

2018 Outbound Exchange
Student Handbook



JAMES COOK
UNIVERSITY
AUSTRALIA



JCU Global Mobility Office

Postal Address:

Building 008, Room 001
James Cook University
Townsville QLD 4811
Australia

Outbound Exchange Telephone: +61 4781 3416

Email: globalmobility@jcu.edu.au

Website: www.jcu.edu.au/globalmobility

Facebook page: [JCU Global Mobility](#) – Like the page to follow updates tag us @jcuglobalmobility

Instagram: [jcuglobalmobility](#) tag us @jcuglobalmobility

Other key contacts

JCU Insurance: jcu.edu.au/chancellery/legal-and-assurance/insurance

Chubb Assistance: red24.com/affiliates/chubbau | +61 2 8907 5995 | JCU Policy Number 04PP007672

JCU Emergency contact (24 hours – only to be used in an emergency): + 61 7 4781 5555

24 Hour Australian Consular Emergency Centre (CEC):

The Consular Emergency Centre (CEC) offers 24 hour emergency consular assistance:

Within Australia: 1300 555 135 (local call cost)

Outside Australia: +61 2 6261 3305 | SMS: +61 421 269 080

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	4
Exchange Steps	5
Preparing to go	6
JCU Administration.....	6
Your Study Plan.....	6
Enrolment at JCU.....	6
Credit Transfer.....	6
Payment of fees.....	7
Accommodation.....	7
Financial Preparation.....	7
OS-HELP loan	7
Centrelink.....	8
Travel Insurance.....	8
Chubb Assistance.....	8
Health, travel and safety advice.....	8
Smartraveller	9
Concur Locate and Trip-It	10
Passport and Visa.....	10
Travel arrangements.....	10
What to take with you.....	11
Documents.....	11
Other items.....	11
Get to know your destination.....	11
Useful websites.....	12
Before you go.....	12
Academic matters.....	12
Pre-Departure Checklists.....	13
JCU Administration Checklist.....	13
Student Administration Checklist.....	13
Packing essentials checklist.....	13
On Exchange.....	14
On Arrival.....	14
Communication.....	14
Health and Safety.....	14
Culture shock.....	14
Top tips to deal with cultural adjustment.....	15
Your responsibilities as a JCU exchange student.....	15
Academic matters.....	16
Enrolling in classes.....	16
Subject changes.....	16
Learning Styles.....	16
Extending your exchange.....	16
Before return.....	17
Returning from exchange.....	17
Cultural readjustment.....	17
Credit transfer.....	17
Returned student feedback form.....	18
Update your resume.....	18
Promote exchange at JCU.....	18



“St Andrews taught me was that your education is about so much more than just study. Doing an exchange can take you places and teach you things you could never have imagined. You’ll come away more educated in your chosen field, in life and the world.” Jessie – University of St Andrews, Scotland

Introduction

Congratulations, you have successfully applied to study overseas as part of the JCU Student Exchange Program. You are about to embark on a rewarding and exciting adventure that will benefit you personally, academically and professionally.

To make the most of the experiences ahead, you need to be well prepared. Please take the time to read this booklet carefully. It contains important information that will help you to fulfil the administrative requirements of going on exchange, as well as providing you with useful advice, checklists and emergency contacts. Please take it with you on exchange.

We hope that you will keep in touch with us while overseas. We are keen to hear from you and hear about your experiences. We would also appreciate any feedback you have on this guide.

The Global Mobility Team

Exchange Steps

Talk to JCU Global Mobility (GM) about your options and deadlines

Check the list of partners jcu.edu.au/globalmobility, do some research

Complete the [JCU Global Mobility Outbound Exchange Application Form](#)

Ask a lecturer/tutor to complete electronic [Academic Reference Form](#)

Work with Admissions/College subject advisor to organise your study plan; choose exchange subjects.

Complete the electronic [Credit Transfer Form](#) (or [language only version](#)) and get approved by College

GM will nominate you to host institution and advise outcome

GM will provide application information for host university

Follow ALL instructions and submit online application to host university by due date. If not electronic, submit completed application form and all supporting documents to GM Office at LEAST TWO WEEKS PRIOR to deadline

GM will submit application on your behalf (if not electronic)

The host university will assess your application, usually 4-8 weeks.

Research your overseas location, accommodation, visa requirements etc

Official letter of offer and offer package will be provided by host university, share with Global Mobility

Sign and return letter of offer (if applicable)

Attend GM Outbound Exchange Pre-Departure Session

Apply for visa (if required)

Book your travel and accommodation

GM will provide OS-Help and Centrelink letters

Visit Centrelink and organise payment while overseas (if applicable)

[Apply for OS-Help loan](#) (if applicable)

[Create Concur account](#) and download Triplt, upload itinerary to activate insurance

Organise Health insurance (if required)

Upload your details to Smarttraveller.gov.au

Notify globalmobility@jcu.edu.au when you have arrived at your host university

Enjoy your time studying abroad



Preparing to go

JCU Administration

Your Study Plan

You must have completed the [Credit Transfer Form](#) and had it approved and signed by your College before you depart. This ensures you receive credit for subjects that you study at your host university towards your JCU degree.

If you need to make changes to your pre-approved subjects on arrival at your host university, **you MUST obtain permission** from JCU.

MANDATORY

Check with the enrolments team at JCU before you depart to ensure that you are correctly enrolled at JCU for the duration of your exchange.

Failure to do so could mean that you do not receive credit for unapproved subjects to your JCU degree on your return and may affect scholarships/grants received and completion date.

Contact the Global Mobility Office globalmobility@jcu.edu.au and the enrolments team at tes.enrolments@jcu.edu.au or DTHM@jcu.edu.au as **soon as possible** to make any changes to your pre-approved Study Plan.

Enrolment at JCU

You must remain enrolled as a full-time student at both JCU and your host university for the duration of your exchange program. This is required to meet visa requirements, exchange program rules, and Centrelink regulations.

Credit Transfer

Provided you stay enrolled in your approved subjects while on exchange, and pass them, you will receive credit for your overseas study on your return to JCU.

Please note that you will receive the appropriate credit points for the subjects that you study on exchange; however, the grades that you receive overseas will not transfer. You will receive a copy of your academic transcript from your host university that will list the grades for your studies overseas.

The Global Mobility Office should receive your host transcript within four weeks of completion and will send to enrolments for processing. Contact globalmobility@jcu.edu.au if you don't see your credited subjects after two months.

HOT TIP

Before you go, arrange with your bank to give someone at home authority on your account while you are away so that they can transfer money to you easily.

Payment of fees

When you are on exchange, it is your responsibility to pay all of your tuition and fees to JCU on time. **Unpaid fees will have serious consequences**, such as cancellation of your course enrolment at JCU and withdrawal from the exchange program. Make sure you pay all outstanding JCU fees and fines, such as library fines, before you leave.

As an exchange student, you do not pay tuition fees to your host university. However, most require you to pay a fee for student services that includes public transport discounts etc. Some host universities, particularly in North America, require you to purchase health insurance through them. See the section on Health and Travel Insurance (pages 8 & 14).

Accommodation

If you have arranged accommodation with your host university, make sure you know when you can move in. If you plan to arrive earlier than the check-in date, you will need to make your own arrangements for temporary accommodation.

If you have applied for accommodation with your host university, ensure that you have received confirmation before you depart and that you have notified your host university about your arrival details.

Make sure that you know about the facilities that you can expect and any items that you will need to take with you.

If you have not organised accommodation through your host university, make a reservation before you depart for a few nights in a hostel/motel on arrival. This will give you time to look for accommodation when you arrive.

Financial Preparation

Make sure that you have prepared a budget for your exchange period that takes into account ongoing financial commitments at home, such as HECS/student fees.

Find out about the average costs of food, accommodation, transport etc. in your host country and familiarise yourself with the local exchange rate at www.xe.com.

OS-HELP loan

If you are interested in taking out the OS-HELP loan, a federal government loan scheme to assist eligible Australian domestic students to undertake some of their course of study overseas, you can find information and the application form on the JCU website (jcu.edu.au/students/student-forms/os-help-loan-application). In **2018**, the minimum is **\$2000** and the maximum you can borrow for a six-month study period is:

- **\$6,665** (if you will not be studying in Asia); or
- **\$7,998** if you will be studying in Asia; and
- An additional **\$1,065** if you will be undertaking Asian language study in preparation for study in Asia.

Find out about the predominant method of payment in your host country, including whether you can use your Australian credit card/debit card.

Take enough local currency with you to pay for initial expenses on arrival, such as public transport, taxis, food and accommodation if required. You can order local currency for most countries from your bank.

There are a number of options for accessing money overseas, which all have related fees. These include credit card, debit card (for ATM withdrawals), money transfer, and wiring money to an overseas bank account.

Talk to your bank about the options and be informed about the charges involved. It can be a good idea to have a major credit card for emergency use. Beware of international bank fees.

“If I’d drawn up a budget before living in London, I would have definitely underestimated the costs. You need to be aware of the many expenses involved because running out of money will drastically affect your freedom and enjoyment.” Catherine – University of East London, UK

Centrelink

If you are receiving Centrelink payments, you can apply to have these continue while you are on exchange:

- You will need a letter from JCU Global Mobility Office confirming your participation in the exchange program. We can issue this letter once you have been accepted by your host institution and your College at JCU have enrolled you in the units you will do while on exchange.
- Contact Centrelink **well in advance** of your departure to inform them of your overseas study plans and contact the Global Mobility Office to arrange a letter.
- For information and contact details regarding Centrelink payments whilst overseas, checkout (humanservices.gov.au/individuals/subjects/australians-overseas).

Travel Insurance

Comprehensive health and travel insurance is essential for JCU outbound exchange students. Insurance should cover you for the entire period you are away from Australia i.e. from the day you leave home until the day you return home, including transits and additional personal time spent travelling overseas.

As a JCU student on exchange you are covered for up to nine months under **JCU's Corporate Travel Insurance (Chubb Insurance Australia Limited (Chubb))**; Policy Number 04PP007672).

Cover is subject to policy terms, conditions and exclusions. Refer to jcu.edu.au/chancellery/legal-and-assurance/insurance/ for further information.

JCU's Travel Insurance **will not apply** until you have uploaded a copy of your flight itinerary to Trip-It well in advance of your departure. Contact insurance@jcu.edu.au if you require an insurance letter or Certificate of Currency for your host university application.

If your travel exceeds nine months, or you wish to undertake personal travel in study breaks, you must obtain private travel insurance. You can choose to purchase private travel insurance through JCU's insurer, [Chubb Insurance Australia Limited](#) or any insurer of your choice.

Ensure that your travel insurance provides cover for health, travel, repatriation and liability. Check the terms, conditions and exclusions of any insurance policy to ensure the cover meets your needs.

Chubb Assistance

In the event of an emergency, sickness or injury anywhere in the world, 24/7 medical, travel and security assistance is available by calling **Chubb Assistance on +61 2 8907 5995** and providing **JCU's Policy Number 04PP007672**.

Chubb has partnered with crisis response management experts red24 to provide you with a comprehensive range of security and travel assistance services, including pre-travel advice and information. You can register online at www.red24.com/affiliates/chubbau using JCU's Policy Number 04PP007672. Once your profile has been set up, you can subscribe to receive travel advice and alerts for the countries you are visiting.

Save the Chubb Assistance number to your phone, and carry the Chubb Assistance card in your wallet. The card includes the emergency phone number and JCU's Policy Number.

Health, travel and safety advice

In addition to pre-travel advice from [Chubb Assistance](#); also check out the traveldoctor.com.au and smartraveller.gov.au websites for further information and specific advice for the country that you are visiting.

Have a medical and dental check-up before departure. Prior to your departure, if you have concerns about your health while living overseas, consult with your doctor. If you have concerns about your security and safety, refer to Chubb Assistance and smartraveller.gov.au.

Ensure that you allow enough time to get any vaccinations that are required for travel to your host country. Consult with your doctor to find out what vaccinations you will need. Some host universities require proof that you have been immunised against diseases such as rubella, tetanus and polio. Your host university will inform you if this is required.

If you have any chronic health issues (e.g. asthma, diabetes) consult with your doctor about how to manage your condition while overseas and make sure you take with you any required documentation about your condition.

IMPORTANT

Many host universities require that you purchase health insurance through them, or with a specific insurer. You should check the requirements of your host university.



NOTE

There is no cover under JCU's travel insurance for emergency medical and additional expenses under the following circumstances: Travel undertaken against the advice of a Doctor or Dentist; If you are unfit to travel; If the purpose of the travel is to enable you to seek medical attention for a Pre-Existing Condition; If the expense is for medication or ongoing treatment for a Pre-Existing Condition and which medication or treatment you have been advised to continue during travel.

Discuss with your doctor what you should do in the case of an acute episode. If you require medication, talk to your doctor about taking a supply with you.

If you do decide to take prescription medicines with you, make sure that they are legal in your host country and take a copy of the prescription or a doctor's note to show to Customs if required.

For information about carrying medicines overseas, see: medicareaustralia.gov.au. Notify your airline before you leave of any drugs you need to take intravenously on your flight (e.g. insulin for diabetes).

Smartraveller

[Smartraveller](#) is provided by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). You should register your travel plans with smartraveller.gov.au, so that in the event of an emergency DFAT will be able to contact you or your family. You should also subscribe for official government travel advice and bulletins.

When registering, you may be asked to provide the following:

- Do you have overseas travel insurance: YES
- Insurance company: Chubb Australia Insurance Limited
- Policy No. 04PP007672
- Phone number: +61 2 8907 5995

DFAT also operate 24-hour consular assistance:

- 1300 555 135 within Australia (local call cost)
- +61 2 6261 3305 from overseas
- +61 421 269 080 for SMS

IMPORTANT

It is becoming more common to have to travel to the consulate/embassy in person to obtain a student visa. For visa information and a list of embassies/consulates, see dfat.gov.au/visas. This will mean travelling to another city so leave enough time and budget for this.

Concur Locate and Trip-It

It is mandatory that you use Concur, JCU's online travel management system that allows JCU to quickly locate and communicate with student travellers, with the benefit of pre-travel advisories to help you remain safe.

This is extremely important as it allows JCU to fulfil its duty of care and to locate students at the time of an emergency, critical incident or natural disaster.

Initial set-up of your Concur/Trip-It accounts:

1. Log-in to Concur (www.jcu.edu.au/financial-and-business-services-internal/strategic-procure-to-pay/jcu-travel/concur) using your JC log-in details
2. Select the App Centre tab at top of page
3. Select the orange Trip-It app
4. When prompted, create a trip-it account (using your JCU email), and link to your Concur account
5. Activate the account as per email sent to your JCU account
6. Download the Trip-It app to your Smartphone to receive alerts on events that might impact your travel (security, weather events, natural disasters, flight status, gate changes, etc.)
7. Once your initial set-up is complete, and for all travel:
8. Email your travel itineraries and confirmations to plans@tripit.com to be added to your profile (you can also add trips yourself via the app) If your plans/itinerary change at any time before or during your travels
9. Email the update to plans@tripit.com. Be mindful that if you require assistance, JCU needs to be able to locate you in order to provide the support and assistance needed.

Passport and Visa

Your passport must be valid for the duration of your time overseas, plus an additional six months. It is a very good idea to take photocopies of the front pages of your passport to take with you and to leave with someone at home in case you lose it.

Once you have received your acceptance letter from your host university, you can apply for a student visa,

if required. You should do this as soon as possible, as processing times vary. It is your responsibility to make sure that you obtain your student visa in a timely manner, not the responsibility of JCU.

Visa requirements change frequently and vary from country to country, so you will need to find out what the existing requirements are. Make sure that you know the terms and conditions of your Student Visa. It will tell you whether you can work, not necessarily the case, and if you can travel out of the country and return again.

The best place to start is to research your host [country embassy or consulate](#) website or contact them. They can also inform you of the exact documentation you need to submit in order to obtain a visa.

Students going to the USA: Obtaining a visa to study in USA means you need to travel to the US Consulate in Sydney to attend an interview. You apply for a visa and book a time for the interview on ustraveldocs.com. If you have any questions regarding your visa to the USA, you can email amvisa@state.gov. You can generally expect a reply within 48 hours.

Students transiting through the USA on their way to the final destination: If you are travelling through USA on your way to your final study destination, it is very likely you will need a transit visa for USA. Talk to your travel agent about this or contact the US Consulate for advice.

Under the USA visa waiver program **time spent in Canada and Mexico and adjacent islands count towards the maximum of the 90-day stay** allowed under the program. If you are intending to study in any of the above countries and want to visit the USA, you will need to apply for a US B1/B2 visa. If you have a question, you can email visa@state.gov.

Travel arrangements

You will need to arrange your own travel arrangements.

Do not book your flights before you have received your official acceptance to your host university. JCU's travel Management Company can assist with travel booking, contact jcu@travelctm.com.

IMPORTANT

Photocopy all your important documents: passport (including visa pages), insurance policy, plane tickets, acceptance letter from your host university, details of any vaccinations and doctor's notes. Email to a friend or family member and yourself. This will be crucial in event of an emergency or if you lose your documents.

Make sure you know the dates of any compulsory orientation/enrolment sessions. Plan to arrive with enough time to participate in these and to settle into your accommodation and environment before classes begin. (Usually you should aim to arrive at least one week before the start of classes). If you need to find your own accommodation, you should allow additional time to do this.

"Pack half as much as you think you'll need and take twice as much money."

Erica, University of Dundee, Scotland

What to take with you

Documents

- Valid passport and visa. Your passport must be valid for at least 6 months longer than your planned time overseas.
- Passport-sized photos of yourself if applicable, (in some countries, you will need these for official applications).
- A copy of your acceptance letter from your host university.
- A copy of your current JCU academic transcript.
- Details of your travel insurance policy and Chubb Assistance membership card.
- Your bank details and bank contact numbers in case you need to contact them.
- Documentation to show that you have had any vaccinations that are required.
- If you need medication, a doctor's note to enable you to carry your medication through Customs.

Other items

- Small gifts from Australia for your new friends and hosts.
- Any prescription medication that you need (see advice about getting a doctor's note and checking that your medication is legal in your host country page 8).

- International Students Identity Card (ISIC) – the only internationally accepted proof of student status and also offers a range of student discounts around the world: isic.org/student-card/the-isic-student-card
- Always check luggage restrictions for your flight before packing and never carry items for strangers.
- Check country-specific electricity guides to identify respective plugs/outlets and voltages/frequencies used for domestic appliances worldstandards.eu/electricity/plug-voltage-by-country/.

Get to know your destination

Being well prepared before departure will help you to stay safe and will assist you in settling in and adapting to your host country.

You can do a lot of research before you leave into your destination country, city and university. Sources include:

- The internet
- Brochures and maps of your host university and city
- Travel guides such as Lonely Planet, Rough Guides and Culture Shock
- Talking to other returned or current JCU exchange students, or students at JCU on exchange from your host university – ask the Global Mobility Office about contacting other students

Check out:

- [JCU Students Abroad](#)
- [JCU Global Mobility Facebook](#)
- [JCU Global Mobility Instagram page](#)
- [JCU Globetrotters](#)



Useful websites

Australian Embassies around the world	www.dfat.gov.au/missions
Lonely Planet Guides	www.lonelyplanet.com.au
Visas	www.dfat.gov.au/visas
Fodor's Travel	www.fodors.com
Travel warnings, health and travel advice	www.xe.com www.
Travel Doctor	smartraveller.gov.au
Currency convertor	www.traveldoctor.com.au
International Weather	www.worldweather.org
Current time around the world	www.timeticker.com
International Student Identity Card	www.isic.org/student-card/the-isic-student-card
Google Translate	www.translate.google.com.au
Chubb Assistance	https://www.red24.com/affiliates/chubbau/

Before you go

Academic matters

As soon as you receive your letter of offer, if subjects are not guaranteed, find out the opening dates to register for courses as per your approved credit transfer form.

Register for courses as soon as you can, do not leave it until you arrive in country as it can be very difficult to match and get approved new subjects if you do not have many electives. It can be done, but you do not need the added stress when arriving in a new country.

“Get in as early as possible with subject enrolment. If they are not guaranteed, do whatever it takes to sign up when enrolment opens - even if it is at 3am! There are always a lot of international students and the classes usually fill up very quickly.”
Trisha - University of Ljubljana Slovenia



Pre-Departure Checklists

JCU Administration Checklist

- I have completed the Credit Transfer Form and had it approved and signed by my College and enrolments
- I have checked that I am correctly enrolled at JCU for the duration of my exchange
- I have made arrangements for the payment of my tuition and other fees to JCU
- I have created a Concur/Trip-It account and emailed my travel itineraries and confirmations to plans@tripit.com.
- I have requested a letter from Global Mobility (if required)
- I have contacted Centrelink to arrange continuation of payments (if applicable)
- I have applied for an OS-HELP loan (if applicable)

Student Administration Checklist

- I have obtained my Student Visa and any transit visas required (if applicable)
- I have a valid passport with six months validity on my return
- I have arranged travel insurance
- I have arranged health insurance (if applicable)
- I have had any vaccinations required

- I know my options for accessing my money overseas
- I have arranged accommodation with my host university or temporary accommodation on arrival, and I have received confirmation of this
- I have returned all forms required by my host university (e.g. arrival/accommodation forms, immunization form)

Packing essentials checklist

- Passport (and visa if applicable)
- Travel itinerary/tickets
- Photocopy (or scan and email) important documents.
- Passport-sized photos (required by some countries only)
- Copy of letter of acceptance from your host university
- Copy of approved JCU Credit Transfer Form
- Copy of current JCU academic transcript
- Chubb Assistance emergency/membership card
- Bank details and bank contact numbers
- Prescription medication/prescriptions (if applicable)
- Credit card/debit card or similar
- Local currency
- Power adaptor for using Australian electronic appliances in your host country

NOTE

It is your responsibility to familiarise yourself with the laws and customs of your host country and adhere to them. You need to be aware of laws regarding drinking age, driving, working etc.; ignorance is not an excuse, and could prove very costly.

On Exchange

On Arrival

Contact home and let your family/friends know that you arrived safely. Please do this as soon as possible to avoid unnecessary worry. Contact the Global Mobility Office at JCU to confirm your arrival and provide your contact details.

Visit the International Students Centre or equivalent at your host university – introduce yourself and find out about any orientation events and useful information for international students.

Communication

Keep us updated! Please advise the Global Mobility Office of your new contact details, including at least email address and mobile number (email us on globalmobility@jcu.edu.au).

If you plan to blog about your exchange adventures let Global Mobility know and we can incorporate it into the Global Mobility website.

Communication with family/friends back home is relatively easy – cheap phone cards, Skype, Viber, WhatsApp etc make staying in touch both easy and affordable.

Health and Safety

Stay safety conscious in the first few weeks, especially as you get to know your new environment and culture. Remember to exercise the same caution as you would at home in regards to your personal belongings and safety.

Try to familiarise yourself with your surroundings and participate in your host culture – e.g. visit shopping centres and local landmarks, take public transport, try new foods. This will help you to feel more at ease and you'll understand your host culture better.

Things like jetlag, unfamiliar food and a new environment can all take their toll on your health. Feeling a bit run

down in the first few weeks is normal, make sure to take extra care of yourself at this time. Make sure you get enough sleep and eat well, a balanced diet is important, no one can keep going on 2-minute noodles and chips.

“Don't be scared to go outside your comfort zone to meet new people. Put yourself out there, talk to the locals. You'll make life-long friends and it's an experience you will never forget!” Kayla - Northern Arizona University USA

Culture shock

Arriving overseas will be exciting and exhilarating, but do not be surprised if you also feel disoriented and confused, you will go through a period of adjustment.

At home, you know the language and societal expectations. Without thinking about it, you know how to act and what is and is not appropriate. In a new environment, you will need to learn how to speak, what to eat, how to act and what is appropriate.

It can take time to adjust to a new culture, and you may experience a level of culture shock at first. This is perfectly normal. Culture shock is caused by stress resulting from the uncertainty of being in a new and different environment.

Try to talk to others in the same situation, and to your new friends. JCU Global Mobility Office staff are always happy to hear from you, so send an email/Facebook message to let us know how you are getting on.

Make an extra effort in the first few weeks to get involved in activities, take up new opportunities, and meet new people, by doing this, you will start to adjust and feel more confident and comfortable in your new country.

IMPORTANT

Contact the Global Mobility Office and your College as soon as possible if you're taking subjects not on your approved Credit Transfer Form - it is essential that you get JCU approval for any change of subjects to be credited.

At some stage the excitement and exhilaration may wear off and you may experience culture shock, common symptoms include:

- Changes in eating and sleeping habits
- Homesickness
- Self-doubt
- Feelings of sadness or depression
- Recurrent illnesses
- Bouts of irritability or frustration
- Persistent negativity towards host culture
- Withdrawing from friends and activities

“If you have any doubts or fear about leaving family and friends, it is quite natural, but studying aboard is definitely worth the leap - so go for it!” Nimesh - University of Dundee, Scotland.

Top tips to deal with cultural adjustment

- Don't deny that you are experiencing culture shock – be patient with yourself
- Remember this is normal and temporary, others may be experiencing it too
- Allow yourself time to work through it
- Set realistic expectations
- Don't be afraid to ask questions
- Be aware of your environment
- Embrace sharing your home culture/country

- Don't be afraid of silence
- Help someone else – you will be reminded of your own strengths and skills
- Keep an open mind and a sense of humour
- Improve your language skills
- Establish a routine
- Get out and explore your new environment
- Join clubs and activities at your host university

Eventually it will start to feel familiar and more like your second home. You will have developed new skills and built meaningful relationships. Now you can really experience the new culture.

Your responsibilities as a JCU exchange student

While you are away on exchange, you are an ambassador for JCU. It is important that you behave appropriately and act responsibly.

Failure to comply with JCU and host university standards may result in withdrawal from the exchange program. JCU Student Conduct Policy: jcu.edu.au/policy/student-services/student-conduct-policy.

It is your responsibility to familiarise yourself with the rules of your host university, as well as the laws of your host country and adhere to them. Remember that breaking the law in another country can lead to severe penalties, such as imprisonment, just for minor offences.

*“For a great exchange experience, be open minded and be adventurous. It is also good to be patient sometimes, when difficulties come our way.”
Fatima - University of Oslo, Norway*



Academic matters

Enrolling in classes

Enrolling in classes will be different to what you are used to at JCU. You might be able to enrol in classes before you leave Australia, or you may only be able to enrol once you arrive in your host country.

Not all classes on your Credit Transfer Form may be available, this is why we have more classes pre-approved than needed for a full course load, to provide options. If you cannot enrol in certain subjects, let [Global Mobility](#) know as soon as possible.

Make sure you check with your host institution regarding enrolment dates and procedures. It is recommended that you enrol as soon as possible, this will reduce the amount of stress when you arrive in a new country.

“The university is bigger and has more students. Class sizes are a lot smaller, it’s easy to ask questions. Lectures are not recorded and attendance counts for 10% of your final grade.” Kessia - University of Miami, USA

Subject changes

If it proves necessary to make changes to your pre-approved subjects on arrival at your host university, you **MUST** obtain permission from JCU. Failure to do so could mean that unapproved subjects are not credited to your JCU degree on your return.

Contact the Global Mobility Office and enrolments as soon as possible if you need to make any changes to your pre-approved Study Plan (see page 4 for contact details).

Learning Styles

Teaching styles differ across institutions and may be very different to what you are used to, take the opportunity to embrace new experiences.

Ask for clarification if you are not sure how to approach a task, or what is expected of you. Don’t be afraid to ask for help if you need to.

Extending your exchange

The maximum exchange period is two semesters (one academic year). If you applied for one semester but would like to extend, you will need to contact the Global Mobility Office as soon as possible to see if it’s an option.

The Global Mobility Office will need to request formal approval from your host university to extend your stay.



In some cases, a visa extension is not possible once you are in country.

You will need formal approval from JCU to extend your exchange period, and you will need to submit an additional Credit Transfer Form for approval of the additional subjects that you plan to take.

Before return

- I have checked the procedure for sending out my transcript with my host university (if possible, request that this is sent to the Global Mobility Office at JCU, see page 1 for address).
- I have made sure I have paid all my fees at my host university (otherwise you will not receive your and this will delay credit transfer)

Returning from exchange

Come and see us in the Global Mobility Office, or email when you return from your exchange to let us know that you are back and tell us about your experiences. You can join the [JCU Globetrotters](#) club and hang out with likeminded returned exchange students.

“The [JCU Globetrotters](#) runs fun events and is a community for all exchange, international and domestic students at James Cook University. Come join the fun!”

Cultural readjustment

Just as you may have felt culture shock on arrival in your host country, you may also find that it takes time to readjust to your home environment on your return to Australia.

Again, this is perfectly normal – you will have experienced and learnt a lot during your time away and will probably have changed as a result. Allow yourself time to settle back in, and try to remember the coping skills that you used when you arrived overseas.

Your friends and family may tire of hearing about your adventures after a while, and you might feel frustrated that no one shares your enthusiasm or really understands what you have experienced. It can help to talk to other returned or future exchange students.

Contact the Global Mobility Office where we will be very happy to hear from you and put you in touch with others who can benefit from your experiences.

Credit transfer

Every overseas university has a different system for issuing transcripts. Yours may be sent directly to you, or may be sent to the Global Mobility Office.

If it is sent to the Global Mobility Office, we will contact you to arrange for you to collect the original and will send a copy to tes.enrolments@jcu.edu.au so that they can credit your studies overseas to your JCU degree.

If you receive your transcript directly, you need to bring it to the Global Mobility Office so that we can take a copy and send it to the enrolments office.

Remember, while you will be credited with the appropriate credit points for the subjects that you study on exchange, the actual grades that you receive overseas will not be transferred to your JCU transcript.

Returned student feedback form

We want to hear what you think about the whole experience. Your feedback will be very useful for other students thinking of going on exchange and your feedback will assist Global Mobility Office staff.

Make sure you complete a Returned Student Feedback Form (surveyMonkey.com/r/JCUExchangefeedback), the link will also be emailed to you. You are required to submit this in order to receive your credit from your exchange.

Update your resume

Stand out from the crowd, add your international experience to your resume. Study abroad is a unique experience that can set you apart from other job applicants.

Approach it like your exchange semester was a job and think about the transferrable skills you developed and the things you learned. Tips can be found here: gooverseas.com/blog/study-abroad-resume-tips.

Some of the common skills and traits developed by studying abroad are:

- Independence
- Language skills
- Problem-solving skills
- Decision-making skills
- Time management
- Money management
- Increased initiative
- Global awareness
- Intercultural communication skills
- Adaptability
- Increased confidence and responsibility
- Networking skills

- Perhaps even improved job-related skills such as writing, interviewing, research or photography.

Promote exchange at JCU

As a returned JCU exchange student, you can assist the Global Mobility Office with promoting the exchange program. We may occasionally ask you to assist with promotional events, to provide information on your exchange experience, or talk with other students interested in taking part in exchange.

This is an opportunity for you to advise other students who are thinking of following in your footsteps. Word-of-mouth is so important, tell everyone, especially first-year students.

If you are keen to spread the word, talk to the Global Mobility Office about how you can help. Options include:

- writing an article for @JCU
- talking to your classmates about your exchange experience
- becoming a 'buddy' for one of our incoming international students
- becoming an ambassador for exchange and participate in events for future exchange students
- putting up posters around your part of the campus

Thanks for taking part in JCU's Exchange Program.

Welcome home



