Marine Biology and Terrestrial Ecology Program 2016

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G’day and welcome to your semester abroad in Australia!

During your 12 week visit to Queensland you will travel to rainforests, reefs and sand islands, learning about some of the most important coastal ecosystems in the world and, of course, getting to know the famous “Aussie” lifestyle.

This information pack will help you with planning your trip. Please read the following pages carefully, as they include useful information on what to bring, what to expect, and what to do upon your arrival in Brisbane. All participants are responsible for and must be familiar with, the material contained in this information pack.

We encourage you to pass this information on to friends or family so they know what you will be up to. As you will be travelling to remote areas with no mobile or internet access, the calendar will be a useful tool for them to know when you will be out of contact.

Before you arrive you should also ensure that you have read the UCEAP pre-departure checklist and informational materials. When viewing the checklist, read UCEAP’s Your Program Guide thoroughly; it features EAP-specific information which is not included in this handbook.

If you have any questions please feel free to email us on international.programs@uq.edu.au. We are happy to assist you before and during your stay in Australia.

We are really looking forward to you joining us for these exciting three months.

See you soon!

From all the team in the International Programs Office
We believe in a hands-on approach to learning, and during your time in Australia you will have many chances to put theory into practice. On the field trips you will visit spectacular and remote locations that many locals never see. An outline of your activities in Australia is given below.

### UC EAP Program Overview

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<td>Location</td>
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International Programs Academic Staff

Associate Professor Ian Tibbetts
Program Director and Marine Biology Course Coordinator

Ian is practically a celebrity when it comes to undergraduate teaching at UQ. He has a passion for teaching and mentoring students and is the drive behind the development of many teaching programs in the School of Biological Sciences. His immersion into all things marine had a cool start - in Swansea, Wales. Things heated up when he came to Australia to study fish communities within Moreton Bay, later to become the Director of the Moreton Bay Research Station for 10 years. Ian’s lab consists of over 17 researchers studying different aspects of fish biology ranging from tiger sharks to pygmy seahorses.

Dr John Hall
Terrestrial Ecology Course Coordinator

John is one of the School of Biological Sciences terrestrial ecology experts, joining the University in 2007. John inherited a love of all things botanic from his father who very early on introduced his son to the natural splendours and living complexities contained within the Lamington National Park. A University of Queensland graduate in Ecology and Geography, his post-graduate attention soon focused on cycads, an ancient group of plants that rely for pollination entirely upon a mutual and exclusive relationship with a particular beetle. For John, it is a privilege to pass to his students the knowledge and enthusiasm given to him by his father and subsequently refined and expanded by his own research. His teaching philosophy is simple, 'Plants Rock!'
Dr Chris Salisbury

Australian Studies Course Coordinator

Chris completed his PhD in political history at the University of Queensland in 2013, and has worked since as a Postdoctoral Fellow in UQ’s Centre for the Government of Queensland, contributing to a number of web-based projects on Queensland’s social and political history. Prior to this, Chris was a research assistant in the Education field and also a member of teaching staff in UQ’s School of History, Philosophy, Religion and Classics. Chris has taught units at UQ in Russian and Soviet history as well as capstone courses in applied Australian history, and has published widely in his specialist fields of Queensland politics, Australian social history and modern Polish history.

International Programs Administration

Jemma Schneider

Acting Manager

Jemma is the main contact in Australia for program advice, support and enquiries. Jemma has spent several years travelling and working overseas in New Zealand, the UK and Europe. Starting out in the tourism and hospitality industries, this experience eventually lead to event administration and coordination. While based in London, Jemma gained extensive experience in event management while spending her free time exploring Europe. Jemma returned to Australia to settle down in Brisbane, and for the past five years has worked in the International Programs office, helping to create an Australian adventure of a lifetime for every student.
Field Trip Locations

**Girraween** is a national park on the Queensland / New South Wales border 260km south-west of Brisbane. Girraween boasts massive granite outcrops, balancing boulders and clear running streams. Brilliant turquoise parrots, yellow-tufted honeysuckle and superb fairy-wrens splash the granite-strewn countryside with colour, while red-necked wallabies, brush-tailed possums and spiny echidnas weave their way through the woodland.

**Lamington** is a national park in Queensland, lying on the Lamington Plateau of the McPherson Range on the Queensland/New South Wales border. The park is 110km North of Brisbane. Lamington National Park is known for its natural beauty, rainforests, birdlife, ancient trees, waterfalls, walking tracks and mountain views. The park is part of the Shield Volcano Group of the World Heritage Site Gondwana Rainforests of Australia inscribed in 1986 and added to the Australian National Heritage List in 2007.

**Stradbroke Island** was a large sand island that formed much of the eastern side of Moreton Bay near Brisbane. Today the island is split into two by the Jumpinpin Channel. Moreton Bay Research Station is the perfect base to research North Stradbroke Island's and Moreton Bay's many and varied ecosystems. Located on the bay side of North Stradbroke Island, in the community of Dunwich, MBRs is just 30 minutes from the mainland and approximately 90 minutes from the UQ campus in St Lucia.

**Carnarvon Gorge National Park** is located in the Southern Brigalow Belt bioregion in Central Queensland, 593km northwest of Brisbane. It began life as a 26,304-hectare reserve gazetted in 1932 to protect Carnarvon Gorge for its outstanding scenic values, its indigenous and non-indigenous cultural heritage, and its geological significance. Hidden in the rugged ranges of Queensland's central highlands, Carnarvon Gorge features towering sandstone cliffs, vibrantly coloured side gorges, diverse flora and fauna and Aboriginal rock art.

**Heron Island** is a coral cay located near the Tropic of Capricorn in the southern Great Barrier Reef, 72km north-east of Gladstone in Queensland, and 539km north of the state capital Brisbane. The island is situated on the western side of Heron Reef, a fringing platform reef of significant biodiversity, supporting around 900 of the 1,500 fish species and 72% of the coral species found on the Great Barrier Reef. The University of Queensland Heron Island Research Station is situated in the island's south-west quarter. Established in the 1950s, the facility is one of the world's principal coral reef research stations, with a variety of research undertaken in coral reef ecology.
The University of Queensland was established by an act of Parliament on December 10, 1909 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Queensland’s separation from the colony of New South Wales. Its foundation four months later made it the first university in the State and the fifth in the nation. In 1911, 83 men and women attended the first classes of the University of Queensland.

The First World War slowed development of UQ but afterwards, research and teaching burgeoned as demand for higher education increased. The fledgling University outgrew its initial buildings in Brisbane City and the search for a larger campus began. In 1929 the Brisbane City Council and a wealthy local Brisbane family dedicated 274 acres of land at St Lucia to the University as its permanent home. Named after the sugar-producing island of St Lucia in the West Indies, the area originally was used to farm sugar, arrowroot, cotton, maize and pineapples.

It took nearly a decade to raise the funds necessary for construction of the first building, later named the Forgan Smith Building. The Second World War diverted the use of many of the University's buildings to military purposes as it served as the advance headquarters for the Allied Land Forces in the South Pacific. The University of Queensland currently has over 40,000 students enrolled from over 120 countries.

The School of Biological Sciences

The School of Biological Sciences is one of the largest Schools of its type in Australia with 52 full-time academic staff. The School provides unique opportunities for study or research in plant and animal biology with research programs spanning ecology, molecular plant sciences, marine biology, entomology, and genetics & evolution. Currently, over 200 students are enrolled in higher degree research programs in the School. Further information, including details of the research interests of academic staff may be accessed on the school’s website at www.biology.uq.edu.au
About Brisbane

“Brissie”, your home from August to November, is the state capital of Queensland and Australia’s third-largest city with a population of approximately 2 million people. The city is located around the Brisbane River with bike and foot paths along its banks.

Brisbane’s small central business district (CBD) is the main hub for business and shopping and is home to most of the city’s sights. On its southern end you find South Bank, a large parkland area with Brisbane’s famous man-made beach, shops, restaurants, weekend markets, and the city’s Cultural Centre.

The University of Queensland is situated in St Lucia and is about a 15 minute bus ride from the CBD. It is also 10 minutes from Toowong, which is the closest suburb with a shopping centre, cafes and restaurants.

More information on Brisbane can be found at:
- wikipedia.org/wiki/Brisbane
- www.visitbrisbane.com.au

Brief history

Originally inhabited by the Turrbal people, the first Europeans settled at Redcliffe in 1824. After this unsuccessful settlement, a harsh penal colony was established on the present site of Brisbane. In 1842 the Moreton Bay area was opened to free settlement and the colony grew and developed with the discovery of gold in various locations around Queensland, banishing much of the aboriginal community from the area. By the time of Federation in 1901, Queensland was the fastest growing state in the new nation and Brisbane was its economic hub. Despite the drought, floods and depression of the 1890s, trade and industry were booming. The Brisbane River was a hive of maritime activity.

The city grew steadily until World War II when it become the main allied headquarters in the South Pacific and an influx of Australian and American servicemen stretched the population to three quarters of a million. Industry flourished and continued to boom post war and Brisbane firmly staked its claim as the third largest city in the country. The 1982 Commonwealth Games were hosted in Brisbane and the city received a massive infrastructure and sporting facilities boost as a result. In 1988 the World Expo was hosted at Southbank (across the river from the CBD), and the event also helped put Brisbane ‘on the map’. 
Arrival in Brisbane

Arriving in Australia on the 14th of August
The official arrival day for the program is Sunday, 14th of August 2016. The International Programs team is very much looking forward to your arrival into Brisbane. We will be providing airport transfers to your accommodation on your arrival day, but in order to do so you will need to email your flight itinerary details to international.programs@uq.edu.au by no later than the 13th of May, 2016. If you arrive before the official arrival day you will need to organise your own airport transfer. Some hotels/hostels provide this service so check in advance.

If you arrive earlier than the 14th of August you will need to organise and cover the expenses for your accommodation, meals and transport. We recommend that you book accommodation at the Brisbane Backpackers Resort as that is where you will be spending your first few nights of the program. Therefore you won't have to worry about packing up and moving to another location (only room!).

Delays on your arrival
We can re-arrange your airport transfer if you advise us of any delays ahead of time. If the delay occurs on the day you are flying please call to let us know on +61 (0)401 671 286. If the delay occurs a few days ahead email international.programs@uq.edu.au.

Strict customs in Australia
Australia has strict quarantine guidelines, and customs might not allow you to bring herbal medicine, large quantities of medicines, food items (e.g. meat products, nuts and fruit) or wooden products such as drums or jewellery into Australia. These customs regulations also apply when sending items by post to Australia. For information on what you can and can't bring or post to Australia visit the Customs and Quarantine page online.

Medication
You should arrange for sufficient medicines to meet your personal medical needs for the duration of your time abroad. Check with the Australian embassy to ensure your medicine is legal here before you leave home. If you have a large amount of medicines you will need to obtain a doctor’s letter stating who the medicines are for, what they are and the dosage, and store the medicines in their original packaging. For more information visit www.tga.gov.au/entering-australia
Brisbane Transport

Brisbane’s public transport network includes buses, trains and city-cat ferries operated by Translink. You have different options to obtain information regarding routes and travel times:

Online: www.translink.com.au/
Telephone: 13 12 30
In person at the Tourist Information Centre on Queen St.

You will be provided with a public transport card called a Go Card, during your first day at UQ. These Go Cards have replaced paper tickets and are the cheapest and quickest way to travel on public transport. They can be used on trains, buses and ferries.

Brisbane public transport may be more expensive than what you are used to. All fares operate on a zone system. Zone 1 and 2 include the city centre and the surrounding suburbs and should get you around for most of your trips. With the Go Card, a single fare costs AUS$3.35 within one zone, AUS$3.93 for travelling in two zones and AUS$4.66 for three zones. Please note that you are not eligible for concession & student fares as you are not enrolled as a student at UQ. These fares are slightly cheaper if travelling off-peak (9am to 3.30pm, and after 7pm on weekdays, all day on weekends).

You will need to budget AUS$350 for public transport costs to and from campus. This does not include personal travel on weekends.

UQ has two main bus stops: Chancellor’s Place and UQ Lakes. Chancellor’s Place is the primary stop and has a number of buses which leave for the city and western suburbs. Buses using the UQ Lakes stop travel over the Eleanor Schonell Bridge connecting UQ with the south side of Brisbane and the city.

You can call a cab by dialling 13 19 24 (Yellow Taxis) or 131 008 (Black & White Cabs) in any Australian city.
PERSONAL EXPENSES

Visiting a new country is always filled with excitement. You will inevitably make comparisons between home and Australia and soon realise that costs can be very different. Australians enjoy an excellent standard of living by world standards, however the population of Australia is significantly smaller than the US which does mean that the cost structures are different.

The Australian Dollar varies against the US Dollar so check out the exchange rate closer to your travels. How much you should budget for your trip depends on what kind of traveller you are, but please be aware that you will probably spend more for a meal, a coffee, or drinks than you would at home.

Budgeting for Brisbane

Comparisons

The following comparison is taken using data from the World Bank and several agencies that compare the cost of living. The table below is a comparison snapshot between costs in the US and in Australia. The prices listed below are to give you an indication of costs in Brisbane. On average items cost between 10-35% higher than in the US. Check out the Numbeo website to give you an idea of comparative costs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Avg US cost (inUSD)</th>
<th>Avg Aust cost (in USD)</th>
<th>Avg Aust cost (in AUD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meal cost x 1 (inexpensive restaurant)</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
<td>$12.94</td>
<td>$17.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meal cost x 2 (mid range, three course)</td>
<td>$45.00</td>
<td>$60.90</td>
<td>$80.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combo meal at McDonalds</td>
<td>$6.50</td>
<td>$6.85</td>
<td>$9.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic beer at pub (pint)</td>
<td>$3.50</td>
<td>$4.57</td>
<td>$6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic beer (0.33L)</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
<td>$5.71</td>
<td>$7.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coke/Pepsi (0.33L)</td>
<td>$1.64</td>
<td>$2.37</td>
<td>$3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eggs (dozen)</td>
<td>$2.38</td>
<td>$3.41</td>
<td>$4.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loaf of bread</td>
<td>$2.45</td>
<td>$2.13</td>
<td>$2.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water (1.5L)</td>
<td>$1.30</td>
<td>$1.96</td>
<td>$2.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicken Breast (1 kg)</td>
<td>$8.04</td>
<td>$8.36</td>
<td>$10.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-way ticket (Local transport)</td>
<td>$3.04</td>
<td>$2.00</td>
<td>$4.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Be prepared

It is best to have a back-up plan for unexpected extra costs. The most common extra cost that past students have encountered is medical expenses. If you need to see a doctor it can be an additional expense that you had perhaps not budgeted for. Keep this in mind when budgeting for your semester abroad and if you are lucky enough to escape sickness and injury then you will enjoy the extra spending money for souvenirs!

Safety

By any standard Brisbane is a safe city. Students are advised to be conscious of their personal safety in much the same way as they would anywhere else in the world. Whilst common sense should dictate your actions during your stay we do ask you take reasonable precautions when travelling and where possible to travel as part of a group (especially in the evenings).
**Medical**

Your UCEAP insurance covers the cost of medical expenses in Australia. See the insurance links for detailed information. If you are sick or injured while in Australia and need medical attention, you will be required to pay for treatment and medications up front and then submit a claim for reimbursement upon your return home. It is therefore important to save all of the receipts and related documentation from any medical appointments as you will need to submit these with your claim.

Expect to pay around $80 AUD up front for a consultation at a Medical Centre with a GP. For example, if you have the flu and need to see a doctor you will pay around $80 for the consultation plus the additional cost of any required medication. You will then be reimbursed for these costs when you make your claim.

If you take any regular medication please ensure that you bring enough with you to cover the duration of your time abroad. It may be difficult to find the exact medication in Australia to what you would normally use and it might be more expensive than what you would pay at home. If you are bringing a large amount of medication with you ensure that it is accompanied with a doctors prescription and that it is enclosed in its original packaging.

**Insurance**

You are covered by insurance through UCEAP for your time in Australia. Please use the insurance links within the online UCEAP pre-departure checklist under the Insurance tab for further details on your cover.

**Visas**

It is essential to ensure that your visa covers the entire program as well as any personal travel before and/or after the program. If you have questions about applying for your visa, check the visa instructions in the UCEAP Pre-departure Checklist and contact the Australian Department of Immigration.

**Note**

UCEAP’s *Your Program Guide* and the more general *UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad* (posted to your UCEAP Pre-departure Checklist) feature EAP-specific information not covered in this *Information Handbook*. Please read through all program-related information carefully before arriving in Australia. If you have questions about UCEAP procedures or policies, contact the UCEAP Systemwide Office.
VACCINATIONS

Before you leave for your semester abroad we recommend that you take the proper precautions to ensure your health and wellbeing during your stay. In general no special immunizations or medications are necessary for travel to Australia. However we do recommend that you ensure your vaccinations are up to date for influenza, tetanus-diphtheria, Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) and yellow fever (depending on prior travel). See details below.

If you are unsure about vaccinations or your general health please consult your personal physician.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vaccination</th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Influenza</td>
<td>Recommended for all travellers from May through October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tetanus-diphtheria</td>
<td>Revaccination recommended every 10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR)</td>
<td>Two doses recommended for all travellers. <strong>Only if not previously given</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow fever</td>
<td>Required for travellers entering Australia within 6 days of having been in or passed through a yellow-fever-infected area in Africa or the Americas. <strong>Not recommended or required otherwise</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Be Sun Smart!

Australia is exposed to higher levels of ultraviolet (UV) radiation than almost anywhere in the world and skin damage occurs rapidly, especially during the middle of the day. It is important to wear sun protection even on cloudy days and reapply sunscreen regularly. Aside from sunburn there can be some serious consequences for not being Sun Smart during your stay such as dehydration and heat exhaustion. Make sure you keep rehydrated by drinking plenty of fluids.

The Cancer Council of Australia recommends 5 steps to protect you from sunburn.

**Slip, Slop, Slap, Seek, Slide.**
- Slip on some sun protective clothing
- Slop on SPF30+ sunscreen
- Slap on a wide brimmed hat
- Seek shade
- Slide on some sunglasses

More information on The Cancer Council’s Sun Smart initiative is available at [www.cancer.org.au/sunsmart](http://www.cancer.org.au/sunsmart)

Beach safety

It is important to always observe correct beach safety while in Australia. Only swim at patrolled beaches where a lifeguard is present and remember to swim in between the red and yellow flags. Never run and dive into the water from the beach and always check for warning signs, if in doubt ask. Australia’s beautiful beaches can hold hidden dangers in the form of strong currents called rips. If you do need help stay calm and attract attention by waving your arms and calling out for help.
YOUR PROGRAM—WHAT TO EXPECT

These are key points that past students have shared with us as being important aspects of the program and which they feel should be relayed to future students. This whole Information Handbook contains valuable information that can help you prepare for the program so please read all of the pages and if you have any questions don’t hesitate to contact our Brisbane office international.programs@uq.edu.au

Key points when preparing for your program abroad

- On your field trip to Girraween National Park (which is your first field trip) it will be very cold at night! We do not say this lightly. You will be sleeping in tents and the temperature during the night can get down to –5°C (23°F). Make sure you pack warm clothes including a warm jumper and a woolly hat, layering is a good way to keep warm as well, and ensure that your sleeping bag is warm enough to handle these temperatures.

- During the program you will be staying with a Homestay family. It is important that you are considerate and helpful guests during your stay. You will find that the more you engage with your family the more you will gain from the experience. Help with chores, keep your room clean, be polite, treat them as you would want to be treated if the roles were reversed. If you have any queries or concerns you can always talk to the Programs staff and we will do our best to help where we can.

- There will be a number of long bus rides when travelling to field locations. A few things to note are:
  - Bring a pillow (a travel pillow is more convenient)
  - Bring a light blanket, sarong or jumper for the bus as the air-conditioning can be very cold and cannot be turned off
  - Bring a book, iPad or iPod to keep you entertained.

- Make sure you bring enough spending money. Australia is more expensive than the USA so keep this in mind when planning your budget. For example a local bus trip (one way) is between AUS$2.83 and AUS$4.91, and beer at a pub or club can be between AUS$6-9.

- Use your time wisely! This is not a vacation and you will have to work hard to achieve good results. The more time you spend during your week studying and keeping on top of your workload, the more time you will have on the weekends to travel and explore Brisbane and other areas of Australia. Come and talk to the Programs staff for ideas and tips of what to see and where to go.
Tips and advice from past students

- Read the information guide before coming, prepare for the workload, prepare to have an amazing semester abroad.
- Be prepared to study as hard as your would for school but remember to balance everything and to enjoy your experience.
- Invest in a waterproof camera - it’s worth it.
- Girraween is cold! Bring layers of clothes.
- Pack light (bring just a backpacking backpack). Travel a lot on the weekends, don’t spend to much time stressing about classes. Plan carefully on what essentials to bring.
- Be prepared financially. Know the public transport system. Pack for freezing cold and dry heat.
- Don’t hesitate to ask the International Programs, professors for assistance or advice. Get to know your tutors and International program staff because first off they’re amazing people and more importantly they are there to help you out in any situation.
- Do not over pack! You don't need it. Bring a pillow for bus rides. Come prepared for an increase in prices.
- Be prepared for Australia to be expensive and be open to your homestay.
- Enjoy every second because it goes extremely fast!
- Make sure to stay on top of school work in order to have fun. Absorb as much of Australia as much as you can. Be sure to travel on your weekends.
- Don’t have any expectations! It will be nothing like you have ever imagined. Be open to meeting everyone, you are likely to make lifelong friends here if you have an open heart!
- Bring warm clothes, prepare for the finances outside of the program, have good communication with your homestay, realize there is work, and get ready to have the best time of your life!
- Take advantage of as many opportunities as possible. Connect with your fellow students. Both Girraween and Lamington will be cold, Carnarvon will be HOT. Hold a Koala every chance you get. Take SO MANY PICTURES.
- Be prepared for very physically demanding field trips and a whole lot of fun! Public transportation costs a lot so bring around $300 for bus alone especially if you want to travel on weekends or to the store. :-)
- Read the handbook and prepare for the journey of a lifetime. Australia might be similar to the States but it is still an amazing opportunity you could never come close to receiving back home.
Program Accommodation

Your primary accommodation while in Brisbane will be with a Homestay family. We aim to house our groups close to the University but Brisbane is a wide-spread city and most students will be travelling 45 minutes to 1 hour to get to campus via public transport.

It can be difficult to fit into a new household and we do our best to help you adapt to your new home. Please remember that Australians come from a wide range of backgrounds and every family is different, so your experience will be different from others. Along with the Homestay allocations we provide some guidelines to help you adapt to living in a new country and to know what to expect at your Homestay. If you have any questions or problems with your Homestay family, we encourage you to come and talk to us immediately.

The cost of your Homestay is included in your EAP fees, however do keep in mind that you may need to contribute towards some small costs such as snacks for your own consumption for your time on campus and to take with you on field trips.

The Weather

The seasons in Australia are the opposite of those in the USA. You will be arriving at the end of the Australian Winter. Luckily for you for you even in Winter, Brisbane is relatively warm during the day (59°F and 70°F) but it can drop below 50°F at night.

You can expect the end of your stay to be a little warmer with temperatures between 70°F and 105°F during the day and 60°F to 70°F at night. Heavy rain in the afternoon is common so bring rain gear such as a rain jacket and umbrella with you (weather can change drastically in a very short period of time).

Water is a precious resource throughout Australia with many parts of the country facing drought conditions. Please note that Brisbane is currently on water restrictions so please be aware of your water usage at all times. As an example, most Brisbane residents restrict their daily showers to 5 minutes.

Handy Tip

To convert Celsius to Fahrenheit: Times by 9, divide by 5 and add 32 (eg, 20°C x9 (180) ÷5 (36) +32 = 68°F)
If you are looking to travel to other destinations in Australia come and have a chat with the staff in the International Programs Office about how to organise your trip. Some places are not as easy to travel to as you may think.

**Travelling close to Brisbane**

**Brisbane**

**Sunshine Coast**
One hour north of Brisbane is the beautiful Sunshine Coast. You will find miles of pristine coastline and lush hinterland, superb cuisine, action and adventure or just the perfect piece of sand on which to sit and ponder. The Sunshine Coast is one of Queensland's premier holiday destinations. Information on what to do on the Sunshine Coast is available at [www.visitsunshinecoast.com.au](http://www.visitsunshinecoast.com.au/)

**Gold Coast**
Just south of Brisbane is the Gold Coast. Explore the beaches, rainforests, theme parks, nightlife, shopping, unique animal adventures and accommodation of one of Australia’s most beautiful locations. More information on the Gold Coast is available at [www.verygoldcoast.com.au](http://www.verygoldcoast.com.au/)

**Byron Bay**
Located 3 hours south of Brisbane in Northern New South Wales, Byron Bay is a relaxing sea side town where the surf is big and the beaches are white. This laid back town is a must to see. [www.visitbyronbay.com](http://www.visitbyronbay.com/)
Getting around

A great place to start planning your trip is the websites for the major domestic airlines, they also usually have links for some great accommodation deals wherever you are going. There are four major airlines that fly domestically in Australia. To visit their websites just click on their logos below.

Airlines

Accommodation

Car Rental
Want to Find out More?
Have a chat to some of the past students who have completed a semester abroad in Australia.

VERY IMPORTANT

If you do head off exploring other parts of Queensland or Australia please let the International Programs Office know where you will be by sending us an email at international.programs@uq.edu.au just in case we need to get hold of you in an emergency.

And BE SURE to complete your Travel Signout in MyEAP!
Important Information for Field Trips: Terrestrial

On the Terrestrial Ecology field trips you will explore some exceptionally beautiful Australian wilderness. The National Parks you will visit are among the most spectacular in Australia, but to enjoy them to the fullest, it’s important that you come into the program well-prepared for the physical realities of hiking and camping.

You will be exploring the National Parks on foot, which means that day-hikes of various length are an essential (compulsory) aspect of the course. The following summary is to give you an accurate understanding of the amount of hiking you will be doing on the terrestrial ecology field trips:

- **Girraween**: 4 miles on the first day, 4.5 miles on the second day, 3 miles on the third day with an optional mountain climb of an additional 2 miles. This equates to around 14 miles over 3 days.

- **Lamington**: 3 miles on the first day, 8.5 miles on the second day, 7.5 miles on the third day with an optional hike of up to 10.5 miles on the fourth day. Hence, you could hike up to 30 miles over 4 days!

- **Carnarvon Gorge**: 4 miles on the first day, 8.5 miles on the second day and 2.5 miles on the third day. This equates to around 15 miles over 3 days (in the hot conditions that characterise outback Queensland at that time of year).

The hikes can be strenuous (especially on uphill sections!) but please be assured that all the hikes are readily achievable by any walker with a positive attitude and a basic level of fitness and mobility. However, it is sensible to come into these hikes with good preparation. It is essential to bring a pair of good, supportive boots or shoes to hike in that are already worn in and comfortable. Before coming to Australia, it would be wise to do a few walks of comparable length to those listed above, to get a sense of the level of physicality involved. Finally, if you have a pre-existing leg, knee, ankle or foot injury, or weak ankles that require extra support, please bring your own brace, tape or bandage with you to carry on the hikes as a precaution.

On some field trips it is unlikely, but not impossible, that night-time temperatures could drop as low as -5°C (23°F). This is a little below freezing, so it is important to bring a suitably warm sleeping bag and plenty of warm clothing! At the other extreme, it is unlikely, but not impossible, that day-time temperatures could rise as high as 40°C (104°F). Therefore you will be required to carry a minimum of 2 litres of water on all hikes (2 litres of water weighs 2 kilograms, or 4 pounds). Rain is always a possibility so you will need to bring wet-weather clothing that you can hike in comfortably.

Finally, while there are sanitation and bathing facilities at the campgrounds, there are none on the hiking trails. Consequently, you should be aware that toilet stops during a full-day hike will mean going behind a tree!
Important Information for Field Trips: Marine

During the Marine Biology field trips you will encounter marine environments such as sea grass beds and mangroves as well as the iconic Great Barrier Reef. On these field trips it is essential to wear protective shoes such as dive booties, reef shoes or old sneakers. We advise on bringing a ‘rashie’ (rash guard) or old shirt to protect against the sun while in the water and on the beach. It is also sensible to use 50+ sunscreen to avoid sunburn.

On your field trip to Heron Island there will be lots of opportunity to snorkel and observe beautiful marine life. You may even be lucky enough to see turtles nesting. Snorkelling is a great experience which requires you to be able to swim. While it is not compulsory, we would encourage you to be confident in the water so that you can enjoy snorkelling alongside the sea creatures and plants of the Great Barrier Reef. Snorkelling equipment is provided for on the field trips.

During both of the marine field trips you will be undertaking research projects which require you to conduct experiments and have contact with the living creatures that occupy the waterways. It is essential to remember that these marine habitats are delicate and must be treated with the utmost respect, everything that is handled must be done so with care.

Accommodation on both of the marine field trips are located within the research station grounds, a short walk to the waterfront where you will encounter an array of marine life. This is dormitory style accommodation with shared bathrooms.

Diving

Scuba diving is not part of the program. However, you can dive with commercial operators during your free time on Heron Island, or North Stradbroke Island. The University of Queensland also has its own dive club. If you are already a certified diver, don’t forget to bring your log book and dive certificate card. Dives can cost between AUS$150 & $250 per day.
Important Packing Tips

When packing for your semester abroad in Australia please keep the following points in mind:

- Read through the packing list (‘What to Bring” section) and make sure you pack all essential items listed.
- Do not bring any valuable jewellery or other precious items.
- We advise that you do not bring any electrical appliances such as hair dryer, straightener or shaver. Australian electricity supply runs on 240volts compared to 110volts for the US. Using American electrical appliances in Australia will destroy the appliance or even worse could shock you or start a fire. If you really need to bring an electrical appliance with you ensure that you purchase an electrical adaptor/transformer.
- Limit your luggage to 23kg (50lbs) or under! You will be travelling by bus and ferry to field trip destinations and you will not want to drag around heavy, oversized luggage. You will be able to leave some possessions with your Homestay family or at the programs office when you go away in the field. Therefore it is recommended to bring an extra duffel bag in your luggage that you can pull out and use for field trips.

You really don’t want to be struggling with heavy, oversized luggage

One medium sized suitcase with a smaller backpack OR one rucksack with a smaller backpack would be ideal

OR

Packing Light

You must be able to carry your luggage with you to and from field trip destinations therefore you will need to pack light!

Remember that you are here to study and a lot of your time is spent out in the field. On your field trips you should only carry what you need for that field trip. You should not be leaving behind large amounts of luggage with your Homestay family or in the programs office at any time.

There are plenty of shops in Australia so if you forget something you will more than likely be able to purchase it.
WHAT TO BRING

Packing for a three-month trip is challenging! You will need to come prepared for your time on campus, as well as for your trips to the rainforest, the beach and the reef.

Travel light, and remember comfortable and practical clothes - clothes appropriate for field work are essential (e.g. Clothes that can get dirty and some clothes for very cool nights!). You will have time in Brisbane to shop for any extra items that you may need.

Clothes

Essential
- Sunglasses (Polarised glasses are recommended)
- Waterproof coat / rain jacket
- Pants, sweaters, warm clothes (eg. Thermals)

You will need warmer clothes on some field trips at night as it can get below freezing
- Lighter clothes (for humid weather, temperatures 70°F to 105°F, heavy rainfall)
- Long sleeved shirts and pants for fieldwork
- UV Protection Shirt (e.g. rashie/rash guard) or old t-shirt for water activities
- Old clothes that can get muddy and wet

On field trips there will be limited opportunity to wash clothes - bring enough old/hiking clothes for a week

- Swimsuit and beach towel

A wetsuit and snorkel gear is available for your use at Heron Island

Desirable
- Nice clothes for going out
- Nice clothes for going out

Shoes

Essential
- Comfortable, enclosed shoes or boots for hiking

Please bring worn in shoes (if you are buying new ones make sure you wear them in before you arrive).

You will spend a lot of time walking in the Aussie Bush and blisters can be a real pain!

- Reef shoes, dive booties or old joggers (this is an absolute must!)

These shoes must be worn during reef walks on Heron Island

- Sandals (or ‘thongs’ as Aussies say!)

Desirable
- Nice shoes for Farewell Dinner and for going out

Toiletries and Medication

Essential
- Sunscreen (at least SPF 30+)
- Bath towel (don’t forget you will need a towel for shower and beach use)

You could buy these in Australia to save space in your luggage (approx. US$6 for a cheap towel)
- Personal toiletries e.g. shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste etc.
- Insect repellent

Desirable
- Sea sickness medication for ferry trips across the open ocean
- Any medication you may need (enough for the whole trip)

Don’t forget to bring a copy of the original script with you to show Customs upon your arrival into Brisbane airport
Miscellaneous

Essential
- Sleeping Bag to 0 degrees or below (for fieldtrip camping)
- Head Lamp/Torch: You will be expected to carry one with you on all hikes as a safety precaution.
- Water Bottle - you must carry 2L (0.5 gal) with you on hikes. Either bring one 2L bottle or two 1L bottles. *Metal bottles do a great job keeping water cool and reducing plastic waste!*
- Smaller backpack for daytrips (e.g. day bush walks)
- Smaller bag (i.e. duffel bag) for field trips (packed empty in your larger bag) *You will be able to leave some possessions with your Homestay family or at the programs office when you go away in the field*
- Extra support for hiking if you need it (e.g. ankle brace, knee brace, bandages, tape)
- Two tea towels/dish towels

Desirable
- Sleeping pad (for extra warmth and comfort when camping—cots and air mattresses will be provided)
- Stationery: notebook, document holder, USB, pencils, pens, inexpensive calculator, ruler, highlighters, eraser, folder or clipboard (to provide a firm writing surface while on field trips).
- Spending money: ATMs are widely available in the cities – ask your home bank about collaborators in Australia and the fees involved. *Westpac Bank and St George Bank have a reciprocal arrangement with Bank of America so there are no withdrawal fees ($5) for Bank of America cards. There will still be a currency conversion charge of around 3%.*

Electrical

Essential
- Laptop with power supply, USB stick and power cable
- Ethernet cable and installation software would be helpful in case a reset is necessary.
- Digital Camera (with charger and a cable to upload pictures) *Invest in a waterproof camera or waterproof casing to take underwater shots while snorkelling.*
- Mobile phone *Your phone will need to be set up for global roaming, but it’s probably cheaper to either purchase a pre-paid phone or buy a SIM card when you arrive in Australia. Check your phone is not ‘locked’, preventing it from accepting a different SIM card. You may need to pay a fee to ‘unlock’ your phone to other networks before you come to Australia. Speak to your service provider in advance about international travel options.*

Desirable
- MP3-player or iPod with charger (you will be travelling a lot)
- DVDs or a book for the long bus trips
- Electrical adapters (Australia runs on 240 volts) *Australian electricity supply is 240 volts. Most electronics stores stock wall plug adaptors for appliances with different pin arrangements. Always check if your 110v appliance has automatic switching for a 240v supply. If not, it is recommended that you get an 110v/240v transformer before leaving home.*
Internet

You will be able to access the internet at The University of Queensland with your own laptop or a UQ computer. As you will be spending a large amount of time in the field, there will be times when you do not have access to the internet at all. And many places will not have the level of connectivity you are used to at home. Your Homestay will provide internet access however they may restrict usage (e.g. movie downloads).

Please note, the level of connectivity at Heron Island will be very limited, as the internet is often very slow. Also, sites like Facebook are blocked and you will not be able to access them at all.

Over the phone

If you choose to bring your mobile phone from home, it will need to be set up for global roaming, investigate options with your service provider at home before you leave. Alternatively you can purchase a pre-paid phone or buy a SIM card here in Australia. If you choose to bring your phone from home and purchase a SIM card you will need to ensure it has been ‘unlocked’ by your service provider before arriving in Australia.

Snail Mail

Note that mail and packages need to travel through the University’s mail system to get to the International Programs Office which means it will take longer to get here than your post office at home may have indicated.

All mail to participants should be addressed with the name of the student and sent to the following address:

STUDENT NAME
International Programs Office
School of Biological Sciences
Goddard Building (8)
The University of Queensland
St Lucia Qld 4072
AUSTRALIA
Contact in Australia

The International Programs team is here to help you throughout your stay in Australia.

Our contact details are below:

Email: international.programs@uq.edu.au

Phone: +617 3365 2125 or +617 3346 7331

In case of emergency please contact:
Jemma Schneider: +61 401 671 286

Please ensure your parents, guardians and friends have these details in case they need to contact you.

We look forward to seeing you soon!