Welcome!
Congratulations on your acceptance to Flinders Medical School! We here at Flinders are very excited for you to join our Flinders Med Family. Flinders is a great place to study as there is such a welcoming and friendly comraderie among medical students. There are lots of student organizations within the Medical School for you to join and take part in, providing an excellent way to meet your peers, get involved, and learn more about the medical profession outside of the classroom. From workshops to lectures to social events, these student groups ensure there is always something going on within Flinders Medicine! Hopefully this guide gives you a better idea of life at Flinders – but feel free to email the Flinders Medical Student Society (FMSS) international representative at international@fmss.org.au if you have any questions.

Student Life
Flinders University Medical School provides a unique and supportive environment among students. Fellow students are constantly sharing resources to their classmates and are always willing to help each other. The competitive or cut-throat environment often associated with Medical school does not seem to persist at Flinders; instead the students here are always supportive of each other. There are plenty of medical student groups to get involved in as well. There is the Flinders Medical Student Society (FMSS), Flinders University Surgical Society (FUSS), General Practice Student Network (GPSN), Flinders University Critical Care Society (FUCCS), and many more. These groups are constantly putting on events for students, so there is never a dull moment at Flinders Med. These events range from academic lectures, to clinical skills workshops, and social events such as MedBall, ScrubCrawl (a massive pub crawl where students where scrubs out), MedRevue, MedCamp, and more. These student groups are a great way to get involved, learn more about the medical profession, and to meet your fellow students.

Important Notice Regarding Internships
The South Australian Medical Education and Training (SA MET) Health Advisory Council (HAC) manages the allocation of internship places in South Australia. Currently, SA MET uses a priority ranking system method of determining which graduating medical students are allocated internship positions first. Under the current system, SA international graduates are Category 3, below all domestic students. Prior to 2017, all international students interested in staying in Australia have received an internship, however with recent increasing demand over internships it is likely that some international students will miss out on internship positions in Australia. As international students are currently prioritised below domestic students and will be the last to be offered an internship position, FMSS encourages that prospective students explore all possible avenues for undertaking an internship in home countries or other countries before entry into medical school. Do note that the South Australian internship allocation system is likely to soon
change to a merit based internship allocation process, which will likely change the prioritization status of international students and can potentially increase the probability of international students receiving an internship in South Australia. If you would like to learn about the different internship options available to International Students in Australia, please feel free to contact the FMSS International Representative at international@fmss.org.au

Now onto the rest of the student guide: this article should be read in conjunction with the New Student Guide on the FMSS website to give you everything you need to know to make your transition to Medicine in Australia at Flinders University. If you have any further questions, feel free to email international@fmss.org.au.

**Gaining a Student Visa**
On receipt of your Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE), you may apply for a student visa. The best way to apply for a student visa is online via the Department of Immigration and Citizenship website. You can also apply at Australian Embassy. The visa application will require you to submit a few documents and undergo a health checkup which can only be done at specific providers in each country (you can find the provider for your location from their website as well – and be aware that this health check may or may not be covered by your insurance provider). Generally speaking the student visa process is quick and easy.

**Health Insurance**
Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) is a mandatory requirement for your student visa. Make sure to visit the Australian Government Private Health Insurance Ombudsman website to get your health cover organised before you arrive. The Flinders University website also has useful information regarding different health insurance providers, here.

**Immunisations**
The school of medicine will request that you undergo specific immunisations in order to be able to visit the hospital wards. For specific details check the New Student Guide. As an international student these immunisations will not be free (with the exception of the Mantoux test) so you should investigate if it is possible to get them performed before you leave. You will need to bring documented proof of compliance so print out the appropriate Form A & B and take it with you when you go for appointments. Also bring any other immunisation forms/paper work you receive.

**Police Check**
Upon their arrival in Australia, International students are required to provide a Police Check from their country of origin to the CAU. Make sure you get this before you leave home because some countries will not allow you to get it unless you are living in the country at the time. Do this early as in many countries this process can take weeks or months. Once students have been in Australia for more than 6 months they must then undertake a Criminal History Screening check with the DCSI. See the New Student Guide for the requirements of the Australian checks.
Banking
Most Australian Banks allow you to open an account while you are still overseas (excluding BankSA). It is probably easier to open an account before you arrive to Australia so that you have immediate access to a bank account when you arrive. You can deposit funds into the account but you won’t be able to spend from it till you arrive and visit your bank branch and verify your identity. They also have decent interest rates compared to the US at least. Some of the Major Banks in South Australia:

- ANZ
- NAB
- BankSA
- Bankwest
- Commonwealth Bank
- Westpac

Electronics
• Laptops - If you don't already have one, you will probably need/want one for medical school. Compare prices online as you will probably find it is cheaper to buy one at home. Just make sure that the power supply is compatible (230V/50Hz), the power plug is replaceable with an Australian version and that the warranty is international. Also not all international warranties are made equal. Some require the machine be sent back to the country of purchase at the owners expense. Others cover hardware but not software (they will not supply the installation disks or reinstall Windows after a failure). Some vendors do not have repair centres in South Australia so your machine may have to be sent interstate which can take many weeks. Be careful, read the fine print, ask questions and get answers in writing. Note: All Apple products come with a full international warranty which can be extended with Apple Care and there is a fully authorised repair centre in town and another 10 minutes from the University.

• Printers - You can buy a printer here if you need one or you can use the ones in the library for a per page fee.

• Hard Disk - Bring along an external hard drive because you're going to get many Gigabytes of notes from the second years.

Mobiles
It is probably going to be cheaper to bring your mobile phone from home and use that same phone with your new Australian phone plan, rather than buying a brand new phone with a phone plan in Australia.
There are three major mobile phone carriers in Australia; Telstra, Optus and Vodafone. Each of these has a storefront at the local mall close to Uni.

- Telstra - best national coverage (especially in remote rural parts of Australia), but also is the most expensive.
- Optus is less expensive and has almost the same coverage as Telstra and is generally considered price competitive.
- Vodafone is the cheapest of the three but has the smallest network. However, it now has the best coverage in the hospital and on the university campus.
If you are concerned about coverage, you can check out the coverage maps here; Telstra, Optus, Vodafone.

**Internet**

Once you have a place to stay you will probably want to consider Internet access. This is probably something that you can arrange once you have found accommodation and have moved to Australia. If you know the address or an existing landline number you can check what options are available at adsl2exchanges. Most areas near the university should have access to high speed ADSL2 or cable from several carriers. The mainstream providers are;

- **Telstra** have a high quality network but do tend to be uncompetitive on price unless bundled with home and mobile services.
- **Optus** are similar to Telstra but a little cheaper.
- **Internode** are known for their high quality, fast network and local support (the helpdesk is located in the Adelaide CBD). They also offer free Usenet access and options for monthly contracts.
- **iiNet** is the third largest ISP behind Telstra and Optus and have competitive options.
- **TPG** provides a fast service at a competitive price.
- **Dodo** is all about being cheap.

There are several important things to consider when looking at an internet service provider;

- **Contract lock in.** If you need to move house are you going to be hit with additional fees to terminate the contract?
- **Additional services** such as unmetered data, Usenet access (if you don’t know what this is you should find out), gaming servers, mirror servers, etc.
- **Local office and support.**
- **Naked DSL vs DSL vs cable.**
- **Options for bundling in mobile phone, landline, digital TV, etc.**

If you think you are going to be a light Internet user you could always use a 3G modem or tether to your mobile but don’t expect to be impressed by performance or price.

**Customs**

Declare it or don’t bring it! The Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service is very protective of the local ecosystems and thus they take comprehensive measures to ensure that people don’t bring in anything foreign into the country. Checkout their website where they discuss what you can bring and what you should keep at home. If ever in doubt declare it or you may face strict penalties! Sniffer dogs operate at all international airports looking for things including food so don’t bring any food and if you do then declare it.

**Accommodation**

Many Students choose to live on campus for their first year to help with their transition to Flinders University and life in Adelaide. Living on campus has many merits that include a short walking distance to classes, a lively community, and a 24/7 support system. On other hand, it does have its downsides such as its really high cost and long distance from the city. If you don’t want to go through the hassle of finding a place from abroad this is a good
option for the first term and many people move houses mid-year so you won’t have trouble finding someone to move in with them.

If you are considering off-campus accommodation, consider staying close to the Bedford Park area if you want to be within a walking distance from the university or along any major transportation routes to facilitate your commute everyday. Public Transport in Adelaide is not the best and many student end up getting a car during their first year. If you want to wait until arriving in Australia to arrange accommodation, that is definitely doable, as there are plenty of options for “immediate” move in. Flatmates and Gumtree always have tons of people looking for housemates so these are good options if you are looking to join an existing house without going through the hassle of finding a available home to move into. Be sure to check your Flinder’s Medicine Year facebook page or the Flinders Medical Forum facebook page as many students post on these pages looking for roommates.

If you are going to be looking for accommodation in the private rental market, you might want to search the following websites:

- Flinders On-campus Accommodation
- Flinders Housing - Private Accommodation
- Gumtree
- Flatmates
- Realestate.com.au

**Overview: Things to do before arriving to Flinders**

- Arrange student visa
- Background police check
- Get up to date with vaccinations (can also be done after arriving in Australia) and gather vaccination record from home country.
- Open a bank account
- Arrange accommodation (can also be done after arriving in Australia)