



STUDENT HANDBOOK 2019

Griffith Accommodation Homestay

WELCOME TO THE HOMESTAY PROGRAM

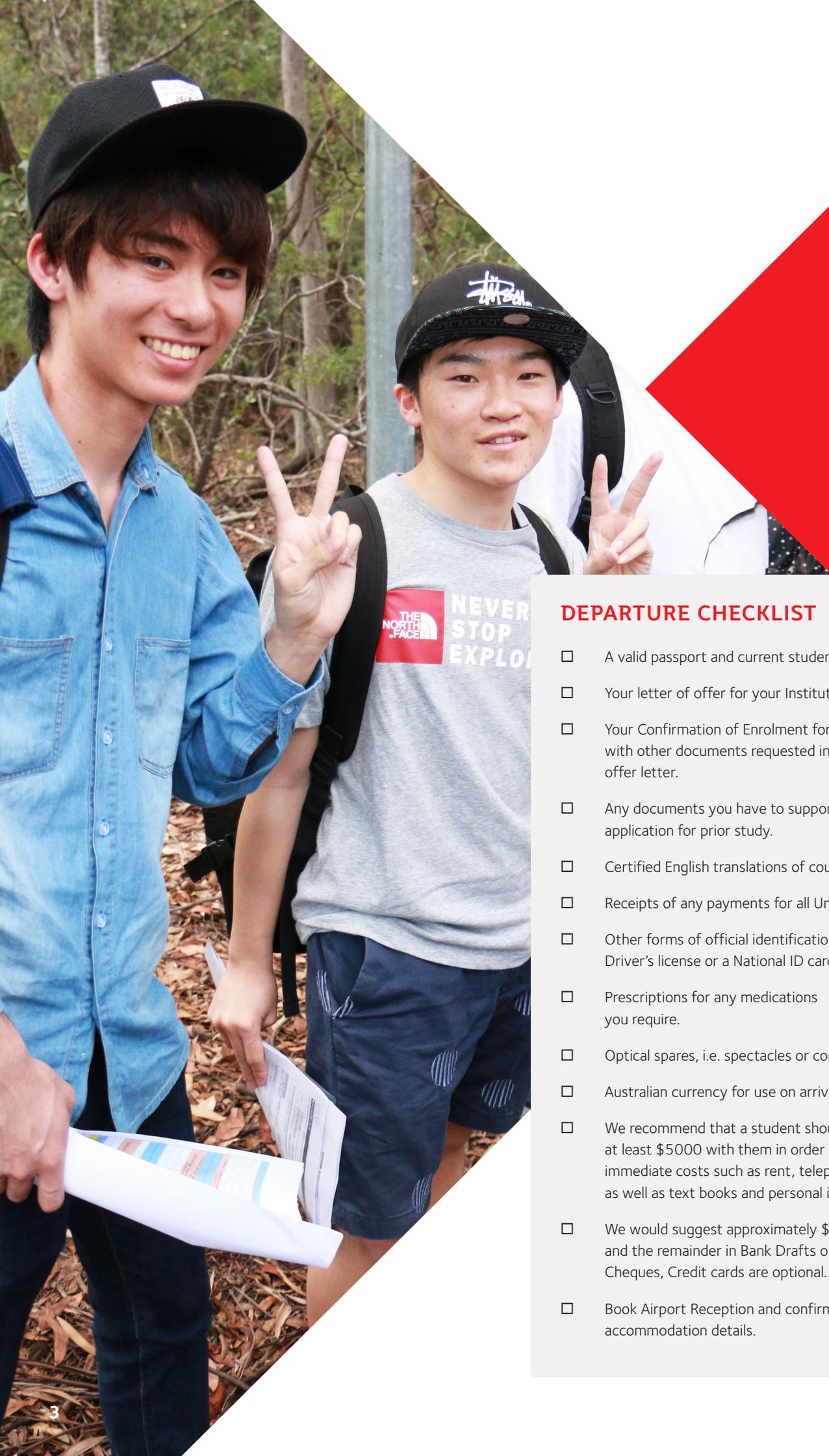
Homestay should be a positive and rewarding experience. This booklet is designed to help you adjust to life with your homestay family as quickly as possible so that the cultural exchange is a happy one. Please use it as a guide and seek further assistance from staff if you wish to have any points clarified.

All families have undergone an orientation process, homes have been inspected and you will have support from staff if you experience any difficulties with your homestay. Families apply to the institution to take part in the program to experience a cross-cultural exchange. To learn from you about your country and to teach their children to understand people from all over the world.

Although homestay may require you to confront fundamental differences between cultures and a different way of living, the benefits certainly outweigh any problems you may encounter – if you let it! Most visitors to Australia never experience life in an Australian household and do not have the opportunity to make a lasting friendship.

Enjoy and embrace the Homestay experience.





DEPARTURE CHECKLIST

- A valid passport and current student visa.
- Your letter of offer for your Institution
- Your Confirmation of Enrolment form together with other documents requested in your offer letter.
- Any documents you have to support a Credit application for prior study.
- Certified English translations of course outlines.
- Receipts of any payments for all University fees.
- Other forms of official identification such as your Driver's license or a National ID card.
- Prescriptions for any medications you require.
- Optical spares, i.e. spectacles or contact lenses.
- Australian currency for use on arrival.
- We recommend that a student should bring at least \$5000 with them in order to cover immediate costs such as rent, telephone, internet as well as text books and personal items.
- We would suggest approximately \$1000 in cash and the remainder in Bank Drafts or Travellers, Cheques, Credit cards are optional.
- Book Airport Reception and confirm flight and accommodation details.

When you arrive in Australia



WE RECOMMEND THAT YOU

1. Phone home or email your family to confirm that you have arrived safely in Australia.
2. Get to know the local area and public transport systems. Visit Translink for details. Your host family will assist you with bus timetables.
3. Check your email – Griffith University may have sent you some important information regarding orientation and enrolment.
4. Locate your Griffith campus.
5. Open a bank account – To open a bank account you will need at least three forms of identification including your passport.
6. Purchase a Go Card for public transport for public transport. Always remember to touch your go card flat onto the card reader at the beginning of your journey and touch off again at the end. When you touch on and touch off correctly your go card will automatically deduct the correct fare.

USEFUL THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Take your time to settle in and be open to the new experience.
- Try not to expect too much, too quickly and most importantly don't be afraid to ask for help.
- Be prepared for different experiences when you arrive.
- Many other people have experienced how you feel but have gone on to learn about and to feel comfortable and familiar with their new surroundings.
- There will be no expectation that you should give up your own culture.
- Australians rarely use official titles and instead refer to most people by their first names.

COMMUNICATION IS THE KEY!

Communication is the most important ability to develop. Communication skills will allow any uncertainties you may have to be openly discussed and your fears dealt with. Your family will not mind how many questions you ask or how often you speak to them. Try to remember that they will want to make your stay with them a happy one but may not realise you are unhappy about

something unless you tell them. Smile and explain politely if there is something you do not understand. They will be more than happy to assist you to adapt to your new lifestyle. Communicate with the homestay provider on a day-to-day basis. Offer to help with minor household chores such as occasional washing up and keeping your bedroom clean and tidy. Student should be open about their needs/wants. For example, the need to make a phone call late in the night (after 10pm).

HOMESTAY MAKES IT EASY!

Homestay provides a safe, protective environment from the moment you arrive without the worry of finding somewhere to live; having electricity and telephone connected and having to do the shopping. The homestay family can help with familiarising yourself to your new surroundings and the journey to your institution.

A LITTLE ABOUT AUSTRALIANS

It is against the Australian law to discriminate. When applying for homestay, you will be required to complete an online application. The application will ask for details of your requirements. Please note that Australia welcomes people from all nations and homestay programs reflect this. Under Australian law, all citizens are equal. This means that men and women are equal and it does not matter what country a person comes from.

You may find that you are placed in homestay with Australians who originate from another country. English may be their second language too! However, they will be fluent in English even if they have an accent and the husband and wife may come from different countries. Your homestay family may consist of a single woman who may, or may not, have children. In the majority of Australian families, both the husband and wife go out to work. You will be required to assist generally, just as their own children do, in light tasks such as setting the table, washing up the dishes and keeping your own room clean and tidy.

When living in a private home, remember that a courteous and considerate attitude is always appreciated. Each member of the family is treated equally and with respect. It is important to smile and say, "Please" when you ask for something and "thank you" when you receive it.

Some expectations your homestay family may have

COURTESY

Your host family will expect to know where you are at all times. If you are not returning home for your evening meal, you must let your family know before they have cooked your dinner. A telephone call at lunchtime is all that is needed. If your host family are at work, then ask them how you may leave a message. If you are staying out with your friends, again, please let your host family know – this may be done by telephone, text or email.

- Please also ask your host family first before inviting friends to your family's home. Remember, always be friendly, polite and courteous to your host family; they have opened up their home to you.
- Be considerate and keep noise to a minimum.

MANNERS

Each culture will have different ways of eating. If you are feeling uncomfortable about Australian table manners please ask your family for assistance. In Australia, it is not acceptable to spit and is against the law to do so in public. If you need to spit, please leave the room and use the toilet. It is considered polite to blow your nose into a handkerchief or tissue but it is not polite to sniff.

DAMAGES

Pay for any damage to family property (if the student is responsible for the damage). Please be honest and advise your host family if an accident has occurred.

SMOKING

Most homestay families will only allow smoking outside their home. If you smoke, please ask your host family where you may smoke in their home or garden. Australia law does not allow smoking in buses, public buildings or buildings at the institution.

USING THE TELEPHONE

Please ask your host family before you use the telephone so that you can arrange to pay for your telephone calls. You should also do the same before arranging reverse charge calls. The easiest way to make an international call is to use a telephone card. Please ensure that you settle your telephone account with your host family before you move out.

USING THE BATHROOM

It is most important to communicate with your host family regarding the use of the bathroom. Ask your host parents how long you may use the bathroom. Usually ten minutes would be acceptable, but check to be certain. It is usual to sit on the toilet seat in Australia and leave the toilet clean and tidy as you find it.

Australia experiences droughts where water is in limited supply, so please discuss your water usage with your host.

MOBILE PHONE

Many students arrive in Australia with a mobile phone. To upgrade to Australian connection you can purchase a pre-paid starter kit. If you do not have a mobile phone, perhaps you may consider purchasing one so that you can contact your friends and family. Make sure you provide your homestay family with your phone number so that they can contact you.

USING THE INTERNET

Please ask your family about a convenient time to use the Internet. Not all homestay families will offer this service. You can expect to pay an additional amount for the internet usage and your family may provide you with an account, detailing the information. You can also use the internet facilities on campus or at one of the many internet café outlets located in the major shopping centres close to your homestay accommodation.

The majority of Homestay household's will provide Internet facilities. Students can expect to pay up to \$10.00 per week to use the Internet. Communication is important between the host and student about accessing the internet and timeframes. Students should not access inappropriate Internet sites; these may include but are not limited to:

- Sites that are illegal or hold illegal content.
- Sites that are pornographic or contain inappropriate sexual material.
- Sites that advocate hate or violence.
- Sites that offer games or software that are unrelated to academic programs.
- Download movies or films from the private internet address.

USING A HEATER

In winter, your host family may give you a heater. Turn it off overnight and sleep under the doona or blankets on the bed. It is dangerous to leave a heater on all night. If you enjoy candles, make sure you extinguish them before you go to sleep but ask your family for permission before you light the candles for safety reasons.

RECYCLING IS A POPULAR TREND IN AUSTRALIA

You may notice that your host family has two garbage bins. Ask your family to let you know the correct usage of these bins for recycling plastics and paper.

HEALTH

Students should adopt good personal hygiene practices while staying in the homestay. Students are obligated to care for the safety of other individuals whom they may meet during their University activities including living in a homestay environment. "In accordance with State Legislation, both students and staff have a duty of care to disclose notifiable diseases. This duty of care includes a duty to minimise the risk of spreading or contracting infectious diseases.

PETS

In Australia, many households have a family pet, this maybe a dog, cat, bird or guinea pig. Some students will be afraid of the family pet as in many Asian countries dogs and cats are seen as taboo. Please make sure you talk to your family about your fears or ensure that when applying you indicate that you do not wish to live with pets.

BRINGING YOUR FAMILY

If you plan to travel with other family members, it is your responsibility to organise hotel accommodation for them in advance. It is not appropriate to expect your host family to accommodate members of your family. Most host families will welcome a visit from your family members but it is not possible for them to stay overnight in your homestay.

HOMESTAY FEES

Homestay fees are payable directly to your homestay family, (four weeks in advance) and should be paid as soon as possible after arrival. Homestay fees are not refundable for this four-week period. In Australia, bargaining to reduce a price is not an acceptable practice and will cause severe embarrassment to your host family. Should you wish to leave your host family after the four week period, it is necessary to give your host family adequate notice of at least two weeks.

For more information visit griffith.edu.au/homestay

INAPPROPRIATE QUESTIONS

Asking personal questions can sometimes cause embarrassment. In Australia. It is considered impolite to ask a person's age or religion. It is also impolite to ask how much money someone earns or to enquire about a person's job or career. Australians respect each other and recognise friends and relations as equals.

LAUNDRY

Students are responsible for their own laundry unless the homestay host offers to wash your clothes. This can be negotiated with the family. Ask your host how to operate the washing machine and when would be a convenient time to wash your clothes.

YOUR HOMESTAY ROOM

Your room will be equipped with a desk and chair, and a desk lamp, together with a comfortable bed and linen. The room will be part of the general family living area, and easily accessible to bathroom facilities.

STUDENTS WHO ARE UNDER THE AGE OF 18

If you are under 18 years of age, you must stay with a registered Griffith Homestay family. You will be required to report regularly to see the Student Adviser, you will also need to stay with your family until you are 18; you are not permitted to stay out overnight without permission from the University.

These restrictions are compliant with the ESOS Act and National Code for International students. All families who host under 18 students have been issued with a Blue Card and are approved by Griffith Homestay.

RELIGIOUS WORSHIP

In Australia, freedom of worship is a basic human right. As a multicultural society, most religions are represented in the Australian community. If you wish to attend your chosen place of worship, ask your family to assist with directions. Sometimes your host family may invite you to worship with them. If you do not wish to partake in their chosen religious worship then you may decline politely their invitation. Respect and be aware of cultural differences and beliefs of the home stay.





SECURITY

It is not usual for bedroom doors to have locks. If you close your door, it will be a sign to your host family that you do not wish to be disturbed. If you are returning home before your host family then they will give you a front door key so you can get in. If they do not do this, then ask for one politely. If you do not want the host children to enter your room, please advise your family and make it clear that they may only enter when invited by yourself. Make sure if you travel at night time that you have contact details for your family in case you get lost or miss your bus, otherwise your family will worry. Keep all valuables, money, passport and airline tickets in a safe place.

Harassment discrimination, bullying or harassment in any form (including racial, ethnic, religious, disability, sexual orientation, etc.) is unacceptable. The university recognises the right of all students and staff to work and study in an environment free from all forms of harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination. If you are seeking counselling for sexual harassment, sexual assault, or domestic and family violence, you can call the Sexual Harassment and Assault Counselling phone line for bookings with a counsellor, information and referrals on (07) 5552 9600 during business hours from 9 am to 5 pm (weekdays).

griffith.edu.au/safe-campuses

TRANSPORT

Students are responsible for their own transport. On arrival, your homestay host will assist with transport information to the University and back to your homestay accommodation. Families should live within a 30-40 minute journey from campus by public transport. The University has a free inter-campus bus service between Mt Gravatt and Nathan campuses. It is useful to point out landmarks near the location of your bus stop, for example a particular building, park or billboard so that you can identify where they are, or an alternative bus number in case services are rescheduled or cancelled without prior notice.

You will be supplied with a card which clearly states your address and telephone number. In case, you get lost or miss your bus, then you can catch a taxi and show the driver the address details on your homestay card provided by the family.

griffith.edu.au/parking

SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND ASSAULT – ZERO TOLERANCE

Griffith University recognises the right of all students and staff to a University environment where equality of opportunity, inclusion and diversity are valued, promoted and practised. Griffith University has zero tolerance for sexual assault, harassment (including sexual harassment), bullying and discrimination and expects that students, regardless of background or intrinsic characteristics, are able to participate fully in University activities and will feel that their contribution is welcomed, valued and supported. Please refer to Griffith University's Student Sexual Assault, Harassment, Bullying and Discrimination Policy.

Griffith University encourages individuals to report incidents of sexual assault, sexual harassment, harassment, bullying and discrimination and provides options ranging from anonymous reporting and disclosure, to lodgement of formal concerns and investigations. The Procedures for Reporting and Responding to Student Sexual Assault, Harassment, Bullying and Discrimination outline the process for reporting, responding to and resolving concerns.

policies.griffith.edu.au

Some interesting facts about Australia



ALCOHOL

The legal age for drinking alcohol in Australia is eighteen years. There are heavy fines for people who drive while under the influence of alcohol. You must have blood alcohol content less than 0.05%, which is equal to approximately one glass of beer.

In Australian hotels and bars, you should expect to pay for each drink as you buy it. The Australian custom of “shouting” means that if someone buys you a drink, you are expected to “shout” them back by buying them a drink. If you are of age and wish to bring alcohol into your host family’s home, please ask their permission first.

DRUGS

The use of drugs and drug trafficking is illegal in Australia and carries heavy penalties which may include jail.

DRIVING A CAR

In Australia, you must possess a driver’s license before you can drive a car. For more information about licences visit: transport.qld.gov.au

CULTURE SHOCK

Culture shock is the feeling of being out of place in an unfamiliar environment. The initial excitement of moving to a new country often subsides when different cultural expectations challenge you to attend to daily responses and behaviours previously taken for granted. The potential stress of dealing with these persistent challenges can result in feelings of hostility and frustration with your host country as well as a profound longing for home.

PERSONAL CRISIS

From time to time, some Homestay Students may experience difficulties such as depression, mental illness, suicidal thoughts and alcohol or drug dependence or abuse. The University has a number of trained professionals who can provide counselling and support at no cost to the student. During office hours, students may contact Student Services on 3735 7470 (Nathan) or 3735 5669 (Mt Gravatt). Outside office hours, College members may contact Student Adviser or seek assistance from Lifeline’s 24 hour Telephone Counselling Services (131 114). Students are able to contact Griffith University Crisis Support after hours from 5.00pm to 9.00am weekdays, 24 hours all weekends and public holidays. Contact phone number: 1300 785 442 or text 0488 884 146.

OVERCOMING CULTURE SHOCK

Once you realise you have culture shock, getting over it and moving on to better adjustment with the host culture will depend on you. You must take some positive steps to feel better, and the sooner you take them, the better!

Recognition:

Firstly, you should remember that culture shock is a normal part of your adjustment and that you may have some of the symptoms. Some of your reactions may not be normal for you; you may be more emotional or more sensitive, or lose your sense of humour. Recognising your culture shock symptoms will help you learn about yourself as you work your way through it.

Be objective:

Secondly, try to analyse objectively the differences you are finding between your home and your host country. Look for the reasons your host country does things differently. Remember that host customs and norms are (mostly) logical to them, just as your customs and norms at home are logical to you!

Set Goals

Thirdly, set some goals for yourself to redevelop your feeling of control in your life. These should be small tasks that you can accomplish each day. For example, if you do not feel like leaving your room, plan a short activity each day that will get you out. Go to a post office or store to buy something, ride a bus or go to a sports event. If you feel that language is your problem, set daily goals to learn more: study fifteen minutes a day; learn five new words a day; learn one new expression each day; watch a TV program in your new language for 30 minutes. Each goal that you achieve will give you more and more self-confidence that you can cope.

Share your feelings:

Fourthly, find local friends who are sympathetic and understanding. Talk to them about your feelings and specific situations. They can help you understand ideas from their cultural point of view.

INTERNAL SUPPORT SERVICES

Available to Griffith University students including:

Griffith University Health Centre

Provide a range of medical and ancillary services for students and staff of the University.

Nathan	Mt Gravatt
☎ (07) 3735 7470	☎ (07) 3735 5669
🕒 9am to 5pm	🕒 9am to 1pm Mon–Thurs
📍 Level 1, Sewell (N12), Kessels Road, Nathan QLD 4111	📍 Level 2, Auditorium (M23), Messines Ridge Road, Mt Gravatt QLD 4122

Residential counsellor

Confidential support service Dedicated to supporting residents of Griffith University Colleges.

- ☎ (07) 3735 7470
- ✉ residentialcounsellor@griffith.edu.au
- 📍 Sewell building (N12)

Counselling and Wellbeing

Free, professional and confidential counselling.

Nathan	Mt Gravatt
☎ (07) 3735 7470	☎ (07) 3735 5669

After Hours Crisis Support Service

Call 1300 785 442 or text 0488 884 146

Mental health nurse

- ☎ (07) 3735 7299
- 📍 Level 1, Sewell (N12), Kessels Road,
Nathan QLD 4111

Safe Campuses

griffith.edu.au/safe-campuses

EXTERNAL SUPPORT SERVICES

Available to both Griffith and non-Griffith students including:

1800RESPECT

Confidential information, counselling and support service. Open 24 hours to support people impacted by sexual assault, domestic or family violence and abuse.

- ☎ 1800 737 732
- 🌐 1800respect.org.au/

Sexual Assault Helpline

Available 7.30 am – 11.30 pm, 7 days/week

- ☎ 1800 010 120

Mensline (DV Connect)

Free confidential telephone, counselling, referral and support service for men available 9 am – 11.30 pm, 7 days/week.

- ☎ 1800 600 636
- 🌐 dvconnect.org/mensline

Sexual Assault Services

Directory for support services in Queensland

- 🌐 health.qld.gov.au



IF YOU ARE UNHAPPY

You may seek assistance if you feel that you need help in settling in to your host family's home. Moving home stays is not encouraged and is not an automatic process. It is at the discretion of the institution and cannot be decided by your agent. It is in your own interest to adjust to your new environment and make appropriate changes by understanding your host family's household. Remember that communication is the key!

We hope you will enjoy your homestay experience. If you have any questions about home stay, please ask to meet the staff at your institution. Students can make appointments at the Reception area of their school.

If any difficulties develop, no matter how large or small, please telephone the Homestay Coordinator for assistance on 07 3735 7919. All comments or complaints are confidentially treated and investigated.

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

Homestay Coordinator

Griffith Accommodation, Campus Life
Griffith University, Brisbane Q 4111

☎ 07 3735 7919
0419 720 826 – *emergency use only*
✉ homestay@griffith.edu.au

Emergency Contacts

Police / Ambulance 000
Security on Campus (07) 3735 7777

Translink

☎ 131 230
✉ transport.qld.gov.au

Department on Home Affairs

🌐 homeaffairs.gov.au

Hospitals

Royal Brisbane Hospital (07) 3253 8111
Logan Hospital (07) 3299 8899
QEll Hospital (07) 3275 6111
Gold Coast Hospital 1300 744 284

Health Services

Griffith University Nathan Campus (07) 3735 3734
Griffith University Gold Coast Campus (07) 5552 8734

International Services

Griffith University Nathan Campus International Office (07) 3735 7200
Griffith University Gold Coast Campus International Office (07) 5552 9259
Griffith University Nathan Campus Griffith English Language Institute (07) 3735 7089
Griffith University Gold Coast Griffith English Language Institute (07) 5552 7594
Griffith University Nathan Campus Multi Faith Centre (07) 3735 7052
Translating & Interpreting 131 450
World care Assist - 24 hours 1800 814 781