



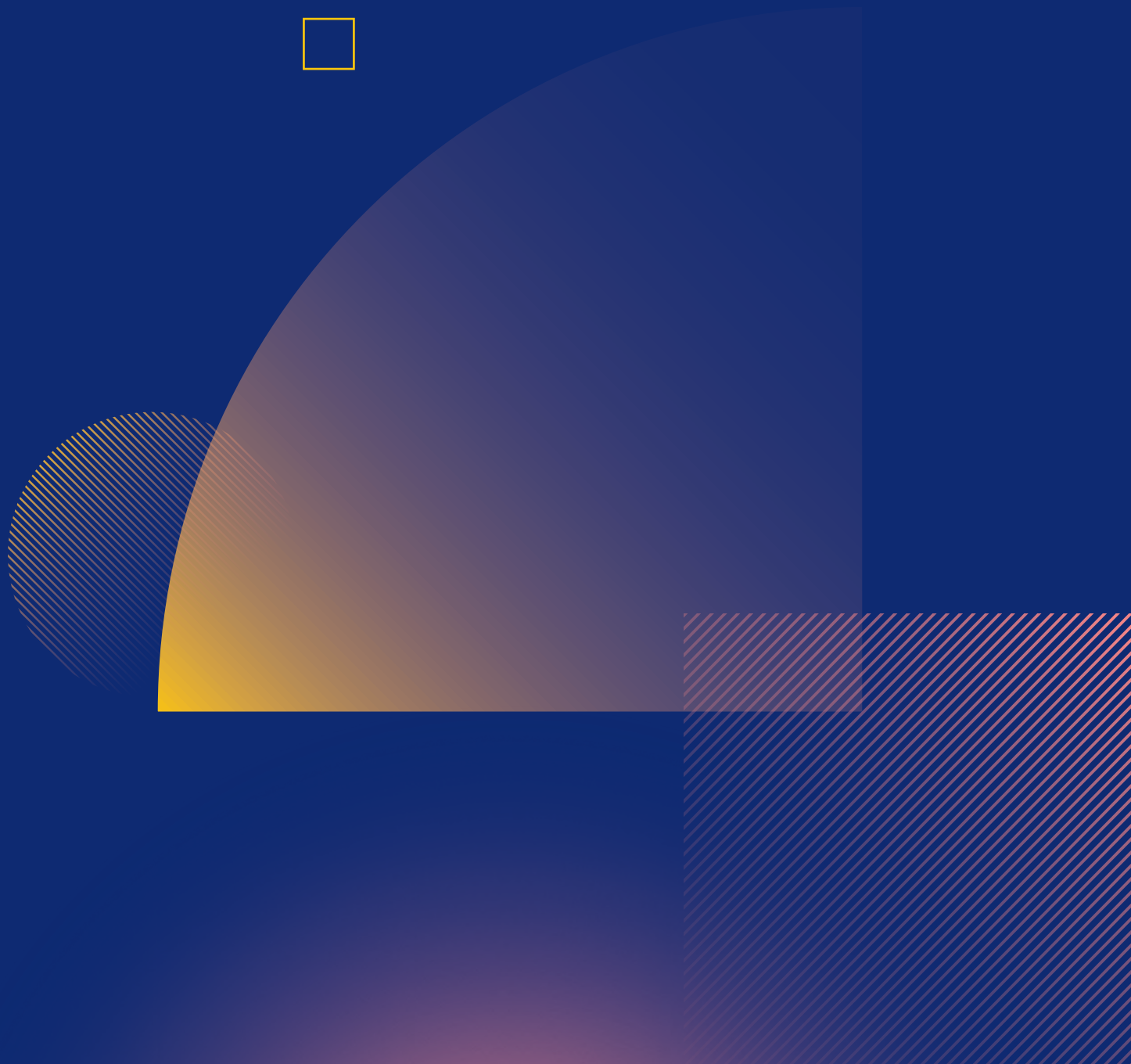
Strathcona
GIRLS GRAMMAR

OVERSEAS

Student Handbook

2021

GIRLS
UNSTOPPABLE



About Strathcona

Strathcona is the catalyst of a life-shaping momentum, ensuring each girl discovers a trajectory as unique and full of potential as she is.

Upon their respective journeys, Strathcona girls break the stereotypes of private education — and we are proud of it. Action, meaning and fulfilment take precedence, and are aptly expressed in the School motto: 'Bravely, Faithfully, Happily.'

Through a culture of academic excellence and a rich selection of co-curricular activities, girls grow and thrive. Strong, resilient, empowered — at Strathcona these are more than just words. We imbue them with impetus tied to each girl's uniqueness and personal ambitions.

As a student's voice and identity emerge, so does her character. And it is here that Strathcona truly sets itself apart. A Strathcona girl is balanced in mind, body and spirit. Her robust sense of self is founded upon respect, integrity, compassion, courage and genuine community spirit. Being ready for life isn't about bettering others — it is about improvement within.

In essence, Strathcona affords its girls the opportunity to discover who they really are, and to pursue their life's potential by being themselves.

Or, put another way:
unstoppable girls begin at Strathcona.



Our Vision

Strathcona aspires to be a nurturing learning community that develops intellectually curious, optimistic, life-ready young women who are empowered to shape their future in a rapidly changing world.

Our Values

Respect, Integrity, Compassion, Courage, Empowerment.

Our Guiding Principles

1. To be courageous and creative in thinking, learning and research
2. To act judiciously and purposefully in contribution to the world
3. To be resourceful, resilient, and optimistic in spirit
4. To utilise authentic, agile learning places and systems
5. To enrich and strengthen our multi-faceted contemporary community
6. To ensure visionary leadership and wise stewardship

Our Motto

Fortiter — Bravely: Strathcona girls are courageous

Fideliter — Faithfully: Strathcona girls are ethically minded

Feliciter — Happily: Strathcona girls are optimistic

Statement of Philosophy

- We are committed to offering our students the best education possible, and allowing each student to realise their full potential.
- We are committed to offering the best academic environment possible. To do this, we support each student's learning and ensure that each student can learn in an environment free from bullying, harassment, and undue distraction.
- We are committed to caring for each student's emotional and pastoral needs. To do this, we have a pastoral care framework and provide support such as counselling services and education on resilience and mental health.
- We are committed to allowing each student to achieve in areas of their own interest. To do this, we accommodate each student's interests, allowing them to balance curricular and extra-curricular activities, and encourage them to pursue their interests.
- We are committed to fostering leadership in all of our students. To achieve this, we have programs and activities which encourage each student to lead among their peers.
- We are committed to allowing each student to live a healthy and active lifestyle. To do this, we provide education on a healthy lifestyle, and encourage sporting and other recreational activities.





Contents

Introduction	6
Why Study at Strathcona.....	7
Study in Victoria	7
Support - Keeping you safe and happy is our number one priority	8
House activities.....	8
Key Staff here to help you	9
Enrolment and Requirements.....	10
Tuition Fees	10
Prerequisites to achieve a place.....	10
For student visa holders not accompanied by a parent	11
Courses provided	12
Change of Address	12
Overseas Students Orientation	13
Accommodation	13
Overseas Student Health Cover.....	14
Overseas Student Safety Card.....	15
Overseas Student Visa Conditions.....	15
Change of Visa Status	15
Overseas Student Attendance Requirements.....	16
End of Term Travel	16
Overseas Student Transfer	17
Important Information	17
What happens when I first arrive in Australia?.....	18
Laws and Safety in Australia	20
What do I do if I am sick?	21
Additional Useful Links for Overseas Students.....	23

Introduction

We welcome you to Strathcona, a school which provides the emotional, social and practical support that is necessary for a successful transition to the Australian education system.

All Staff, but in particular the Overseas Student Coordinator, will help you with your transition into Strathcona ensuring it is a positive and meaningful experience. The Overseas Coordinator is here to manage any uncertainty that you may experience when you first start at the School and to care for you during your studies. In order to settle into Strathcona quickly, we encourage you to meet and talk with your Year Level Coordinators, Heads of House and other staff members as well as the other students.

This manual has been produced as a reference for you. It will direct you to people who can help if you have a problem and it will explain how the School operates.

The School has several important policies available via the public website that you and your family should familiarise yourselves with before commencement.

These include:

- Student Accommodation Arrangements Policy
- Course Progress & Attendance Policy
- Academic Integrity Policy
- Transfer Policy
- Complaints Handling Policy
- Complaints Appeals Policy
- Procedures to reduce the risk of Child Abuse
- Terms & Conditions of Enrolment, Fees Policy and Business Regulations Notice
- Refund Policy
- Deferment Policy

English and translated copies of these policies are available on the [school website](#).

Strathcona is a not-for-profit independent school. In its policies and practices, the School supports and promotes the principles and practice of Australian democracy, including a commitment to:

- Elected government
- The rule of law
- Equal rights for all before the law
- Freedom of religion
- Freedom of speech and association
- The values of openness and tolerance.

We are here to assist you and answer your questions as they arise.

Welcome to the Strathcona community!

Why Study at Strathcona



At Strathcona, we support each individual girl to develop her own voice and identity, as well as health in body, mind and spirit.

There is a strong sense of belonging at the School, facilitated by a nurturing Pastoral Care program, Cross-age programs create opportunities for mentoring and friendships and a House System provides a vibrant platform for personal development activities.

Strathcona students have a strong sense of social responsibility and possess a genuine spirit of global citizenship.

The Strathcona environment nurtures the pursuit of academic excellence, co-curricular involvement, leadership development and community. Our aim is to afford girls the opportunity to try various activities so that each individual is able to recognise and develop her own interests and unique attributes. We take a personalised approach to learning and development to each of our students.

Marise McConaghy, Principal

Study in Victoria

We are proud to welcome our students to the beautiful garden state of Victoria and the vibrant city of Melbourne. Melbourne is consistently nominated as one of the most liveable cities in the world (Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) liveability survey).

We want you to enjoy Melbourne and also to be safe. Overall, our city is a safe, friendly and welcoming study destination, offering students a wonderful healthy lifestyle in a city vibrant with shopping, cafes, and magnificent outdoor opportunities. Your Overseas Student Coordinator, homestay family and support person will help you transition into your new life at Strathcona and importantly you will need to listen and adhere to advice, rules and guidelines all provided to keep you safe and happy. Victoria's leading school education system, excellent classroom facilities, welfare support and English language centres make Victoria one of the world's best education destinations.

Primary and secondary studies in Victoria are structured so that each calendar year represents the completion of a year level of study (approximately 40 weeks). The school year starts late January/early February. The school year is divided into two Semesters (four Terms). The holiday breaks occur between Term 1 and Term 2 (usually 2 weeks), Term 2 and Term 3 (usually 3 weeks) and Term 3 and Term 4 (usually 2 weeks). Please refer to our Term Dates on our [website](#).

You can learn more about student experiences and more about Melbourne, including transport options and events by accessing the Study Melbourne website [here](#). Alternatively, you may wish to download the Study Melbourne app.

Support - Keeping you safe and happy is our number one priority

The wellbeing and happiness of our students is our top priority and is anchored by the strength of our House System. Each girl enrolling into Strathcona is placed within a House (or colour group). Each House has a House Mentor who arranges individual meetings with each student. These one-on-one discussions provide students with feedback and advice for how to develop her own goal/s and take ownership over how they are created and achieved. This process empowers the student to use her knowledge of her character strengths to set goals for the senior years of schooling and life beyond school.

In addition, our overseas students are also supported by our Overseas Student Coordinator, School Psychologist, the Deputy Principal, the Heads of House and House Mentor, a Buddy program and ultimately, the School Principal.

Everyone within Strathcona is kind and caring and recognises the challenges overseas students may face with being away from home and working within a different language and culture. By providing multiple avenues of care and support, our overseas students have many opportunities to seek guidance and advice allowing their studies to thrive and friendships to grow.

House activities

Every Strathcona student belongs to a House (colour group) and there are lots of opportunities to represent your House in Debating, Drama, Music and sporting activities. This is a fun way to meet other students from your own year level and different year levels.

The four Houses are:



Run by the House Captains, House meetings will take place leading up to each House event. During these House meetings you will have an opportunity to sign up to the events you would like to participate in. Everyone is expected to participate in the House Swimming, Cross Country and Athletic Sports, as well as other events, depending on your year level.



Key Staff here to help you

On arrival at school, you will meet key staff members who will help you to settle into your new environment:

Child Safety Officers



Mrs Marise McConaghy
Principal



Ms Tracy Herft
Deputy Principal – Operations



Mrs Lisa Miller
Head of Junior School



Ms Kerri Rhodes
School Psychologist



Mrs Karyn Murray
Head of Yr9 - Tay Creggan



Mrs Amber Sowden
Dean of Students



Mrs Sharon Turner
School Psychologist

Heads of House



Ms Hollie Fields
Head of House – Arnold



Mrs Megan Boyd
Head of House – Findlay



Mrs Miranda Gazis
Head of House – Gilbert



Mrs Rhiannon Ward
Head of House – Grenfell

Other Key Contacts



Mrs Amanda Orgill
Overseas Student Coordinator



Ms Liesl Woods
Yr7 Coordinator



Mrs Melissa Patel
Yr8 Coordinator



Mr Scott Sweeney
VCE Coordinator



Mr Ross Phillips
Senior Dean of Learning Futures



Mrs Mary Petsinis
VCE EAL Teacher



Ms Peixia Mo
VCE Chinese Teacher



Ms Diana Li
VCE Chinese Teacher



Ms Joanna Buckley
Careers Advisor

Enrolment and Requirements

At Strathcona we welcome Overseas Students for all secondary year levels, Years 7 to 12.

Students in Years 7 and 8 must be accompanied by a parent or live with a Student Guardian approved by the Department of Home Affairs. Homestay accommodation is not available to students who are 13 years of age and younger.

Students studying in Year 9 are usually about 15 years of age and students studying Year 12 are usually 17 or 18 years of age. Year 12 is the last year of secondary school and is designed to prepare students for university or other tertiary education. Entry to tertiary courses is dependent upon the score the students achieve in their VCE (Victorian Certificate of Education).

In Victoria, the highest qualification a student can obtain from secondary school is VCE. To qualify, students must study for a minimum of two years (Years 11 and 12) and pass at least five subjects throughout that two-year course. English is the only compulsory subject (At Strathcona all overseas students must study English as an Additional Language (EAL).

In some instances, students may be eligible for credits for semester units completed in their home countries. You should ask your education agent about this. For VCE level courses (Year 11 and Year 12) you may refer directly to the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment at <https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au>.

Please note Strathcona cannot secure migration outcomes, this responsibility remains with the applicant's family. Strathcona takes pride in providing an exceptional education with every opportunity to learn and thrive, however the School cannot guarantee successful educational outcomes through the delivery of a course.

Tuition Fees

School Fees are invoiced in two instalments (by Semester). The first instalment is invoiced by November in the year prior to the new school year and the second instalment invoiced in May of the new school year. Invoices will be sent via email. No payment plans are available for overseas students.

Attached is a copy of the [Terms & Conditions of Enrolment, Fees Policy and Business Regulations Notice](#).

Prerequisites to achieve a place

To be eligible for a place at Strathcona in Years 7-12, an overseas student must show documented evidence of good grades in academic subjects studied in the previous school(s) and English competence must be at an appropriate level prior to enrolment. Additional school-based testing in Mathematics and English may be required.

We require a minimum Australian Education Assessment Services (AEAS) score of 50 (intermediate) and stanine 5 (average) to apply and a minimum score of 70 (upper intermediate) and stanine 5 (average) to attend a pre-enrolment interview.

Strathcona will not enrol an overseas student who does not meet the entry prerequisites.

The cost associated with the English language proficiency testing must be met by the applicant's family on each occasion. Please note the AEAS report is valid for 12 months.

For further information regarding the English language proficiency testing please visit the Australian Education Assessment Services (AEAS) website. The [AEAS website](#) is in English but there is a link on the page for other languages. The website contains information regarding test location and times.

It should be noted that Strathcona will work with overseas students to ensure success but cannot guarantee that students will:

- successfully complete their studies;
- successfully complete their VCE; and/or
- gain entry into a tertiary institution.

When should an Overseas Student Apply?

Overseas students entering Years 9-12 should take the Australian Education Assessment Services (AEAS) at least 6-12 months prior to their anticipated commencement date. This gives the student time to plan their English Language Intensive Course for Overseas Students (ELICOS) course to ensure they are ready to commence school at the beginning of the academic year.

- Overseas students applying for Year 11 or 12 entry must start in Term 1.
- Overseas students applying for Year 10 entry can start in Term 1 - Term 3.
- Overseas students applying for Year 9 entry can start Term 1 - Term 4.

For student visa holders not accompanied by a parent

If you require Strathcona to issue a Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation and Welfare document (CAAW) as part of your visa application, the following conditions must be met as a condition of your enrolment and for the entire period you are enrolled at Strathcona:

- **Australian Homestay Network (AHN)**

You will be required to stay in homestay accommodation approved by the School, **regardless of your age**, for the entire period you are enrolled at the School. Students are expected to stay at the chosen homestay while they are studying at Strathcona unless a valid reason is given for a move to another homestay. This must be discussed with the Overseas Student Coordinator, and approval given, before any decision is reached. Strathcona uses [AHN - Australian Homestay Network](#) as our Homestay provider. Students requiring homestay accommodation must register directly with AHN before a homestay can be found.

- **ISA Student Advocates (ISA)**

You will be required to have an additional Welfare and Support Person appointed by Strathcona for the entire period you are enrolled at the School, **regardless of your age**. Students must register directly with [ISA Student Advocates](#). This service is an additional cost to the family. **This service is compulsory and not negotiable.**

Strathcona engages the services of ISA to provide this **additional** care and support for its overseas students. The support service provided by ISA is not 'guardianship' and ISA has no responsibility for the student's accommodation or welfare. This paid support service is additional to, and not in place of, the support and counselling the school provides its students. Strathcona does not delegate, outsource or contract out that responsibility.

ISA's role as an additional support is to:

- Accommodation during holiday periods

- Parent/Teacher interviews
- Reporting process both academically and socially
- Liaising with your homestay family
- Absences
- School expectations (e.g. attendance at events, behaviour)
- Liaison with your parents
- An additional point of contact as a support person for any concerns you may have.

Courses provided

Strathcona welcomes overseas students in Years 7-12. The course is based on the Australian Curriculum up to Year 10 and then the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE), both developed and supported by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA).

Strathcona Baptist Girls Grammar School CRICOS Code: **00577C**

CRICOS registered courses: Secondary **005486K**

Curriculum Handbooks

Course details may be found in the Curriculum Handbooks downloadable from the School portal, MyStrathcona or by clicking on the handbooks below.



2021 Years 7-9
Curriculum Handbook



2021 Year 10
Curriculum Handbook



2021 VCE Curriculum
Handbook.pdf

Modes of study offered

Students are required to attend Strathcona course(s) face-to-face, on campus using school facilities. Strathcona uses a wide range of teaching and assessment methods. Depending on course components, a student's course may also include:

- Online learning in class time or after school hours;
- Approved excursions or learning journeys;
- Approved work experience program;
- Outdoor education activities; and/or excursions;
- Approved studies that contribute to a student's enrolled course but are delivered by another approved provider.
- Sport and Co-curricular activities such as Debating, Science Club, Rowing, Kayaking, Saturday Netball, Snowsports, Duke of Edinburgh Awards and Rhythmic Gymnastics as examples.

Change of Address

Your current address must be kept up-to-date at all times. Strathcona is required to advise the Government of any changes.

Should you change your address at any time, you must:

- Notify the School of your new details within 7 days.
- Notify the Overseas Student Coordinator immediately.
- Notify your Head of House or the Head of Tay Creggan (Year 9)

There are no excuses and no exceptions. If you fail to do this, your visa can be cancelled.

Overseas Students Orientation

We know there are lots of things to organise and to think about when starting at a new school, let alone in a new country. Our Overseas Student Coordinator is here to help and will meet with you before school starts to help you get ready and to answer any last-minute questions. Our Overseas Student Coordinator will confirm your personal details, accommodation arrangements, transport, and discuss uniform requirements and booklists.

Your orientation to Strathcona will include:

- Meeting the Principal and Deputy Principal
- Meeting the Senior Dean of Learning Futures to confirm subject choices.
- Meeting the Careers Advisor and VCE Coordinator to discuss VCE and tertiary pathways (if and when applicable).
- Meeting your Year Level Coordinator to discuss course requirements, class arrangements and your timetable.
- Meeting our IT Staff who will assist you with setting up accounts and passwords.
- Meeting your EAL teacher
- Meeting the other Overseas students in your year level
- Touring the School
- Being introduced to a “Buddy” or “Mentor”
- Learning and remembering the location of your locker, the School Nurse, the School Psychologist and the Canteen 😊

Accommodation

Students in Years 7 and 8 must be accompanied by a parent or live with a Student Guardian approved by the Department of Home Affairs. Homestay accommodation is not available to students who are 13 years and under.

Strathcona recommends that overseas students who are 15 years of age (generally this will be Year 9) or older live with either:

- **Family member or Student Guardian approved by the Department of Home Affairs living in Melbourne**, ie. Living with either Mum or Dad or close relative.
- **Homestay family** (approved by the School)
This refers to living with a family in your host country and participating in the lifestyle of the family. You are a member of the family and are expected to abide by their household rules. Each Homestay has its own rules and customs.

The School requires an environment that provides supervision and encouragement for you. Unsuitable living arrangements can lead to illness, tiredness, absenteeism and a reduction in academic success.

Please discuss your arrangement with the Overseas Student Coordinator if you have a problem or concern regarding your homestay accommodation.

Sufficient notice must be given by the student/their family, prior to entry, if they require the School to arrange a Homestay as homestay positions are not always readily available. The Overseas Student Coordinator will work with AHN to find a homestay that meets as many of the student's requirements as possible. The Overseas Student Coordinator will conduct a homestay inspection prior to the student moving in and every 6 months thereafter to ensure the living arrangements remain suitable to the student's needs.

Once accommodation is arranged and all parties are satisfied, the accommodation should not be changed, unless a student can provide a suitable reason for wishing to change.

Overseas Student Health Cover

Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)

As a requirement of a Student Visa, overseas students must have health insurance cover (OSHC) arranged **before** they arrive in Australia and for the length of their visa or for their total study period, whichever is longer. This is a requirement of the Department of Home Affairs. OSHC provides medical and hospital insurance in Australia. Strathcona's preferred health insurance provider is [Medibank](#).

The cost associated with the OSHC must be met by the applicant's family and is dependent upon the length of the student's visa.

Medibank Membership Card

Once your OSHC payment is processed you will receive a confirmation letter from Medibank. You are expected then to follow the instructions on the letter to activate the policy. A membership card will be issued shortly thereafter. You will need to keep your membership card in a safe place for when you may need to claim back your medical expenses.

A copy of your membership card must be forwarded to the Overseas Student Coordinator once received.

Should you misplace your membership card at any time, please see the Overseas Student Coordinator for assistance.

Making a claim

Once your OSHC policy is activated, information will be sent to you explaining your cover and what medical expenses you are entitled to claim.

Medibank App



Medibank now has an Overseas Student Health Cover app for students with Medibank insurance. This app allows you to access and manage your health cover from your phone anytime, anywhere.

You can also:

1. Make claims on most medical services.
2. Use the GPS tracker to locate nearby doctors and health professionals who have an arrangement with Medibank and bill Medibank directly (out-of-pocket costs may apply).
3. Access your digital membership card.
4. Reissue a copy of your certificate and renew your cover.
5. Access mental health support and counselling services by phone.
6. Speak to a registered nurse via the 24/7 Student Health and Support Line.
7. Translate some features of the app into simplified Chinese.



To download the app, you need to search Medibank OSHC in the App Store or on Google Play.

Overseas Student Safety Card

All overseas students are given an Overseas Student Safety Card at the time of commencement in case the student needs to contact responsible persons in the event of an emergency. This card includes the contact details for the Emergency Services and Overseas Student Coordinator.

The Overseas Student Safety Card includes the following contact details for students in the case of an emergency:

- Emergency (Police, Fire, Ambulance)
- Commonwealth Ombudsman
- Victorian Registration and Qualification Authority
- 24-hour Strathcona emergency contacts (Campus and additional emergency contacts)

A world-wide emergency app called 'Safe Student' is also available to download. The app allows students to alert up to three contacts of any emergency situation and the app also has a GPS. For more information and to download the app [click here](https://safestudentapp.com/) (https://safestudentapp.com/). Safe Student is available for apple and android phones.

Overseas Student Visa Conditions

Student Visa holders must abide by the visa conditions at all times and failure to comply could result in the cancellation of their visa.

Visa conditions include (but are not limited to):

- Completing the course within the duration specified in the CoE (Confirmation of Enrolment).
- Maintaining satisfactory academic progress.
- Maintaining approved Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) while in Australia
- Remaining with the principal school for six (6) calendar months, unless issued a letter of release from the provider to attend another institution
- Notifying the School of their Australian address and any subsequent changes of address within seven (7) days.

For a full list of mandatory and discretionary student visa conditions please [click here](#).

Change of Visa Status

If there is any change to a student's visa or visa status, the student must notify the School immediately and forward a copy of the new visa to the Overseas Student Coordinator.

Where a student becomes a Temporary or Permanent Resident the family will be required to pay full tuition fees for the duration of that calendar year with the fee change only taking effect from the following year. The family must provide proof that the student is living with a parent/legal Welfare and Support Person as Strathcona does not allow local students holding temporary or permanent visas to live in homestay accommodation.

Overseas Student Attendance Requirements

Attendance for the entire school year is a requirement by the School.

Students are expected to remain at school for the whole day unless special permission is given, in which case the student must check out at Student Services before leaving school. In addition to the regular school program, there are some special occasions which all students are expected to attend and these are detailed in the School online diary on MyStrathcona.

There is a requirement by the School to attend at least 90% of the scheduled classes each term.

The Australian Government requirements are that students who do not comply with the visa condition relating to enrolment, attendance and academic performance may, in certain circumstances, have their visas cancelled automatically.

If a student is absent from school for any reason, the School must be advised. A parent, Student Guardian approved by the Department of Home Affairs, additional Support and Welfare Person or Homestay Host must advise the school about hour absence either via the Strathcona app or by email to absentee@strathcona.vic.edu.au.

If you are ill, written correspondence from your Parent, Student Guardian approved by the Department of Home Affairs, ISA Welfare and Support Person or Homestay Host is required.

End of Term Travel

It is important to make travel arrangements well in advance as student bookings can be very busy towards the end of term. Before booking a ticket home, be sure to check the School Calendar for end and beginning of term dates as Overseas students are expected to book flights around the term dates.

Written permission from a Parent, approved Nominated Guardian or additional Welfare and Support Person must be sent to the Principal, Mrs Marise McConaghy (mmcconaghy@strathcona.vic.edu.au), at least one month prior to travelling, explaining the reasons for the student's early departure or late return to school after the holiday period. Students must also advise the Overseas Student Coordinator of their travel plans and provide a copy of their airline ticket as confirmation of the student's departure and return. Once written correspondence is received the Principal will advise whether leave is granted.

Sometimes there are exceptional circumstances where a student needs to leave school *before* the end of term and/or return to school *after* term has commenced.

Please note the finishing date for the School year and all of the special events that take place at the end of the school year such as Presentation Night and Christmas Church Service. All students are expected to attend these special School events.

Overseas students are part of the School community and are expected to participate in the co-curricular life of the School. For example, House Events – Music, Sport, Drama, School music performances and Debating. Involvement in these activities is much appreciated by your peers and staff alike.

Overseas Student Transfer

Strathcona will assess student transfers in a reasonable time frame and will process any transfer requests and subsequent release at no cost to the student. Strathcona asks overseas students, families and education agents to note that a term's notice is required from the parent or welfare and support officer as per business regulations and agreements.

Prior to accepting a student wishing to transfer from another school, Strathcona will apply criteria for entry pre-requisites and should be satisfied that the student has demonstrated a commitment to their studies during the course, had good attendance record for the course, and paid all fees for the course.

Important Information

Uniform

Strathcona students represent the School to the wider community and take great pride in their School and their appearance. All uniforms must be clean and tidy, skirts on or below the knee, and if hair is below the shoulder then it must be tied back. The uniform is to be worn correctly to and from School. During orientation students will receive the full Uniform Policy and any questions will be answered. Dobsons is our Uniform Supplier and they will assist you with every uniform item you need. A list of uniform requirements can be accessed on the school portal, Mystrathcona or by clicking on the Senior School Handbook below.



2021 Senior School
Parent Handbook.pdf

Booklists

Each year Strathcona thoughtfully considers the books designated to students and subjects, tailoring these resources to suit the needs of the curriculum delivery.

New Books

Strathcona partners with [Campion Education](#) as our booklist provider. Booklists become available for every year level in approximately November. Campion can deliver these books directly to your home or to our school. Families will need to use the code J9U6 to access the 2021 booklists.

Second-Hand Books

Our school has partnered with the [Sustainable School Shop](#). This service is accessible online. It preferences our school first and then provides access to buy and sell items with families attending other nearby schools. Available to review are second-hand textbooks, calculators, stationery, musical equipment and more. Additional details are available on MyStrathcona.



What happens when I first arrive in Australia?

Australian Immigration

When you first arrive in Australia you will be required to make your way through Australian Immigration (follow the signs for Arriving Passengers as you leave the plane). An Immigration Officer will ask to see your completed Incoming Passenger Card (given to you on the plane) along with your passport and student visa evidence. The Immigration Officer will check your documents and may ask you a few questions about your plans for your stay in Australia.

Baggage Claim

Once you have passed through the immigration checks you will move to baggage claim (follow the signs) and collect your luggage. Check that nothing is missing or damaged. If something is missing or damaged go to the Baggage Counter and advise them of your problem. Staff at the Baggage Counter will help you to find your belongings or lodge a claim for damage.

Australian Customs and Quarantine

Once you have your luggage you will go through Customs. Be careful about what you bring into Australia. Some items you might bring from overseas can carry pests and diseases that Australia doesn't have. You must declare ALL food, meat, fruit, plants, seeds, wooden souvenirs, animal or plant materials or their derivatives. Australia has strict quarantine laws and tough on-the-spot fines so ensure you do not fail to declare or dispose of any quarantined items.

Airport Pick-up

Before you leave home, you should provide your family and friends, and Strathcona, the details of your flights, transfers and where you will be staying when you arrive in Melbourne.

If you are travelling alone the Overseas Student Coordinator will send you important information prior to your departure with the contact details of the school representative who will be picking you up from the airport and a clear description of where you will meet.

Keeping in Contact

Once you have arrived in Australia, you should then let your family and friends know that you have arrived safely. It is important to ALWAYS let someone know where you are and how to contact you by phone or by post.

Accessing Money

Please note that it is not safe to bring large sums of money with you! Lost credit cards or traveler's cheques can be replaced, but very few travel insurance companies will replace lost or stolen cash. Do not ask someone you have just met to handle your cash for you or to take your cash to make payments for you. Not even someone who may indicate they are studying at the same education institution.

Currency Exchange

Only Australian currency can be used in Australia. If you have not brought some with you, you will need to change your money into Australian currency as soon as possible after arrival. You can do this at the airport. Once you have arrived in Melbourne, you can also change money at any bank.

Electronic Transfer

You can transfer money into Australia by electronic telegraph or telegraphic transfer at any time. This is a fast option and will take approximately 48 hours, but the bank will charge a fee on every transaction.

Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs)

Automatic Teller Machines are located everywhere (including at the airport) and you can immediately withdraw cash from your overseas bank account at ATMs displaying the Cirrus Logo (if your ATM card has international access). Check this with your financial institution before leaving home.

Credit Cards

All major international credit cards are accepted in Australia but you must remember that repayments to many of these cards can only be made in the country where they were issued. Do not rely on being able to get a credit card once you arrive in Australia because this is very difficult due to credit and identification laws.

Setting up a Bank Account

You can choose to open an account in any Bank, Credit Union or Building Society in Australia. To open a bank account you will need:

- Your passport (with the arrival date stamped by Australian immigration)
- Student ID card
- Money to deposit into the account (this can be as little as \$10)

Anyone who wishes to open a bank account in Australia must show several pieces of personal identification which are allotted a points system. 100 points of identification is required to establish your identity as the person who will be named in the account. **Your passport and proof of your arrival date in Australia will be acceptable as 100 points if you open an account within six weeks of arrival in Australia.** After this time you will be required to produce additional documentation. As a student you will be able to open an account with special student benefits. Many banks have 'Student Accounts' which contain no or minimal fees for transactions that might normally be attached to regular savings accounts. You will also require your student ID card from Strathcona to prove you are a student and should have access to the benefits offered by a student bank account. For information on setting up a bank account before you arrive in Australia please visit <https://www.studymelbourne.vic.gov.au/money-and-budgeting/banking-in-victoria>

Most people in Australia enjoy the convenience of internet banking and/or telephone banking, which enables them to manage their money, pay bills etc. from home. At the time you are setting up your account you can request these services from your bank.

Emergencies

ISA has a 24-Hour Help line to assist you in an emergency. Key these two numbers into your phone 03 9663 2887 and 0401 995 900 and title the number Strathcona Help and Strathcona Help2. You will also be given a Safety Card by the school. Keep this Safety Card with you at all times as it has the school's emergency number and other important contacts

If you are in a real, life-threatening emergency situation then call Australia's emergency line 000.

The Triple Zero (000) service is the quickest way to get the right emergency service to help you. It should be used to contact Police, Fire or Ambulance services in life threatening or emergency situations only. (Emergency 000 lines should not be used for general medical assistance).

Dialling 112 will override key locks on mobile phones and therefore save time. Emergency Services operators answer this number quickly and to save time will say, "Police, Fire, or Ambulance". If you are unsure of what emergency service you need tell the operator what the emergency is. You will then be connected to the appropriate service to assist.

Ambulance

Ambulances provide immediate medical attention and emergency transportation to hospital. Dial 000.

Lifeline

Lifeline is a free Crisis Support service which is staffed by trained volunteer counsellors who are ready to take calls 24-hour a day, any day of the week from anywhere in Australia. These volunteers operate from Lifeline Centres in every State and Territory around Australia.

Anyone can call Lifeline on 13 11 14. The service offers a counselling service that respects everyone's right to be heard, understood and cared for. They also provide information about other support services that are available in communities around Australia. Lifeline telephone counsellors are ready to talk and listen no matter how big or how small the problem might seem.

Emergency Translation

For translation service in an emergency situation dial 1300 655 010.

Laws and Safety in Australia

Obeying the Law

One of the reasons we have such a wonderful lifestyle in Australia is due to our representative democracy, the separation of powers, and our respect for the rule of law. We have a lot of laws in Australia and, as a result, society runs smoothly.

In being granted a visa to study in Australia, you signed a document (Australian Values Statement Temporary) agreeing to respect Australian values and obey the laws of Australia for the duration of your stay. Failure to comply with the laws of this land (including State and Territory laws) could result in a fine or the cancellation of your visa and possible deportation back home. If you are convicted of a serious crime, it could result in imprisonment. Nobody wants this to happen!

You can find a comprehensive outline of Australian Law and Legal System at: <https://legal-translations.com.au/australian-legal-system/>.

Personal Safety

- When you are out and about it is important to be alert and to be aware of your personal safety
- Think ahead - consider how you are going to get home - what about pre-booking a taxi or arranging transport with a friend or family member?
- Make sure you have enough money to get home or to use the phone.
- Keep away from trouble - if you see any trouble or suspect that it might be about to start - move away from the scene if you can. The best thing you can do is to alert the police and keep away.
- Walk purposely and try to appear confident. Be wary of casual requests from strangers, like someone asking for a cigarette or change - they could have ulterior motives
- Be alert to your surroundings and the people around you, especially if you are alone or it is dark
- Travel with a friend or as part of a group
- Stay in well-lit areas as much as possible.
- Walk confidently and at a steady pace
- Do not respond to conversation from strangers on the street or in a car - continue walking.
- Be aware of your surroundings and avoid using earphones - you might not hear trouble approaching.
- Always keep your bag in view and close to your body.
- Be discrete with your cash or mobile phones
- If you do not have a mobile phone, make sure that you have a phone card or change to make a phone call, but remember - emergency 000 calls are free of charge.

(Source: Australian Federal Police)

Public Transport

Strathcona is serviced by a comprehensive Public Transport network so it is easy to get to and from school and to the surrounding suburbs. As a student you can access this service at a reduced rate with a Student Concession Card and a Myki card. The Overseas Student Coordinator can advise how to apply for this card. You can also access information at [Public Transport Victoria](#).

Travelling on public transport should be a safe and comfortable experience. Numerous security measures have been adopted to maximise the safety of travelers, including security officers, police, guards, help points, good lighting and security cameras. Most drivers also have two-way radios and can call for assistance. Never be afraid to ask for assistance from the driver or public transport officers.

Making Phone Calls within Australia

To make international phone calls:

Dial – international access code (0011) + the country code + the area code (if required) + phone number
When adding a country code to a number, any leading 0 (zero) on the area code following it is NOT dialed.

To make domestic phone calls:

Dial – the area code + phone number

Mobile/Cell Phones

Before bringing your mobile phone to Australia check with the [Australian Communications and Media Authority](#) to make sure it can operate here. Australian telecommunications providers offer a wide range of services which provide a mobile phone within the cost of using that service. There are many differences to the services provided. You should understand what deal you are accepting before signing a contract with a provider. You will need to consider what provider to pair your mobile phone with. [Telstra](#) and [Optus](#) provide the better coverage and you can visit them in store when you arrive here in Australia.

What do I do if I am sick?

It is most important you tell someone if you are unwell. Tell your parent, Student Guardian approved by the Department of Home Affairs, Homestay Provider, ISA Welfare and Support Person or the Overseas Student Coordinator so they can arrange an appointment for you to see a doctor.

Seeing a Doctor

When you attend your appointment, the doctor will ask you questions about your health and may give you a brief physical examination, such as checking your breathing, your throat, ears etc. The doctor will then give you some advice regarding management of your illness and may give you a prescription for some medication. **If you have had, or need to take time, off studies you will need to get a medical certificate from the doctor to give to the Overseas Student Coordinator.**

Interpreter Services

We are lucky in Australia to have a variety of healthcare professionals from many different cultural backgrounds, so you may be able to see a doctor who speaks your first language. However, if you are having difficulties communicating with your doctor, the Translation and Interpreter Service (TIS) can be used. For more information visit <https://www.tisnational.gov.au/> or phone 131 450.

What happens if I have to go to a dentist or doctor appointment?

Your parent, Student Guardian approved by the Department of Home Affairs, Welfare and Support Person, or Homestay Host can either email absentee@strathcona.vic.edu.au or use the Strathcona app to advise the details of your appointment and what time you will be collected from school. You will need to excuse yourself from class and check out at Student Services when your parent, ISA Welfare and Support Person, Student Guardian approved by the Department of Home Affairs or Homestay Host collects you. You must then sign back in when you return. If you need an extended time away from school you will need a Medical certificate from the doctor to give to the Overseas Student Coordinator.

What do I do if I feel sick whilst I am at school?

If you feel sick during class, let your teacher know and they will send you to the Health Centre. If you feel ill at recess or lunch, please go to the Health Centre. The staff at the Health Centre will take good care of you. If they feel you need to go home, the Health Centre staff will contact your parent, Student Guardian approved by the Department of Home Affairs, ISA Welfare and Support Person or Homestay Host. Please do not make direct contact yourself and arrange to go home as, for your safety, this must go through the Health Centre.

What do I do if I am feeling worried or stressed about anything at school?

We have a wonderful team of people who are all here to look after you. If you feel anxious about anything, please talk to your Overseas Student Coordinator, House Mentor, Head of House or your ISA Welfare and Support Person. If we think you need more support, we can arrange for you to see our School Psychologist or Chaplain.

What do I do if I arrive late?

If you arrive after 8.25am, you must go to Student Services to sign in before going to class, otherwise you will be marked absent. If you have an activity before school (eg. a private music lesson) and will miss the start of Period 1, you must sign in at Student Services so that we have a record of why you are late to class.

What should I do if I miss a lesson because I am away sick or at a Speech/Music lesson?

If you have a scheduled speech or instrument lesson, try to let your subject teacher know in advance that you will be missing class.

If you miss a lesson it is your responsibility to catch up on classwork/homework. Contact a classmate to get notes and instructions and then clarify any tasks with your subject teacher.

If you are away sick, your primary focus should be getting well again, and then catching up on work. Please talk to your teachers when you return to school.

Additional Useful Links for Overseas Students

<https://www.homestaynetwork.org/> - Australian Homestay Network

<https://www.studentguardians.com/> - Overseas Student Alliance (ISA)

<https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/How-we-can-help/overseas-students> - Overseas student Ombudsman

<https://internationaleducation.gov.au/Regulatory-Information/Pages/Regulatoryinformation.aspx> - The Australian Government's Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Legislation

<https://aeas.com.au/> - Australian Education Assessment Service

<https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/> - Department of Immigration and Citizenship

<https://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au/> - The official Australian Government website for studying in Australia

<https://www.visitvictoria.com/> - The official site for Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

<https://kidshelpline.com.au/teens> - Teenager helpline





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