



INTERNATIONAL PARENTS HANDBOOK

SWINBURNE UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

WELCOME TO SWINBURNE

You have been sent this handbook because your child received an offer to study at Swinburne University of Technology in Australia. The information provided here includes important contacts, facts about student life and Swinburne's many support systems, and general advice for parents of international students. It is here to assist you in supporting your child as they plan for, and eventually settle into, study in a new country.

TO-DO LIST

Help your child apply

Accept the offer

Pay the deposit

Organise their insurance

Book flights

Get ready for the move

Triple check they've got everything

To the airport!

Orientation

Start of classes



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Our aim is to prepare students for long-term success in their study and future careers. We look forward to welcoming your child and assisting them with obtaining their goals for the future.

PROFESSOR LINDA KRISTJANSON AO
VICE-CHANCELLOR AND PRESIDENT
SWINBURNE UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY



IMPORTANT DEADLINES

Accepting the Offer, Paying the Deposit and OSHC (Overseas Student Health Cover)

You and your child should carefully read their Offer Letter together. It will include the terms of the offer, information about the campus and location where your child will be studying and will explain how and where to pay the deposit. If you have questions that the Offer Letter doesn't answer, please visit our website. It is mandatory for all Student Visa holders to hold valid Australian health insurance for the length of their visa, known as OSHC. Their Swinburne offer letter will quote the cost of visa length cover with Swinburne's preferred provider, **Medibank**. Payment for visa length cover along with the deposit will be noted as a 'yes' on the overseas Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE).

Enrolment and Timetable

After accepting their offer, your child will need to enrol. They will do this by completing a form on our website. If you have questions while completing the enrolment process, please visit swinburne.edu.au/enrolment.

Visa and Agents Support

In most cases, your child will need a visa to live, study, or work in Australia. To apply for a student visa, your child will need to have accepted their offer to study at Swinburne and paid their deposit. Upon receipt of the acceptance and deposit, Swinburne will issue a Confirmation of Enrolment. They will need to present the following documents to the Department of Home Affairs:

- A Confirmation of Enrolment from Swinburne
- An Offer Letter from Swinburne
- Evidence of visa length Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) (if not paid to Swinburne with the deposit)
- All other relevant documents listed on the Department of Home Affairs visa checklist.

Please ensure you and your child read and understand the Department of Home Affairs visa checklists and visa conditions and requirements before they apply. You can find the checklist, and more information, by going to the **Department of Home Affairs** website (homeaffairs.gov.au).

We recommend that your child contact their official agency for support and advice in relation to the Visa procedure.

Booking a flight

After their application has been processed, the deposit has been paid and their student visa has been issued, you and your child can book their flight to Australia. We recommend that they arrive two to four weeks before starting their course. This will give them time to organise accommodation and settle in before classes begin.

International Student Welcome

Swinburne provides all commencing students with an international student welcome session. This is usually during the same week as their course orientation day, or orientation week (O-week). This session provides important information specific to international students, including their rights and responsibilities, assistance adjusting to life, and living in Australia and the local community. This team is available to support your child throughout their time at Swinburne.

Orientation Day

Orientation Day is a chance for new students to explore their campus, learn more about their course, meet their peers, get to know their teachers, before classes officially begin. We recommend encouraging your child to join Orientation Day. More information about Orientation can be found on our website.

Start of Classes

The date of your child's first week at university will depend on a number of factors including their course, the campus, and more. Ask your child to provide you with their start dates once they have received them.



PREPARING FOR YOUR CHILD'S DEPARTURE

Before your child leaves for Australia, they should have...

A place to live

Whether temporary or permanent, your child will need accommodation organised before arriving in Australia. If you have family or friends living in Melbourne, we recommend organising for your child to stay with them for a short time.

This will help with the transition into life in another country. If you do not have relatives or friends in Melbourne, we recommend organising on-campus accommodation for your child. This will give your child the opportunity to live somewhere safe and friendly, while adjusting to Melbourne and university life among other students.

More information on on-campus accommodation can be found on our website by searching **accommodation**. You can also contact our Accommodation Adviser via email at **accommodation@swin.edu.au**.

All the essential belongings

Helping your child pack for their trip will ensure they are prepared for their life in Melbourne. It will also make the process feel real. We recommend writing a list of belongings they intend to take with them, and that they intend to purchase when they arrive.

Practical life skills

If they don't already practice them, we suggest teaching your child the skills needed to live independently. Being able to cook, clean, budget, and manage their time will be essential skills for your child to have when living, studying and working overseas.

TUITION AND OTHER FINANCES

To help track your child's tuition fees and payment dates, ask your child to log in to **My Financials** on the Swinburne website and share their State of Account and Tax Invoice with you. This will always show the current status of payments and upcoming fees.

You will need to make your child's tuition payments upfront by the relevant due dates, which will be provided to you. Make sure to double check the bank account details and the amount. For more information, go to our website and search **paying your fees**.

Your child will need to set up an Australian bank account. We recommend doing some research with your child before they depart. Many banks require new customers to set up a new account in person, but some will allow your child to complete the process online. Bendigo Bank has a branch on-campus at Swinburne, and they provide special offers for students. You can find out more information at: **bendigobank.com.au/swinburne**

Make sure you and your child discuss what their expenses are going to be. This will include outlining what they will be expected to pay for and what you are planning to cover. If your child doesn't already have a good grasp on managing their money, we suggest helping them outline some financial plans. For example, meal planning, paying bills, and explaining the difference between a credit card and debit card. Helping your child with their budget will enable them to live comfortably and stress-free in Australia.

Expatistan lists the following living costs as the Australian standard:*

- Monthly rent for a furnished studio is \$780 USD
- Monthly public transport ticket is \$90 USD
- Monthly utilities including gas, electricity, internet) is \$133 USD
- One lunch meal is \$10 USD
- Weekly supermarket shop for one person is \$35 USD

*These costs are an estimate at the time of publication.

For information on the cost of living in Australia, you can visit the **Expatistan** website and search for Australia.





WHAT YOUR CHILD CAN EXPECT FROM UNIVERSITY LIFE

During Orientation week, Swinburne staff will discuss with your child what to expect from life as an international student. There will be new friends, new food, and all that comes with moving from one country to another. And there will be difficulties, like ‘homesickness’ and ‘culture shock’. You can take a role in supporting your child through this period of change to understand what is happening to them and assure them that it’s a very normal response. If you can, give your child practical suggestions on how to cope with the situation, and remind them that they can always speak with the International Student Adviser at Swinburne.

New international students at Swinburne will be required to attend the International Student Welcome, organised by International Student Advisory & Support. After that session on the same day there will be a Student Support Services EXPO where students will have the opportunity to meet all the support services available on campus. More detailed information of these events will be provided in your child’s offer letter.

If your child is studying full-time, this usually means they will study four courses per semester. A full-time study commitment is made up of contact and non-contact time. Full-time study is a condition of their student visa.

Contact time is the time students spend in classes – lectures, tutorials and, depending on the course, laboratory practicals, trips, and work placements. Although some lectures are not compulsory, encourage your child to attend their lectures regularly, as this is where course content is thoroughly covered. Your child will be given assignments, readings, and will often be expected to take notes.

Non-contact time is the time spent studying independently between classes – working on assignments, preparing for tutorials and revising for tests and exams.

BEING INVOLVED IN YOUR CHILD’S STUDY

At university, students over 18 years of age are treated as accountable adults who are largely responsible for their own work and academic results. Following the Universities Australia Privacy Laws, we will only share your child’s academic information with you with their consent. We appreciate your understanding with this.

If your child is under 18 years of age, you will receive contact information for a dedicated International Student Adviser.

If you would like to be involved in your over 18 child’s studies and results, we suggest asking them to involve you, or to provide written permission for the university to discuss their studies with you. Offer advice where you can and try your best to be supportive if your child is finding study challenging or if they aren’t reaching their goals. It’s best to discuss expectations before they start their course and let them know that you will be available if they need to come to you for help.

While studying in another country will be rewarding and exciting, it can also be difficult.



ASSESSMENTS AND MARKING

It is important for you and your child to have a good understanding of how Swinburne's assessment and marking systems work. The assessment of each unit will, in most cases, be combined from group assignment, individual assignment and final examination.

At Swinburne, work and performance is graded as High Distinction, Distinction, Credit, Pass and Fail. We also assign the widely used Grade Point Average value to these marks. See the table below for specifics.

CODE	DESCRIPTION	GPA VALUE
HD	High Distinction 80%–100%	4
D	Distinction 70%–79%	3
C	Credit 60%–69%	2
P	Pass 50%–59%	1

Students who attend regular study groups generally achieve better results, as study groups discuss and work through concepts, ideas and any confusion with course material. Study groups can be self-organised by students or run by a student's faculty. An Academic Development Adviser can connect your child with an appropriate study group, or they can find one themselves.

More information on grading and results can be found by going to our website and searching **results**.

HOW YOUR CHILD CAN ACHIEVE THEIR CAREER GOALS

Swinburne provides specialist support to international students from arrival to completion of their studies. All Swinburne students have access to SwinEmploy for up to 12 months after they complete their final semester of study.

Your child's first year at university is the perfect time for them to learn about themselves and their chosen career through core courses. During this time they should start to develop their skills through projects, student clubs and activities and they should identify and narrow down their career goals. Our Professional Purpose program, undertaken by all students at Swinburne, assists students in defining their career goals and their life trajectory.

During their second year, students will actively participate in industry-linked projects and should find a suitable part-time job to enhance their confidence, social skills, communication skills, problem-solving skills, and their sense of responsibility. Students in their second year are encouraged to participate in study tours and exchange programs.

In their third year, your child will work on a final project, known as a Capstone Project, and will likely undertake an internship. During this time, they will learn key life skills that will assist them in applying for work during and after university, covering resume writing, interviewing, and more.



MAKING SURE YOUR CHILD IS HAPPY AND HEALTHY

When your child is away, you want to know that they are taking care of themselves, and that their physical and emotional health is being looked after.

Explain to your child how they can take care of their emotional wellbeing while at university – reminding them to work on managing stress effectively, creating a support network, taking time to rest, and asking for help when they need it.

To keep your child aware and educated about certain dangers and risks, please talk to them about general safety, sexual consent and personal boundaries. We also recommend doing research on Australia's beach safety guidelines before your child arrives.

Swinburne runs the Aussie Bush & Beach program twice a year, where international students meet Australian life-savers and learn practical skills about staying safe while enjoying the Australian way of life on the beach.

Dedicated International Student Advisors are available year round to advise and assist students on how to adapt and thrive in Australia.

Your child must obtain Overseas Student Health Cover for the proposed duration of their student visa. For more information about your child's student health cover, please visit our website and search **overseas student health cover**.

All students should have an emergency contact on their student record in case they get sick, are injured or if they need urgent support.

The International Student Advisors are available for 24x7 emergency and urgent support on **(+613) 9214 6741** and may need to access the student's nominated contact person to offer extended support if there is a serious incident.

If your child is injured, sick, or in need of urgent support, they, their housemate, or close friends can contact an International Student Advisor on the After-Hours Assistance Line as listed above and an ISA&S representative can be with them if required to assist and support in a crisis. We have staff on-site that respond to all emergencies, and if serious medical attention is required, our staff will assist in directing your child to the appropriate form of care – whether that be a doctor, an emergency room, or other.

To maintain a healthy, balanced lifestyle while studying at Swinburne, we advise that students do not attempt to work more than 40 hours per fortnight or less at their part-time job. As well as being likely to affect their health and wellbeing, this is also a breach of their student visa and may impact your child's ability to continue or complete their studies.



SUPPORT FOR YOUR CHILD AT SWINBURNE

Being away from your child while they face new challenges and gain new independence may be difficult. If your child needs support from us at any time, there are many programs and departments they can turn to. Once in Australia, your child can speak to a member of staff or an adviser about assistance with their transition. International Student Advisers are available to help them discuss any and to direct them to the most effective personal and study supports available.

Joining clubs and activities and participating in events will help your child to meet new people and socialise. It will also help them to feel welcome and comfortable at Swinburne. We recommend encouraging your child to look into the extracurricular programs available to them, while also making sure they aren't committing to too much. Sitting down and working out a balanced timetable with them is a good way to stay informed of what your child is up to, while also ensuring they're well prepared.

KEEPING CONTACT AND VISITING YOUR CHILD

Staying in contact with your child while they're living in Australia will play a big part in making the adjustment period easier for them. It's also important to stay in contact so that you feel confident that they're happy and doing well.

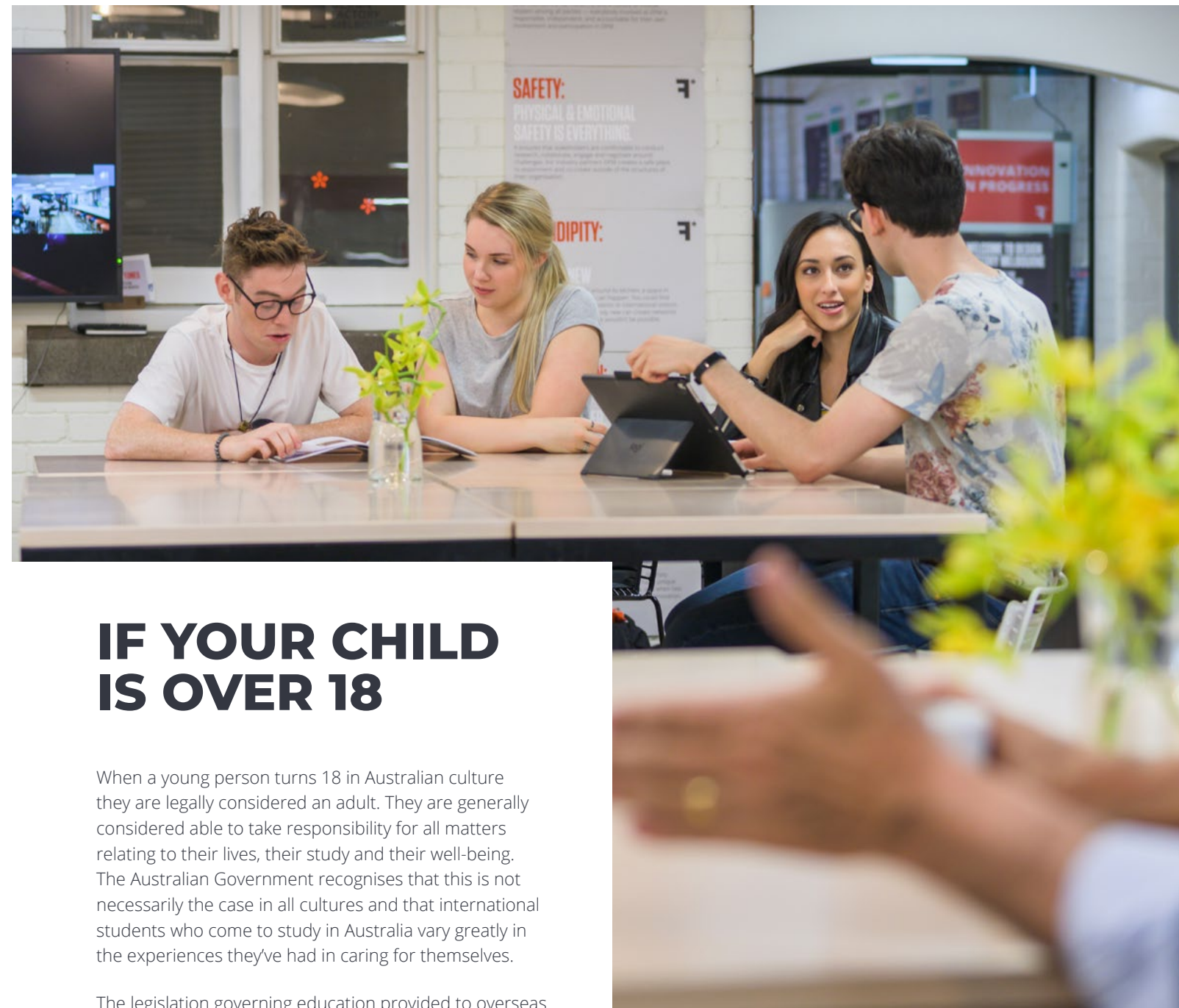
It's important to be mindful of the time difference between your country and Australia. For example, for many places in Asia there is a three-hour time difference with Melbourne. Classes at Swinburne will often start at eight or nine in the morning and it's important for students to be punctual for their classes and get enough sleep to be successful in their studies. Failure to attend classes can affect both a student's visa to study in Australia and their ability to make satisfactory academic progress.

The International Student Advisory & Support team are a free and confidential service that provides support to international students, whether academic, personal, or otherwise. Students can make appointments by calling **(+613) 9214 6741**, or by emailing **isa@swin.edu.au** from their student email. The team also has an Accommodation Adviser who can assist with questions about housing, an adviser that specialises in employability who can help in finding part-time jobs, and an officer whose job it is to know about activities and events so students can get involved and meet new people.

You can find out more about Swinburne's student advisory and support by going to **swinburne.edu.au/current-students/student-services-support/international**

Setting times for phone calls and Skype sessions will make getting in contact easier and less stressful. Having a set time every week is a good place to start. If your child doesn't answer or return your call, try not to worry, and remember that they are juggling lectures, tutorials, homework and socialising, and may just be busy.

If you are able to visit your child while they're studying in Australia, please do. We recommend visiting during university holiday periods, so that their studies aren't interrupted, and they are free to take advantage of the time you have together.



IF YOUR CHILD IS OVER 18

When a young person turns 18 in Australian culture they are legally considered an adult. They are generally considered able to take responsibility for all matters relating to their lives, their study and their well-being. The Australian Government recognises that this is not necessarily the case in all cultures and that international students who come to study in Australia vary greatly in the experiences they've had in caring for themselves.

The legislation governing education provided to overseas students is called the Education Services to Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS). ESOS requires by law that all overseas students are provided with a minimum level of support to assist their welfare and study experience in Australia. There is a requirement that all students receive a minimum of information such as;

- Before they leave home, often called Pre-Departure (from their home country), or Pre-Arrival (in Australia) material
- Support upon arrival usually in the form of airport pick-up and transfer to accommodation (if requested by the student)
- Support from the education provider in the form of orientation to the buildings, services available at the institution, life in Australia and the study they will undertake, and the ability to find on-going support and advice throughout their studies.

IF YOUR CHILD IS UNDER 18

For international students who are under 18, the process of studying at Swinburne will be different. Your child's official agent should be able to provide the necessary information, but for further assistance, please visit our website and search **applying for your visa**, or contact one of our International Student Advisers by emailing **isa@swin.edu.au**.

HEAR FROM THE PARENTS



“From my son’s first semester at Swinburne until now, we are comfortable and worry-free about Duc and his study. In the first year, we kept in touch with regular phone calls to listen to Duc talk about his study and daily life. When everything was better and smoother, we still kept in touch, but our conversations were more about our family and showing our love to each other.

Duc has grown up and become stronger and more independent, and better in financial management and time management skills. He now knows how to keep life balanced. And we are very happy that Duc has been appointed as a teaching assistant at Swinburne, which is a very good opportunity for him to enhance his knowledge and skills.”

MS MINH HUE
MINH DUC’S MOTHER
Vietnam

“I feel happy and proud that my child has studied and grown up at a well-established and reputed university, and I believe that other parents who have sent their child to Swinburne feel the same way. My daughter now has officially become an Australian citizen, she’s gotten married and settled down in Melbourne. I and my family would like to thank Swinburne for having provided the high-quality education they have, and for helping my child grow.”

MR NGOC BAI
MAI PHUONG’S FATHER
Vietnam



FROM ZEQI’S MOTHER PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

“After Zeqi started in Swinburne, she was inspired by university’s open, equal, honest, and free style. Swinburne’s education focused on cultivating students’ independence and creative and critical thinking. The teaching method has inspired Zeqi and helped her to finish her undergraduate study with outstanding results.

There is no doubt that the recognition and passion for Swinburne leads to her decision to continue study with Swinburne and get master’s degree. We have also noticed a clear change in Zeqi – she has built up her independence and courage. She can speak publicly with confidence. We believe these skills will help her with her career in the future.”

HEAR FROM THE STUDENTS

LENNY INDONESIA

“I’m studying bachelor of business at Swinburne, Melbourne. I started my study in February 2019 through UniLink pathways, which really helped me to adjust to Australia’s study system more easily. The facilities at Swinburne are very helpful, too, with Wi-Fi around campus, accessible computers and printers, Student HQ and much more. This has helped me a lot with my assignments and projects

throughout the semester. The atmosphere around campus is really supportive to studying and the lecturers and teachers are willing to answer any questions we have. Finally, I appreciate the cultural diversity at Swinburne. There are a lot of people coming from different countries to study here, and we are all able to learn from many cultures at the same time.”

“
Winning a scholarship has made study in Australia possible for me, coming from Colombia. In my previous job, I was a petroleum engineer, but I am fascinated by renewable energy and hope to contribute to advancements in the field when I graduate. I chose Swinburne because of its connections with industry.

MONICA
COLOMBIA



IMPORTANT CONTACTS

Accommodation:

✉ accommodation@swin.edu.au

Sponsored student advice:

✉ sponsoredstudents@swin.edu.au

International Student Advisory
and Support:

✉ isa@swin.edu.au

For student on-campus support
in emergencies:

📞 +61 3 9214 3333

HELPFUL LINKS

swinburne.edu.au

homeaffairs.gov.au

expatistan.com

bendigobank.com.au/swinburne

To find all our information about being
an international student in one place,
visit our International Student Support
page on our website: [swinburne.edu.
au/current-students/student-services-
support/international](http://swinburne.edu.au/current-students/student-services-support/international)



PLEASE
RECYCLE