

Updated 20 May 2020

### General

#### ***Where can I access information about the South Australian Government's response to Covid-19?***

The South Australian Government has website containing information about how South Australia is responding to Covid-19, including information about the current situation, health advice and current restrictions. You can access this information at the [SA Government Covid-19 homepage](#).

#### ***What is the current situation in South Australia?***

The [SA Government Covid-19 Dashboard](#) contains all the latest information and statistics regarding the spread of Covid-19 in South Australia.

On Friday 15 May 2020, the Chief Public Health Officer Ms Nicola Spurrier [announced](#) that there were no existing active cases of Covid-19 in South Australia, making us the first state in Australia to eliminate all active cases.

#### ***Can students travel to and from South Australia?***

Currently the Australian Government has [imposed restrictions](#) on non-citizens entering the country that prevent travel into Australia at this time. Anyone who is not a citizen or permanent resident of Australia is not permitted to enter at this time.

Even if a student has a valid and current tourist or student visa, they will not be permitted to enter Australia until the travel restrictions have been lifted. At this point, there is no indication as to when this will occur.

Due to the restrictions, many airlines have decided to cancel all international flights going to and from Australia.

In addition, domestic travel within Australia is restricted. South Australia is currently requiring anyone who has entered from another Australian state to self-isolate for 14 days after arrival into South Australia.

## **Students currently in South Australia**

### ***Is my student required to stay at home, or can they go to school?***

South Australian Government Schools are **open for students** as of the start of Term 2 (27 April 2020).

The advice from the Chief Public Health Officer and Australia's expert health body (AHPPC) is that schools are low risk environments for Covid-19 and should remain open. Schools will be open in Term 2 and all international students are encouraged to attend.

The Department for Education is encouraging families to feel comfortable and safe about sending their children to school in South Australia. As such, international students are required to attend schools and participate in face-to-face learning onsite. Students who are feeling unwell or showing any symptoms of Covid-19 are required to stay at home and seek medical attention at the earliest possible chance.

Any student who has a chronic medical condition or a compromised immune system, should consider staying at home. If unsure, students can talk to their parents, homestay family, or doctor to get help deciding if they should return to school. Students who are worried about attending school due to potential exposure to Covid-19 need to discuss this with the school's International Student Programs Manager.

### ***If my student decides to finish their study in South Australia early and return home, can they get a refund of tuition fees?***

Yes – if the reason the student is departing early is because of impact or concerns connected to Covid-19, students are eligible for a refund of unused tuition and homestay fees. No cancellation fees will be charged under these circumstances. Refund requests must be made in writing to International Education Services.

### ***Can my student return home and then come back when the travel restrictions are lifted, without terminating their enrolment?***

As South Australian Government Schools have now reopened, if an international student chooses to return to their home country they can choose to defer their studies and return at a later date to complete their course. Alternatively, they can terminate their enrolment and request a refund of remaining tuition, homestay and OSHC fees (if applicable).

All requests to defer studies must be received in writing. Please contact us for more detailed information if required.

### ***What initiatives are in place to reduce the risk of my student contracting or coming into contact with someone who has Covid-19?***

Australia has quickly adopted social distancing practices that prohibit large gatherings of people and request people to maintain distances of 1.5m between each other where practical. In addition, Australians are encouraged to minimise non-essential travel and to stay at home as much as possible to avoid spreading the disease.

The number of new cases in Australia has slowed substantially, and existing cases are being tracked and monitored to ensure that person-to-person transmission is eliminated or at least minimised.

The Australian Government has recently launched the COVIDSafe app to assist in tracking contact history and slow the spread of Covid-19. Students can download the app from the links below:



Schools are increasing cleaning schedules, making sure there is soap, sanitiser and tissues available for students and staff, and has put protocols in place to practice social distancing where appropriate.

### ***What is the procedure if my student feels unwell or has Covid-19 related symptoms?***

Anyone who has a fever or respiratory symptoms consistent with coronavirus, no matter how mild, is encouraged to attend a Covid-19 clinic, or their GP, for assessment and testing. Testing has been expanded to also include anyone with unexplained loss of taste or smell.

Symptoms of Covid-19 include:

- fever
- cough
- shortness of breath

Other early symptoms to watch for are:

- chills and body aches or muscle pain
- a sore throat
- headaches
- runny nose
- diarrhoea
- unexplained loss of taste or smell

If your student experiences any of these symptoms contact a [testing centre](#).

SA Health provides information about what to do if there is any suspicion that a person has contracted Covid-19 or shows symptoms here:

[Flowchart – “What Should You Do ...”](#)  
[Testing for Covid-19](#)

### ***What is the procedure if an international student is confirmed to have contracted Covid-19?***

If the student has not yet notified their school or homestay, please call the IES Emergency Line immediately on +61 401 123 205 and let us know.

If the student has been attending school, the school will be closed for a minimum of 24 hours to allow the Department for Education to trace contacts and contact anyone at risk and to undertake a deep

clean of the school site. If the student is in a serious condition, they will be hospitalised and treated until they are cleared for release. Otherwise, the student will be required to undertake 14 days of isolation at home.

Information regarding what is involved in home isolation can be found on the [SA Health Self-Isolation Advice](#) page.

### ***What happens if a local student or teacher is confirmed to have contracted Covid-19?***

The school will be closed for a minimum of 24 hours to allow the Department for Education to trace contacts and make contact with anyone at risk and to undertake a deep clean of the school site. If any international student is confirmed to have been in close contact with the confirmed case, they may be required to self-isolate at home for 14 days.

### ***What happens if a member of a homestay family is confirmed to have contracted Covid-19?***

If anyone in a homestay family has returned a positive Covid-19 test, all members of the home would be required to follow the direction of SA Health and self-isolate.

Please refer to our [factsheet](#) on Covid-19 for more information on self-isolation.

### ***Is medical treatment for Covid-19 covered under the standard Bupa Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)?***

#### **Testing**

Overseas students and visitors are covered for medical services provided in hospital and out of hospital, including GP visits and tests (e.g. pathology) as well as prescription medicines as per their product benefits. This is provided the service is recognised by Medicare and an MBS item number attached, and not an excluded service. Waiting periods, fund and policy rules apply. For Bupa OSHC, coverage is up to 100% of the MBS benefit. There is no change in coverage for out-patient medical services specific for Covid-19.

#### **Hospitalisation**

Overseas students and visitors are covered for hospitalisation as per the standard product benefits available to all Bupa OSHC members. There is no change in hospital admission benefits and the benefits payable specific for Covid-19. Waiting periods for pre-existing conditions will still apply, with each case assessed on a case by case basis.

For more information, please read the [Bupa Covid-19 Updates for International Students page](#).

### ***Should students get a flu vaccination while in South Australia?***

The current advice from SA Health is that everyone in South Australian try to get a flu vaccination this year. Our office has provided information to students parents on the importance of the flu vaccination in the current circumstances. Natural parents of students can refuse to allow their children to receive the vaccination if they prefer.

There is a small cost to cover the cost of the vaccination, which is approximately \$16.00.

The cost of the doctor's appointment to receive the vaccination is covered by Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC). Please note that depending on the clinic your student visits there may be a small fee.

### ***What welfare support is available for international students in South Australia?***

The constantly changing nature of the situation regarding Covid-19 can lead to many students feeling uneasy, isolated or marginalised. The South Australian Government Schools International Student Program has a number of existing measures in place to assist international students should they feel their mental well-being is at risk, such as talking to their school counsellor or International Student Program Manager. Homestays have also been provided with information on how to best support students during this time.

In addition to this staff from International Education Services have been making phone calls to students to check on their wellbeing and follow up on any concerns raised. Calls to homestays have also been made to ensure that homestay families are coping well at this time and are able to support the international students living in their home.

International Education Services is providing a support package for international students that includes a \$100 Covid-19 assistance payment for all international students. Through their school students will be able to claim this money and use it for additional school expenses such as tutoring, school uniforms, school sweater, calculator, excursions or stationary etc. Our accredited schools will work directly with their international students about claiming this support funding.

The South Australian Government has implemented a support package for South Australian homestay families, a one-off \$200 Covid-19 assistance payment per student will be provided to homestay families to assist with the ongoing delivery of quality support, welfare and accommodation for these students.

If you have any concerns about the mental or physical health of your student(s), please contact International Education Services on +61 8 8226 3402. If the situation is urgent, please call our 24-hour Emergency Line on +61 401 123 205.

### ***If my student is not able to get a flight home at the end of their course, will they be allowed to extend their study and their student visa?***

Students will be allowed to extend in cases where the school and homestay are available to accept the student's extension. Additional tuition and homestay fees must be paid prior to the extension. In cases where a student's extension is due to cancellation or unavailability of flights due to Covid-19, the Extension Administration Fee will not be charged.

In order to extend their program at South Australian Government Schools, existing students will likely need to obtain a new visa that will allow them to stay in Australia during their extension. International Education Services is able to issue additional Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) certificates upon receiving payment of extension fees.

## **New students who wish to commence study in South Australia**

### ***Can my student start in Term 3 2020 on-site at a South Australian Government School?***

Currently the Australian Government has [imposed restrictions](#) on non-citizens entering Australia that prevent travel into the country at this time. The Australian government will consider international students returning to Australia as part of the country's easing of restrictions in the future however unfortunately there is no indication of the exact date these will be lifted.

### ***If my student decides to go to South Australia at a later time, can they defer their studies? What impact will this have on their course?***

Yes – international students can defer the commencement of their study to a later time. Any fees that have been paid already will be applied to start from the new commencement date.

Students that hold an offer to commence Year 11 in the 2021 school year may need to adjust their course in order to allow time to undertake the Intensive Secondary English Course (ISEC), which may impact on their ability to obtain enough credit to proceed into Year 12. Please contact International Education Services to discuss deferment cases for students who intend to commence Year 11 in 2021. Please also consider the age of your students when deferring, as some schools may not allow students over the age of 18 to commence Year 11.

### ***If the travel restrictions are eased during 2020, can my student start their enrolment mid-term?***

Students who have an offer to commence mainstream studies (not in ISEC) in Years 8, 9 or 10 will be permitted to commence mid-term. Year 11 or 12 students are required to commence their mainstream studies at the beginning of the academic year in order to obtain the required amount of SACE credits.

Students who are not required to obtain any SACE credits, for example Study Abroad Program students, are permitted to start mid-term regardless of their year level.

### ***If my student decides not to go to South Australia, or cannot travel to South Australia because of Covid-19 related concerns, can they get a refund of fees paid?***

Yes – International Education Services will provide a full refund of all fees paid for international students who were not able to travel to South Australia and commence their studies as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Cancellation fees will not be applied when refunding fees for students who are cancelling due to Covid-19.