



## **International Student Handbook**

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## Welcome

### *Welcome to Byron Yoga Centre*

Hello and congratulations on your decision to undertake your yoga teaching training with Byron Yoga Centre.

Moving overseas and studying for one or more years is a very important and big decision. In this handbook you will find information about obtaining your visa, what to expect in Australia, how to get insurance, accommodation, and plenty more.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions and we look forward to meeting you soon.

### *John Ogilvie*

Founder and Director, Byron Yoga Centre  
Purna Yoga – asana | breath | meditation | philosophy



## **Byron Yoga Centre Main Contact Details:**

Purna Yoga Pty Limited, trading as Byron Yoga Centre

**Office and Retreat Centre:** 50 Skinners Shoot Road, Byron Bay

Telephone: 02 6685 8327

Fax: 02 6678 0313

Website: [www.byronyoga.com](http://www.byronyoga.com)

**Yoga Studio Byron Bay:** 6 Byron Street, Byron Bay

**Yoga Studio Melbourne:** Ashtanga Yoga Centre - Level 1, 110 – 112 Argyle St, Fitzroy

**Postal address:** PO Box 721, Byron Bay, NSW 2481

**International Student Coordinator/Advisor** Renata Guerra Carmello –

Telephone: +61 (0)2 6685 8327 Email: [education@byronyoga.com](mailto:education@byronyoga.com)

### **International Student 24 Hour Emergency Contact**

Renata Guerra Carmello 0402 452 679

### **Emergency Telephone Numbers:**

Police, Fire, Ambulance 000 Landline; 112 Mobile

In Australia dial 000 from any phone for fire, police, or ambulance services. 112 may also be dialed from mobile phones. Dialing 112 will override key locks on mobile phones and therefore save time. Emergency Services operators answer this number quickly and to save time will say, "Police, Fire, or Ambulance". If you are unsure of what emergency service, you need tell the operator what the emergency is. You will then be connected to the appropriate service to assist. It is wise to think ahead with the most important information which will help them to respond. Where you are; (note street names and the closest intersection), what has happened and to whom; what their condition is. The operator may then ask you to stay on the phone until the emergency services arrive. In life threatening situations the operator may also give you some instructions to assist until the emergency unit arrives. If you are concerned about your English, remain calm and work with the operators who are very experienced with all cultures.

The Emergency Service should be used to contact Police, Fire or Ambulance services in life threatening or emergency situations only. Emergency 000 lines should not be used for general medical assistance.

## **Department of Home Affairs (Immigration)**

### **Brisbane Office**

Ground Floor, 299 Adelaide Street, Brisbane,  
Queensland 4000 Mail address PO 9984, Brisbane, Qld  
4001

### **Melbourne Office**

2 Lonsdale St, Melbourne VIC 3004  
Office hours: 9 am to 4 pm, Monday to  
Friday Telephone: 131 881

## **Emergency Medical Treatment**

### **Byron Bay**

In case of sickness out of normal business hours, Byron Bay Hospital at 54 Ewingsdale Rd has an emergency department with nurses in attendance and doctors on call.

### **Melbourne**

The Royal Melbourne Hospital is one of Australia's leading public hospitals. It's open 24 hours and located at 300 Grattan Street, Parkville.

## **Medical Centre's**

### **Byron Bay**

North Coast Medical Centre, 24 Shirley Street, Byron Bay (02) 6685 8666  
General medical practitioners, osteopaths, naturopaths, psychologists,  
psychiatrists Or Holdsworth House, 37 Fletcher Street, Byron Bay (02)  
6680 7211

### **Melbourne**

The Integrated Medical Centre, 460 Brunswick St, Fitzroy (03) 9485 8000 General  
medical practitioners, psychologists, physiotherapists  
Or Melbourne City Medical Centre, 68 Lonsdale St, Melbourne (03) 9639 9600

## **Legal Centre**

### **Byron Bay**

Northern Rivers Community Legal Centre:  
16 Carrington Street, Lismore (02)

6621 1000 Melbourne

Fitzroy Legal Service Inc

Level 4, 126 Moor Street, Fitzroy (03) 9419 3744

## **Overseas Student Ombudsman**

Ombudsman investigates complaints from people who believe they have been treated unfairly or unreasonably by an Australian Government agency.

Ombudsman phone number: 1300 362 072

Please check Byron Yoga Centre [Complaints & Appeals Policy](#).

## **Transport**

### Byron Bay

[Blanch's Bus Service](#) (02) 6686 2144

[Brunswick Valley Coaches](#) (02) 6680 1566

[Byron Taxis](#) 131008

Bicycles are a common form of transport in Byron Bay. They are sold and rented at several locations in Byron Bay. Byron Yoga Centre can also arrange the rental of a bicycle. Be aware that failure to wear a bicycle helmet is an offence.

### Melbourne

Melbourne's trains, trams and buses are an easy way to see all the city's best attractions, sporting venues and shopping precincts. All you need is a *myki* card and you'll be ready to travel around the city.

[Public Transport Victoria](#) - You will find timetables and journey planner

[Sky Bus](#) 1300 759 287

[Melbourne Taxis](#) 132227

## **Public Facilities**

### ATMS

Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs) are located in Jonson Street in Byron Bay. The closest ATM to the Melbourne studio is at 317 Brunswick Street or at 143-153 Johnston Street.

### Public Telephones

Public Telephones are located at Railway Park at Jonson Street in Byron Bay (near the pedestrian crossing).

Public phones close to the studio in Melbourne are at 90 Brunswick Street, 408 Brunswick Street, or 246 Nicholson Street. If you need to locate public phones in other suburbs in Melbourne, please check it [online](#).

Local Telephone Calls cost \$0.50. Long-distance and international calls are generally less expensive on Sundays. Pre-Paid Telephone Cards cost \$5, \$10, \$20 and \$50 and may be purchased at most news agencies, post offices and convenience stores.

### Directories

Visit [White Pages](#) and [Yellow Pages](#) for directories of residential, commercial and government phone numbers in Australia; and for a list of country codes and area codes for international calls.

### Post Office

Byron Bay Post Office is located opposite Railway Park, in Jonson Street, near the pedestrian crossing.

There are many [Post Offices](#) in Melbourne. The closest post office to the Melbourne studio is at 54 Brunswick Street.

## Public Library

Byron Bay Public Library is located on the corner of Lawson and Middleton Streets, Byron Bay. It has internet access, study areas. Fiction, non-fiction, and reference books are available for perusal and temporary memberships may be available in some circumstances.

Melbourne has six [Public Library branches](#) across the municipality. The City Library is at 253 Flinders Lane and it's open from 8am to 8pm and you can find the other branches [on line](#).

### **Application Process Step-by-Step Model:**

- |                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| <b>STEP 1:</b>  | Student enquiry and Enrolment application (via agent, online, email or phone)  |
| <b>STEP 2:</b>  | Pre-enrolment interview is arranged, documents requested, and evidence is provided by the student                    |
| <b>STEP 3:</b>  | Letter of Offer is issued by Byron Yoga Centre   |
| <b>STEP 4:</b>  | Student Acceptance: return signed forms and payment of deposit is arranged   |
| <b>STEP 5:</b>  | Confirmation of Enrolment (COE) is issued by Byron Yoga Centre   |
| <b>STEP 6:</b>  | Health cover arrangements (OSHC) by the student  |
| <b>STEP 7:</b>  | Student Visa application with the Department of Home Affairs (Immigration)   |
| <b>STEP 8:</b>  | Student makes payment of balance of fees   |
| <b>STEP 9:</b>  | Once visa is granted, student travels to Australia and sets up living arrangements, mobile phone, bank account, etc. |
| <b>STEP 10:</b> | Student arrives at Byron Yoga Centre Studio for Orientation and commencement of the course                           |

### **Course Fees and Charges**

The tuition fee for the 10865NAT Certificate IV in Yoga Teaching is AUD\$10,000 and for the 10677NAT Diploma of Purna Yoga Management is \$20,000. When the student enrolls for both courses in advance, the fee is AUD\$27,500.

The tuition fee includes all the required props used in class, manuals, and books. There is no enrolment fee.

Payment plans are available, please request via email to [education@byronyoga.com](mailto:education@byronyoga.com).

Once a payment schedule has been agreed to in your letter of offer, no changes can

be made other than in compassionate and compelling circumstances (as outlined in the Policies and Procedures Manual) and requests are required in writing. As an RTO, Byron Yoga Centre is required to implement a process or strategy that will ensure that fees collected in advance from students are suitably protected.

Accordingly, no more than 50% of the entire course fee will be requested upfront. Fees collected in advance from international students are protected under the provision of the Tuition Protection Service (TPS). Byron Yoga Centre will manage a designated bank account in this regard, where all tuition collected in advance from international students will be housed until the student commences the course.

In the event that a student does not receive a visa, an administration fee of AU\$250 will be retained by Byron Yoga Centre and all other monies paid by the student will be refunded.

### **Things to Do:**

#### **Before Leaving Home:**

- Apply for passport
- Arrange Australian student visa
- Check documents with the Department of Home Affairs
- Make contact with Byron Yoga Centre
- Arrange for immunizations and medications from your doctor
- Apply for a credit card and/or arrange sufficient funds
- Confirm overseas access to your funds with your bank
- Make travel arrangements
- Arrange travel insurance
- Advise Byron Yoga Centre of travel details
- Arrange accommodation
- Arrange transport from airport to accommodation
- Pack bags, being sure to include the following:
  - Contact details of Byron Yoga Centre's International Student team
  - Enough currency for taxis, buses, phone calls etc. in the event of an emergency
- Prepare a folder with important documents:
  - THIS HANDBOOK!
  - Passport
  - Letter of Offer signed by you with the receipt of payment
  - COE (Confirmation of Enrolment)
  - Certified copies of qualifications & certificates
  - Travel insurance policy
  - ID cards, driver's license, birth certificate (or copy)

**NOTE:** Make sure you leave any originals or copies of these documents safely with family in your home country in case of loss

### **Upon Arrival in Australia:**

- Call home
- Settle into accommodation
- Contact Byron Yoga Centre
- Purchase household items and food
- Get student ID card from Byron Yoga Centre
- Advise health insurance Company of address & get card
- Open a bank account
- Apply for tax file number if seeking work
- Attend Orientation and begin course study

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## **Introduction to Australia**

Australia is an English-speaking country. The standard of living and the quality of education are high while living costs are much lower than most other western countries. Australia is one of the most culturally diverse countries in the world and is considered one of the safest study destinations.

Australia is the land of contrasts - sweeping golden beaches, coral reefs rich with marine life, tropical rainforests, mountain ranges, vast grazing lands and sparse deserts. Surrounded by the Indian and Pacific Oceans, and the only country to occupy an entire continent, Australia has many unique plants and animals.

The surface geology is typically old and flat, with a major mountain range stretching down the eastern coast and another mountain range in the north west of the continent, and a desert in the centre.

Useful links:

[www.about-australia.com](http://www.about-australia.com)

[www.tourism.australia.com](http://www.tourism.australia.com)

## **Introduction to Byron Bay**

Cape Byron is Australia's most easterly point, located on the North Coast of New South Wales. With its numerous beaches, unspoilt hinterland, and relaxed lifestyle, Byron Bay is a popular tourist destination. It is also a place where artists, musicians, dancers, writers, surfers, healers and of course yogis express their diversity and individuality.

The town has all major facilities: a hospital, cinemas, supermarkets, health food stores and great restaurants, as well as a flourishing alternative health industry. Bicycle is the easiest way to get around town and bicycle rentals are easily organised through Byron Yoga Centre. The average summer temperature is 21C - 28C, and average winter temperature is 15C - 21C, there are also periods of heavy rainfall, especially in summer. The area has a total annual rainfall of 1734mm.

Byron Shire has a population of close to 30,000, while the town of Byron Bay has a population of about 9,000.

Byron Bay is located just off the Pacific Highway, 800kms north of Sydney, 175kms south of Brisbane. Airports are located in Ballina (30mins south) or Coolangatta (60mins north) and buses and trains arrive regularly.

The following websites provide information about Byron Bay and the surrounding area: [www.byronbay.com](http://www.byronbay.com)

[www.echo.net.au](http://www.echo.net.au)

[www.visitbyronbay.com](http://www.visitbyronbay.com)

## **Introduction to Melbourne**

Melbourne is the capital and most populous city of the Australian state of Victoria, and the second-most populous city in Australia and Oceania.

The name "Melbourne" covers an urban agglomeration spanning 2,664 km<sup>2</sup> which comprises the broader metropolitan area, as well as being the common name for its city centre.

Melbourne consists of 31 municipalities. It has a population of 4,641,636 as of 2016, and its inhabitants are called Melburnians.

January is the hottest month in Melbourne with an average temperature of 21°C and the coldest is July at 10°C with the most daily sunshine hours at 11 in January.

The wettest month is May with an average of 68mm of rain.

Melbourne is the coastal capital of the south-eastern Australian state of Victoria. At the city's centre is the modern Federation Square development, with plazas, bars, and restaurants by the Yarra River. The Fitzroy area is an inner-city suburb of Melbourne, 3 km north-east of Melbourne's Central Business District.

Melbourne's alternative side is full force in Fitzroy, the inner-city mecca for all things cool and kooky. Wander along Brunswick Street, Fitzroy's main drag, for tonnes of vintage clothing stores and second-hand bookshops. Take your pick from an array of cafés and restaurants, like the famous vegetarian spot Vegie Bar.

The following websites provide information about Melbourne and the

surrounding area: [www.melbourne.vic.gov.au](http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au)

[www.visitmelbourne.com](http://www.visitmelbourne.com)

[www.visitvictoria.com/Regions/Melbourne](http://www.visitvictoria.com/Regions/Melbourne)

## **Introduction to Byron Yoga Centre**

Byron Yoga Centre is one of the longest running yoga schools in Australia, as well as one of the few yoga teacher training organisations that operate as an RTO (Registered Training Organisation), offering the highest possible qualification in yoga teaching. Byron Yoga Centre's teacher training programs are designed to be affordable and flexible. We offer residential or non-residential, intensive or part-time courses, at the 200 and 500-hour levels, as well as the new 10865NAT Certificate IV in Yoga Teaching.

When you make the pivotal decision to embark on yoga teacher training, you know you're in safe hands with Byron Yoga Centre.

Our teacher trainers are all well-trained, experienced, and passionate about supporting you on your professional and personal journey.

Reflecting the holistic approach of our signature yoga style, Purna Yoga, the teacher training courses at Byron Yoga Centre are comprehensive and thorough, covering the many diverse elements of yoga, including systematic analysis of the postures, the breathing techniques, as well as the more subtle branches of meditation, philosophy, and ethics.

We aim to maintain a standard of excellence in yoga education with a robust faculty of resident and guest senior teachers who are experts in their respective fields, such as Anatomy and Physiology, Yoga Philosophy, Yoga Therapy, Women's Health, Ayurveda, and Kirtan (chanting).

Yoga Teacher Training courses are held in Byron Bay at our studio at 6 Byron Street and at our retreat centre at 50 Skinners Shoot Road. The courses in Melbourne are held at level1, 110-112 Argyle Street, Fitzroy.

### **Arranging Visas**

All International students wanting to study in Australia require a student visa. Some other visa holders are also eligible to study as international students in Australia. Many students apply for a visa themselves [on-line](#). The visa application process can be complicated and for students from some countries it may better to submit an application with the assistance of an accredited agent due their familiarity and experience in the field. You can check with [Byron Yoga Centre](#) in Australia for their accredited agents in your country.

In order to apply for a student visa you will need a valid passport, an electronic Confirmation of Enrolment (eCoE) and other documentation required by the Department of Home Affairs in Australia. You must ensure to allow enough time for processing between lodging your application and the start of your training course, as it can be a lengthy process depending on your country of origin. It is YOUR responsibility to arrange your visa before you arrive in Australia.

### **Department of Home Affairs (Immigration)**

The Australian Government's Department of Home Affairs provides comprehensive information about student visa requirements and the application process, as well as application document checklists to assist you with your application.

Visit their [website](#) for the latest information.

### **Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)**

As well as links from the DHA website the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade [website](#) has a comprehensive list of Australian embassies, high commissions, consulates and representative offices around the world.

### **Migration Agents**

A migration agent can assist you in submitting your visa application and communicate with DHA on your behalf, but please note that you do not have to use a migration agent to lodge any kind of visa application.

### **Education Agents**

Education agents promote various Australian education programs and institutions internationally and are a good way for students to apply to study in Australia. Agents are experienced in making international student applications and applying for visas. Most speak both English and the local language so this makes the

application process a lot simpler and generally hassle free for students and parents. Most do not charge for their service as they collect a commission from the institution you choose to attend. However, some agents do charge small amounts or offer additional services for which they charge. You can check [online](#) for contact details of agents that legally represent Byron Yoga Centre.

Please Note: Although able to assist in completing education and visa applications, Education Agents are NOT licensed to provide migration advice.

### **Visa Conditions**

If you are granted a visa, you must abide by its conditions. Failure to comply with these conditions could result in the cancellation of your visa. These conditions include (but are not limited to):

- You must remain enrolled in a registered course
- You must maintain satisfactory academic progress
- You must maintain adequate arrangements for health insurance during your stay in Australia
- You must continue to satisfy the requirements for grant of your student visa. This means, for example, that you continue to have sufficient financial capacity to support your study and stay in Australia
- You cannot work more than 40 hours per fortnight when your course is in session
- Notify your training provider of your Australian address and any subsequent changes of address within 7 days.

Check the [full list](#) of mandatory and discretionary student visa conditions.

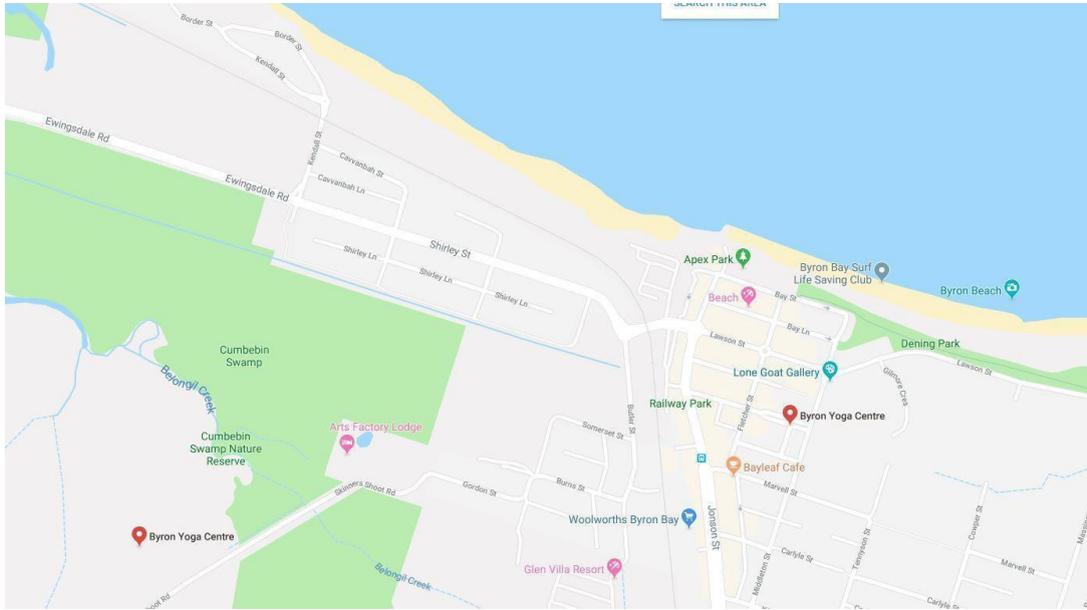
### **Arranging Travel**

You will need to make your own travel arrangements to Australia. Please try to arrive at least 2 weeks before the start of the course to allow enough time for settling-in, adjusting to the climate and overcoming jet-lag.

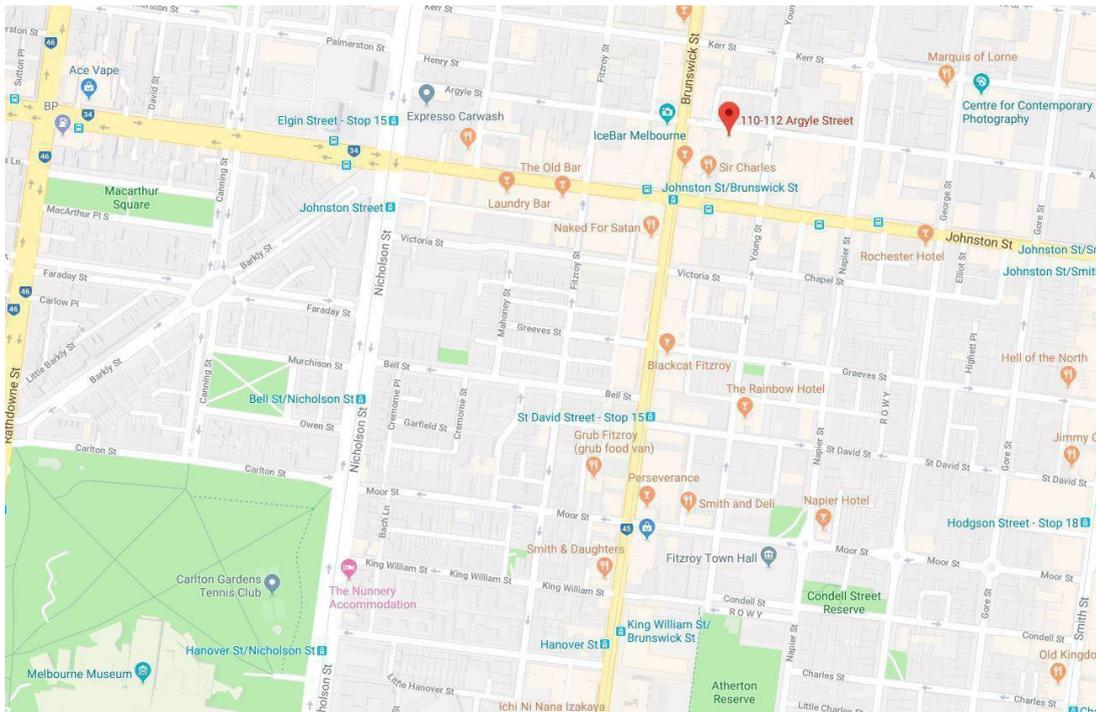
If you are coming to Byron Bay, you should fly into [Brisbane International Airport](#), which is the closest international airport to Byron Bay. Byron Bay is located 175kms from Brisbane International Airport and the best way to arrive here is to book a shuttle service from the airport to your accommodation. The companies we recommend are [Byron Easy Bus](#) and [Go Byron](#).

If you are coming to Melbourne, you will fly into [Tullamarine Airport](#), which is the busiest airport in Australia. Fitzroy is located 20 kms from Tullamarine Airport. You can get a shuttle service from the airport to your accommodation or get a Uber or taxi which can be easily found at the airport. The shuttle companies recommended are [Skybus](#) and [Starbus](#).

[Link to Byron Bay map](#)



[Link to Melbourne map](#)



## Documents

You should prepare a folder of official documents to bring with you to Australia, including:

- Valid passport
- Printed copy of your visa and Letter of Offer from Byron Yoga Centre Confirmation of Enrolment (COE)
- Receipts of payments (e.g. tuition fees, OSHC, bank statements etc.) Insurance policies
- Original or certified copies of your academic transcripts and qualifications
- Other personal identification documents, e.g. birth certificate, ID card, driver's license
- Medical records and/or prescriptions.

Keep all documents in your carry-on luggage. In case you lose the originals, make copies that can be left behind with family and sent to you.

## What to Bring

Students are often surprised by how strict Australian Customs Services and Quarantine can be. If you're in doubt about whether your goods are prohibited or not, declare it anyway on the Incoming Passenger Card which you will receive on the plane.

Students have received on the spot fines for not declaring items.

Visit the [Department of Agriculture](#) homepage to understand what you can bring to Australia

- Read "Arriving in Australia"

And let your family and friends know what can be mailed to Australia. Baggage allowances flying into Australia will vary according to your carrier, flight class and country of origin. Please check with your carrier prior to departure. Economy passengers are generally permitted 1 x checked luggage (35kg) and 1 x carry-on (7kg) for international flights, but only 20kg of checked luggage on domestic flights within Australia. This will significantly limit the amount of things you can bring, especially if you will fly within Australia to get to your final destination. Therefore, it is essential to think the packing process through very carefully. You will be able to purchase most things upon arrival in Australia but the price may be higher than in your own country.

## Seasonal Considerations

Summer in Australia is from December to February, autumn from March to May, winter from June to August, and spring from September to November. For most of the country the hottest months are January and February.

If you arrive in June or July, the coldest months of the year, you may need to bring or buy winter clothing and blankets. You may also need to purchase a heating appliance once you arrive.

## **Clothing**

For yoga teacher training, the most appropriate clothing is yoga or exercise wear, or loose comfortable clothes. Shorts are often worn during the summer months and sandals are the most common footwear. It is acceptable for both men and women to wear shorts and sleeveless t-shirts. This is common during the hotter months. In winter, some warm clothes are needed for early mornings and evenings.

More formal dress for women may be desired for social events. For festive occasions, you may want to bring traditional dress and accessories.

Other items you might need to include (most can also be purchased in Australia)

- alarm clock
- bath towels, bed sheets, pillowcases dictionary (bilingual)
- small sewing kit music CDs or iPod
- sporting equipment toiletries
- umbrella
- camera
- micro recorder for lectures
- spare spectacles or contact lenses, your optical prescription
- photos of friends and family
- swimming costume
- small gifts from home

## **Bringing your Computer**

The standard voltage for electrical items in Australia is 240V. Electric plugs have three flat pins one of which is an earth pin. You may need to buy an adaptor or have the plugs changed when you arrive.

Bringing a PC or laptop into Australia may be a little more complicated. Items owned and used for more than 12 months prior to arrival are allowed in tax-free. Proof of the date of purchase and purchase price may be required. Computers which are less than 12 months old and over AU\$400 may attract Goods and Services tax (GST) at a rate of 10%. Consideration is given as to whether or not you intend to export the computer at the conclusion of your studies.

To satisfy the Customs Officer that you will be taking the computer out of Australia you should bring along a statutory declaration (a written declaration witnessed by the certifying authority in your country) stating that the computer is for use during your studies in Australia, and that you intend to take it back with you when you complete your studies. You may be required to give an undertaking under Section 162 to this effect and provide a cash security to Australia Customs upon arrival.

## **Mobile Phones & Laptops**

If you are considering bringing a mobile phone, laptop, or any communication devices we suggest that you visit the [Australian Communications and Media Authority](#), before making any purchases. Some students have brought in their own laptops with internal modems only to discover that they were unable to use their modem in Australia. Any external or built-in modems must be Austel Approved in order to function in Australia.

## **On your Flight**

Wear comfortable, layered clothing so that you are able to make adjustments according to the local weather. Remember – if you are flying from a northern hemisphere winter into the Australian summer it will be very HOT so wear light weight clothing underneath and have a pair of sandals or lighter shoes in your hand luggage if you need cooler footwear. Alternatively extra clothing may be required on-hand if flying into the Australian winter season.

Before landing in Australia passengers are given an Incoming Passenger Card to fill in. This is a legal document. You must tick YES if you are carrying any food, plant material including wooden souvenirs, or animal products. This includes fruit given to you during your flight. If you have items you don't wish to declare, you can dispose of them in quarantine bins in the airport terminal. Don't be afraid to ask airline staff if you have any questions. If you are carrying more than AU\$10,000 in cash, you must also declare this on your Incoming Passenger Card. It is strongly recommended however, that you do not carry large sums of cash but arrange for an electronic transfer of funds into your Australian bank account once it has been opened.

## **Entry into Australia – Australian Immigration**

When you first arrive in Australia you will be required to make your way through Australian Immigration (follow the signs for Arriving Passengers as you leave the plane). An Immigration Officer will ask to see your completed Incoming Passenger Card (given to you on the plane) along with your passport and student visa evidence. The Immigration Officer will check your documents and may ask you a few questions about your plans for your stay in Australia.

## **Baggage Claim**

Once you have passed through the immigration checks you will move to baggage claim (follow the signs) and collect your luggage. Check that nothing is missing or damaged. If something is missing or damaged go to the Baggage Counter and advise them of your problem. Staff at the Baggage Counter will help you to find your belongings or lodge a claim for damage.

## **Detector Dogs**

You may see a Quarantine Detector Dog at the baggage carousel or while waiting in line to pass through immigration, screening luggage for food, plant material or animal products. If you see a detector dog working close to you, please place your bags on the floor for inspection. These dogs are not dangerous to humans and are trained to detect odours. Sometimes a dog will sit next to your bag if it sniffs a

target odour. Sometimes dogs will detect odours left from food you have had in the bag previously. A quarantine officer may ask about the contents of your bag and check you are not carrying items that present a quarantine risk to Australia.

### **Australian Customs and Quarantine**

Once you have your luggage you will go through Customs. Be careful about what you bring into Australia. Some items you might bring from overseas can carry pests and diseases that Australia doesn't have. You must declare ALL food, meat, fruit, plants, seeds, wooden souvenirs, animal or plant materials or their derivatives.

Australia has strict quarantine laws and tough on-the-spot fines. Every piece of luggage is now screened or x-rayed by quarantine officers, detector dog teams and x-ray machines. If you fail to declare or dispose of any quarantine items, or make a false declaration, you will get caught. In addition to on-the-spot fines, you could be prosecuted and fined more than AU\$60,000 and risk 10 years in prison. All international mail is also screened.

Some products may require treatment to make them safe. Items that are restricted because of the risk of pests and disease will be seized and destroyed by the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS).

For more detailed information about bringing in food, animals, plants, animal or plant materials or their derivatives, visit the [Department of Agriculture](#) website.

### **Arrivals Hall**

You will be able to leave the restricted area and enter the Arrivals Hall once you have cleared Customs. Here you will find a number of retail and food outlets along with public telephones, an information booth and money exchange facilities. If you arrive on a weekend, you may like to exchange money here as most banks are not open on Saturdays and Sundays.

### **Getting from the Airport**

If you are coming to Byron Bay, you should fly into [Brisbane International Airport](#), which is the closest international airport to Byron Bay. Byron Bay is located 175kms from Brisbane International Airport and the best way to arrive here is to book a shuttle service from the airport to your accommodation. Public transport is not available from Brisbane airport to Byron Bay. The shuttle companies we recommend are:

- [Byron Bay Shuttle](#) 02 6685 7447
- [Go Byron](#) 02 6620 9200
- [Grey Hound](#) 1300 473 946
- [Brisbane2Byron](#) 07 5443 4175

If you are coming to Melbourne, you will fly into [Tullamarine Airport](#), which is the busiest airport in Australia. Fitzroy is located 20 kms from Tullamarine Airport. You can get a shuttle service from the airport to your accommodation or get a Uber or taxi which can be easily found at the airport. Public transport is also available and you can check it in this [link](#).

The shuttle companies recommended are:

- [Skybus](#) 1300 759 287

- [Starbus](#) 03 8378 8700
- [AXB](#) 03 9090 0003

### **Keeping in Contact**

Before you leave home, you should provide your family and friends, and Byron Yoga Centre, with details of your flights to Australia and where you will be staying when you arrive. (Do not change these details without informing them). Once you have arrived in Australia, you should then let your family and friends, and Byron Yoga Centre know that you have arrived safely. It is important to ALWAYS let someone know where you are and how to contact you by phone or by post.

You can call Byron Yoga Centre's administration office on (02) 6685 8327 and advise us of your address and telephone number in Australia.

### **Accessing Money**

You should read this section carefully, and discuss the issues raised in this section with the bank or financial institution in your home country before you leave. All banks operate differently and you should be aware of all fees, charges, ease of access to your funds, and safety of the way in which you will access those funds.

You will need to make sure you have enough funds to support you when you first arrive. It is recommended that you have approximately AU\$1500 to AU\$2000 available for the first two to three weeks to pay for temporary accommodation and transport. You should bring most of this money as either traveler's cheques or on an international credit card. Traveler's cheques can be cashed at any bank or currency exchange in Australia.

Please note that it is not safe to bring large sums of money with you! Lost credit cards or traveler's cheques can be replaced, but very few travel insurance companies will replace lost or stolen cash. Do not ask someone you have just met to handle your cash for you or to take your cash to make payments for you. Not even someone who may indicate they are studying at the same education institution.

### **Currency Exchange**

Only Australian currency can be used in Australia. If you have not brought some with you, you will need to do so as soon as possible after arrival. You can do this at the airport. Once you have arrived in Byron Bay, you can also change money at any bank or at the Atlas Currency Exchange at 4/47 Byron Street, Byron Bay.

### **Electronic Transfer**

You can transfer money into Australia by electronic telegraph or telegraphic transfer at any time. This is a fast option and will take approximately 48 hours, but the bank will charge a fee on every transaction.

### **ATMs**

Automatic Teller Machines are located everywhere (including at the airport) and you can immediately withdraw cash from your overseas bank account at ATMs displaying the Cirrus Logo (if your ATM card has international access). Check this with your financial institution before leaving home.

## **Credit Cards**

All major international credit cards are accepted in Australia but you must remember that repayments to many of these cards can only be made in the country where they were issued. Do not rely on being able to get a credit card once you arrive in Australia because this is very difficult due to credit and identification laws.

## **Arranging Accommodation**

There is the possibility of shared accommodation in Byron Bay:

- [Flatmates.com.au](http://Flatmates.com.au)
- [Gumtree](http://Gumtree)
- [Byron Bay Student Accommodation](#)
- [Facebook Groups:](#)
  - [Soulful Abodes Short Term](#)
  - [Soulful Abodes Long Term](#)
  - [Byron Bay Rental Sleuth](#)
  - [Community Page](#)

Shared accommodation in Melbourne:

- [Gumtree](http://Gumtree)
- [Flatmates.com.au](http://Flatmates.com.au)
- [Share Houses](#)

Local Real Estate Agents who manage rental accommodation are:

- [Ray White](#)
- [First National](#)
- [Raine & Horne](#)
- [LJ Hooker](#)

## **Temporary Accommodation: Hotels, Motels & Backpackers**

Generally, the price you pay for accommodation will determine its quality. However, it can be expensive to stay in a good quality motel or hotel for a long period of time. Backpacker accommodation is relatively inexpensive but you may need to bring your own pillow and sleeping bag if you choose this option.

There are hostels in Byron Bay and Melbourne for a temporary accommodation:

- [Nomads World](#)
- [XBase](#)
- [YHA](#)

In these websites you can book and compare different hostels:

- [Hostel World](#)
- [Hostel Bookers](#)

## **PART 3                      SETTLING IN**

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## **Things to Keep in Mind When Renting:**

### **Security Deposits/Bond**

The owner or agent of an owner who has the right to rent you a property is called the landlord. A landlord will ask you for money before you move into an apartment. This is called a security deposit or bond and may amount to more than AU\$1,000 dollars. The bond is usually set at four weeks' rent. A bond/"security deposit" is an amount of money that is supposed to guarantee that the tenant will care for the property. If the tenant does not care for the property or clean it before leaving, the landlord has a legal right to keep the security deposit. Otherwise, the landlord must return the security deposit within a month after the tenant leaves. The landlord or agent is obliged to lodge the security deposit with an organization called Rental Bond Board, to be held until the property is vacated.

### **Signing a Lease**

In most cases, the landlord will require the tenant to sign a lease. A lease is a written agreement between a tenant and a landlord that describes the responsibilities of each party. This is a binding legal document that commits the student to a specific period of residency in the unit.

### **Inspection of Property**

Most landlords will inspect the property with you on commencement of your tenancy. This is done with a list of furniture and fittings in each room of the property so that the two of you can agree on the condition of the property at the commencement of the tenancy. You should note on this document anything you notice during the inspection that is not already listed, and keep a copy that has been signed by both of you. Once you are the tenant, the condition of these things will be your responsibility. This will be done again at the end of your tenancy and the final condition of the property may determine the return of your full security deposit. If this inspection is not suggested, you might suggest it yourself as a means of ensuring fair treatment for all parties involved.

### **Utilities**

Unless someone is already living in the dwelling, the new tenant must start utility services, such as telephone, electricity, and gas. This requires contacting each individual company and arranging for the services to be connected from a specified date. The companies providing these utilities also require a small security deposit. If someone has vacated the property before you, contacting these utility companies for connection of services will ensure all previous accounts have been finalised and paid for by the previous tenant.

### **Restrictions**

The lease may contain restrictions, such as not permitting animals or children in the dwelling. Ask the landlord about his/her particular requirements. Make sure that you know and understand these restrictions before signing the lease. If you do not obey the restrictions on the lease, the landlord can ask you to leave.

## Inspecting a Potential Property

It's a good idea to take notes of each property you inspect. As well as the address, rent, and agent take notes of the details:

- Are there laundry facilities?
- Is there a telephone line already connected?
- Do the light fittings work?
- Is the oven/ stove, gas or electrical?
- Do the toilet and shower all work?
- Is there damp or mold on the walls?
- Is there painting required?
- Is the place furnished? What kind of furniture?
- What kind of heating/cooling is there?
- Is there an insect/ pest problem?
- Is it close to transport, shops, and Byron Yoga Centre?
- Will the area be noisy? Is it on a busy road?
- Is there good security?
- Will the landlord carry out any repairs before you move in?
- How are repairs made once you live there, and who pays for which repairs?
- Are smoke alarms fitted in all the bedrooms?

## Choosing a Roommate

The task of choosing a roommate needs to be taken very seriously. The person or persons with whom you decide to live can affect the quality and productiveness of your international student experience in Australia. When the moment comes for you to make your decision concerning roommates, remember these tips: don't panic, take your time, and don't compromise on important principles.

## Bills & Expenses

Do you and your roommates expect to share the costs of buying toilet paper, washing powder for clothes and dishes, cleaning supplies etc. which is used by everyone?

If you are answering an advertisement for a roommate; what does the rental price cover? Does it include utilities, or are they split equally when the accounts are due? Who will pay them and how will you all know they have been paid?

## Getting help

If you need help in relation to a lease or tenancy, you can talk to Byron Yoga Centre, or contact: the [Tenants Union of NSW](#) or the [Tenants Union of VIC](#).

## Mobile Phones and Computer & Internet Access

Before bringing your mobile phone to Australia check with the [Australian Communications and Media Authority](#) to make sure it can operate here. Some countries, such as Japan and the USA, use mobile phone networks that are not available in Australia. If not, you can buy your mobile phone in Australia. Australian telecommunications providers offer a wide range of services which provide a mobile phone within the cost of using that service. There are many differences to the services

provided. You should understand what deal you are accepting before signing a contract with a provider. You can [compare](#) mobile phone plans in Australia.

Some of the mobile phone companies will also provide you with internet access. In fact, you may be able to make arrangements with a company where you can get cheaper rates if you have internet and mobile phone through the one service provider. In addition, with provider [Telstra](#), you could get a packaged deal for your home phone, internet and mobile phone.

Internet access is available at Byron Yoga Centre and at the Byron Public Library, in Lawson Street, Byron Bay and at the City Library in Melbourne at 253 Flinders Lane.

### **Shopping**

Standard business hours in Australia are 9am to 5 pm Monday to Friday. Shops and businesses are often also open on Saturdays and Sundays in Byron Bay and Melbourne city to cater for tourism. Supermarkets are generally open until about 9pm.

### **Bargaining/Haggling**

When shopping in Australia, you generally don't bargain or barter (also called haggling) for the price of an item. The displayed price for items is fixed and if Australian GST (Goods & Services Tax) is applicable it will already be included in the displayed price. However, there are exceptions to this rule. There are places and circumstances in which it is perfectly acceptable to barter for the best price possible. These may include: at garage sales, community markets, second hand dealerships, or at electrical goods' stores, furniture shops, or when purchasing a motor vehicle if you are offering to pay in cash, or have seen the item at a competitor store for a better price.

If you are paying by CASH and, if you are buying more than one item, you may have more bargaining power. Begin the bargaining process by asking:

"What's the best price you can give me?"

Or at a garage sale, you might pick up several items whose combined total is \$50 and say: "I'll offer you \$30 for all of these."

### **Purchasing an Item**

The most common methods of purchasing items are by cash or EFTPOS. EFTPOS (Electronic Funds Transfer at Point of Sale) allows you to use the card attached to your Australian bank account to make purchases and withdraw cash at the same time (at the retailer's discretion) from more than 103,000 merchants across Australia. Just swipe your keycard through the EFTPOS card reader, select your account type and enter your PIN number. EFTPOS is available at most supermarkets, petrol stations and retail outlets. Just look for the EFTPOS sign. You can choose to make the EFTPOS transaction from your savings account, cheque account or credit card. You receive a printed receipt after each purchase and the transaction appears on your statement.

### **Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)**

Overseas student health cover (OSHC) is insurance that provides cover for the costs of medical and hospital care which international students may need while in Australia and is mandatory for international student visa holders. OSHC will also cover the cost of emergency ambulance transport and most prescription drugs.

Only Australian health funds that have signed an agreement with the Australian Government can provide OSHC. **Byron Yoga Centre does not provide OSHC, however you must provide the evidence of your OSHC, so BYC to keep on your file.** Some of the OSHC providers are:

- [Medibank Bupa](#)
- [NIB](#)
- [Australian Health Management](#)

You can [compare](#) all the overseas student health cover (OSHC) providers.

You will need to provide evidence of your membership and payment at time of processing your enrolment to study in Australia.

You may choose to change your health fund at any time, but will need to abide by the conditions of change of the health fund provider you are leaving.

Students may also take out additional cover in the form of Extra OSHC and students who could not previously access OSHC may now be able to access Optional OSHC. Some students may be exempt from enrolling in the OSHC such as students from countries who's Governments may have Reciprocal Health Agreements for students in Australia.

Note: only some reciprocal health agreements cover students in Australia, some will only cover visitors. You should determine if you are eligible before you apply for your visa to come to Australia.

Find further information on [OSHC](#).

If you come to Australia on a visa other than a student visa and undertake a short course of study of three months duration or less you will not be eligible for OSHC.

It is wise to purchase travel or private medical insurance in this case.

OSHC provides a safety net for medical expenses for international students, similar to that provided to Australians through Medicare. Additionally, OSHC includes access to some private hospitals and day surgeries, ambulance cover and benefits for pharmaceuticals.

If you need to visit a doctor or medical centre, show your card at the end of the visit. You will be charged the doctor's fee and the government fee component of that may be processed by the medical centre. If the medical centre is not able to process the government fee, pay the total amount, keep the receipt and you can claim the government fee back from your OSHC provider.

Information on making a claim or renewal of insurance may be obtained from your provider.

### **Dental and Optical**

Dental and optical health services are not covered by your OSHC unless you take out extra cover. If you need to see a dentist or optometrist you will need to make an appointment (see the Yellow Pages) and pay the full fee of this service. Dental and optical health services are not covered by your OSHC unless you take out extra cover. If you need to see a dentist or optometrist you will need to make an appointment (see the Yellow Pages) and pay the full fee of this service.

## Managing your Finances:

### Initial Expenses

This is an example of some of the expenses you might encounter when you first come to Australia. Please check the [Government website](#) for more examples and information.

<b>Expense</b>	<b>Estimated Cost \$AUD</b>
Temporary accommodation 4 weeks	1,000.00
Rental bond (four weeks rent @ \$250/week)	1,000.00
Advance rent (two weeks @\$250/week)	500.00
Electricity connection	200.00
Telephone connection	100.00
Internet connection	100.00
Mobile phone and/or network sim card	50.00
Household items, e.g. furniture, crockery, etc.	1,000.00
Transportation ie bicycle	300.00
Incidentals	100.00
Insurance – house, car, health	500.00
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>4,850.00</b>

### On-going Expenses

Once you have established yourself in accommodation, you will need to budget for on-going expenses such as rent, food, telephone, gas and/or electricity, transport, health and incidental expenditure.

### Setting up a Bank Account

You can choose to open an account in any Bank, Credit Union or Building Society in Australia. Do your research to get the best deal. To open a bank account you will need:

- your passport (with arrival date stamped by Australian immigration)
- student ID card
- money to deposit into the account (this can be as little as \$10)

Anyone who wishes to open a bank account in Australia must show several pieces of personal identification which are allotted a points system. 100 points of identification is required to establish your identity as the person who will be named

in the account. Your passport and proof of your arrival date in Australia will be acceptable as 100 points IF you open an account within six weeks of arrival in Australia. After this time you will be required to produce additional documentation. As a student you will be able to open an account with special student benefits. Many banks have 'Student Accounts' which contain no or minimal fees for transactions that might normally be attached to regular savings accounts. You will also require the student ID card from Byron Yoga Centre to prove you are a student and should have access to the benefits offered by a student bank account. Check for a [comparison](#) of accounts in banks throughout Australia.

Most people in Australia enjoy the convenience of Internet banking and/or telephone banking, which enables them to manage their money, pay bills etc. from home. At the time you are setting up your account you can request these services from your bank. In Jonson Street, Byron Bay, you will find branches of the following Australian banks:

- National Australia Bank
- Commonwealth Bank of Australia
- ANZ Banking Group
- Westpac Banking Corporation
- Southern Cross Credit Union

Most bank branches are open from Monday to Thursday, 9:00am to 4:00pm and Friday 9.00am to 5pm (except on public holidays). ATMs remain open 24 hours a day. However, you should be aware of your personal safety if accessing cash from an ATM at night in quiet areas where there are not a lot of people around.

### **Working while studying in Australia**

As a student visa holder, you are permitted to work a maximum of 40 hours per fortnight when your course is in session, and unlimited hours when your course is out of session. Please note you cannot work until you have commenced your course in Australia.

Work that is formally registered as part of your course is not included in the 40 hours per fortnight limitation.

Students must comply with the work conditions for student visa holders.

Please refer to the [Department of Home Affairs \(DHA\) website](#).

### **Finding Work**

You may find it difficult to find work in Australia as you will be joining the general Australian population in your search; therefore you should not rely on income from employment when budgeting to pay for living expenses. There is no guarantee that employment companies will find work for you.

Byron Bay has a high rate of unemployment and a high number of overseas travelers looking for part time work. To find a job in Byron Bay try the local newspaper, [The Echo](#).

Melbourne is a large city and has more work opportunity than Byron Bay, however the number of people looking for jobs is also high which makes it very competitive. Please find below some websites that advertise jobs:

- [Seek Career](#)
- [One Jobs](#)
- [Careers Victoria](#)

For information and advice about your workplace rights and obligations, pay overview and employee entitlements, please check the [Fair Work Ombudsman website](#).

## **Taxes**

Taxes are managed through the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). The tax you pay depends on how much you earn.

### **Getting a Tax File Number**

You must obtain a Tax File Number to be able to work in Australia. A tax file number (TFN) is your unique reference number to our tax system. When you start work, your employer will ask you to complete a tax file number declaration form. If you do not provide a TFN your employment will be taxed at the highest personal income tax rate, which will mean less money in your wages each week.

You can apply for your [TFN online](#) or phone 13 28 61, 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday. For the ATO translating and interpreter service phone: 13 14 50.

### **Taxation Returns**

If you pay too much tax you are entitled to a refund. To get a refund you will need to lodge a tax return. You can lodge online using e-tax (free), by mailing a paper tax return, or by paying a registered tax agent to complete and lodge the return for you. If you lodge by e-tax your refund will normally be issued within 14 days.

- Lodge [online](#) using e-tax
- Or find a registered [tax agent](#)
- Tax returns are lodged at the end of the Australian tax year – (1 July to 30 June).

### **Superannuation**

If your monthly wage is more than AU\$450, your employer must contribute an additional sum equal to 9% of your wage into a superannuation (pension) account for you. In most cases, you can access your contributions when you leave Australia permanently, although the contributions will be taxed.

You check your eligibility to [claim your superannuation](#) and to apply for your payment. You will need to provide the details of your superannuation fund.

### **Personal Safety**

While Australia is generally a safe place to live and study, it is still important that you take precautions to reduce the chance of an incident occurring.

## Going out

When you are out with friends or by yourself, here are some simple things to consider:

- Always plan your trip home, especially at night. You may want to pre-book a taxi or arrange transport with a friend. Always make sure you have enough money to get home.
- Try to travel with a friend or in a group.
- Keep your bag and belongings close to your body and where you can always see them.
- Never hitch hike.
- If you don't have a mobile phone, make sure you have a phone card or money to make a phone call.
- Where available, use pedestrian walkways and cross the street at pedestrian crossings or lights.
- Leave valuables at home if you don't need to take them with you. This includes jewellery, electronic equipment such as iPads and your passport. If you've recently arrived and don't have anywhere permanent to live yet, talk to your institution's international student support staff about secure storage facilities on campus.
- Don't carry large amounts of money with you. You can access your money at ATMs found in shops, supermarkets, petrol stations, shopping malls, bars, shop fronts and many other public places.
- Call 000 in the event of an emergency. Remember, calls to 000 are free of charge.

## Public transport

Public transport is reliable and widely used in Australia, particularly in metro and urban areas. A number of security measures have been implemented to maximise the safety of public transport users including security officers and guards, help points, good lighting and security cameras. However you should still use caution when travelling on public transport:

- Avoid isolated bus, rail and tram stops.
- Check transport timetables to avoid long waits, particularly at night.
- Train carriages nearest to the driver or guard are lit and safest at night.
- If you find yourself left in a train carriage on your own or with only one other person you may feel more comfortable moving to another carriage.

## Taxis

Some tips when using taxis in Australia:

- Sit wherever you feel most comfortable – it is normal for passengers to sit in the front or the rear of the taxi.
- Always ensure you know the address of your destination before getting into the taxi.
- Tell the driver the route you would like to take to your destination, and don't be afraid to speak up if the driver takes you a different route, particularly one you are unfamiliar with.
- If you don't want the driver to know exactly where you live, get them to drop you off a short distance away.

### **At school or on campus**

When you are at your institution during the day or night, here are some tips to help keep you safe:

- Make sure you are aware of the security and emergency arrangements at your institution and in your local area. Your institution should provide you with this information either in your information pack or once you arrive.
- Some large institutions offer security escort services or bus shuttle services for out of office hours. Contact your institution directly to see if this is a service they offer.
- If you drive to your institution, try to park close to your destination and use well-lit car parks.
- When leaving your institution at night try to walk with a friend or group, and take paths that are well lit and ideally frequently used by other people.

### **Road Rules**

If you are going to drive in Australia, no matter whether you are an experienced driver and have an international drivers' license or not, **YOU MUST KNOW THE ROAD RULES** before you attempt to drive!

For more information on rules and penalties visit the Roads and Maritime Authority for [NSW](#) or for [Victoria](#)

Many lives are lost on Australian roads every year and international visitors are at high risk! If you come from a country where you drive on the opposite side of the road to Australia it is sometimes helpful to have a companion drive with you to ensure you both take note of traffic conditions and signs until you are more familiar with driving on the left side of the road. A handy tip is not to think of it as the other side of the road, but to think that the "white line" (or centre dividing line on the road) is on your side as the driver, just as it is in all countries. It is recommended that you take one or two driving lessons in Australia before you begin to drive here on your own.

### **Vehicle Registration and Insurance**

Any motor vehicle you own must be registered and insured before you drive it on the road. You must register it in your name and provide the State car registration board with your driver's licence details and your residential address in Australia. Third Party Insurance is compulsory and evidence of insurance must be produced when registering the vehicle.

It is recommended that you have fully comprehensive car insurance if you own a car, this will protect you if you have an accident that is your fault as it will help pay for any damage you may have caused to your car or another car.

### **Drivers Licence**

In Australia if you hold a current driver license from another country, you are allowed to drive on your overseas licence as long as:

- You remain a temporary overseas visitor

- Your overseas licence remains current
- You have not been disqualified from driving in that State or elsewhere and
- You have not had your licence suspended or cancelled or your visiting driver privileges withdrawn.

Most overseas visitors are not required to obtain an Australian license if you comply with these conditions and can continue to prove your genuine visitor status to the Police if required.

## **PART 4 SOCIAL AND CULTURAL**

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## **Adjusting to Life in Australia:**

While living and studying abroad may be an exciting adventure, it can also present a range of challenges. Having decided to study and live in Australia you will be undertaking adjustments in many areas of your life including cultural, social and academic. It is also important to remember that while these changes are occurring you will be embarking upon a new period of study (for many of you in a different language) and be away from your usual supports, networks and resources. Adjustment to a new country and culture is a process that occurs gradually and takes time. The values, beliefs, traditions and customs of your home country may vary greatly from those in Australia and adapting to the Australian way of life may take some time.

Be mindful that living away from home can be very confronting at first. Try not to make hasty decisions or discontinue any medications. Be aware of any emotional changes or difficulties that may be occurring. Please do not hesitate to contact our student support Renata Guerra Carmello on 0402 452 679 or email [education@byronyoga.com](mailto:education@byronyoga.com) or call the office 02 6685 8327 during the opening hours (Monday to Friday 8 am to 5 pm).

This advice may help:

### **Listen, observe and ask questions**

Adjustment to a new culture and way of life takes time. Allow yourself time to observe those around you and patterns of both verbal and non-verbal communication. Don't be afraid to ask questions if there are things you do not understand as this will reduce the chance of confusion or misunderstandings.

### **Become involved**

Make an effort to meet people and become involved in groups both on campus and in the wider community. Maintain an attitude of openness to new situations and experiences. Establishing friendships and joining groups is the best way to experience and learn about Australian culture and will certainly mean you have a richer and more enjoyable time here.

### **Try to maintain a sense of perspective**

When confronted with difficulties remind yourself that living and studying abroad is a challenge and it is normal to feel stressed, overwhelmed and out of your depth at times. Try to recall or make a list of the reasons you initially wanted to study abroad in the first place. Listing positive events or changes within yourself that have occurred since you arrived may also assist with getting things in perspective.

### **Maintain some of the routines and rituals you may have had in your home country**

This can include small things such as continuing to drink a certain type of coffee or tea or eating specific foods. It may also include maintaining involvement in bigger events such as celebrating a national day in your country of origin with a group of friends or finding a cultural group related to your home country for support.

### **Keep lines of communication open with those at home**

Communicating with those at home regularly about your experiences of study and life in Australia, through emails, telephones and letters, is vital. Not only does it help to keep you connected with important social supports, it also assists your friends and family to understand your experiences which will smooth the transition when you return home.

### **Sense of humor**

Importantly, remember that living in a different culture means you will inevitably find yourself in a range of unusual and often confusing situations. Being able to laugh in these situations will remind you that it takes time to understand different cultures and that it is ok to make mistakes.

### **Ask for help**

Don't be afraid to ask Byron Yoga Centre staff for assistance or support if you need it.

Finally, relax and enjoy the journey!

### **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 behaviors 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.

### **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. It is you who must take some positive steps to feel better, and the sooner you take them, the better!

### **Recognition**

First, 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 humor. Recognising your culture shock symptoms will help you learn about yourself as you work your way through it.

### **Be objective**

Second, 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**

Third, 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**

Fourth, 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.

### **Greeting People**

When meeting someone for the first time, it is usual to shake the person's right hand with your right hand. People who do not know each other generally do not kiss or hug when meeting. When you first meet someone, it is polite not to talk about personal matters.

Many Australians look at the eyes of the people they are talking with. They consider this a sign of respect, and an indication that they are listening. Do not stare at the person for a long time.

You can address a new acquaintance using their title and family name. You may use their first name when they ask you to or use it in the introduction. In the workplace and among friends, most Australians tend to be informal and call each other by their first names.

### **Clothing Customs**

The types of clothing that people wear reflect the diversity in our society just as much as the variation in climate. There are no laws or rules on clothing, but you must wear certain clothing for work situations. Most workplaces have dress standards.

Outside of the work situation, clothing is an individual choice; many people dress for comfort, for the social situation or the weather. Clubs, movie theatres and other places require patrons to be in neat, clean clothes and appropriate footwear.

Many Australians live close to the beach and the sea. On hot days, they may wear little clothing on the beach and surrounds. This does not mean that people who dress to go to the beach or swimming have low moral standards. It means that this is what we accept on and near our beaches.

People from other countries can choose to wear their national dress. They may be religious or customary items and include monks' robe, a burqa, a hijab or a turban. As a tolerant society with people from many different cultures, clothing is a part of cultural beliefs and practices that is encouraged.

### **Polite Behavior**

'Please' and 'thank you' are words that are very helpful when dealing with other people, and buying goods or services. When asked if you would like something, like a cup of tea, it is polite to say, 'Yes please', or just 'please' if you would like it, or 'no, thank you' if you do not. When you receive something, it is polite to thank

the person by saying 'thank you'. Australians tend to think that people who do not say 'please' or 'thank you' are being rude. Using these words will help in building a good relationship.

Sometimes a sensitive issue may come up in conversation. Not to talk may seem rude. It is more polite to say 'sorry, it is too hard to explain' than to ignore a question.

Australians often say, 'Excuse me' to get a person's attention and 'sorry' if we bump into them. We also say, 'Excuse me' or 'pardon me' if we burp or belch in public or a person's home.

You should always try to be on time for meetings and other visits. If you realise you are going to be late, try to contact the person to let them know. This is very important for visits to professionals as you may be charged money for being late or if you miss the appointment without notifying them before the appointment time.

Most Australians blow their noses into a handkerchief or tissue, not onto the footpath. This is also true for spitting. Many people will also say, 'Bless you' when you sneeze. This phrase has no religious intent.

### **Australian Slang**

Much common word usage or 'slang' may seem strange to people new to Australia. Slang words start from many different sources. Some words are shortened versions of longer words. Many were expressions already used by migrants who came from the north of England. If you are unsure what an expression means, it is all right to ask the person who said it to explain. Some common expressions are:

- Bring a plate - when you are invited to a party and asked to 'bring a plate', this means to bring a dish of food to share with your host and other guests. Take the food to the party in any type of dish, not just a plate, and it is usually ready to serve. This is common for communal gatherings such as for school, work or a club. If you are unsure what to bring, you can ask the host.
- BYO - when an invitation to a party says 'BYO', this means 'bring your own' drink. If you do not drink alcohol, it is acceptable to bring juice, soft drink or soda, or water. Some restaurants are BYO. You can bring your own wine to these, although there is usually a charge for providing and cleaning glasses called 'corkage'.
- Arvo - This is short for afternoon. 'Drop by this arvo,' means please come and visit this afternoon.
- Fortnight - This term describes a period of two weeks.
- Barbeque, BBQ, barbie - outdoor cooking, usually of meat or seafood over a grill or hotplate using gas or coals. The host serves the meat with salads and bread rolls. It is common for a guest, when invited to a BBQ, to ask if they should bring anything.
- Snag - The raw type sausages usually cooked at a BBQ. They can be made of pork, beef or chicken.
- Chook - The term chook means a chicken, usually a hen.

- Cuppa - a cup of tea or coffee 'Drop by this arvo for a cuppa' means please come and visit this afternoon for a cup of tea or coffee.
- Loo or dunny - These are slang terms for toilet. If you are a guest in someone's house for the first time, it is usually polite to ask permission to use his or her toilet. 'May I use your toilet please?' Some people ask, 'Where's the loo?'
- Fair dinkum - honest, the truth. 'Fair dinkum?' when used as a question means, 'is it really true?'
- To be crook – to be sick or ill. Flat out - busy.
- Shout - to buy someone a drink. At a bar or a pub when a group of friends meet, it is common for each person to 'shout a round', meaning buy everybody a drink. Each person takes a turn at buying a 'round'. It is also acceptable to say that you do not drink (alcohol) by saying that you are a 'teetotaler'. This also means you are not obliged to shout.
- Bloke - a man. Sometimes if you ask for help, you may get an answer to 'see that bloke over there'.
- How ya goin? 'How are you going?' means how are you, or how do you do? It does not mean what form of transport you are taking. Sometimes it can sound like 'ow-ya- goin-mate'.

### **Tipping**

Tipping is not generally expected or practiced in Australia. This is because throughout Australia, service industry staff are covered by minimum wage laws and therefore do not rely on tips for their income. However, it is acceptable to leave a small amount (perhaps 10%) should you feel you have received exceptional service.

### **Public Holidays & Special Celebrations:**

Australians hold certain days each year as special days of national meaning. We may recognise the day with a holiday for everyone or we can celebrate the day as a nation with special events. Most States and Territories observe some of the public holidays on the same date. They have others on different dates or have some days that only their State or Territory celebrates. In larger cities, most shops, restaurants and public transport continue to operate on public holidays. In smaller towns, most shops and restaurants close. However, as Byron Bay is a major tourist destination, many venues remain open for business.

### **New Year**

Australians love to celebrate New Year, January 1. There are festivals, celebrations and parties all over the country to welcome in the New Year. Sydney Harbour and Sydney Harbour Bridge have become synonymous with New Year celebrations in Australia the fireworks display is considered to be one of the best in the world. January 1 is a public holiday.

### **Australia Day**

Australia Day, January 26, is the day we as a people and place celebrate our

nationhood. The day is a public holiday. The day marks the founding of the first settlement in our nation by European people.

### **Easter**

Easter is the most significant event of the Christian calendar.

In addition to its religious significance, Easter in Australia is enjoyed as a four-day holiday weekend starting on Good Friday and ending on Easter Monday. This extra-long weekend is an opportunity for Australians to take a mini-holiday, or get together with family and friends. Easter often coincides with school holidays, so many people with school aged children incorporate Easter into a longer family holiday. Easter is the busiest time for domestic air travel in Australia, and a very popular time for gatherings such as weddings and christenings.

### **Anzac Day**

Anzac Day is on April 25 the day the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) landed at Gallipoli in Turkey in 1915 during World War 1. This day is set apart to hold dear the memory of those who fought for our nation and those who lost their life to war. The day is a public holiday.

### **Labor Day**

Labor Day is celebrated on different dates throughout Australia, in New South Wales it is celebrated on the first Monday in October. As elsewhere in the world, Labor Day originated in Australia as a means of giving 'working people' a day off and recognising the roots of trade unionist movements and workers' rights.

### **Queen's Birthday**

The Queen's Birthday holiday celebrates the birthday of Queen Elizabeth II who is not only Queen of the United Kingdom but also Queen of Australia, where the Queen's Birthday is a public holiday celebrated on a Monday but on different dates. Having the Queen's Birthday on a Monday, results in a three-day long weekend.

### **Christmas**

Christmas is celebrated in Australia on 25 December. Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. Christians believe that Jesus is 'the son of God', the Messiah sent from Heaven to save the world. On Christmas Day family and friends gather to exchange gifts and enjoy special Christmas food. Australians are as likely to eat freshly caught seafood outdoors at a barbeque, as to have a traditional roast dinner around a dining table. Many Australians spend Christmas out of doors, going to the beach for the day, or heading to camping grounds for a longer break over the Christmas holiday period. There are places which have developed an international reputation for overseas visitors to spend Christmas Day in Australia, such as Bondi Beach in Sydney.

### **Sun Safety**

Australia has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world. In fact, one in every two Australians will be diagnosed with skin cancer at some point during their lifetime. The good news is; it can be prevented. By minimising your exposure to the sun's damaging ultraviolet radiation (UVR), you can protect your skin and prevent the

development of skin cancer.

Skin cancer and skin damage are caused by being exposed to the sun's harmful ultraviolet radiation (UVR). The key to preventing skin cancer is to protect your skin from the sun by practising sun safe behaviours; stay out of the sun between 10am and 3pm; wear protective clothing, sunglasses and a hat; and use sunscreen.

### **Beach Safety**

The ocean in Australia can be dangerous, with strong currents and rips. A rip is a strong current running out to sea. Rips are the cause of most rescues performed at beaches. A rip usually occurs when a channel forms between the shore and a sandbar, and large waves have built up water which then returns to sea, causing a drag effect. The larger the surf the stronger the rip. Rips are dangerous as they can carry a weak or tired swimmer out into deep water.

Remember the **F-L-A-G-S** and Stay Safe:

**F** Find the flags and swim between them - the red and yellow flags mark the safest place to swim at the beach.

**L** Look at the safety signs - they help you identify potential dangers and daily conditions at the beach.

**A** Ask a surf lifesaver for some good advice - surf conditions can change quickly so talk to a surf lifesaver or lifeguard before entering the water.

**G** Get a friend to swim with you - so you can look out for each other's safety and get help if needed.

**S** Stick your hand up for help - if you get into trouble in the water, stay calm, and raise your arm to signal for help. Float with a current or rip - don't try and swim against it.

Never swim at night; under the influence of alcohol or directly after a meal. Never run and dive into the water.

### **Bush & Outback Safety**

Australia has many extraordinary and beautiful places to explore. If you are going on a trip, travel with other people, make sure someone knows where you are at all times and stay on a road or a walking track.

### **In the Bush**

Be prepared if you plan some time in our bushland. Plan your hike. Always tell someone where you are going and what time you expect to return. Let them know when you return safely. Check the weather forecast and be prepared for unexpected changes in weather. When walking or exploring outdoors drink plenty of water (allow at least one litre of water per hour of walking). Wear sturdy shoes

and socks, a hat, sunscreen lotion, comfortable clothing and insect repellent. Other handy items for long bushwalks include food, warm clothing, first aid supplies, a torch and a map. Never walk alone. Read maps and signs carefully. Stay on the track and stay behind safety barriers. Never dive into a rock-pool, creek, lake or river. Stay away from cliff edges and waterfalls. Do not feed or play with native animals. You might get bitten or scratched. Limit your use of fire. Use a fuel stove for cooking and wear thermal clothing to keep warm. Never leave fires unattended or unconfined. Visit the ranger station or park information centre to obtain details on the best places to visit and any additional safety tips for that park. For more information, visit [NSW National Parks](#) or [VIC Parks](#)

### **Dangerous Animals & Plants:**

Australia is home to a variety of native animals. Even if they seem friendly to you, do not touch or feed them - they are not used to close contact with humans and may hurt you. If you are visiting any of Australia's beautiful parks or forests be wary of animals in their natural habitat, do not try to touch them or feed them.

### **Bites and Stings**

The majority of insects in Australia are not harmful to humans. Some insects bite and sting if they are threatened so it is best to avoid touching them if you want to avoid being stung or bitten.

In case of allergic reaction, call the Poisons Information Centre on: 131 126.

## **PART 5 OBLIGATIONS, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

This is an extract of the Policies and Procedures Manual 2018-v12

### **Please read – Important Information Regarding Your Training**

Once a student has reviewed the information that pertains to their chosen path of study, they are to complete the Enrolment Form (and other applicable application documents) and return it to the Administration Department of the RTO.

Byron Yoga Centre will review the application for completeness and make a decision on how to proceed.

If the application is approved:

The student will be notified within 15 days of the receipt of their application.

1. The student will be provided with a Letter of Offer.
2. The student's upfront fees will be calculated and the student will be invoiced.
3. The student is to sign the Letter of Offer and return it to the RTO within 10 days of receiving it.
4. A Student File will be opened for them and their details will be entered on the Learner Management System (LMS). The RTO Administration Department should ensure that all other necessary documents and information have been collected from the student using the Enrolment Document Checklist.
5. Once the signed Letter of Offer and payment of the deposit are received by the RTO, Byron Yoga Centre will provide the Student with a Confirmation of Enrolment (COE) generated through the Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS).
6. Students will be asked to complete a Special Needs Form during the enrolment process. The RTO may also choose to implement other procedures to help determine the level of numeracy and literacy of each potential student. Both of these procedures contribute to ensuring that the RTO is able to assist students it identifies in extra need and support with the most appropriate resources.
7. The student will then receive a copy of their Learning and Assessment material in preparation for their studies. These documents will be the

responsibility of the student for the duration of the course. Any lost material that needs replacing may incur a replacement fee.

8. On the commencement of training, the student will be provided with further information about the college and its operating policies and procedures before proceeding.
9. Once the student and trainer are satisfied that there are no further outstanding queries or information to be covered, training will commence.

If the application is denied:

1. The student will be notified within 15 days of the receipt of their application.
2. The notification will be in writing and will outline the reasons behind the decision.
3. Students will be provided with a copy of the Complaints, Grievances and Appeals policy and procedure for International Students.

All applicants who are successfully admitted entry into a course offered by Byron Yoga Centre and who are granted a Student Visa will be required to participate in an Orientation Program hosted by the RTO. This program helps to familiarise new students with Byron Yoga Centre and with Australia in particular.

### **Enrolment may be Deferred, Suspended or Cancelled:**

Students may apply to defer their studies due to compassionate and compelling circumstances & suitable evidence must be provided. The cost of the initial application is \$100.00, for all subsequent applications, \$150.00. All applications are to be made prior to close of business on Friday of the 7th week of the preceding term. Applications submitted after this time will be refused. Students may be required to leave Australia and should check the Department of Home Affairs rules around deferment.

Students who wish to defer their studies must apply to Byron Yoga Centre in writing. Suspension is considered when a student wishes to halt their studies for a period more than 2 weeks. Students must have evidence to support their request for a deferment. For example, where a student requires a deferment due to medical illness, it is expected that a valid, signed medical certificate will be provided as evidence. Students are to be advised that Deferments and Suspensions are only granted under very special circumstances, usually involving compassionate and compelling reasons.

Further information describing what circumstances would be considered for the potential approval of a deferment can be found below:

International students may defer studies at Byron Yoga Centre when significant personal circumstances have interfered, or threaten to interfere, with the educational process. These significant personal circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- a) The health and physical well-being of the student or their spouse or family members, whether residing in Australia, in the student's country of origin, or in a third country.
- b) The economic well-being of the student and/or their spouse or family members, whether residing in Australia, in the student's country of origin, or in a third country.
- c) Changes to the personal freedom and social well-being, whether actual or threatened, that are brought about by legal, criminal, or political processes and which have a direct affect upon the student, the student's spouse or family members, whether residing in Australia, in the student's country of origin, or in a third country.

Byron Yoga Centre will evaluate the evidence provided and reserves the right to determine the suitability of that which is provided.

Once Byron Yoga Centre has the application and the required evidence, the RTO Chief Executive Officer will decide whether or not to grant the student the requested deferment. Items that the Chief Executive Officer will take into consideration include, amongst other things:

- The student's academic progress to date;
- The student's attendance records to date;

The student will be informed in writing of the outcome of their application and will be asked to sign their agreement to any conditions placed on the request being granted and their understanding of their overall obligations. This may include a revised Confirmation of Enrolment (COE) being issued to the student.

Should a request be denied, the student may access Byron Yoga Centre Complaints and Grievances Policy for International Students and follow the guidelines outlined in this document.

Where a student chooses to temporarily suspend their studies (usually 2 weeks or less), the same steps and principles listed above will apply. However, Byron Yoga Centre will take extra steps to determine whether the suspension period requested would still enable the student to continue to complete their course within the timeframe of their original Confirmation of Enrolment, with extra support if required. Byron Yoga Centre will again take into consideration the

student's academic progress and attendance to date.

Byron Yoga Centre may choose to suspend a student's enrolment under the following circumstances:

- a. The student is disruptive on site and in class, evidenced by 2 or more complaints from fellow students and trainers/assessors;
- b. The student is the subject of complaints from the wider Australian community (evidenced by 2 or more complaints);
- c. The student causes minor (less than \$500) damage to the property of Byron Yoga Centre or is involved in inciting others to do so.

Byron Yoga Centre may choose to cancel a student's enrolment under the following circumstances:

- a. Academic Misconduct – defined as attempts by students to cheat, plagiarise or otherwise act dishonestly in undertaking an assessment task or assisting other students to do so. Students are considered guilty of cheating if they seek to gain advantage by unfair means such as copying another students' work, or in any way misleads a trainer/assessor about their knowledge, ability, or the amount of original work they have done.
- b. The student fails to pay the required fees, or abide by any other conditions, as stipulated in their agreement with Byron Yoga Centre;
- c. The student is the subject of an investigation by the Australian Police Force;
- d. The student steals or causes significant damage (more than \$500) to the property of Byron Yoga Centre or is involved in inciting others to do so.

Student's involved in the stealing or damage to Byron Yoga Centre property will be charged accordingly.

Where Byron Yoga Centre has chosen to suspend or cancel a student's enrolment, the student will be informed in writing and the 20-day appeal period will apply.

## Access and Equity

### What do the terms “Access” and “Equity” mean?

**Access** generally refers to the ability to enter training. Improving access might include improving physical access to a training venue or ensuring that selection criteria do not discriminate against clients.

**Equity** in this context means equality of access to, and potentially equal outcomes from training regardless of the individual's circumstances, background and identity.

Byron Yoga Centre is of the firm belief that every individual regardless of personal history, present circumstances or any other factor that can commonly be considered as an inhibiting factor to self-development, should be provided the opportunity to improve their life through further education. Byron Yoga Centre embraces multiculturalism and diversity in Australia and is pleased to be a contributor to quality education.

Access and equity issues are addressed during staff induction and during staff meetings and professional development activities. Access and equity are addressed within Byron Yoga Centre Code of Practice. The Code of Practice is openly communicated to all training participants and training and assessment staff.

Byron Yoga Centre endeavours to eliminate discrimination against persons on the ground of:

- Sex
- Marital status or pregnancy
- Family responsibility or family status
- Race
- Religious or political conviction
- Impairment
- Age

This Access and Equity Policy will be made available to students and potential students through the Student Handbook available on our website and in hardcopy.

## Procedure

Potential students seeking to enroll with Byron Yoga Centre will be assessed for entry to study through the same published entry requirements and through the same process, regardless of their background, circumstances, or eligibility for funding. Entry requirements for each of our courses are published on our website, while general information about enrolment can be found within the Enrolment Policy and Procedure.

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Upon enrolment, all students will be requested to complete a Special Needs Form. Prior to the commencement of training, all participants will have the opportunity to discuss any specific learning needs with their facilitators/assessors. Students will be asked during their welcome to the course to raise any access and equity issues they may face with the administration staff of Byron Yoga Centre. Further steps are listed below:

1. Students may be asked to complete a short Literacy and Numeracy test to identify any potential areas of difficulty that they may have, or any skill gaps that may need to be addressed.
2. Information received from this test will be analyzed by the facilitator. Students identified as needing help will be contacted by the facilitator. Privacy and Confidentiality will be discussed with the student.
3. The Facilitators will discuss with participants at the commencement of each training session or course, the topic of Access and Equity. The Facilitator will request that any outstanding Special Needs forms be submitted to the Administration Department of the RTO.
4. Any unresolved queries relating to access/equity issues will be referred to the Chief Executive Officer (for instance, if they cannot be resolved by the Facilitator).
5. The Chief Executive Officer will then contact the participant to discuss their access/equity issue and make appropriate arrangements which may include notifying the training venue, arranging a meeting with the participant and the Facilitator, arranging extra assistance from the Facilitator or external assistance as required.

6. File notes will be made of the action taken in each case where access/equity assistance is required, and the outcome recorded for the participant.

Access and Equity issues are not only addressed in terms of the services offered by Byron Yoga Centre, but also in terms of its own employment principles and in terms of addressing the wellbeing of all staff.

In addition to eliminating potential discrimination on the previously listed points, Byron Yoga Centre also takes a very firm stance on Sexual Harassment and Workplace Bullying. Byron Yoga Centre follows guidelines available by Fair Work Australia and Workcover on these issues.

Should it come to light that harassment in any form is occurring in the workplace, Byron Yoga Centre will endeavor to end the situation as soon as possible. The following steps will be taken.

- The employee who is felt to be discriminated against is advised to confide in a trusted mentor or friend about the situation.
- The employee is encouraged to discuss the situation with their immediate supervisor or manager. If either of these is in fact the person involved in the harassment or discriminatory behavior, the employee is to seek the next line of management and discuss the situation at hand.
- An investigation will be completed by the nominated manager and a resolution sought in which all parties can agree. All notes and documents associated with the incident will be kept under the strictest confidence.
- A schedule will be put in place to monitor the situation and wellbeing of the affected employees.
- Where no resolution can be determined by the nominated Manager, the Chief Executive Officer will become involved.
- A review of the information provided will be undertaken and further investigation completed as required. A resolution will be sought in which all parties can agree. All notes and documents associated with the incident will be kept under the strictest confidence.
- Where appropriate, disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment will be considered.
- Where it has been found that an employee's personal and human rights have been severely impacted, Byron Yoga Centre will endeavor to support that employee in seeking external resolution and compensation as they choose.

- If at any point, the victimized employee feels that their needs in this regard are not being suitably catered for by Byron Yoga Centre, they will be directed to seek support from external authorities that govern fair work practice in Australia.

### **Monitoring Attendance – International Students**

Byron Yoga Centre will systematically monitor students' compliance with student visa conditions relating to attendance. Trainers will mark an Attendance Sheet at each class.

The nominated RTO administration assistant will follow up student attendance at the close of each study day.

Arriving to class late three (3) times will equal one (1) absence. Leaving class early three (3) times will equal one (1) absence.

After three (3) unexcused absences or 85% attendance a Warning Letter will be sent to the student reminding the student of responsibilities and consequences of failure to maintain attendance and satisfactory progress. The letter will include details of counselling available relating to both learning skills and personal issues which may be affecting study.

Where the student has been absent for five (5) consecutive scheduled study days the nominated RTO administration assistant will notify the RTO Chief Executive Officer and send an email or letter advising the student to contact Byron Yoga Centre immediately or it will be assumed that they are no longer studying.

If a response has not been received within seven (7) days of the sent date of the letter, and all other means of contacting the student have failed, the student's Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) will be cancelled accordingly.

Students who have failed to attend at least 80% of classes at the end of the first study period will be subject to an Intervention Strategy to assist them meet course progress. Students will be required to make an appointment with the RTO Chief Executive Officer, who will design an Intervention Strategy to be agreed to by the student in question. The Strategy may include activities such as extra lessons with trainers, implementation of a mentoring system or formal counselling as required.

The intervention strategy must be explained, and the student must indicate whether they agree to abide by the terms. All parties, including the student must sign the intervention strategy. The document will be placed in the student's file. At the time that the intervention strategy is agreed to, the student will be made aware that further unsatisfactory attendance will lead to the student being reported to the Department of Home Affairs which may lead to the cancellation of his/her visa, depending on the outcome of any appeals. A record of all intervention measures implemented, and all relevant documentation will be kept in the student's file.

Should an International Student for a second compulsory study period miss five (5) consecutive study days or fall below the 80% attendance requirement, Byron Yoga Centre will notify the student of their intention to report them via the Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS) and provide the student with an opportunity to appeal (20-day period).

Immediately following the 20 working days where the student has not submitted a request to appeal or after the appeals process is completed and the original decision stands, the student will be reported to DHA via PRISMS with the approval of the RTO CEO. Byron Yoga Centre will report the student within five (5) working days of finalizing the decision to report.

Byron Yoga Centre may decide not to report a student for breaching their attendance requirements if it deems that the student is clearly and without question, meeting satisfactory course progress. This includes passing all units in a study semester. Byron Yoga Centre may question its trainers for further evidence regarding a student's progress and use this as part of its decision making process. The decision not to report a student for breaching attendance requirements sits solely with Byron Yoga Centre.

***Note: If a student's enrolment is suspended, the period of suspension of enrolment (as entered in PRISMS) will not be calculated in the attendance monitoring calculations.***

### **Monitoring Course Progress – International Students**

#### **Academic Progress**

The progression of students through courses in which they are enrolled to achieve the consequent awards in the required time is a desirable goal and a key indicator of the quality of an educational institution. Notwithstanding, some students will have difficulty with various units and on occasion receive a fail grade. While the occasional fail will slow progress towards completion of an award, it hopefully indicates difficulty in only one aspect of a course that may be balanced by ability in another.

However, if the student has failed a number of units, it is necessary for Byron Yoga Centre to exercise its duty of care towards the student by attempting to help them to explore the options available to them so as to prevent the incurring of significant costs and not meeting the original timeframe of their Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE).

Byron Yoga Centre is obliged to comply with the *National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018* and the ESOS Act 2000. Standard 10 of the National Code mandates monitoring of course progress by international students.

## Standard 8 – Overseas student visa requirements

### Monitoring overseas student progress, attendance, and course duration

*Byron Yoga Centre will systematically monitor students' course progress. Byron Yoga Centre is proactive in notifying and counselling students who are at risk of failing to meet course progress requirements. Byron Yoga center reports students, under section 19 of the ESOS Act, who have breached the course progress requirements.*

Byron Yoga Centre will monitor, record, and assess the course progress of each student for each unit of the course for which the student is enrolled in accordance with course progress policies and procedures.

Byron Yoga Centre implements appropriate documented course progress policies and procedures for each course, which must be provided to staff and students, that specify the:

- Requirements for achieving satisfactory course progress
- Process for assessing satisfactory course progress
- Procedure for intervention for students at risk of failing to achieve satisfactory course progress
- Process for determining the point at which the student has failed to meet satisfactory course progress, and
- Procedure for notifying students that they have failed to meet satisfactory course progress requirements.

**Byron Yoga will assess the course progress of the student at the end point of every study period. This will include checking student's homework results; teaching assessments and journal work for the term. Mentors for each cohort will record any information re. Students progression in the Teacher's Communication Google doc.**

Byron Yoga Centre has an intervention strategy, made available to staff and students, that specifies the procedures for identifying and assisting students at risk of not meeting the course progress requirements. The strategy must specify:

- Procedures for contacting and counselling identified students
- Strategies to assist identified students to achieve satisfactory course progress, and
- The process by which the intervention strategy is activated.

Byron Yoga Centre will implement the intervention strategy for any student who is at risk of not meeting satisfactory course progress requirements. At a minimum, the intervention strategy must be activated where the student has failed or is deemed not yet competent in 50% or more of the units attempted in any study period.

Where Byron Yoga Centre has assessed the student as not achieving satisfactory course progress, Byron Yoga must notify the student in writing of its intention to report the student for not achieving satisfactory course progress. The written notice must inform the student that he or she is able to access Byron Yoga Centre's complaints and appeals process as per Standard 8 (Complaints and appeals) and that the student has 20 working days in which to do so.

Where the student has chosen not to access the complaints and appeals processes within the 20 working day period, withdraws from the process, or the process is completed and results in a decision supporting the , the must notify the Department of Education through PRISMS of the student not achieving satisfactory course progress as soon as practicable.

<https://www.aei.gov.au/Regulatory-Information/Education-Services-for-Overseas-Students-ESOS-Legislative-Framework/National-Code/nationalcodepartd/Pages/ExplanatoryguideD10.aspx>

**Progression of students in their enrolled course of study will be evaluated during the processing of unit results normally occurring at the end of each study period. However, during semester, students with two events such as the late submission of an assignment or failure of an assignment/assessment shall be deemed "at risk" and be sent an appropriate warning letter.**

The Progression Rules against which the academic progress of students in a course shall be evaluated are as follows:

- A. At least two late assignments or two failed assignments/assessments
- B. Passing more than 50% of enrolled units in a study period.
- C. Failing at least 50% of the enrolled units in a study period.

The following circumstances will lead to the application of the outcomes in accordance with the Byron Yoga Centre progression rules:

1. The progression of any student who complies with Progression Rule "A" in a study period will be assessed as marginal and the student declared "at risk" and the student warned of the implication of continuing such

behavior.

2. The progression of a student who complies with Progression Rule “B” will be assessed as satisfactory and the student declared “in good standing”.
3. The progression of any student who complies with Progression Rule “C” in a study period will be declared in need of intervention, with the student and Byron Yoga Centre to define and implement a strategy that will meet the student’s needs and assist them in meeting course progress requirements.
4. Where the progression of an international student complies with Progression Rule “C” for a second consecutive study period, Byron Yoga Centre shall inform the student of its intention to report the student to the Department of Home Affairs.

### **Completion Within the Expected Duration of Study**

Standard 11 of the National Code mandates completion by an international student of their course of study within the expected duration of study.

#### **Standard 11 – Completion within the expected duration of study**

***BYC will monitor the enrolment load of students to ensure they complete the course within the duration specified in their CoE and do not exceed the allowable portion of online or distance learning. s only enables students to extend the expected duration of study for the course through the issuing of a new CoE in limited circumstances.***

Byron Yoga will must always have and implement documented policies and procedures for monitoring the progress of each student to ensure that the student is able to complete the course within the expected duration as specified on the student’s CoE. In monitoring this enrolment load, Byron Yoga must ensure that in each compulsory study period for a course, the student is studying at least one unit that is not by distance or online learning.

Byron Yoga may only extend the duration of the student’s study where the student will not complete the course within the expected duration, as specified on the student’s CoE, as the result of:

- a. compassionate or compelling circumstances (e.g. illness where a medical certificate states that the student was unable to attend classes or where the was unable to offer a pre-requisite unit)

- b. Byron Yoga will implement its intervention strategy for students who were at risk of not meeting satisfactory course progress, or
- c. an approved deferment or suspension of study has been granted under Standard 13.

Where there is a variation in the student's enrolment load which may affect the student's expected duration of study, Byron Yoga is to record this variation and the reasons for it on the student file. Byron Yoga must correctly report the student via PRISMS and/or issue a new CoE when the student can only account for the variation/s by extending his or her expected duration of study.

Byron Yoga may allow the student to undertake no more than 25 per cent of the student's total course by distance and/or online learning. However, the registered provider must not enroll the student exclusively in distance or online learning units in any compulsory study period.

Except in the circumstances specified in 9.2, the expected duration of study specified in the student's CoE must not exceed the CRICOS registered course duration.

The Department of Education has prepared an extensive explanatory guide to assist providers with the implementation of the National Code 2018. The Explanatory Guide can be found at the following link:

<https://internationaleducation.gov.au/Regulatory-Information/Pages/National-Code-2018-Factsheets-.aspx>

The Explanatory Guide offers the following advice in relation to the workload required of international students:

Byron Yoga Centre can allow a student to enroll in less than a 'full-time' load in any study period if:

- There are compassionate or compelling reasons for reducing the load.
- The reduced load is part of the provider's intervention strategy.

Byron Yoga Centre is obliged to monitor the enrolment load of international students to ensure that at all times they are in a position to complete their course within the duration on each student's COE, usually the normal duration of the course.

Before the commencement of study and each study period the International Student Liaison Officer shall negotiate/confirm with each international student a program of study designed to complete the student's course within the period specified on the student's COE.

The Term Mentor and Student Support Manager will ensure that students will be provided with responsible guidance as to course requirements for each semester, including details of the assessment requirements within each unit.

In discussion with the International Student Liaison Officer before the commencement of each study period, the student may request a variation of the agreed program of study (in writing) which may extend the period of study beyond the expected duration only on the grounds of:

- Compassionate and compelling circumstances; or
- Approved deferment or suspension of study.

The International Student Liaison Officer shall record approval of such a request on the student's file, along with the reasons for the approval.

If, during a study period, the student has reason to vary their enrolment due to compassionate and compelling circumstances, the student may apply in writing for the details of their enrolment to be altered accordingly. The International Student Liaison Officer shall record this approval on the student's file along with the reasons for the approval and advise the CEO of this action.

At the beginning of the student's penultimate study period, if it has been determined the student is unable to complete by the end of the next study period, the International Student Liaison Officer may request of the CEO the extension of the student's enrolment and the issue of a new COE should the student meet the requirements of compassionate and compelling circumstances.

Byron Yoga Centre will not allow international students to undertake more than 25% of their total course by distance and/or online learning. Byron Yoga Centre will not enrol an international student exclusively in distance or online learning units in any compulsory study period.

### **Compassionate and Compelling Circumstances**

For a student to establish compassionate and compelling circumstances they must provide proof of these circumstances. The evidence will be reviewed, and a decision made at the discretion of Byron Yoga Centre.

**Definition:** Compassionate or compelling circumstances are generally those beyond the control of the student when they have an impact on the student's course progress or wellbeing. These could include:

- Serious medical condition or injury

- Bereavement of close family members such as parents or siblings.
- Major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring their immediate travel
- A traumatic experience which could include but is not limited to:
- Involvement in or witnessing of an accident or ☒ A crime committed against the student or
- The student has been a witness to a crime and this has impacted on the student.

### **Guidelines for Compassionate and Compelling Circumstances**

Medical certificates provided as evidence must:

- Be issued by a registered doctor and include the Doctor's contact details
- State that the student has a medical condition and is unfit for study
- State the length of time the student will be unfit for study

Death certificates provided as evidence must be certified and translated into English.

Evidence of a major political upheaval or natural disaster must be within reasonable proximity to the student's family and will be investigated by the RTO.

Evidence of a traumatic experience must include a police report or psychologist's report/letter or a report/letter issued by a suitably qualified professional.

### **Transferring Between Providers (International Students)**

Byron Yoga Centre must meet obligations contained within the *National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018* (The National Code 2018) in relation to students seeking to transfer between providers of educational services.

## **Definitions:**

**Principal course:** The principal course of study refers to the main course of study to be undertaken by an International Student where a student visa has been issued for multiple courses of study. The principal course of study would normally be the final course of study where the International Student arrives in Australia with a student visa that covers multiple courses.

**PRISMS:** Provider Registration and International Student Management System

## **Prospective students seeking to transfer to Byron Yoga Centre from another provider**

Byron Yoga Centre will not enrol a student wishing to transfer from another registered provider's course prior to the student completing a minimum of six months of that principal course except where:

- 1) The original provider has ceased to be registered;
- 2) The course in which the student is enrolled has ceased to be registered;
- 3) The original provider has provided a written letter of release;
- 4) The original provider has had a sanction imposed on its registration that prevents the student from continuing his or her course;
- 5) Any government sponsor of the student considers the change to be in the student's best interest and has provided written support for that change.

Where a student enrolled with another registered provider of educational services requests to be enrolled with Byron Yoga Centre prior to completing six months of their principal course, has met all of the necessary entry requirements and one or more of eligibility criteria listed above, that student shall:

- 1) Receive a formal Offer of Admission letter from Byron Yoga Centre;
- 2) Receive supplementary information around their chosen course, Byron Yoga Centre policies and procedures and refunding of course fees;
- 3) Be asked to produce a Letter of Release from the previous provider;
- 4) Present the Letter of Release together with the completed Acceptance of Offer of Admission as the initial part of the enrolment process with Byron Yoga Centre.

Where a student has completed six months of their Principal Course, Byron Yoga Centre does not require a Letter of Release from the original provider.

### **Prospective students seeking to transfer from Byron Yoga Centre to another provider**

Byron Yoga Centre recognises that, from time to time, there will be requests from International Students for a Letter of Release so that they may enrol at another registered provider of educational services. Students are required to obtain a Letter of Release should they wish to transfer prior to completing six months of their principal course with Byron Yoga Centre. Valid circumstances for requesting a Letter of Release include, but are not limited to, the following:

- personal or financial hardship,
- familial trauma or social anxiety caused by separation, and
- better prospects for educational success and advancement.

Where an International Student enrolled with Byron Yoga Centre requests to transfer to another registered provider of educational services prior to completing six months of their Principal Course, that student shall:

- 1) Make a written request for release from Byron Yoga Centre;
- 2) Provide a formal Offer of Admission from the other provider;
- 3) Receive a written response to the request within five (5) working days.

Where an International Student enrolled with Byron Yoga Centre lodges a written request for a Letter of Release, accompanied by a formal Offer of Admission from another registered provider, Byron Yoga Centre shall:

Acknowledge receipt of the request and process it without cost to the student;

- 1) Make a determination regarding the request and respond, in writing, within five (5) working days.

If the request is granted, Byron Yoga Centre shall:

- 1) Provide the student with a formal Letter of Release within 5 working days of the determination being made;
- 2) Provide a Statement of Attainment where applicable in accordance with Australian Qualifications Framework guidelines;

- 3) Inform the student, in writing, that he or she is required to contact the nearest DHA Office in order to obtain advice about whether or not a new Student Visa is required;
- 4) Update the PRISM database with regard to the student's current status at Byron Yoga Centre

If the request is refused, Byron Yoga Centre shall:

- 1) Provide the student with a written explanation of the grounds upon which the application was rejected;
- 2) Advise the student that he or she retains the right to appeal the decision in accordance with the Byron Yoga Centre Complaints and Grievances Policy for International Students.

Byron Yoga Centre reserves the right to refuse a request for a Letter of Release in the following instances:

- 1) The student has failed to provide a valid Offer of Admission or other supporting documentation from the other Provider;
- 2) The student has outstanding financial obligations to the Byron Yoga Centre;  
and
- 3) The student has not returned resources borrowed from the Byron Yoga Centre.

In accordance with Academic Administration best practice, Byron Yoga Centre will maintain a record of all requests for Letters of Release. Copies of all documentation related to each student's request and the response of Byron Yoga Centre will be stored in that particular student's file.

Byron Yoga Centre will release a student where Byron Yoga has assessed that:

- the international student will be reported because they are unable to achieve satisfactory course progress at the level they are studying, even after engaging with that registered provider's intervention strategy (7.2.2.1)
- there is evidence of compassionate or compelling circumstances (7.2.2.2)
- the provider does not deliver the course as outlined in the written agreement (7.2.2.3)

- there is evidence that the international student's reasonable expectations about their current course are not being met (7.2.2.4)
- there is evidence that the international student was misled by the registered provider or an education or migration agent regarding the registered provider or its course and the course is, therefore, unsuitable to their needs and/or study objectives (7.2.2.5)
- an appeal (internal or external) on another matter results in a decision or recommendation to release the international student (7.2.2.6).

### **Students seeking to transfer from Byron Yoga Centre to another provider after completing 6 months of their Principal Course**

Where an international student enrolled with Byron Yoga Centre requests to transfer to another registered provider of educational services after completing six months of their Principal Course, that student shall:

- 1) Notify the Byron Yoga Centre in writing of their intention to withdraw;
- 2) Ensure all outstanding fees are paid and property belonging to Byron Yoga Centre is returned;
- 3) Ensure all personal details in the Byron Yoga Centre are up to date prior to departure.

Upon receiving such notification from a student, Byron Yoga Centre will:

- 1) Update the student's details in the Byron Yoga Centre database;
- 2) Encourage the student to contact the nearest Department of Home Affairs to discuss their situation;
- 3) Update the PRISM database with regard to the student's current status at Byron Yoga Centre.

### **Student Support Services**

Byron Yoga Centre will endeavour to support a student through their course of study through means such as access to additional time with trainers and access to professional career guidance counselling when available.

Byron Yoga Centre will also maintain a directory of organisations known throughout the VET sector to provide assistance and guidance to students (Support Agencies Register). Staff at Byron Yoga Centre will assist the student in making contact with the relevant organisation and where possible, implement additional requirements or special circumstances needed by the student in order to have a higher chance of success at completing their studies.

All students are required to complete a Special Needs Form upon enrolment and submit it to the RTO Administration Department.

Students are assigned a mentor each term to support the learning journey. The Student Support Manager will also be available to students Tuesday to Friday. 0491642642

### **Variation to Training Schedule**

Should a student require a variation or amendment to the agreed training schedule for any reason, this is to be formally documented with detail surrounding the request for the change. The RTO Chief Executive Officer and the relevant Trainer/Assessor are responsible for ensuring that any changes implemented still meet the requirements of the qualification and relevant Training Package and that the quality of the training and assessment provided are not negatively impacted in any way.

The student, the relevant trainer/assessor and RTO Chief Executive Officer are all to sign off on the amendment and the document is to be filed in the student's hard copy file. A note in the Learner Management System is also to be made by the Administration Department.

The RTO Chief Executive Officer retains the sole right to approve or decline requests for amendments to a student's training schedule. Students have the right to appeal decisions which involve a request being declined and may follow the formal Complaints and Grievances procedure in this regard.

The Variation to Training Schedule Form can be used for the purposes outlined above.

### **Withdrawing from Studies**

Students who wish to withdraw from their studies at Byron Yoga Centre are required to inform the RTO in writing. This can be done by completing a Withdrawal Form. This ensures that Byron Yoga Centre can appropriately close off the student's enrolment and maintain accurate and up-to-date records. Students will have an opportunity when notifying the RTO of their withdrawal to

apply for a refund. Any request for a refund will be assessed in accordance with the Byron Yoga Centre Fees, Charges and Refund Policy.

## **Privacy and Confidentiality**

Byron Yoga Centre has undertaken to comply with the requirements of the Privacy Act 1988, including in particular, the 13 Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) that fall under this Act.

As a Registered Training Organisation, Byron Yoga Centre is required to report on data it obtains from its students to State and or Federal Government agencies for reasons such as research, statistical analysis and the generation of performance reports for RTOs so they may gain a better understanding of their standing with other RTOs in relation to customer satisfaction.

Information RTOs are required to share includes the courses and subjects in which students are enrolled, their age and gender, details of where they were born and went to school.

The data collected by the RTO must conform to the Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information and Statistical Standard (AVETMISS). Following AVETMISS guidelines allows for there to be a benchmark in vocational education and training (VET) measurement that in turn provides a more accurate and defined picture of what is happening in the sector.

It enables comparison and analysis at all levels of the training system, nationally and within each state and territory. Byron Yoga Centre collects this information from students through the issuing of its Enrolment Form provided upon expression of interest in any of our courses.

Information about a student, except as required by law or as required under the Standards for Registered Training Organisations, is not disclosed without the student's written permission and that of their parent or guardian if the student is under 18 years of age. Where a student/guardian consents to disclosure of information, they will be requested to complete the Permission to Disclose Information Form, which provides specific information around what is to be disclosed and to whom. A copy of the completed form will be kept in their student file.

Student files are kept in secure facilities at Byron Yoga Centre offices with access restricted to only key RTO personnel. All RTO personnel are required to sign a Confidentiality Declaration upon being appointed by the company.

Student assessment records are retained in a secure location for a period of 30 years in accordance with current Federal and State legislation, before being destroyed.

Students are encouraged to keep the RTO abreast of changes to their personal circumstances so that information held on file is accurate and the most recent available.

### **Privacy Policy**

*Under the Data Provision Requirements 2012, Byron Yoga Centre is required to collect personal information about you and to disclose that personal information to the National Centre for Vocational Education Research Ltd (NCVER).*

*Your personal information, may be used or disclosed by Byron Yoga Centre for statistical, administrative, regulatory and research purposes. Byron Yoga Centre may disclose your personal information for these purposes to:*

- *Commonwealth and State or Territory government departments and authorised agencies; and*
- *NCVER.*

*Personal information that has been disclosed to NCVER may be used or disclosed by NCVER for the following purposes:*

- *populating authenticated VET transcripts;*
- *facilitating statistics and research relating to education, including surveys and data linkage;*
- *pre-populating RTO student enrolment forms;*
- *understanding how the VET market operates, for policy, workforce planning and consumer information; and*
- *administering VET, including program administration, regulation, monitoring and evaluation.*

*You may receive a student survey which may be administered by a government department or NCVER employee, agent or third party contractor or other authorised agencies. Please note you may opt out of the survey at the time of being contacted.*

*NCVER will collect, hold, use and disclose your personal information in accordance with the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth), the National VET Data Policy and all NCVER policies and protocols (including those published on NCVER's website at [www.ncver.edu.au](http://www.ncver.edu.au)).*

*For more information about NCVER's Privacy Policy go to <https://www.ncver.edu.au/privacy>*

## **Student Access to Information**

Byron Yoga Centre is able to provide students with copies of information held about them at their request. Please provide adequate notice (at least one week) in this regard.

## **Procedure**

- Student to complete a Request for Information Form;
- Completed form to be submitted to RTO Administration Department;
- Allow 1 week for processing;
- RTO to contact student when information is ready for collection;
- Administration to sign off that information has been collected.

## **Provision of Quality Training and Assessment**

Byron Yoga Centre is committed to providing training that meets the needs of its students as well as the wider industries in which it operates. As a minimum, Training and Assessment Strategies will be developed for each qualification, course or Unit of Competency on the RTO's scope of registration. These strategies will be developed in consultation with industry and will be subject to a review once a year. The following procedure is to be implemented:

- Learning and Assessment Strategy in need of review identified by the Chief Executive Officer;
- Strategy to be revised to ensure it reflects current delivery and assessment practice of the RTO;
- Industry Consultation Questionnaire template to be sent out to chosen industry partners with revised Learning and Assessment Strategy;
- Industry Consultation Questionnaire to be retrieved and reviewed. Further follow up with industry partners to be conducted as required;
- Where possible, recommendations and feedback from consultation with industry partners is to be incorporated within the Learning and Assessment Strategy of the RTO;
- Industry Consultation Questionnaires to be files appropriately;
- Industry Consultation Register to be updated with activities undertaken.

Other methods to be used to ensure that industry is being effectively engaged include:

- Inviting industry partners to attend and participate in meetings being held by the RTO as part of its Continuous Improvement Schedule;
- Negotiating with industry partners to allow trainers/assessors working for Byron Yoga Centre to have access to work sites and gain exposure to current industry practice;
- Inviting guest speakers of applicable industries to give talks/presentations to students when possible; and
- Attending industry networking events as part of the RTO's overall Professional Development agenda.

Training and Assessment Strategies will reflect the requirements of the relevant Training Package and will identify target groups. The strategies will contain information on Byron Yoga Centre staff, facilities, equipment, training and assessment materials. All of these areas may be subject to review and improvement following engagement with industry and any recommendations it puts forward.

### **Staff**

Byron Yoga Centre utilises the services of both training contractors and full-time facilitators to provide training and assessment in accordance with its scope of registration. Administrative staff are employed to provide support to both the training and assessment staff as well as senior management to assist in ensuring compliance with the requirements of the NVR Act 2011.

All staff are required to undertake professional development and undergo a staff review at least once a year.

### **Facilities**

Byron Yoga Centre endeavours to have suitable facilities for its training and assessment services. Facilities used for training will be either under the direct ownership of Byron Yoga Centre or used under a long-term lease agreement. These facilities are to be fitted with the relevant technology and furniture that can facilitate a comfortable and supportive learning experience.

Where appropriate and agreed to, Byron Yoga Centre will use facilities provided by the employers of students for the purpose of training and assessing. In all

instances a Site Capacity Checklist will be completed to ensure that the premises provide a suitable platform for the delivering of training and that it is able to meet the requirements as outlined by all the relevant qualification packaging rules.

## **Equipment**

Equipment and machinery are used within training and assessment where possible to ensure students receive understanding of the equipment as per the workplace requirements. At all times the standard operating procedures are used to ensure safety is maintained.

It is the intent of Byron Yoga Centre to invite industry representatives to participate in an annual review of industry-related equipment and infrastructure. When developing training plans, equipment and machinery that are used at the workplace are assessed for the availability for training and assessment activities.

## **Training and Assessment Material**

Where possible, Byron Yoga Centre will endeavour to design and create its own training and assessment material.

Where it is not possible to develop its own material, Byron Yoga Centre will purchase the materials from a suitable, reputable supplier.

All material purchased for use in Byron Yoga Centre's services to the public will be validated by its own suitably qualified staff or an external consultant to ensure that standards of the relevant training package and industry requirements are being met.

Byron Yoga Centre staff has access to all relevant resources for training and assessment.

## **Assessment**

In developing the assessment procedure for each qualification, the RTO will ensure:

- Compliance with the assessment guidelines from the relevant Training Package or accredited course;
- Assessment leads to a qualification or statement of attainment under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF);
- Suitable pre-assessment procedures are in place to prepare student for assessment;

- Formal assessment complies with the principles assessment (i.e. assessment is valid, reliable, flexible and fair);
- Formal assessment complies the rules of evidence (valid, sufficient, current and authentic) guide the collection of evidence;
- There is a focus on the application of knowledge and skills to the standard expected in the workplace, including skills for managing work tasks, contingencies and the job environment;
- Timely and appropriate feedback is given to students;
- Assessment complies with access and equity guidelines as outlined by Byron Yoga Centre Access and Equity Policy;
- Student's right to appeal is clearly noted.

All records of assessment will be in accordance with the requirements of the NVR Act 2011 and Byron Yoga Centre Record Keeping policies and procedures.

### **Plagiarism**

It is not permissible to attempt to pass off another person's work and ideas as one's own. To do so constitutes plagiarism and will result in penalties, including exclusion from the unit or cancellation of enrolment. All attempts at plagiarism will be treated extremely seriously and all students will be made aware of their responsibilities in this regard.

Students will be expected to sign a Plagiarism Declaration prior to submitting any work for assessment.

### **Submission of Assignments**

All assignments and homework given to a student must be completed and submitted on the date specified by the trainer/assessor. This is in order for the training and assessing staff to complete assessments before certification can be issued. Should there be any delay, a student is requested to contact our office to discuss their concerns.

### **Alcohol and Drug Policy**

Byron Yoga Centre stands firmly against the use of Drugs and Alcohol on its premises and by any persons, including staff, students and contractors, during its

hours of operation. It is felt that a zero tolerance in this regard is in the best interest of all parties and will contribute to ensuring Byron Yoga Centre's compliance with all State and national legislation associated with such behaviour.

Students who are suspected of being under the influence of Drugs or Alcohol will not be permitted to attend class. Neither will staff members who are suspected of being under the influence of Drugs or Alcohol be permitted to attend their normal work activities.

Byron Yoga Centre will endeavour to educate both staff and students about the potential harm and lifelong effects of consistent Drug and Alcohol abuse and in turn, endeavour to promote healthy lifestyle habits and practices.

Byron Yoga Centre's policy on Alcohol and Drug use is clearly stated in the Student Handbook and is addressed in the corporate induction process. In both instances, participants are asked to sign off on their understanding to this and other Byron Yoga Centre policies and procedures.

Byron Yoga Centre will promote organisations known to be subject matter experts in this regard and will supply suitable reference material to students and staff alike.

## **Procedure**

Any person who suspects that a Byron Yoga Centre staff member or student may be intoxicated and of potential harm to fellow students or staff members should contact the first line of authority. For students, this is their trainer. For staff members, this is their supervisor. If the first line of authority is unavailable, endeavour to contact the RTO Chief Executive Officer;

- The nominated authority is to then, where safe and appropriate, escort the intoxicated individual from the premises;
- The RTO Chief Executive is to be notified immediately after the event;
- Details of the incident and all witness accounts are to be recorded as soon as is practicable;
- In the context of the offender being a student, Byron Yoga Centre may request that the student be transferred to an alternative provider and will support this process as necessary. Where the staff member is the offender, Byron Yoga Centre Chief Executive Officer will arrange a consultation between both parties so that a resolution may be negotiated that is agreeable to all concerned and will assist everyone involved moving on from the event;

- Police will be contacted where it is determined that there is severe risk of damage to any persons or property.

### **Work-Based Training**

The term “work-based training” is considered to mean training and/or assessment that will occur in a workplace other than in a provider’s own simulated workplace environment.

In some instances, students may be required to undertake work-based training for courses offered by Byron Yoga Centre. Where work-based training is a course requirement, the RTO will ensure that students have access to suitable and appropriate host employers as part of their training. Host employers will be chosen using strict selection criteria and will at a minimum, include the following steps:

- Site visit of the premises and facility, including a general inspection;
- Interviews with business owners/directors;
- Signing of Memorandum of Understanding with business owners/directors interested in acting as host employers in partnership with Byron Yoga Centre;
- Completion of a Site Capacity Checklist to ensure the facilities/premises meet the requirements of the course in question;
- Completion of ongoing risk assessment activities to ensure requirements and the conditions of the MOU are continually being met.

Students will be informed of all work-based training requirements through course material issued to them prior to formalising their enrolment. Upon enrolment and prior to commencing work-based training, Byron Yoga Centre will hold an Orientation Session for all affected students. This session will be used to convey, amongst other items, the following information:

- Rights and responsibilities of students in the workplace;
- Rights and responsibilities of Host Employers;
- Rights and responsibilities of Byron Yoga Centre
- Assessment in the workplace.

Students will be required to sign a 'Work Placement Agreement' to demonstrate their understanding of the above information and commitment to the program. Any variations to the hours worked and conditions of the work placement must be approved by the RTO Chief Executive Officer and the Host Employer.

Student attendance throughout the work placement will be recorded by the Host Employer and the student via standard workplace timesheets or Training Journal.

Course progress will be monitored by having regular meetings between the Byron Yoga Centre Assessor, the student and the host employer. Where the student is not felt to be meeting course progress requirements, coaching and mentoring will be offered, and in the case of International Students, the Monitoring Course Progress policy and procedure will be followed.

In the context of traineeships and apprenticeships, a formal Training Plan will be negotiated with the student, employer and Byron Yoga Centre prior to the commencement of training. Once agreed, all parties will sign the document.

Byron Yoga Centre does not accept assessment conducted by workplace supervisors and managers. Assessment is reserved for assessors employed by Byron Yoga Centre.

## **Recognition of Prior Learning**

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a process that recognises a student's current skills and experience regardless of where and when the learning occurred. Applications for RPL are based on whole units of competency and are to be submitted prior to the commencement of training.

Students can base their application on any combination of formal or informal training and education, work experience or general life experience. In order to recognise prior learning, it is necessary to compare the informal or non-formal learning the individual has achieved against the relevant unit of competence. This comparison includes learning outcomes, required skills and knowledge and their application within the range specified for that unit of competence.

The RPL process is to determine if the prior learning fulfils all, some or any of them.

## **Procedure**

- Student is to discuss request with the relevant Byron Yoga Centre Assessor;
- Should the decision be made to progress with RPL, an RPL Application Form will be issued to the student;
- Where required, appropriate fees to be paid;

- Student will be issued with an RPL Kit;
- All items requesting information in the RPL Kit to be completed and returned to the Administration Department of the RTO;
- The Assessor will assess the information provided and will make a decision if and for what to grant RPL. If a student presents an AQF qualification or Statement of Attainment to the Assessor from another RTO, the Assessor will take a copy and verify its authenticity.
- The Assessor will discuss the outcome of the assessment with the student. Both the student and the Assessor will sign off on the outcome.
- This information will be forwarded to RTO Administration staff for input into the Learner Management System and students' hard copy files.
- Successful candidates will be issued with a Qualification or Statement of Attainment.
- Unsuccessful candidates will be given feedback with options to provide further evidence. A Gap Analysis will be conducted in this regard, and where possible, the RTO will provide the student a range of options to address the missing evidence. This may be in the form of further assignments including questioning, workbook activities and work-based projects.

All applicants have a right to formally appeal the RPL assessment through Byron Yoga Centre Appeals process. All information is handled according to Byron Yoga Centre Privacy and Confidentiality guidelines.

With regard to International Students, if credit granted shortens the student's course, this will be reflected in the Student Offer Letter (as this is the contract with the student) and will be indicated on the Confirmation of Enrolment issued for that student. Such students are reminded that a successful RPL or credit transfer application can affect their visa status and should they have any further queries in this regard, they are to contact the Department of Home Affairs.

Where credit is granted to an international student during their course of study, and their period of study is shortened, the RTO will inform the Department of Education and DHA through the use of PRISMS.

All students will be asked to confirm their understanding and provide their approval for the implementation of the outcome of their application for credit.

## **National Mutual Recognition and Credit Transfer**

National Mutual Recognition is the process whereby a Registered Training Organisation agrees to recognise the AQF qualifications and Statements of Attainment issued by any other Australian registered educational institution (whether it be VET, Higher Education or secondary) or the Unique Student Identifier Registrar, and provide credit as applicable. Byron Yoga Centre follows the principles of National Mutual Recognition in this regard. The RTO will seek verification of the certification supplied with each application that it receives.

Should a student wish to have their qualifications reviewed in order to obtain credit, the steps below must be followed. There is no charge for a Credit Transfer application.

### **Procedure**

- Student is to discuss request with the relevant Byron Yoga Centre Assessor;
- Should the decision be made to progress Credit Transfer, a Direct Credit Transfer Application Form will be issued to the student;
- Original certificates and Statements of Attainment to be witnessed by the Assessor. Copies to be made. The student may also wish to provide certified copies;
- The Assessor to verify authenticity of documents provided;
- Information will be forwarded to RTO Administration staff for input into the Learner Management System and students' hard copy files. The student may be granted an exemption from certain aspects of the training as deemed appropriate.

With regard to International Students, if credit granted shortens the student's course, this will be reflected in the Student Offer Letter (as this is the contract with the student) and will be indicated on the Confirmation of Enrolment issued for that student. Such students are reminded that a successful Credit Transfer application can affect their visa status and should they have any further queries in this regard, they are to contact the Department of Home Affairs.

Where credit is granted to an international student during their course of study, and their period of study is shortened, the RTO will inform the Department of Education and DHA through the use of PRISMS.

All students will be asked to confirm their understanding and provide their approval for the implementation of the outcome of their application for credit.

Note that providing credit for previous studies is not recognition of prior learning. RPL is an assessment-only pathway of determining the competence of a person, while providing credit is recognising the equivalence in content and learning outcomes between different types of learning and/or qualifications previously undertaken and completed successfully.

### **Extension process and fee**

- If a student fails to complete the term assessments and tasks by the first week of their term break then they will need to apply for an extension.
- Extensions can be requested by emailing: [homework@byronyoga.com](mailto:homework@byronyoga.com)
- Byron Yoga Centre will permit extensions to students seeking extra time to complete assignments. The first extension application will be free of charge. All subsequent applications will be charged at a rate of \$100. Extension periods last for a period of 2 weeks. Students must contact Byron Yoga Centre at least 1 week prior to a submission or completion due date to apply for an extension. Byron Yoga Centre reserves the right to refuse an extension in its absolute discretion.
- Extensions and suspensions can only be granted in compassionate or compelling circumstances.
- In the event that a student does not complete their course in time, and does not seek either an extension or suspension for the course as directed above, then their training will be considered incomplete. No refund will be given and a new enrolment must be pursued.
- The extension fee is paid by clicking <https://byronyoga.secure.retreat.guru/program/extension-fee-2021>