



# Personal Safety Student Factsheet

Made by the Safer Community Team

[swinburne.edu.au/safercommunity](https://swinburne.edu.au/safercommunity)



# Personal Safety

Australia is considered a very safe place to live and study. However, there are still ways to increase your safety and decrease the chance of an incident occurring on and off campus. We want you to have a great time at university and to enjoy living and learning in Australia.

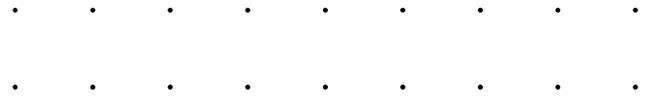
Advice and support around personal safety is available at Swinburne and externally. Here are some tips to help safeguard you and your property.

## General safety

- Always be aware of your surroundings, such as people, activities and cars.
- Do not let your phone distract you from what is happening.
- If using headphones or earphones, consider keeping the volume low or using one earpiece.
- Take particular care when crossing roads (e.g., Wakefield Street).
- Avoid engaging with strangers if you feel uncomfortable or unsafe.
- Take notice of the safety features around you (e.g., CCTV, Police officers and Security staff).
- Always bring your mobile with you. Consider purchasing a portable mobile charger.
- When walking around campus at night, walk with friends and take paths that are well-lit and frequently used.
- If you need assistance on campus, call **Swinburne Security** on **03 9214 3333**. You can save their number on your phone and access their information via the **Swinburne app**, under the 'staying safe' section.
- When staying late on campus, you can arrange for a **Security** escort to your car, train station or on-campus residence. *Note:* Security Officers can escort you to places adjacent or near campus but are not permitted too far off campus.
- If you are on Hawthorn campus, you can also use the **Night Bus service** offered by Security. Please enquire with Security on whether the service is operational.
- If driving, park at university car parks as close to your destination as possible. Do not leave valuables in your car as it can attract theft.



# Personal safety



## Looking after your valuables

- Keep your belongings close to you and within your view.
- Keep your valuables out of sight of others (e.g., don't leave your bag unzipped or phone visible in your back pocket).
- Never leave your bags or personal items unattended in public places, including in Swinburne campus buildings such as libraries. If you are studying in the library and need to leave your study space, take your laptop with you; or if you are with a friend, ask them to keep an eye on your things.
- Leave important items at home if you don't need them (e.g., passport, iPad etc.).
- Do not carry large amounts of cash.
- In the event of an item being lost or stolen, contact [Swinburne Security](#). Lost and found items are stored in a secure area on campus.

## Protecting your personal information

- Keep a safe record of your personal information (e.g., driver's license number, passport details, tax file number).
- Be suspicious of calls or messages that ask for any personal information, passwords, PIN or account details. Do not give out information unless you are 100% sure of the validity of the request.
- Do not throw papers carrying bank details in the bin. Shred them and destroy old cards by cutting through the chip and magnetic strip. If you lose your card, contact your bank straight away and lock the card via your mobile banking app.
- When you move residences, inform all relevant organisations of your new address and arrange for Australia Post to forward your mail to avoid strangers receiving your personal information.
- Refer to our [Scams bite-size video recording](#) and [Cyber Safety factsheet](#) for further tips.

## Going Out

- Make sure your mobile is charged and able to make calls before you go out, in case of an emergency or if you lose the people you are with. Keep your phone out of sight while walking along streets, roads and between sites.
- Stay close to friends and try to leave a pub or club with them.
- Travel in a group if possible.

- Plan your journey home ahead of time. For example, arrange a designated driver, pre-book a licensed taxi, know the locations of official taxi ranks or check public transport timetables in advance. If you use Uber or ride sharing service, you can share your location and driver's details with a friend.
- Do not hitch hike or accept rides from strangers.
- Plan if you are going somewhere you do not know. Let someone know where you are going and when you are expected back, especially if going out overnight.
- Walk in well-lit and commonly used areas. Try to avoid badly lit areas, parks, alleyways and underpasses. Do not walk the streets alone at night or in the early hours of the morning. If you do have to walk, avoid shortcuts and stick to main roads.
- Avoid using your phone in isolated places, as it can distract you from your surroundings.
- Have safety precautions ready to use (e.g., whistle or safety app).
- If you feel threatened by someone, tell them to stop in a loud voice or ask others for assistance. In case of an emergency, call **000**.

## Using public transport

- Know that all metropolitan railway stations and train carriages are equipped with CCTV cameras. Police officers can use CCTV footage to aid in any investigations.
- Utilise safety zones which are specific areas on platforms marked out by signs in clear, yellow lines on the floor. These zones are well-lit, located within reach of the public emergency communication system, and receive CCTV surveillance throughout the train station's hours of operation.
- Be aware that train carriages are equipped with an emergency communication system which provide direct communication with the driver if assistance is required.
- Approach a Protective Services Officer (PSO) for safety advice or in an emergency.
- Check timetables before your journey to avoid long waiting times.
- Know that tram and bus drivers can help during an emergency.
- Try to sit nearest to the driver on trams and buses if you are travelling alone.

# Personal Safety

- Be aware that trams can take much longer to stop than you may think. Be extra careful when crossing tram tracks.
- If you feel uncomfortable, get up and move away.

## Using taxi or rideshare services

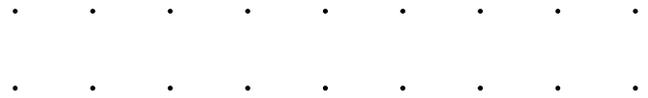
- Sit where you feel most comfortable. The back seat can help you avoid unsafe situations.
- Tell the driver the route you would like to take to your destination. Speak up if the driver takes a different route.
- If you do not want the driver to know exactly where you live, ask them to drop you off a short distance away.
- Verify the make, model, colour and license plate of the care before you get in. Check that it matches with your booked car.
- Ask the driver who they are to confirm the correct booking.
- Tell your friends or family that you are on your way and share your rideshare or taxi details.

## Being drink safe

- Be aware that it is easier to do something risky when you are drunk, and you are more likely to lose your belongings.
- Eat before you drink alcohol, and drink plenty of water between drinks to help you not get drunk.
- Keep track of what and how much you are drinking. Never leave your drink unattended or accept a drink from a stranger to avoid getting spiked. For further information check out our [Drink Spiking bite-size video recording](#).
- Make sure you stay safe around water if you have been drinking. Refer to the [Royal Life Saving Society Australia's Make the Right Call](#) campaign for further information.
- If you are considering using substances, be aware of the effects. Refer to [Drug Facts](#) and our [Alcohol and Drug Use student resource](#) for further information.



# Personal safety



## Staying safe at home

- If you live in shared accommodation, lock your room whenever you leave it (even if you are just going to the kitchen).
- Do not open the door for strangers.
- Leave a light on when out at night so the house/room does not appear empty. A sensor light works well for this too.
- Always close your windows and lock your door if you are going out.
- Ensure outside doors all have working and adequate locks. If you can, fit any vulnerable downstairs windows with key-operated locks.
- Keep valuables out of sight and in a secure place. Consider secure storage for expensive items if you are leaving these during the holidays.
- Decrease the chances of a fire or electrical safety issue by ensuring all electrical items are safe and smoke detectors are in working order.
- Familiarise yourself with any fire procedures for your accommodation, including the evacuation procedure and meeting points.

## Protecting yourself against stalking behaviour

Stalking occurs when someone repeatedly imposes unwanted communication and/or contact on a person that causes them to feel fear or distress.

- If you or someone you know is hurt or in immediate danger: call emergency services on **000**.
- If you are being stalked or followed and feel unsafe, you can contact [Swinburne Security](#) on **03 9214 3333** or Police on **000**.
- You can report any threatening, concerning or inappropriate behaviour in the Swinburne community to [Safer Community](#).
- Refer to our factsheets on [Stalking](#) and [Family Violence](#) for further information.

## Being an active bystander

If you feel it is safe to do so, you can step in as an active bystander when you witness concerning behaviour. You can do this by taking the following steps:

### Direct intervention

- Interrupt the behaviour by telling the threatening person to stop in an assertive tone, if safe to do so.
- Ask the person who is being bullied or harassed if they are ok and whether they need help.
- Bring other people's attention to the situation and consider intervening as a group.
- Do not engage in violence.

### Indirect intervention

- Get help from somebody with authority (e.g., teaching staff, Security, Safer Community).
- Call for help via [Swinburne Security](#) on **03 9214 3333** or Police on **000**.
- Listen and support the person being bullied or harassed.
- Encourage the impacted person to seek help and report the behaviour.

## Using personal safety apps

### bSafe

A free personal safety app designed to keep you and your friends safe. It has features for both everyday safety and emergency situations, including a personal safety network, virtual friend walk, fake call and emergency alert with GPS, video and siren.  
[getbsafe.com](http://getbsafe.com)

### Get Home Safe

A free safety app for when you're travelling, on vacation or just living life. It lets you set a safety timer with details about your plans and alerts your contacts if you don't check in after the event. The app has real time GPS updates so friends and family know your exact location and can come get you or alert professionals to help.  
[gethomesafe.com](http://gethomesafe.com)

### Positive Pathways Safety and Wellbeing App

A safety and wellbeing app for women experiencing domestic and family violence. It looks like a wellness app with inspirational quotes, positive moments and a daily diary that is password protected. Its main purpose is for use in emergencies, with audio recording, automatic help messages and GPS location as well as a one-touch **000** call function.  
[positivepathways.org.au/services/safety-and-wellbeing-app/](http://positivepathways.org.au/services/safety-and-wellbeing-app/)

# Supports

## On campus

### Safer Community

Safer Community offers advice, support, intervention, and risk management for students who experience or witness inappropriate, concerning or threatening behaviours on or off campus. You can get in touch with the team by email or via the online reporting form. You can also access relevant contact details via the [Swinburne app](#) under the 'staying safe' section.

[safercommunity@swin.edu.au](mailto:safercommunity@swin.edu.au)

[swinburne.edu.au/incident-reporting-form](https://swinburne.edu.au/incident-reporting-form)

[swinburne.edu.au/safercommunity](https://swinburne.edu.au/safercommunity)

### Swinburne Security

Contact campus security services for emergencies on campus, after hours assistance or for a security escort. You can access relevant contact details via the [Swinburne app](#) under the 'staying safe' section.

03 9214 3333

### Crisis Line – Out of Hours

The Swinburne crisis line is available to help 24 hours a day on weekends and public holidays, and outside business hours on weekdays (before 9am and after 5pm).

Call 1300 854 144 or text 0488884145

### Health and Wellbeing (Counselling and Psychological Services)

If you are struggling with a personal, emotional or mental health difficulty, whether related to your studies or your life away from university, counselling may help. Register and make an appointment with the counselling services.

03 9214 8483

[swinburne.edu.au/counselling](https://swinburne.edu.au/counselling)

## Off campus

### Emergency Services

National emergency response and reporting for Police, Ambulance and Fire.

In emergencies, call 000.

[police.vic.gov.au](https://police.vic.gov.au)

[triplezero.gov.au](https://triplezero.gov.au)

### Magistrates Court of Victoria

Information about applying for a personal safety intervention order.

[magistratescourt.vic.gov.au](https://magistratescourt.vic.gov.au)

### Crime Stoppers

National crime reporting organisation. Confidentially report information to help solve crime.

1800 333 000

[crimestoppers.com.au](https://crimestoppers.com.au)

### Australian Human Right Commission

Investigates and resolves complaints of discrimination, harassment and bullying based on a person's sex, disability, race, age and sexuality.

1300 656 419

[humanrights.gov.au](https://humanrights.gov.au)

