students Health Cover (OSHC) for the duration of their stay in Australia. Further information is available from: http://www.border.gov.au/Trav/Stud/More/Health-Insurance-for-Students. Bring the details of your OSHC with you.
- **Accommodation**: Book accommodation before you leave your home country. There are many sources of short and long term accommodation in Australia, but it is wise to book ahead as short term places are not always available. Start looking for long-term accommodation as early as possible.
- **Money**: Organise to have at least A$2,000 available to you on arrival in Australia (approximately A$500 in cash and A$1,500 in travellers’ cheques or accessible by ATM). You also must ensure you have access to the money you need whilst in Australia to cover your course fees, travel, food, accommodation, and personal needs.
- **Consular assistance**: Make a note of the contact details of your country’s embassy in Australia.
- **Documentation**: Pack a document folder containing your offer letter, Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE), signed course agreement, English test results, identification documents (passport, drivers licence), important contact numbers, a written character reference (translated into English) to help in securing accommodation, details of pre-arranged accommodation and important medical records.
- **Insurance and quarantine**: Check customs and quarantine regulations and pack any items you wish to declare separately.
- **Travel**: Organise insurance for your travel and personal belongings.
- **Travel**: Ensure your flight is booked in time for you to arrive for SAFT Orientation Day or the date you have been given for course commencement.
- **Be well rested**: Try to be well rested and fit before you travel, as the impact of settling into your new environment, meeting new people, and starting your course can be very tiring. Staying fit and healthy is an important part of success in your learning. You will be required to undergo an aviation specific medical check.
- **Past work history and qualifications**: If you intend to seek work in Australia whilst undertaking your course, bring a document outlining your past work history, references from past employers and certified copies of your qualifications.
- **Contact phone numbers**: Bring names, addresses and phone numbers of your Australian contact persons. Also have important phone numbers with you such as SAFT contact phone number and Australia’s emergency ambulance, fire, police – Triple Zero – 000.
Australian Immigration

Student Visas

Student visas are administered by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP). To undertake our nationally accredited full-time courses you will be required to have a Vocational Education and Training Sector Visa (Subclass 572), which allows you to stay in Australia to study full-time with SAFT.

It is very important that you are fully aware of, and meet, all the conditions of your visa. Visa conditions are set out in the letter of approval sent with a visa or on a visa label. Information about the Student Visa can be obtained from http://www.border.gov.au/Trav/Visa-1/572-#

Persons entering Australia on a Student Visa have certain obligations. These include: continuous enrolment in a course registered on the CRICOS register, satisfactory attendance record, satisfactory course progress for each study period, providing your home address to SAFT within seven days of entry to Australia and informing SAFT of any change in your address or contact details, work (paid or voluntary) for no longer than 40 hours in a fortnight (14 days from a Monday to the second Sunday).

Breaking these conditions can cause a visa to be cancelled and this has serious consequences: under the law, a student may be required to leave Australia, have their visa cancelled, and have restrictions placed on future return to Australia.

Travel to and arrival in Australia

Book your flight/s to your Australian destination as soon as your Visa has been approved. Arrange for someone to meet you at the airport, or be sure you know the address and contact details for your destination and how you will get there. There are Trains running from Sydney airport. If you intend to catch the train, make sure you know if you have to change trains, where to change and what other train lines to travel on.

There are no trains from Melbourne airport, but there is a good bus service to the city centre, taking passengers to Southern Cross train station.

Clearing Customs in Australia

On your flight you will be given an incoming passenger card. Read it carefully and complete the details accurately. If you are not sure about something you are bringing with you, then declare it and customs will advise you.
On arrival, you will first of all be cleared through the immigration checkpoint. Have your passport ready. Then you will enter the baggage hall where you can claim your luggage and proceed to Customs and baggage examination. Department of Immigration and Border Protection website contains useful information. http://www.border.gov.au/ 

For information about the airport arrivals process, refer to the website information for the airport where you will be arriving in Australia.  

You must declare any food, plant materials and animal products. For more information about what you can and cannot bring into Australia, visit http://www.daff.gov.au/ 

Your luggage, including your hand luggage, may be x-rayed inspected or checked by a detector dog team. Do not be surprised if detailed checks are carried out. 

An official may ask you to open your luggage so that it can be inspected. If the Customs official decides that an item is not quarantined, you will be allowed to keep it and move through the Customs checkpoint. If the item is quarantined, it will either be confiscated and destroyed, or held for decontamination and returned to you at a later date. 

Australia has strict quarantine laws so it is important to declare all the items you are carrying on the incoming passenger card. Those who do not declare honestly risk fines and prosecution. 

**SAFT Orientation Day**

Orientation takes place before you commence your formal study program. At the orientation sessions you will find out more about your course and training plan, you’ll have an opportunity to meet with the flight instructors and administration team and most likely some of your fellow students also. Orientation includes a tour of the Airport and SAFT facilities. You’ll also learn more about the social side of life in Australia.

Attendance at the SAFT Student Orientation Day is compulsory as you will receive crucial information regarding your studies and obligations. SAFT Orientation Day is held within the first week of your course start date.
Costs associated with your course

Course fees are broken into two main categories – Tuition Fees and Additional Charges. Most of the costs associated with your course are already included in your total course fees which you have been advised of. Anything additional you want to purchase, such as additional stationery items (pens, folders, carry bag, laptop) are items you will need to purchase separately.

Be sure you are aware of the potential additional costs of any extra flight tests and exams which you may need to undertake if you fail to pass these as required by CASA. Ensure you have access to funds to cover these additional costs if necessary.

English Language Requirements, Support and Pathways

Some applicants are required to provide the results of an English language test to acquire a student visa. To ascertain which “Country Assessment” level applies to your visit check http://www.immi.gov.au/allforms/pdf/assessment-levels.pdf

For entry to SAFT courses you MUST meet the general English language proficiency level which is approved by the Civil Aviation Authority of Australia. CASA has nominated IELTS or TOEFL or TOEIC as the acceptable general English language test.

When you book your English test, you are personally responsible for informing the test centre exactly what test or tests you wish to take and the purpose for which you are undertaking the test.

Additionally, like all exam sittings, prior arrangements would be essential as there is considerable demand for such general English language testing. CASA advises candidates to lodge their applications as early as possible.

You will be required to undertake ONE of the following tests and achieve one of the minimum test scores outlined below. The test results you provide to SAFT must not be more than two years old. If you have any further questions, contact SAFT for more information.

a) IELTS (International English Language Testing System) minimum overall grade score of 5.5 (with no band score less than 5.0) Note: Test bands are listening, reading, writing & speaking
b) TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language)
c) TOEFL Internet based test. Minimum test score 71
d) TOEFL Computer based test. Minimum test score 197
   TOEFL Paper based test. Minimum test score 530
e) TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication) minimum test scores
English Language Pathways

Applicants who do not meet SAFT’s English language entry requirements and need to improve their English language proficiency can do so through SAFT’s approved English Language Instruction Course for Overseas Students (ELICOS) provider, Ability English.

Ability English will prepare students for IELTS and in the Test Preparation Course you will learn about:
- the test and what it’s asking you to do
- valuable test tips
- test-taking skills under pressure
- how to improve your personal problems

Speak with our Student Support Officer or contact Ability English to discuss your needs with them. Ensure you indicate you are intending to enrol in a SAFT aviation course.

Education Agents

Education Agents are often the first point of contact between Australian training providers and intending students. You may approach an Education Agent to assist you, or an Education Agent may have approached you.

The role of an Education Agent is primarily to market and recruit students for the training provider. The agent’s role generally includes:
- Identifying prospective students considering studying in Australia
- Giving students information about the provider and their courses
- Helping students complete enrolment forms
- Providing a contact point for the student while they are studying in Australia
- Preparing and submitting a prospective student’s visa application, where qualified to do so.

The National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007 (the National Code) requires that Australian training providers only use agents who provide international students with accurate information about study in Australia and who act honestly in their dealings with students.

SAFT will only use Education Agents who have an appropriate knowledge and understanding of the Australian international education industry.

Education Agents approved to market, recruit and support our students are listed on our website. However, if your Agent is not listed, they can contact SAFT for an application form.
If you have applied to SAFT through an Education Agent or an Education Agent is assisting you with your entry to Australia and enrolment, it is very important that you advise SAFT of the Agent’s details.

What to Bring

Seasonal Considerations ☀️

Summer in Australia is from December to February, autumn from March to May, winter from June to August, and spring from September to November. In most major Australian cities, the hottest months are January and February.

If you arrive in June or July, the coldest months of the year, you may need to bring or buy winter clothing and blankets. You may also need to buy a heating appliance once you arrive, depending upon the heating provided in your accommodation.

Clothing 🌟

Students are required to wear the Soar Aviation Student Pilot uniform. This will be provided to you upon your arrival and it is expected that your uniform is consistently clean, ironed and worn respectfully, as you are a representative of the school. Any student not wearing the correct uniform or wearing the uniform in an untidy manner may be sent home to change.

Outside of the college, in Australia men and women commonly wear shorts and t-shirts in summer. In winter, jeans or trousers, polo shirt or T-shirt and jumper. A sports coat or suit and tie for men and appropriate dress for women is necessary for some functions such as formal dinners, attendance at a wedding. Formal mens and ladies clothing can be hired from formal wear hire retailers if required. For festive occasions, you may want to bring traditional dress and accessories.

Other Items 🧱

(You may want to bring some or all of the following items. These can also be purchased in Australia)

- scientific or graphics calculator
- camera
- micro recorder for lectures
- spare spectacles or contact lenses
- your optical prescription
- photos of friends and family
- swimming costume
- small gifts from home
- alarm clock
□ dictionary (bilingual)
□ bath towels, bed sheets, pillow cases
□ small sewing kit
□ music CDs or mp3 player (iPod)
□ sporting equipment
□ toiletries
□ umbrella
□ laptop or tablet

Australian power voltage

The standard voltage for electrical items in Australia is 240V. Electric plugs have three flat pins, one of which is an earth pin. You may need to buy an adaptor or have the plugs changed when you arrive.

Please note: In the picture to the left, the red dot indicates that the switch is on and power is flowing through that socket.

Mobile Phones & Laptops

If you are considering bringing a mobile phone, laptop or any communication devices, we suggest that you visit the Australian Communications and Media Authority www.acma.gov.au before making any purchases. Some students have brought in their own laptops with internal modems only to discover that they were unable to use their modem in Australia. Any external or built-in modems must be Austel Approved in order to function in Australia.

Pharmaceutical Goods

International students cannot use the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme which allows Australian citizens to buy prescription items at a subsidised cost. If you require ongoing medication, adjust your budget. Check the Therapeutic Goods Administration site at www.tga.gov.au/consumers/travellers.htm to find out about which prescription drugs you can bring and in what quantities. If applicable, declare your prescription drugs to customs officer and show your script and a letter from your doctor.
Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)

Current Australian legislation requires all overseas students studying in Australia to have purchased Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC). It must be effective from the date you arrive in Australia. Your policy should include cover for visits to the doctor, some hospital treatment, ambulance cover and limited pharmaceuticals (medicines).

Insurers who offer OSHC include Australian Health Management, BUPA Australia, Medibank Private, Allianz Global Assistance and NIB OSHC. Only Australian registered private health insurers can offer OSHC, and cover is available to be purchased online with the above listed providers.

For further information on minimum policy inclusions, waiting periods, and other information please see the Department of Health website.

It is also recommended that you research whether you will require any further forms of insurance whilst in Australia such as:

- Private health insurance - to cover items your OSHC may not cover;
- Travel insurance - tourism and/or travel related costs such as cancelled flights or lost luggage;
- Home and/or contents insurance - coverage for the building you will live in and your belongings in case of theft or damage; and
- Vehicle insurance - coverage if you purchase a car, motorbike or other vehicle whilst in Australia. Compulsory insurance is required for some states, please check with the relevant Government agency.

ESOS Framework

The Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) framework protects the rights of international students studying in Australia. It also sets the standards for the regulation of Australian education and training institutions providing courses to international students.

The Framework incorporates the ESOS Act, Regulations, the National Code and Legislative Instruments, training provider registrations, information for students, and the Tuition Protection Service.

As an international student studying with SAFT in Australia, you have the right to information before commencing your course. You will be given further information at the Orientation Day to help you, but if you have any questions about any of the following prior to your departure to Australia, please contact our office for further information. You should

- understand the course into which you have enrolled – expected outcomes, duration, methods of assessment, expected attendance hours, expected progress requirements, location
- know about the place where you are studying – location, facilities, transport
• have access to support services that can help you with your study and also help with advice regarding personal services and your adjustment to life in Australia
• know the details for SAFT’s contact officer or student support officer
• know what support is available if you are not progressing well
• understand if you can apply for course credit
• know the circumstances in which your enrolment can be deferred, suspended or cancelled
• be aware of the complaints and appeals process.

You should have received before enrolling, current and accurate information about the courses, fees, refunds, modes of study, cancellations and conditions of enrolment;

When you have been accepted to enrol with SAFT, you will enter into a written agreement with SAFT. The written agreement is like a contract, and you and SAFT are required to do the things outlined in that agreement once you sign or indicate to SAFT that you accept the agreement. You do not have to pay the provider or their agent any money or fees until you have signed the agreement. Read the agreement carefully.

Your signed course agreement contains important information. Bring a copy of your signed course agreement to Australia with you.

For further information on the ESOS framework, please visit the Department of Education and Training

**Accommodation Options 🏡**

While SAFT does not offer accommodation services or take any responsibility for accommodation arrangements, our Student Support officer is able to refer you to appropriate accommodation services and is available to discuss any issues or concerns you may have with accommodation arrangements.

One option for overseas students is the Australian Homestay Network. To book accommodation, you will need to register on www.homestaynetwork.org and find out if there is accommodation available in the location of your course.

All students are encouraged to have at least 2-3 weeks accommodation organised prior to arrival in Australia, with the anticipation to move into permanent accommodation upon arrival. Our Student Support Officer can refer students to appropriate accommodation services. Please view our Life in Australia Booklet for more information.