

FINDING A JOB

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT GUIDE



WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE?

At SHOC, we understand that it's not easy to study in a new country. We are also aware of the pressures that international students face to support themselves financially while at university.

As an international student this guide will support you during your job search.

TAX

Have you got a Tax File number?

- To work in Australia you need a work visa and a tax file number (TFN). Your employer will use this number to withhold taxes from your wage and send it to the tax office.
- You can view the TFN application options on the Australian Taxation Office website www.ato.gov.au.

Why do I need to pay tax?

If you are enrolled in an Australian educational institution for more than 6 months you are considered an Australian resident for taxation purposes.

Can I get that money back?

Yes. At the end of the income year (30th June) you can complete an annual tax return. This looks at your income and the tax you paid to determine if you are eligible for any tax return.

What happens to my tax after I go back home?

You may be able to lodge a tax return early when you return to your home country. Depending on your situation, you may be able to claim any superannuation that was accumulated while you were living in Australia.

PROTECTING YOURSELF

How do I not go over my allowed hours?

Make sure that you are keeping track of the hours you are working each week. As an international student there are certain number of hours you are allowed to work each week or fortnight. If you go over these hours you could put your visa or study at risk.

Let your employer know the maximum hours you can work during each semester. If there is a change in your study load ie at the start or end of a semester let your

employer know at least 4 weeks in advance.

Can I work if I have a scholarship?

You will need to check the details of your scholarship to make sure that you are allowed to work. Some PhD scholarships have restrictions.

What is a scam?

Unfortunately, there are many employers who do not do everything as the law says. They may not offer the minimum wage or refuse to give pay slips each week or fortnight. Some may even tell lies to international students, saying that they are not allowed to pay them the full wage or threaten to tell the government that they are working too many hours each week.

Some international students are asked to do tasks such as transferring money from one account to another, keeping a small amount in return. This is called money laundering and it is illegal.

How do I find the minimum wage?

The Fair Work Ombudsman website lists the minimum wage for different industries.

You can check your wage on their website

www.fairwork.gov.au/pay/minimum-wages.

What if I am unsure about a job?

You do not need to accept a job offer straight away. You can request 24 hours to consider the offer and make an appointment to see a SHOC employment advocate to discuss the job.

What type of work can I expect to get as a student?

Many students work in the hospitality and retail industries. These industries often require evening and weekend work well with student schedules. Professional roles related to your studies are much harder to come by and often require full-time hours.

What sort of expectations should I have?

Do not expect to get a job straight away. Finding employment in Brisbane can be challenging and it takes time. Increase your chances by updating your resume and cover letter to meet Australian standards.

I would like to work on campus, can I?

Positions on campus are very competitive. Many positions on campus also require employees to work Monday to Friday, which may not work around your timetable.

UPDATING YOUR RESUME

What is different about applying for a job in Australia?

Applying for jobs in Australia usually requires a cover letter and a resume. You can apply for positions online through popular job searching sites such as Seek or by visiting businesses in person with a copy of your resume. If you're applying for a position online, it is important that you have a cover letter that addresses all the qualities they are looking.

What are the minimum skills required?

Different industries will have different skill requirements. If you are looking at a role which involves talking to customers, it will be important that you have good English communication skills. Other commonly required skills include the ability to work in a team, organisational skill, leadership skills and the ability to work well under pressure.

The skills required will be listed in the job advertisement and change from job to job. Read the advertisement carefully and match your resume and cover letter to the skills required.

How do I update my resume to Australian standards?

Your resume should include the following:

- Name, address, contact phone number and email. You do not need to include your marital status or date of birth
- 11 point font using a simple layout. Avoid using tables and coloured, large or fancy fonts
- A career objective or profile summary

- List of your most recent positions (in chronological order) with the duties that you performed in these roles
- List key skills
- At least 2 referees

For more detailed information regarding resume writing, please see the PDF resources provided by SHOC www.uqu.com.au/employment or book an appointment online to speak to a SHOC employment advocate.

Qualifications needed?

If you work in hospitality you will most likely need an RSA and if you work with children you will need a blue card. Check each position for the required qualifications.

Responsible Service of Alcohol (RSA)

If you work anywhere that sells alcohol, for example bars, restaurants and cafes, you will need a Responsible Service of Alcohol certificate (RSA). It is against the law in Australia to employ someone who serves alcohol without having completed this course. You can easily complete this course online for around \$25 or under.

Blue Card

Any work that involves working with children will require you to have a blue card. Employers often pay for these so check with your employer first before paying for one.

How do I get a job in my professional field?

Obtaining a job in your professional field is much more difficult than finding a casual or part-time role in the hospitality or retail industry. Many professional roles require full-time hours and are highly competitive.

For assistance with full-time position applications, book an appointment online with the UQ Career Hub www.careerhub.uq.edu.au.

Taking time off for exams and holidays

We all want to have some time off around the exams, but to an employer, 3 weeks off twice a year is a large amount of leave. If you have exams, then it will be wiser for you to ask for the days before and on your exams off, rather than the entire study and exam period.

The same rule should apply for asking for holidays. If you have had time off for exams and request 2 months off to return home, it may strain the working relationship you have with your employer.

In Australia, the general amount of time a staff member is allowed off each year is 4 full weeks. If you are doing 10 hours a week, then this will equate to about 40 hours of leave a year. When considering time off, keep this in mind.

Talk to your employer when planning any time off so you can negotiate a time frame that is suitable for them and you.

Undergraduate students

As an undergraduate it is difficult to find work related to what you are studying. Completing some volunteer work in your field could help you to find work related to your degree when you graduate.

Post graduate students

Many post graduate students would like to work part-time in their professional field, yet finding these positions can be challenging. You may need to work in an industry that is better suited to students until you find employment in your field of interest.

Exchange students

If you are an exchange student and are only in Brisbane for a short time, it can be difficult to find work. Do not rely on your ability to find a part-time or casual job while living in Australia as you may not be able to find work.

English language skills

For any customer service job, you will need good English language skills. If you are still struggling with your English language skills, you may be better off looking for positions where these skills are not required including: washing dishes or cars, cleaning and stocking shelves.



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