

Orientation Handbook for International Students



By Tasmanian Medical Students' Society



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Tasmanian University Medical Students' Society

Congratulations on attaining a place in the MBBS course at the University of Tasmania! Here's some (unofficial) information on Australia, Tasmania, the University and TUMSS for you to look over before you arrive.

The Tasmanian University Medical Students' Society (TUMSS)

TUMSS is the student run organisation that represents all medical students at the University of Tasmania, serving a number of roles, both academic and social.

TUMSS operates in conjunction with the Australian Medical Students' Association (AMSA). We also have strong links with the Australian Medical Association (AMA), other medical bodies, and our valued sponsors.

The aims of TUMSS are to:

- Represent medical students on UTAS committees, providing a student voice on issues of current relevance, therefore allowing students direct input into their medical school and curriculum.
- Liaise with relevant student and professional bodies, including the Tasmanian School of Medicine (TSoM), the Australian Medical Students' Association (AMSA) and the Australian Medical Association (AMA).
- Encourage members to consider their well-being, both physical and mental, and the well-being of their colleagues.
- Provide members with access to support services, including student mentors.
- Organise social and sporting events for members.
- Provide career information to members on the various medical specialties and vocational training opportunities.
- Promote interaction between medical students in different year groups, on different campuses and from different backgrounds.
- Advocate for students on issues of relevance.

For more information, please do not hesitate to contact me, Qi Xuan (or Dexter), your International Student Officer from TUMSS, at qxgan@utas.edu.au , +61 411401125 or +65 97656030 (whatsapp available too) or via facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/qixuan.gan>).

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Airport Reception and Temporary Accommodation

When you first arrive in Hobart, you will have a number of options to help you get to your accommodation. UTAS offers free airport pickup to all international students upon completion of their application form, which can be found on their website, at

http://www.utas.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/439114/ArrivalFormSCHobart.pdf

This option is the best if you are arriving alone. However, if you have accompanying family members, UTAS does not offer a free pickup service. It is stated on the application form that UTAS can arrange a taxi service for you and your family at an additional cost of \$25 per person, but this is very costly.

Students may instead wish to use the Tas Redline Shuttle Buses that are located at the exits of the airport. Shuttle Buses charge \$17 per person, and drop you off at specific venues in Hobart (such as backpackers or hotels). You may wish to book the shuttle beforehand at <http://www.tasredline.com.au/index.php/hobart-airport-shuttle>. However, if you are intending to go to the residential colleges (Christ, John Fisher or Jane), the shuttle is not the best option as you will have to walk quite a distance from the drop off points.

Taxis are also easily available at the airport; however they can be very costly. This option is the best if you are arriving with your family members and you have a lot of luggage. Another option is to rent a car and drive to your destination. Car rental services are available directly outside the airport.

If you have not already arranged permanent living arrangements for the year, then a Backpackers Hostel will be the most convenient and cost-effective option for the time being. For a list of Backpacker hostels or hotels, please refer to page 2 of the application form in this link.

http://www.utas.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/439114/ArrivalFormSCHobart.pdf



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Booking your Return Plane Tickets

If you are planning to return to your home country at the end of the school year, there are a few key dates to keep in mind. The last possible day of exams is November 14th 2016, but the results are not released perhaps until November 29th. At this time, you will find out if you will be required to sit for a supplementary or deferred exam paper, which will take place during the mid to late December 2016. It is best to study hard during the year so that you do not have to take a supplementary exam and you can return home after November 14th and book your tickets with insurance, in case you need to extend your stay in Australia. Alternatively, you can plan to return home after the supplementary/deferred exam time.

For students who intend to return home during the winter break, the last day of exams is on the 27th of June and school starts on the 17th of July.

For more information about the school calendar, you can visit

<http://www.utas.edu.au/key-dates/key-university-dates-2017>

School of Medicine Requirements

All requirements can be found in this link: <http://www.utas.edu.au/medicine/current/mbbs-orientation> (note: some dates on this page regarding official orientation/matriculation have not been updated yet)

Requirements to be completed in your home country:

Police Check- All students will be required to obtain a National Police Check. Police Checks can be ordered from the Police Station in Hobart if you have been residing in Hobart for the past 12 months. For more information, please refer to <http://www.utas.edu.au/health-science/professional-experience-placement/SiP/national-police-record-check>. If you have been residing overseas for the past 12 months, you are required to obtain a National Police Check from your home country. For students from Singapore, please refer to this link http://www.spf.gov.sg/epc/cert_issued.htm. For students from Malaysia, please refer to this link <http://www.kln.gov.my/web/guest/online> and look under the e-Consular heading, Certificate of Good Conduct. If you choose to mail in your application from outside Australia, please ensure you allow enough time for postage to and from Australia.

Vaccinations- All students will be required to show evidence of vaccinations. The list of vaccinations required can be found here

[http://www.utas.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0018/204309/mbbs_txt_Form-Student-](http://www.utas.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0018/204309/mbbs_txt_Form-Student-Immunisation.pdf)

[Immunisation.pdf](http://www.utas.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0018/204309/mbbs_txt_Form-Student-Immunisation.pdf) Please bring this immunisation card to your General Practitioner and get it signed if you have done the immunisations. If you have not, please get your necessary vaccinations done. Do also bring along records of your immunisations. It is best to complete all the vaccinations in your home



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country. If you are not able to do so, any additional vaccinations or blood tests can be conducted in Hobart within the first few weeks of school.

Translations- Although many students may have a driving license, vaccination records or government documents from their home country, these documents will be rendered useless unless translated and confirmed into English by a certified authority, such as Notary Public. Translation services in Australia can be very expensive, so if possible, have all the important documents translated before you arrive in Australia.

Summary of forms to be completed or documents to be obtained:

- 1) St John Ambulance Workplace 2 - Senior First Aid certificate (only if you already have one)
- 2) Safety in Practice Agreement
 - a. Health Assessment form (if you have a medical disclosure in the Safety in Practice Agreement)
- 3) Student Immunisation Record Card
- 4) RHH patient registration form
- 5) MBBS TB form
- 6) Clinical Allocation Agreement
- 7) Talent Release Form
- 8) National Police Check
- 9) Translated driver's license (if you have one)
 - a. If you intend to drive in Hobart, full license from some countries (eg Singapore) is fully recognised. It depends on which category your country falls under. For more country-specific information, visit Service Tasmania on Macquarie Street.
[\(http://www.servicetasmania.tas.gov.au/\)](http://www.servicetasmania.tas.gov.au/)



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Essential items to bring

The sockets in Australia (below left) are different so you will need to buy an adaptor in order to use your own appliances. You may want to purchase multi-plugs (below right) so that you use multiple appliances in one socket. Australia has a 220-240V system.



Here is a simple packing checklist:

Items	Remarks
Toiletries (shampoo, soap, toothbrush, toothpaste)	Toiletries are not provided in the colleges and the university apartment.
Moisturiser, lip balm	Tasmania has a relatively dry climate
stationery	Stationery is more expensive in Australia and there is very limited variety.
Laptop, charger	
Phone, phone charger	
Adapters (see above pictures)	
Important documents (high school graduation results, UTAS required documents, UTAS acceptance letter, air ticket, passport, photocopies)	If immigration officials ask for proof that you will be studying in Australia, you can show them the UTAS acceptance letter
Warm clothing	
Linen (bed sheet, pillow cover, duvet cover)	Linen can be bought at the accommodation services office or you can choose to bring your own. Alternatively, you can purchase them elsewhere. (Kmart/Target)
Medications (if any)	



Transportation

<http://www.metrotas.com.au/>

The Metro bus services most areas in Hobart. It is cost-effective and convenient to purchase a Metro card from the Metro Centre located opposite the General Post Office at Franklin Square. You can then add value to the card and simply tap it on the machine located at the door when you board the bus. Do note that you can also add value to the card when you are on the bus. Presenting your university student card when buying the card will enable you to enjoy student rates. If you are buying a bus ticket and you do not have the exact amount, the bus driver will be able to give you exact change.

You may also like to purchase a car but parking can be quite expensive in town (where the Faculty of Medicine is located). Petrol costs about AUD\$1.67/L (currently). Do note that a car is useful in clinical years when you will have placements in more rural areas of Tasmania that do not have public transport. Taxis are also widely available but can be quite expensive. A trip from Sandy Bay to the city will cost about \$10-12.

Alternatively, you may be happy to just walk. Hobart is quite convenient to walk around but make sure to get a pair of comfortable walking shoes because certain areas can be quite hilly.

Students staying in Christ, John Fisher, Jane Franklin and Apartments can utilise the free shuttle bus service that goes to a few places including the Menzies building in the city where classes are held and Sandy Bay. The Jane Franklin bus has a more frequent service. Bus timetables can be obtained from the respective accommodation services office.

Location of the clinical school

Majority of classes will be held in either the Medical Sciences 1/2 Building, or at the Clinical School building, both of which are located in the city centre. Medical Sciences 1/2 is located just across from the Royal Hobart Hospital, at 17 Liverpool Street, Hobart. The Clinical School building is located on 200 Collin Street, Hobart, which is adjacent to the Royal Hobart Hospital.



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Amenities

For exercise junkies, there are gyms located at the hospital and Sandy Bay campus that offer cheap student packages. There are plenty of other slightly more expensive gyms in the city as well.

The 2 largest supermarkets in Tasmania are Woolworths and Coles and they can be found at various locations around the city. The most convenient Woolworths branches are on Sandy Bay Road in Sandy Bay and on Campbell Street in the city (just a short walk from the Medical Sciences 1 building). The most convenient Coles outlet is at Sandy Bay Road in Sandy Bay. Do note that walking from the colleges to Sandy Bay takes about 30 minutes.

Stationery such as paper, pens, binders, etc, can also be purchased from these stores, or from Office Works, which is only a few minutes walk from the Medical Sciences 1 building as well.

The Reject Shop in the city is also a good place to get cheap bargains for your daily necessities. They offer toiletries etc. at heavily discounted prices.

Food and entertainment

Food can easily be purchased in town and there is a wide variety of food available within walking distance of the medical faculty. There is also a hospital cafeteria on site, which serves relatively inexpensive meals. For a nice dinner out in town, you can go to Salamanca, which also has a couple of nice bars to chill. North Hobart and Sandy Bay are also areas with a variety of restaurants of various cuisines to choose from. Preparing your own meals at home will definitely be the more economic alternative.

Healthcare

International students are not covered for healthcare by Medicare, Australia's public health system. As such, students will need to purchase Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) from Medibank, which has already been included in your fees (if not, please contact myself or the School of Medicine). Do note that whenever you see the doctor, you will have to pay for everything upfront and then retain the receipt in order to claim the money back from either the Medibank office located in town or from their website. More information can be found on the Medibank Website <http://www.medibank.com.au/Client/StaticPages/OSHCHome.aspx>.

Other organizations that offer health insurance, should you wish to purchase additional cover, include NIB, Australian Unity, and MBF, just to name a few.

International students often frequent the Grosvenor Street (Sandy Bay campus) and Collins Street (city) general practice as they charge a minimal consultation fee that will be fully reimbursed by OSHC. Do



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note that you have to make an appointment before visiting the doctor and most practices do not open after hours. If you need to see a doctor after hours, you can call the after hours doctor at 03 6165 2361. In an event of an emergency, go directly to the emergency department at the Royal Hobart Hospital.

Housing

Housing in Hobart is relatively cheaper than most other cities and states in Australia. Many students new to Hobart prefer to live in one of the three colleges associated with UTAS, they are; John Fisher College, Christ College, and Jan Franklin Hall.

John Fisher and Christ College both have professional cleaners to clean the toilets and the common area. Rent is approximately AUD\$206 per week (including electricity, heating and water but without internet) for a single room. These colleges are self-catered and there are shared cooking facilities available (stove, oven and microwave). There are also lockers in the kitchen to store your cooking equipment. There is a small bar refrigerator in each room to store your food items. You can also choose to eat at Pepperz, the accommodations cafeteria which provides relatively cheap meals.

Jane Franklin Hall, however, has all meals provided and costs AUD\$350 per week for a single room. There are no cooking facilities and residents are not allowed to cook.

Students may also choose to live within the University Apartments. The apartments are shared flats located within the vicinity of the John Fisher and Christ colleges. Although fully furnished, students will be expected to clean and prepare meals for themselves, with rent running for AUD\$213 a week. Alternatively, residents can also eat at Peppers.

More information on University Accommodation can be found at <http://www.accommodation.utas.edu.au/about>.

Another popular option is to live a shared house with other students, owned by the Tasmanian University Union (TUU). Rent can range from AUD\$110-185 a week, and tenants will be expected to clean and cook for themselves. Houses are located throughout Hobart, and preference for rooms and location can be given to the TUU office. The TUU office (Hobart) can be reached at +61 3 6226 2495. Students can also opt to find private housing through a real estate agent. A useful website for private housing is <http://www.realestate.com.au/rent>.



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Banking

It is a good idea to sign up for a bank account with an Australian bank. This provides you access to online banking services which are very convenient for payment (eg. University fees) and transactions. The four main banks in Australia are the Commonwealth Bank, NAB, Westpac and ANZ. All four major banks offer free (and often unlimited services) to students. Each bank also offers international students the option to apply for a bank account prior to arriving in Australia, via their websites.

Westpac ATM's adds the extra convenience that it accepts cards from banks such as Scotiabank, Bank of America, Deutsche Bank, BNP Paribas, and Barclays Woolwich branches with no surcharge or international access fees.

Many students choose to sign up for an account with Commonwealth Bank as they have a branch in the Sandy bay campus and their ATMs are widely available in the city.

Phone

There are many telco companies offering a wide variety of prepaid and postpaid options. In Tasmania, most people use Telstra as it has the widest coverage, especially in rural areas. It is, however, the most expensive. Optus is the second most popular options as they are relatively cheaper but coverage is not as good but it is steadily improving. Other telco companies are highly discouraged unless they are using the Telstra or Optus networks. Pricing options and other benefits from the various companies can be found at their respective websites. Optus tends to be popular amongst international students for its competitive pricing and attractive benefits, such as free calls to a specified number of friends with Optus lines. You can get a sim card from the respective telcos at the Sydney and Melbourne airports or you can choose to get it along Elizabeth Street, Hobart where there are Telstra and Optus stores.

Internet access

Unlimited wireless Internet access is available for free at the Sandy Bay university campus, Medical Sciences 1/2, and the Clinical School buildings. Computers are also available at these locations for free access to the Internet.

If you are living in the colleges or university apartments, your only option is to purchase the BigAir Internet packages offered by accommodation services. More information can be found here http://www.accommodation.utas.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/98806/BCB-UTAS-A5-flyer_web.pdf. Another option is to purchase a mobile internet USB but coverage is not as reliable.



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If you are living off-campus, you may want to consider the mobile USB modem or fixed line Internet services offered by various companies.

Printing and photocopying

Printing/photocopying at university sites costs about AUD\$0.12 per page. As such, printing the entire years' worth of lecture notes can be quite expensive. For this reason, many people find it cost effective and convenient to purchase a printer. Black/white toner printers are sufficient for most people, unless you really want to see the histology/pathology PowerPoint slides in colour. Printers, toner and ink cartridges can be purchased from a number of electrical stores around the city, including Officeworks, Dick Smith and Harvey Norman.

Important Things to bring for class

For dissection, everyone is required to buy a dissection kit. The most important instruments for this will be blunt-ended curved dissection scissors, a scalpel, scalpel blades and tweezers. Several stores around Hobart sell these items, but a popular store is SurgiMed. SurgiMed sells dissection kits for \$25. Many of these items may also be for sale by senior students.

You will need a stethoscope and pentorch for clinical lessons. While you may definitely buy them now, many students order them early in the year once in Hobart. Littmann's Classic S.E. II is recommended.

Weather

The Tasmanian weather can be rather unpredictable, with the climate varying from cold to warm, calm to windy, dry to wet, and often all within one day. As such, you should bring clothes for all conditions. Winter (starting around middle of the year) can bring temperatures close to zero degrees Celsius, whereas in summer, temperatures can rise as high as 40 degrees on the hottest days.

Learning about Tasmania

Tasmania has much to offer, in terms of food, attractions, and events. Fortunately, the Discover Tasmania website (<http://www.discovertasmania.com/au>) keeps you up to date so you don't miss a thing! The website also provides maps, Tasmanian statistics, and travel information, so be sure to bookmark this page.

Useful website

For more information, please visit <http://www.utas.edu.au/international-support>