

ADVICE FOR 2024 UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO STUDENTS

Each year we send a survey to the students in their first year of study in Australia and New Zealand. We ask about their university, program, life Down Under, accommodation, and activities outside of the classroom.

Keep reading to get all the insider tips taken directly from the survey for a smooth transition to studying at University of Otago!

COMMENTS & ADVICE ABOUT OTAGO

Program	Why do you <i>like</i> and what do you <i>dislike</i> about your university?	Why do you <i>like</i> and what do you <i>dislike</i> about your program?	What advice do you have for future Canadian or American students coming into this program and university?
Dentistry	I like that the campus is new and has all the latest technology. The staff is very supportive and helpful. I feel like the faculty can be a bit more organized when it comes to administration, especially during the start of the year. A lot of Canadian students felt unprepared when we reached and found out we had to complete more requirements, like CPR etc.	I like the course materials and instructors, we get to do a lot of practice on simulation teeth. I felt sometimes we had less tutors/supervisors than what was needed for our class size.	Make sure you complete most requirements in your home country to make the transition more stress-free.
Dentistry	Like the Staff on campus, the support available. I don't like how a little unorganized some things are, but that could be due things still settle into place after COVID.	Instructors are great, very supportive and friendly. Course material is interesting and relative to what we are studying.	

Dentistry	Love everything, a bit of chaos in terms of scheduling. But even that is okay.	Large class size but better when broken up into streams, more TA or tutors would help with the ratio.	Don't wait, apply as soon as you can.
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Other (Postgraduate Diploma in Aeromedical Retrieval and Transport)	So friendly, organized, professional.	Like the individual small size.	Do it!
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ADVICE ABOUT LIVING DOWN UNDER

The advice below is segmented by university, although some of the suggestions apply to anyone moving to Australia or New Zealand, regardless of which program or university they will be in.

BOND UNIVERSITY

- Try to keep yourself busy and talk to your family often.
- Make friends and remember to enjoy your time. Explore this wonderful country.
- Get your living situation sorted before you arrive, or at least have an Airbnb close to the university you can stay at while you look. Set up your bank, phone, and Gocard day 1.
- Rental crisis on the Gold Coast, living and rent is expensive and difficult to find.
- Australia is tropical Canada. Very comfortable.
- You'll make friends!!
- Get your bank account and phone plan right away, everything else will come with time. Lot and lots of summer clothes and grab your sunscreen here.
- It can be challenging at time. It comes in waves where you are happy to be here and then times when you are struggling. If you know that coming in, so you can set your own expectations, that is really important. But also, as much as FaceTime is not the same, it is the best option, and I really use it all the time. If you need help or just someone to talk to, the counsellors on campus are EXCELLENT.
- Manage your time with school but branch out and make connections.
- Make friends with your cohort. They will be your family Down Under.

CHARLES STURT UNIVERSITY

- Always keep in touch with family even if it is for a few minutes. It can get to you really bad in the beginning but as you establish friends it gets easier and as school gets more heavy you kind of forget about certain things. My number one advice is take care of your health, especially eating properly. Grocery prices are expensive but I found I did not prioritize eating consistently and let me tell you, you will get really tired really quick if you don't. Also make time for the gym as I can't stress taking care of your mental and physical health as school can burn you out.
- Find a group of friends asap! They will make your life much easier and better. Making sure you do your best to go out and explore your city!

DEAKIN UNIVERSITY

- Bring a friend.
- Important to have a strong support network while making the move and for the first few months.
- Try to push yourself to make friends.

FLINDERS UNIVERSITY

- Plan ahead with friends and family on times to call and visit (due to the nature of the course it can be tough for us to go home). To make friends you definitely need to put yourself out there and say yes to as much as possible! Try to get involved in different aspects of the course and in the city.
- Get excited to live in a tropical country and make sure you explore your surroundings, make good friends and connections with other students so you have good support.
- Talk to everyone during orientation week!
- Very easy and adaptable living.
- Put yourself out there and be willing to try new things.
- Video call family and friends weekly, make friends with fellow international students, and find a group.
- Make friends and socialize with everyone. Medicine becomes cliquey very quickly. Make friends outside of school as well.
- Not challenging at all. Very similar to Canada.
- Make friends that you can be yourself with.
- Budget to plan to come home sometime in the year.
- Homesickness will typically sink in after a few months so try to stay in touch with your friends and families as much as possible while keeping the time change in mind. Try to connect with other international students since they are going through the same tradition.
- I lived across the country during my undergrad and had new issues. But don't be scared to swallow your pride and lean on your family as you will, masters programs are intense. Take the support where you can get it.

GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY

- I think overall it's pretty similar to Canada in terms of culture, but Gold Coast is less diverse than bigger Canadian cities, so that does come with pros and cons (i.e. food, people, etc.). Also, Queensland is known to be one of the more racist states, that is something to keep in mind that you may have to deal with outside of uni.
- Make one or two good friends whom you can trust and can help each other, spend your time wisely and stay in touch with the family.

- Make friends as soon as possible.
- Culturally it's VERY similar to Canada. I try to talk to my parents every day, but that amount will change for everyone, but it's important to very consciously make the effort.
- Get your accommodations figured out as soon as possible and keep in touch with family at home. Also, make friends in your program!
- Immerse yourself with the Aussies, some people found good friendships in the Canadian group but I wanted to become part of the community and make mostly Aussie friends.
- I was very homesick for the first 2-3 weeks I was in Australia due to the large culture shock. I would recommend joining communities and clubs to meet new people and make new friends, that helped me alot. I would also recommend staying in touch with your family and friends back in Canada (ex. video calling everyday). Also avoid staying at home too much, going outside every once in a while helps refresh your mind and improves your mood.
- Australia is a lot similar to Canada than I thought it was. Adapting won't be an issue, although it is a struggle to start driving in opposite direction.
- Adapting to life in Australia or New Zealand as an international student can be an exciting but challenging journey. Here is some advice to help future students make a smooth transition:

1. Research and Prepare: Before departure, research the local culture, customs, and lifestyle. Understanding the basics will make the initial adjustment easier.

2. Visa and Legal Requirements: Familiarize yourself with visa requirements and ensure all necessary paperwork is in order. Be aware of visa conditions and deadlines.

3. Accommodation: Arrange accommodation well in advance. Whether it's on-campus housing, off-campus rentals, or homestays, consider proximity to your university and budget constraints.

4. Budgeting: Create a budget to manage your finances effectively. Understand the cost of living and plan your expenses accordingly. Look for opportunities to save money, like student discounts.

5. Healthcare: Familiarize yourself with the healthcare system in your host country. Obtain the necessary health insurance and know how to access medical care if needed.

6. Cultural Sensitivity: Be open-minded and respectful of local customs and values. Embrace cultural differences and make an effort to engage with local communities.

7. Stay Connected: Stay in touch with family and friends back home, but also make an effort to build new relationships with fellow students and locals. Join clubs, attend events, and socialize.

8. Time Management: Balance your academic responsibilities with personal time and exploration. Effective time management will help reduce stress.

9. Explore and Travel: Take advantage of your time abroad to explore the country. Both Australia and New Zealand offer stunning natural beauty and diverse landscapes. Travel when you can.

10. Seek Support: Universities often have support services for international students. Don't hesitate to reach out if you encounter challenges or need assistance.

11. Stay Informed: Stay informed about any changes in regulations, university policies, or important updates related to your student status.

12. Stay Safe: Be mindful of your safety. Familiarize yourself with local safety guidelines and emergency contacts. Keep your belongings secure.

13. Language Skills: If English is not your first language, work on improving your language skills. Effective communication will help you feel more confident and integrated.

Remember that adapting to a new country takes time, and it's normal to face challenges along the way. Embrace the experience, be patient with yourself, and seek support when needed. Your time abroad can be incredibly rewarding and transformative.

- I personally make sure to call my family everyday to stay on touch and make sure I don't feel too alone. I would also recommend getting involved in activities on campus.
- Do your research about accommodation and things like food and transportation costs, but also know that once you get here, you will just have to take things one day at a time. When dealing with homesickness regarding things you miss from home, try to find little places that resemble home, whether that be a shop, a cafe, a park, etc. It's important to find things in our new city that remind us of home, so that they can comfort homesickness, and also create a new "homey" feeling as well. When it comes to missing family and staying in touch with them, calling and texting them is the best option. I know it's not the same, but it really will help keep you connected. Send them pictures that make you happy, or if you use social media often, add your family to your close friends list and post your adventures on Instagram/Facebook for them to follow along and live through you!
- Being able to call family with set times, planning when to go back, make friends.

- It's easy to connect with other international students. Going to a university with smaller classes facilitates this. Make use of FaceTime and video calls. When you feel homesick, think about the winter.
- Take opportunities to connect with people right away that will have things in common with you. Have a plan before arriving on when you will go home for a visit so that you have something to look forward to if things get tough.
- Make friend, work hard, find something you like and stick to it.
- Make friends with people outside of your program and country! Try new things.
- It is very difficult to stay away from family, but it is also a great opportunity to develop yourself and attain self-confidence and self-reliance. Living abroad will enhance your knowledge and ability to understand the world in a broader sense.
- It will take time to adjust but joining clubs and socializing with students on campus helps a lot with making new friends.

JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY

- Making new friends and having a good community to rely on is very important. You can't do medical school by yourself.
- Make friends, use FaceTime to chat with loved ones.
- I'd say make it a priority to FaceTime family back home whenever the time lines up to do so. As for making friends don't be afraid to talk to the people who are taking the same course as you. It's the easiest way to get to know new people.
- Homesickness and feeling like you don't belong is normal in the first sem. Just get through it and make as many connections as possible, by 2nd semester you'll find your people I guarantee it. Be ready for your mental health to be tested in that first semester and please don't hesitate to utilize all the resources at your disposal and to even need to help of professionals outside of school (I know I did).
- Everyone here is really nice, making friends in your course and accommodation will be pretty easy. I recommend staying in touch with your parents, I call mine every day if I can. And personalize your room as much as you can, make it a second home.
- Just be prepared for the heat and bring some shorts!
- Just stay busy, you'll do fine.
- Keep in contact with friends and family back in Canada by any means possible. The weather is something to get use too the heat here is no joke.

MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY

- Find times that work best for calls back home with the time difference it can be hard.
- Always make time for yourself and new/old friends. You will need it!
- I'm not sure. I'm very different to many people so I don't think my advice would apply generally.
- Call up your friends from home if you're feeling home sick!! Get a routine down ASAP.

- It's essential to make friends, and having friends outside of school makes it even better and makes it feel more like home. It takes time, and you will always miss home, but take advantage of the great things in Australia.
- It is pretty easy to make friends with those in the program. Make sure to plan lots of study session which can then turn into planning social events. Facetime is your best friend with staying in touch, but if not possible than an easy update text to family and friends is still great.
- Definitely make friends and don't isolate yourself at home, connect with other international students but also don't be shy to befriend domestic students!

MONASH UNIVERSITY

- You'll become close with people in the program, however for myself the majority of people I became close with are doing the end-to-end rural program so I won't get the opportunity to interact and work with them in a clinical setting which is disappointing. I did not return back to Canada during my "winter" break in June, however the majority of the other Canadian students did which they found refreshing from my understanding. It helps relieved their home sickness and feel that they could push through for the remainder of the year. FaceTime is great for communicating with friends and family back home but just get used to stark time difference when trying to connect with them, it can be challenging at times.
- Go to lots of organized activities. They are a lot of fun and are a great way to meet people.
- Making friends, staying in touch with friends and families back home.

UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

- Dealing with homesickness was not a big issue for me but some colleagues expressed homesickness and depression to a much higher degree, so if staying close to the family is an important factor to your lifestyle then you should make a very careful consideration when choosing to stay in Australia or NZ.
- Always call family back home. Make friends with you classmates and outside of school.
- Growing your network, staying in touch with friends family back home.
- Honestly it's very similar to Canada! I usually stay in touch via FaceTime :)
- Getting a place is quite tough in the beginning but feel reassured that you will definitely find a place to live. As well, feeling homesick is more than likely, but time goes really fast because you're so so busy!
- Make an effort to engage in your family and friends social media when you're gone to stay in touch. Do some math and figure out the best times of day to call home and facetime. Work on getting to know a lot of people before pigeonholing yourself into only 1 or 2 friendships when you don't know people well. Keep up your hobbies and things you do for self-care outside of school. Make

an effort to travel (road trips and travel between semesters) because the time goes fast and you don't want to regret not seeing the things you really wanted to see.

- Make a lot a lot of friends especially international students so you have each other during the breaks and try to travel if you can.
- Make lots of friends inside and outside of your program, explore and don't be afraid to try new things.
- Think of them as your favourite cousins with a funny little accent, they are super nice and very interesting so first and foremost focus on getting to know people, be nice, that way you'll make friends in no time. Plan little outings, enjoy the scenery take advantage of the brilliant cafe and brunch culture and visit art nooks around the city. You could do these things alone as well. Point being, learn to enjoy and appreciate the beauty of your city! Oh, and keep your loved ones in on the ride, send them pictures and videos of you having fun.
- Stay in touch with people from home so you're not too homesick but also create a community outside of that so that you can feel immersed.
- Say hi to everyone! Very easy to make friends in the first few weeks since everyone is in the same boat and have come from different places. Don't just stick to the Canadians in your program!!!
- Go to the farewell dinner/party that OzTREKK hosts back in Canada. I met my roommate and now best friend there. Also join clubs, get involved to meet other locals and internationals.
- Explore the city a lot! you will find that Aus is very similar to Canada with some exceptions. Try the amazing food and coffee here. Always video chat back home to stay in touch with everybody but also live in the moment with all the other Canadians and Australians.
- Life in Australia is very similar to Canada. You can pretty much get everything you need here including all your stores, restaurants, and fast food options. There are a few quirks that you discover Australians do but nothing seriously different about the people either; everyone has been very friendly! My only advice would be to stay in contact with your friends and family back home! The time difference makes it harder so you often have to either wake up early or stay up late to call home.
- Talk to everyone in your cohort during orientation! Go to all the events! Friends who are going through a similar experience as you are makes you feel less alone. Also, just explore! Melbourne has so much to do.
- Be open to going to different events to meet people and have a schedule of times you call back home so you always know when you will be able to talk to your family and friends and not feel as homesick.
- Create as homey of a space as you can to establish a place of familiarity and overcome that feeling of home sickness.
- It is very similar to Canada, so you likely won't have a problem. you can also still keep in touch with friends and family through facetime in the morning and nights, you'll make friends through your class tutorials and during any extracurriculars you get involved with.
- Go to uni orientation week events to make friends. Try to find times in the day that make it easy to call home (I usually call while I eat breakkie).
- Attend social events held by faculty so you can meet people in your program. Finding a group of supportive friends in your program makes a huge difference!

- Get a support network and new friends! Extend yourself to go out there and have new experiences in Oz!
- Make friend is important, also since Australia is extremely chill country, it should be pretty easy to adjust.
- Everyone is in the same boat, you'll meet friends and others in your program who did the same transition! Also find something in the community to integrate yourself into.

UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO

- Do it!
- Definitely make friends, get to know the people you might be going with, those who apply with you. Make time to talk to family, with the time difference it can be difficult, it I found it very helpful to video chat with my family everyday, takes away from being homesick.
- Try your best to socialize and keep active, don't isolate yourself. It can get a bit lonely so keep in touch with family back home.
- You will make lots of friends. Do the socials sports and or gatherings. There is always something happening.

UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND

- Explore the city you're in. Bring comfort foods from home.
- Living expenses are on the rise so get a job, facetime your family often, make friends in your program but also make sure to have friends outside of uni.
- Make friends by going to every event or social possible - constantly reach out to new people. When I'm feeling homesick, it helps to talk to people who are in the same boat as me.
- For Brisbane in particular, I find that the beautiful weather year-round helps to reduce homesickness, and also the change in scenery is great too. Making friends is easy since you can connect with other students in your program or outside of that too. Staying in touch with family is easy through phone, facetime, etc. And you can visit back home too over breaks.
- A lot of students in your cohort to be friends with and various clubs to your individual preference. Call home often as it helps deal with homesickness. Go to dental school events as they are fun.
- It is better to find your accommodations and where to live and make a really good budget schedule. It's really hard to find the accommodations in AU due to housing crisis.
- Try to FaceTime your parents back home consistently, join some clubs or intramurals to meet some people. But the program is set up well to meet lots of students early on.
- Don't treat it any differently than you normally would, just be yourself. Stay in contact with friends and family back home.
- Keep in touch with family and friends back home. Go to events and make friends in Australia.

- IT'S HOT! Get used to not be ok with the cold. You need to adapt to the weather and it really messes up with you if you don't expect it or if you're not ready for it.
- Try to get into the routine you have at home, for me finding a gym and a place to run was really beneficial in feeling more at home, also if you can balance it getting a part time job somewhere you think is cool will bring you a lot of really great friends.
- It is not as hard as you think to get your bank institution set up, a phone plan (they're so much cheaper and have so much more data) or to time a place to live. The housing market can be daunting, but if you put in effort, you will find what you are looking for. It can take a couple months for the homesickness to come in (i.e., you're basically in the honeymoon phase with living abroad for the first 3 months) but know that this is totally normal and there are so many resources available through the university campuses. It is not hard to stay in contact with friend back home, you just have to get good at scheduling time each morning to FaceTime / call friends and family. And take the chances you have to go back home over breaks!
- Get to know your fellow Canadians and always remember your purpose so that you don't give up.
- I recommend attending as many orientation and campus events when you arrive to meet new people.
- Start building your new support network right away! Try to call friends and family back home to ease your transition.
- Making friends who I really connect with was very difficult until I got a job, which I know not everyone can juggle, but for me it was the most essential part to adapting to living here. There are so many running groups and smaller communities to participate in too. Making sure to take time to go on mini trips or explore Queensland more is very important to not get consumed by studying too.
- I think my biggest struggle was the homesickness. Once I landed here, it hit really hard and I wasn't expecting it to hit like that. But the best way to tackle that (and this is basically what everyone says, but it truly works), is to stay busy and distract yourself. Go out and explore, go house hunting, go meet other Canadians arriving. Just do what you can to stay busy and distracted and that really helps with homesickness. Of course, stay in touch and talk to your family and friends more, especially in those initial first few weeks, because that really makes you feel connected and like things haven't changed too much (even though they have). Just know that everyone goes through the same thing and talk about it to get through it! Everyone's adjusting, you aren't alone and trust me when I say its temporary. Soon enough you'll get so busy and start working towards your dreams and you'll feel/notice the homesickness less.
- Put yourself out there and go talk to people and join clubs.
- We love it here. Enjoy everything there is to do, explore the city, Brisbane has so much to offer. Make friends with Aussies and they'll take you out and you can engage in "cultural" (sporting) events. :)
- As someone who is very close with their family and friends left behind, pencil into your schedule intentional time to call home. I try to call home once a week and usually for at least an hour. In the beginning, try to expose yourself to as many activities as you can. Go to events, talk to people in class, stay on campus to study. You'll find your people pretty quickly.
- Make friends early, join clubs, and travel.
- Be prepared for extreme heat and humidity (it can get pretty rough). Get to know people who live around you! We live right next to some of our best friends and it is really nice to be able to text them "Hey want to come over?" and they are there in 5 minutes.

It worked really well for me to schedule a weekly video call with my family to make sure everybody was free to chat and it allowed me to focus more time on studying while still keeping in touch without having unanswered calls.

- It is the same.
- Find a living accommodation near the city or CBD so it is easier for you to do things.
- Schedule your calls with friends or family, be open to the Australians they can be super friendly.
- Explore the country and learn why everyone loves it! There's beautiful beaches, really nice people, and many things you've never seen before. Make all the friends you can but having a core group is nice, especially ones from back home who might understand your homesickness more. Call your family lots because they miss you just as much if not more.
- Make a lot of good friends here! I rely on my friends and they're people I can really count on. Make sure you're calling home regularly and keeping in touch with your friends. And the holidays are really long so make sure to meet up with everyone when you go back home!
- Prioritizing your mental health. Reach out for help if you are struggling.
- Everyone's just as scared as you are, if you get past that initial fear it's easy to get to know other students and make friends from there.
- Its easy to make friends in uni since no one has any friends so everyone wants to meet people.

UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

- All the other international students are dealing with the same things, ask questions to your peers/friends/Facebook groups for anything 'settling in' related, and find some recurring times in your week/day where you know (or you've let your friends/family know) that its a good time to call & catch up to avoid telephone-tag.
- It's not very different from living in North America it's an easy transition.
- Make friends and talk to as many people as you can.
- Join activities, clubs, talk to fam back home often.
- Get out and try something new to make friends outside your program too.
- Join school clubs or participate in student dental organizations to make new connections.
- Have hobbies and make new friends.
- Make time for FaceTiming friends/family back home, best to do it in the mornings.
- I think it's really important to do other things other then school. Go surfing or to the beach on the weekends. Say yes to doing things with new friends. Stay in touch with your support system at home!
- Homesickness is normal and will come regardless of how you prepare for it. To help ease the loneliness, talk to other Canadian students and share how you are feeling. Call home regularly to talk to friends and family.
- Despite the time change, make an effort to stay in touch with family and friends back home.

- Make friends, explore the city.
- Australians are such a fun people. Super friendly. If possible, consider living in a catered college, really makes transition easier for someone who's never lived outside of family home before.
- EXPLORE your new city. Everyone around you knows all the suburbs because they've lived here most their lives, its okay if you don't. And I say explore not just so you know what people are talking about when they say "North Shore Beaches", but also for you to know your surroundings, see new places, see more of what its actually like to live in Australia, outside of the CBD (downtown) where your uni is likely to be located. Remember, Canada isn't just downtown, we have suburbs too, and most people live in suburbs, explore them.
- I think you will have to accept the fact that you will miss out on some things back home. That is something that hit me because I realized I am missing out on doing things with my family. If you can afford it, take trips home during your holidays just to get a mental refresh. I am yet to do so but I know when I do I'll come back feeling a little better and more ready to finish off the program.
- Try to make new friends and not just stay with one group the whole time. Make sure you make time to go travel. The time you have here goes by very fast so make the most of it.
- Make sure you keep in touch with your friends from back home, but don't forget to put yourself out there and immerse yourself in the experience here.
- Be open and explore! People are super friendly in Sydney. Find a place where you can take root, and always make time to call back home when you need it.
- Try to make friends with locals.
- Moving to Sydney, a massive Sydney, is likely to be easier if your coming from Toronto or even Montreal but more difficult if your used to having easy access to the mountains for instance or are from a rural area. The beach is a bit far from the uni via bus, so if that's important to you, you may want to consider getting a car. Sydney is also very expensive so save as much as you can. However, the beaches are fantastic and the breaks between semesters and at mid sems are long so there's plenty of time to explore and enjoy the country.
- Friends have been easy to come by and many Canadians are already here!
- It's quite similar to Canada, and making friends especially among the Canadians is super easy, and everyone is welcoming. Don't be afraid to reach out, we are all happy to help
- I have always been a big traveller and very independent so I did not have a hard time adjusting to life in Australia. The greatest adjustment I had to make was learning the time differences between the two places. Often I was calling my friends and family at 1 in the morning and was upset that they weren't answering haha!
- There is a big time difference when communicating with your family. But schedule calls to make with your loved ones everyday, interact with people in your program. If you're in a masters there's sometimes a big group chat you can be a part of. Try to make friends with people that live close by so it's easy to meet up when you do feel homesick.

- Don't focus all your time on your studies. Try to find different hobbies, make new friends, and experience new things! These all helped me integrate into a new country and make the most out of living in Australia.
- It is hot so prepare mentally for that.
- Lots of FaceTiming, find living accommodations with multiple roommates.
- Don't forget your family and friends that are rooting for you.
- Make friends, go out, be easy with yourself.
- Worry about homelessness.
- Connect with other Canadians!! I can't say it enough, you all struggle together and struggled to get here. It's a huge support that alleviated SO much pressure!

UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

- Try to find a time that works for video chatting family and friends back home, the time zone difference can be awkward to manage.
- Try to connect with people outside of your program (though sports or other activities you like to do). This is a really helpful way to feel more settled.
- Stay in touch with family and friends by any means. Get a mental health plan in place in case things go wrong. A lot of us Canadians had a bit of "trauma" from the Canadian med school admission process and anger towards our home country for not having proper infrastructure in place to become doctors back home. Local students just simply did not understand what we had gone through to get there. However, income and life here is much easier than Canada. Work during med is possible and pay rates are better (and higher for evening and weekend work in basic jobs). The weather and fashion is amazing and I do NOT miss Canadian weather. Plus there are parrots everywhere! Look up Parakeets (Rainbow parrots).
- FaceTime is the best to stay connected. Be outgoing in your classes and chat with people. You'll find many are in your same situation just looking for friends.
- Live in residence to make friends more quickly.
- Making friends is great since a lot of people move here for medical school! Be open to new experiences. The heat can also get to you so be prepared! My city at least needs a car to get around and enjoy for the sake the convenience.
- Have at least one day a week where you FaceTime family members, wear sunscreen daily, and order your groceries from Coles (only a \$2 delivery fee if you do it a couple days in advance).
- Making friends, stay in contact with friends and family as much as possible.

ACCOMMODATION ADVICE

- Don't book something before you go. It can be really scary but I recommend booking an Airbnb for two weeks when you arrive and start house hunting right away. That way you can see places!!
- Find something close to the school within walking distance unless you're going to drive. Start emailing a bunch of accommodation places 1–2 months before you arrive and see what vacancies they will have.
- Start looking early and get a hold of a realtor.
- Look on flatmates.com and Facebook rental groups.
- Start early. Get looking at the market and find people who want to room with you. Make sure you guys are all in Australia because sometimes real estate agents won't accept applications if one person is in Canada.
- Try your best for furnished, especially if you don't have a car but be flexible. Transit here is decent so if you are a bit further away that is always an option.
- Start at student accommodations, then look for other housing just so it's easy when you first get here.
- Find something within your budget and think about on or off campus whether you want to drive and housemates. Living on campus you make closer friendships because you see people everyday whereas off campus you make a bit more effort because you just see people in class.
- Staying on campus first year may be a good option so that you're comfortable and have safe accommodations while you find your bearings overseas!
- Private accommodation is completely different in Oz and it is stressful.
- Try to be open about your options and be prepared to make multiple offers on many properties if looking at private rentals.
- Plan ahead!!! Student accommodation options can be quite expensive but are easier to get into. Share houses can be tough to find and you will want to consider many factors before committing to a place.
- Try to find something that is located close to campus or close to public transit if you aren't getting a car. Try to find a place with reasonable rent since cost of living in Australia can be pretty high. If you are living with housemates make sure that everyone's following house rules.
- Go to as many showing as you can, have proof if funds ready for your applications since you won't have any income.
- Budget, budget, budget!
- Select what is best for your purpose. Everybody has a different opinion about residence.
- Budget your expenses. Limit fast food like Subway. It may be tempting but tracking your health is very important.
- Uni lodge is pretty easy to find online. Just search up your university campus and places to live and many of them will pop up and price is usually shown on website.

- Land in an AirBnB and start arranging inspections, can also offer to pay some rent upfront if possible which can help with rental application.
- Try to find accommodation with other people from OzTREKK. Use the contact list to reach out.
- Book viewings before travelling to Australia.
- Get an AirBnb for the first month and consider apartment inspections a full-time job.
- If you can be in Australia several weeks before school starts then arrange inspections (required for private apartment rentals) but if that is difficult, try to be in one of student accommodations (Unilodge, Scape, etc.) or school residence (International house, Graduate hose) and try to move out, if you wish to do so, in second year.
- Don't try to set everything up at all once as it can get overwhelming try to take things step by step.
- If you have a family member or friend living where you're looking to move, ask them if they'd be willing to go to a viewing on your behalf. Most rentals need an in-person viewing before you can apply. If this is an option for you, you can have accommodation sorted for when you land.

The table below displays current accommodation details for current students.

UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO		
Weekly Rent (\$NZD with Utilities)	How Long it Took to Find Accommodation After Arrival (% of Otago students in that type of accommodation)	Suburb & Building with Reviews
Private Rental Min. Reported Rent: \$430 Max. Reported Rent: \$430 Avg. of All Responses: \$430	100% — Arranged before arrival	North Dunedin “I would definitely recommend my accommodation. It is close to everything, including campus. Safe, with access to the building only by authorized keys. Clean and new, heater during the winter. Smart tv, clean kitchen, power and internet included in the rent.”
Student-purposed Privately Managed Min. Reported Rent: \$200 Max. Reported Rent: \$220 Avg. Reported Rent: \$210	100% — Arranged before arrival	Dunedin “It's close to school, however the standard of housing is poor compared to Canada. There is barely any insulation some flats and it can get loud in party-areas. I like that it's close to my campus and supermarket.” “It's good but I wished it was on a quieter street. If you're an older student try and stay away from Castle St. It's a party street.”

No University of Otago students living in homestay or on-campus residence / college accommodations completed the survey. As such, we don't have student reported data on rent, suggested buildings, or advice on those housing types.

General Accommodation Advice for University of Otago Students:

- I would start with uni accommodation if you are hesitant. Though get to know what you are accepting from the university before doing so. Do your research, get in contact with realtors in the area of the campus, they are very helpful in providing accommodation options and pictures/videos. If you are looking for private accommodation (not through the university) don't sign anything before actually seeing it.
- Research the area before you decide. Check for campus proximity and convenience stores. Check if it's known to have a lot of parties, as the noise can affect your studies.
- Uniflats is a good option.

ADVICE ABOUT WORKING WHILE STUDYING

Time Management is Crucial

- Prioritize schoolwork over your job, if that starts becoming an issue then try to find a less demanding job or work less hours.
- Schedule out a daily and weekly to do list.
- Find a job with extremely flexible hours because your weekly/semesterly schedule will constantly change.
- Find a job with a boss that is very considerate of your schedule and schedules you on your availability.

Look for Jobs in Your Field

- If your program is really busy and want to work, it's a good idea that your job has something to do with your program.
- If in vet med, find a weekend job at a vet clinic, scheduling your own hours via dog walking/sitting
- A lot of 4th years work as dental assistants and give up their jobs to first years if you reach out to them. In terms of handling a job, just know what your priorities are; don't put too much on your plate. (Melbourne Dental Student)

Tips for Finding a Job

- It is easy to find a job, depending on the field you like to apply for. There are MANY places to work so make sure it works for you.
- There are lots of barista jobs.
- Create a LinkedIn account!
- It's much easier to find jobs in the suburbs than in the city.
- Ask friends if the place they work at is hiring.
- A lot of companies are looking for casual workers, meaning there are very few requirements to minimum hours worked per week. This is convenient for around exam times when you will not be able to work. Remember that employers need you more than you need them, and to prioritize yourself first.

How the Australian Job Market Differs from the Canadian Job Market

- Working on the weekends you generally make more money and gives you your evenings free for uni work/to stay at the library.
- Work as early and often as you can, as minimum wage is much higher here than in Canada.
- It can be a process to get HR to sign papers.

JOBS CURRENT STUDENTS HAVE

CHIROPRACTIC

- Fishbowl (health food store) and at a spin studio making \$29/hour. I work a lot and am trying best to balance it with school but need the money.

DENTISTRY

- Bupa Dental as a dental assistant.
- Dental assistant.
- Dental assistant roughly 8-12 hours per week, 30/hour.
- I work about 10 hours a week as a dental assistant. In first year there's a lot of time so you get to learn a lot more by working at a dental clinic.
- I work around 18-26 hours a week as a dental assistant and I'm making \$25 an hour.
- I work as a cardiologist technician and work with Gold Coast Hospital's Principal Cardiology Professor.
- I work as a dental assistant. Highly recommend, accompanies studies very well and you learn so much more about working in a clinic.
- I work for 30 an hour part time as a clinical assistant at an orthodontics clinic.
- I work in a mobile dental clinic as a dental assistant, I work the maximum hours the student visa allows, which is 40 a fortnight. My wage is above average at approximately 28\$/hr.
- I work on campus and I make \$25 an hour doing casual cleaning of the buildings. Casual hours are inconsistent I am mostly on call.
- I'm a dental assistant.
- Part-time work as a dental assistant, around 8 hours a week. Hourly wage is \$28.
- Retail, 10-15 hrs weekly.

LAW

- Flower Power Garden Centre, 4-12 hours per week, a little above minimum wage.
- I volunteer 1 day a week for Australian work experience and to figure out what area I want to work in. If you're doing full time professional school with a full load it's not realistic to work more than one day a week. If you do want to work up to your visa work permit amount then try to take some intensive classes to create more time.
- I work 2-3 days a week, I have two jobs. One as a building concierge and the other as a legal assistant. The first job helps pay my bills and expenses.

- Started a job at a nonprofit. Will be working 22 hours a week. I did not work the first semester. The start of the JD program is really full on, if possible, I'd recommend waiting at least a couple of months to fine work if it's financially possible (but given the high cost of living, may not be).
- Was working at the hospitals and now working at a law firm.

MEDICINE

- I am a tennis coach.
- I work 15-20 hours per week as a cardiac technician and medical admin with a private cardiology company. The minimum wage is much better than Canada and my wage is \$30 hourly.
- I work as an agency nurse.
- I work at a cafe as a barista about 12 hours on the weekends, 34\$/hour with tons of flexibility for my studies and a really fun team.
- I work at Little Stars Kids teaching little ones maths and English.
- I work in medical administration at Brisbane Private Hospital. I just check people in and arrange charts and answer phones and stuff. I work about 8-10 hours per week during school, and during breaks I work more like 20-40 to make money for trips and rent. I make about \$28/hour.
- I'm currently working as tutor with UQ, primarily in the nursing and public health programs. I work about 3-6 hours a week for \$75/hour.
- I'm working as a basketball coach for boys age 12-14. I work 3-4 hours a week at \$35/hr.
- Lifeguarding at the Long Tan pool. Around 15 hours a week. About \$29 AUD/hour.
- Ophthalmic technician.
- Part-time tutoring.
- Research assistant with uni, 8hr/wk, \$70k pro rata.
- Scribe at a clinic, around 8-15 hours weekly.
- Teacher at Matrix Education (private tutoring company), I teach groups of students (up to 15) science & math. 3hrs on Sundays. \$65AUD per hour, requires experience + a completed degree or two depending.
- Tutor kids back home in Canada.
- Work remotely for a Canadian company from Australia. About 8 hours a week.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

- I work as a waitress at a restaurant in Burleigh Heads - wage \$30/h. (Bond University student.)

OTHER

- I work at a local fancy cafe in my suburb where I work between 1 - 3 days a week. I get paid \$26 on the weekdays and \$30 on the weekends which is incredible and plenty to fuel my activities. I love my job I get to make fresh juices and drinks and help out on the floor clearing tables and taking orders.
- I work at a non-for-profit communication job.
- I work for alumni relations at UQ, 3-9 hours per week.
- I work in hospitality.

PHYSIOTHERAPY

- Around half if not more of the physio cohort here is a sports trainer. I work around 5 hours a week during the footy season for \$30/hour. I also work in retail for \$31/hour. (University of Melbourne student.)
- Clothing store - retail, 18-24hrs/week, about \$35/hr, more on weekends!
- Dog/house sitting 1-2/week, \$40 a stay.
- I got my sports trainer certification and worked sporting events at my university for several months. I then decided to get my Pilates certification and am about to start a job that pays way better and is great as a physio student to apply my skills. Lots of people in the program work, and it helps pay for things like trips to different cities and travel!
- I work 2 jobs bartending which I have lots of experience in. I love it and I make normal level 2 hospitality rates. I work too many hours a week (some people say) but I love it.
- I work as a receptionist at a physio clinic nearby. I work approximately 6-10 hours per week, 1 or two shifts per week.
- I work as a sports trainer with an Australian football team as well as a receptionist at a physiotherapy clinic. I try to work 8 hours a week as I like to spend the rest of the time focusing on my studies. I make \$30/hr.
- Part-time soccer coach. Work 5 hours a week. \$28/hour.
- Working at a cafe 2x per week.

PUBLIC HEALTH

- I work as a teacher! I work 24 hours a week.

SPEECH PATHOLOGY

- I work at Lululemon. I waited a while to start work but found that I would be able to manage it with school. I work around 10-15 hours per week.
- I work in retail. I work about 10 hours a week. My wage is \$31 an hour.
- Woolworths, night fill, 24 hours a week, \$24 an hour

VET

- Got a job after completing uni placement. Very applicable to course content (working with animals) work once a week. Very flexible. Aus min wage is much better than Canada.
- I work at a local pet supply shop (UpMarket Pets). They have two locations. Staff are lovely and I make a bit above minimum wage. I work one shift a week during the semester and scrape together as many hours as they can give me on the holidays.
- Strike Bowling - 15h/wk - \$28/h.
- Vet clinic. 4 hours a day. 2 days/week. Around \$18/hour AUD.

YOUR AUSTRALIAN TRAVEL LIST

The beaches, trails, restaurants, attractions, and events listed below are favourite spots for current students!

GOLD COAST

Beaches & Trails	Food & Drink	Attractions & Events
Mermaid Beach (Wednesday morning swim)	Miami Marketta	Pacific Fair Shopping Centre
Burleigh Heads	The Collective Palm Beach	Surfers Paradise (nightlife & night markets)
Currumbin Beach (swimming & surfing)	Southport (great Asian restaurants)	HOTA Markets
Noosa	Cocohut Taste of Thailand	Australia Zoo
Broadbeach	Paradox Coffee Roasters	Queen Street in Brisbane
	Vapiano Soul Boardwalk	Movie World
Byron Bay (lighthouse hike)	The Cardamom Pod	Event Cinemas at Australia Fair (cheap movies)
Miami Beach	San Churros	Coomababah Park (wild kangaroos)
Main Beach (sunrise)	Gemelli Italian Restaurant	Sea World
Springbrook Twin Falls (hiking)	El Camino Cantina	KPOP Karaoke in Southport
Sunshine Coast		

Geelong

Beaches & Trails	Food & Drink	Attractions & Events
Ocean Grove		Melbourne
Geelong Waterfront		

Adelaide

Beaches & Trails	Food & Drink	Attractions & Events
Brighton Beach		Marion Mall
Hiking Trails		

TOWNSVILLE

Beaches & Trails	Food & Drink	Attractions & Events
The Strand Esplanade	Longboard Bar & Trill	Riverway (variety of activities and restaurants)
Palm Cove		Magnetic Island
Trinity Beach		JCU Campus sports & clubs

SYDNEY

Beaches & Trails	Food & Drink	Attractions & Events
Bondi Beach	Miami Marketta	The CBD (activities, restaurants, & shops)
Manly Beach	Brunch places in Surry Hills	Sydney Harbour (especially at night)
Bondi Beach to Coogee Walk	The Rocks	Palm Beach
Darling Beach	El Camino (great Mexican food & unlimited margaritas)	Sydney Opera House
Centennial Park		Macquarie Centre (400+ stores right beside Macquarie University)
Blue Mountains		Circular Quay
Jervis Bay		The Sydney Ferry
Darling Harbour to Circular Quay Walk		Karaoke Bars
		Watson's Bar
		Mrs. Macquarie's Chair
		Luna Park
		Kiama
		Byron Bay

Melbourne

Beaches & Trails	Food & Drink	Attractions & Events
Tarra Bulga National Park	Universal Restaurant	Great Ocean Road
Morwell National Park	Chuchill Hot Bread Bakery & Cafe	Victoria State Library
Bike Trails		University of Melbourne athletic facilities
Hiking Trails	Bunnings (for the Sausage Sizzle)	The Australian Open
Albert Park	Belles Hot Chicken (fried chicken)	Melbourne Central
Philip Island (day trip from Melbourne)	Guzman y Guzman (Mexican food)	St. Kilda
Lorne (surfing)	Proud Mary Coffee	Chadstone
Rottnest Island (western Australia)	Lune Croissanterie	Royal Botanical Gardens
Penguin Island (western Australia)		Portsea (weekend getaway)
		Melbourne Museum
		Melbourne Aquarium
		Melbourne Zoo
		Peninsula Hot Springs
		Altona (weekend getaway)
		Queen Victoria Market
		Fitzroy Gardens

Brisbane

Beaches & Trails

Gold Coast beaches

Noosa

Kangaroo Point (viewing & walking trails)

Byron Bay

Food & Drink

West End restaurants (great vegan options)

Variety of arcade bars

Christian Jacque Artisan Bakery

Attractions & Events

The Stampede

Lone Pine Koala Sanctuary

South Bank (Riverwalk path with plenty of restaurants, & shops)

West End Market

Brisbane Botanic Gardens

North Stradbroke Island

Whitsunday Islands

CityCat Ferry at sunset