RMIT UNDER 18 INTERNATIONAL CARE PROGRAM

RMIT UNIVERSITY Vocational Education
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RMIT U18 INTERNATIONAL STUDENT CARE ARRANGEMENTS

RMIT is committed to the support, safety, and success of international students under the age of 18 years. In accordance with the Australian Government's *National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018*. RMIT is required to have in place procedures for ensuring welfare, support, and accommodation arrangements for students under the age of 18 years.

International students who will reside and study in Australia **without a relative approved by the Department of Home Affairs**, must:

- live in RMIT approved accommodation at select Scape and Iglu sites, Yugo or in an approved homestay through Australian Homestay Network (AHN) and,
- participate in the RMIT Under 18 International Care Program until 18 years of age or the completion of their program.

Both these conditions must be met before RMIT can issue a **Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation and Welfare (CAAW)**.

The **RMIT Under 18 International Care Program (Care Program)** supports the welfare and wellbeing of international students under the age of 18 years who are enrolled in studies at RMIT UP or at RMIT University. Under this program, RMIT offers ongoing monitoring and assistance with academic studies, accommodation, and wellbeing and welfare for the duration of enrolment, or until students reach their 18th birthday.

Participation in this program is **mandatory** for any international student who holds, or has applied for, a student visa and is or will be enrolled at RMIT while under the age of 18. This includes students who have secured welfare arrangements through RMIT and:

- will be under 18 when entering Australia to begin a course at RMIT or,
- are transferring from a different education provider and will be under U18 when commencing with RMIT

This program is designed to ensure student safety and wellbeing and to enable participants to gain maximum benefit from their study experience.

THE RMIT UNDER 18 INTERNATIONAL CARE PROGRAM

The Care Program offers holistic and comprehensive student support delivered by a team dedicated to student welfare in coordination with RMIT's wellbeing, academic, and student life communities. The Program includes:

- Arrival check ins and support
- Under 18 orientation program
- Regular workshops
- Fortnightly meetings with an RMIT U18 International Student Caregiver
- Dedicated ongoing support from RMIT U18 International Student Welfare

How to apply for the Care Program

Registration for the Care Program is included as part of accepting an offer. To fully accept an offer, a student must confirm welfare arrangements. Confirmation of welfare arrangements and registration with the Care Program is completed via the Study Link application portal when accepting an offer.

To accept an offer and complete registration, students must:

- upload an approved accommodation contract,
- upload copies of parents'/legal guardians' passports, and
- pay Care Program fees.

A contract with an approved accommodation provider and full payment of Care Program fees is required to secure a **Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation and Welfare CAAW)**. An international student under the age 18 year may not be issued a Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE), nor be able to apply for a student visa, without a valid CAAW.

Application Instructions

1. Accept offer and pay enrolment deposit.
2. Calculate Care Program and administration fees using the Care Program calculator on the website. To calculate fees, provide student date of birth (*dd/mm/yyyy*) and select student program from the listed options.
3. Click on the payment portal and agree to the terms and conditions (LINK), and make full payment, including administration fee, of the calculated fee.
4. Complete Welfare Approval Form and attach Care Program payment receipt and approved accommodation contract.
5. Submit completed Welfare Approval for revision. International Admissions will confirm Care Program application and process the CAAW and CoE.

Transferring from another registered education provider

If a student applies to transfer to RMIT from another education provider, they must fully satisfy the conditions outlined in their RMIT offer letter. This includes nominating a welfare arrangement, providing parent/legal guardian information, and paying all applicable fees.

If a transferring student intends to register for the Care Program, they are advised to follow the above application instructions. Where applicable, a student must also provide a release letter from their current education provider.

RMIT will issue a new CAAW and Confirmation of Enrolment only when a welfare transfer date has been agreed with a student's current education provider to ensure no gaps in welfare.

RMIT does not accept responsibility for an under 18 student's accommodation and welfare arrangements before the commencement date on an RMIT-issued CAAW. A CAAW is issued no more than 14 days before the commencement of the term of enrolment.

Fees

Fees for the Care Program are charged at a daily rate and are calculated from 2 weeks prior to program commencement to a student's 18th birthday or the completion of their enrolment. A **CAAW administration registration fee** also applies to all applicants.

Calculate and pay Care Program fees at: International students under 18 years of age - RMIT University.

All charges are in Australian Dollars (Inc. GST)

- CAAW Registration Fee: **$330.00**
- Daily Charge: **$12.10**

Please note, fees are subject to annual review.

Refunds

If a student enrols in the Care Program and later decides to withdraw, they must notify RMIT U18 International Student Welfare in writing via email at **isunder18@rmit.edu.au**. A full refund, less the $330 CAAW administration fee, will be provided if written notice is received before the commencement of the care arrangements. After this date, any unused portion of the Care Program fee will be refunded. Students must provide a minimum of 10 working days' notice when discontinuing from the Care Program.

See the **Refund Table** below for refund eligibility, evidence, and timely application per circumstance.

Refund reason	Refund payable	Evidence required	Refund submission date
Visa not granted	Unused allocated payments (calculated at daily rate to 18th birthday) minus administration fee	Written notice of withdrawal	By last day to enrol
Change of welfare arrangements	Unused allocated payments (calculated at daily rate to 18th birthday) minus administration fee	Evidence of alternate welfare arrangements	At least 10 working days prior to change date
Termination of enrolment	Unused allocated payments (calculated at daily rate to 18th birthday) minus administration fee	Return flight details	At least 10 working days from termination date
Transfer of welfare arrangements	Unused allocated payments (calculated at daily rate to 18th birthday) minus administration fee	Agreement from new education provider that includes date of welfare transfer	At least 10 working days from transfer date
Compassionate or compelling reason	Unused allocated payments (calculated at daily rate to 18th birthday). Administration fee may be refunded, depending on circumstances.	Supporting documentation evidencing compassionate and/or compelling circumstances Proof of return home such as a boarding pass or international movement record may be requested	Ad hoc
Provider default – RMIT is unable to provide the program	Full refund	N/A	Ad hoc
Student cannot provide release letter from current education provider	Unused allocated payments (calculated at daily rate to 18th birthday) minus administration fee	Current education provider letter proving rejection of release	Ad hoc
Student did not meet program conditions*	Unused allocated payments (calculated at daily rate to 18th birthday) minus administration fee	Application for deferral or withdrawal of application for enrolment	Ad hoc

**Academic or English condition not met*

If a student has been issued a CAAW and they withdraw from the Care Program, RMIT will withdraw CAAW and notify the Department of Home Affairs that these care arrangements have been cancelled.

Confirming Approved Accommodation

Confirming approved accommodation is an essential part of securing a CAAW. Students subject to RMIT welfare arrangements and registered for the Care Program must reside in approved accommodation while studying at RMIT and under the age of 18 years.

RMIT partners with Scape, Yugo, Iglu and the Australian Homestay Network (AHN) to provide accommodation approved for international students under the age of 18 years. Where a student chooses to live is an important factor in their success and should be considered carefully before arrival.

Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA)

Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) buildings are specially designed accommodation that cater to the specific needs of students. A PBSA experience can be a great way to connect easily with other students and to enjoy easy access to university as Scape's PBSA sites are located close to the RMIT City Campus in the heart of the Melbourne CBD. Each site offers a range of room types, meal options, and in-house residential social and support programs.

Scape University Square	Scape Victoria	Scape Queensberry
Scape Swanston	Iglu Melbourne City	Yugo University Square

Australian Homestay Network (AHN) – Homestay

A homestay is a local family, couple or single person offering full board in their home. Homestay hosts are located throughout the inner Melbourne suburbs. A homestay experience can be a great way to adjust to life in Melbourne and form relationships with a local family and community.

Students may choose from two Homestay options:

- Complete Homestay: *2 meals Monday-Friday, 3 meals Saturday-Sunday*
- Traditional Homestay: *3 meals Monday-Sunday*

Please note that homestay accommodation is subject to availability and may not be available to all students. Homestay accommodation may be located up to 45 minutes travel by public transport from RMIT campus.

Australian Homestay Network

U18 International Student Responsibilities

An international student under the age of 18 years must comply with RMIT policy and with Australian law. Non-compliance may result in the withdrawal of CAAW which may impact a student's visa.

U18 International Student Rules

All students registered with the Care Program and subject to RMIT welfare arrangements must:

- Comply with Australian law and the RMIT Student Charter
- Ensure timely arrival in Melbourne and attendance at all compulsory Care Program and orientation events
- Regularly check their RMIT student email account for scheduled meetings, important information, and updates
- Attend all **mandatory** fortnightly meetings with the Under 18 Student until 18th birthday
- Comply with in-house accommodation rules and conditions, including accommodation curfew
- Apply and confirm approval from RMIT Under 18 International Student Welfare for
    - Offshore (holiday) absences,
    - Late curfew requests, and
    - Temporary welfare waivers
- Update and maintain current contact details including address, email, mobile and home phone number, on the RMIT system as a condition of maintaining a student visa
- Maintain regular contact with RMIT and raise any concerns about life or study in Australia

Accommodation Procedures and Rules

RMIT partners with approved accommodation providers to ensure that students under the age of 18 are hosted in spaces appropriate to their age and designed to protect and promote safety and wellbeing. Approved accommodation providers, in partnership with RMIT enforce measures such as curfew, to ensure students' safety and compliance with the National Code of Practice, the RMIT Child Safety Framework, and the Victorian Child Safe Standards.

Students are responsible for understanding and complying fully with these conditions.

Curfew

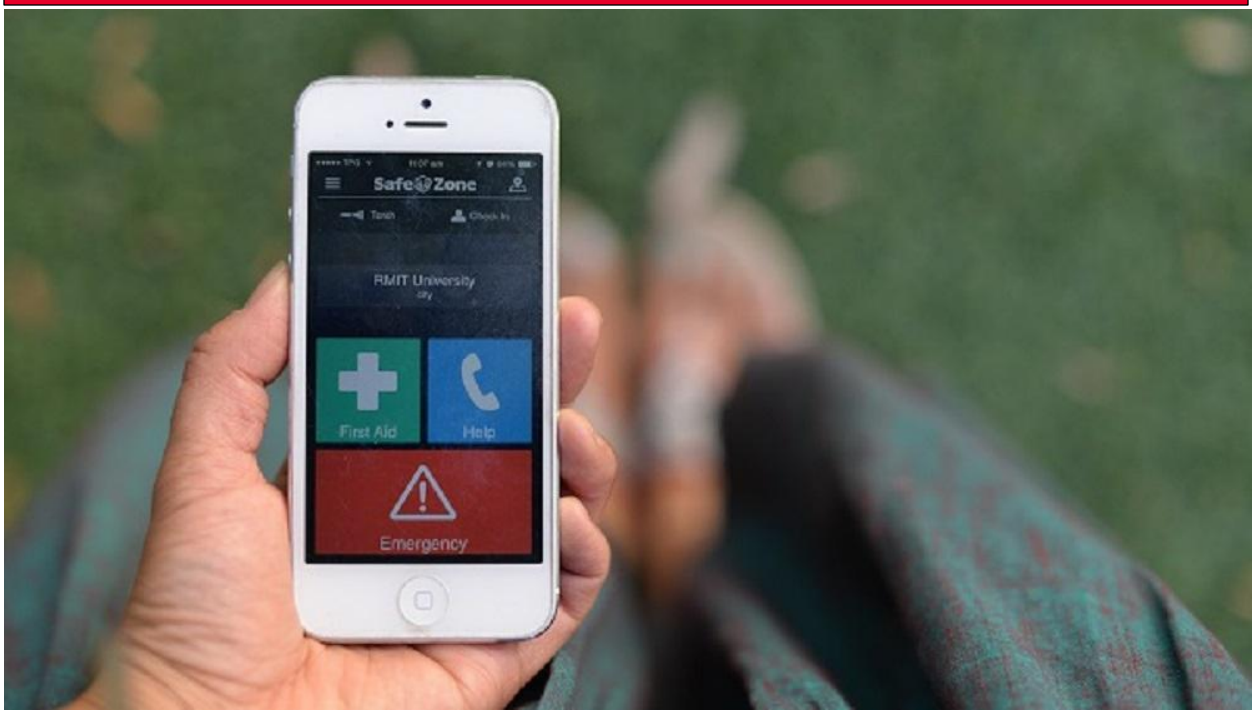
All students subject to a CAAW are required to abide by a curfew of 10:00 PM. Once curfew attendance has been registered at a Purpose-Built Student Accommodation facility (PBSA) or the student has returned to their homestay (Homestay), students must remain at the approved accommodation until 06:00 AM the next morning.

If a student subject to RMIT CAAW knows they will arrive at their accommodation later than 10:00 PM, they must contact their accommodation provider and the Care Program as soon as practicably possible to provide their whereabouts, the reason for breach of curfew, their intended means of return, and an estimated time of arrival.

Please note, RMIT considers breach of curfew to be a significant endangerment to student safety and a serious infraction of CAAW conditions. Repeated or serious breaches of curfew may result in the withdrawal of CAAW which may impact a student's visa.

If students intend on staying away from their accommodation overnight or for a holiday, they must seek approval at least three days in advance from the RMIT U18 International Student Welfare Team by submitting a Temporary Welfare Waiver.

SafeZone



Students must download the SafeZone app on arrival to connect instantly to Campus Security, First Aid, or Emergency support if needed.

Download the app from SafeZone

Welfare Waivers

Under certain circumstances, a student may apply for a temporary waiver of CAAW conditions. If all requirements are met, RMIT may approve the temporary suspension of the conditions of a student's welfare arrangements. All waivers are approved at the discretion of RMIT and may not be guaranteed. All welfare waivers and curfew extension requests must be received at least 3 business days prior to the nominated date.

Temporary Welfare Waivers

A student must apply for a Temporary Welfare Waiver under the following circumstances:

a) The student plans to arrive in Australia with their parents/legal guardians and wishes to reside overnight in alternative accommodation that is not their RMIT approved accommodation for a short time: Temporary Welfare Waiver – Offshore.
b) The student wishes to reside overnight for a short time with parents/legal guardians who are visiting Australia outside of the student's study periods: Temporary Welfare Waiver - Onshore.

RMIT will not approve a Temporary Welfare Waiver for a student who will not be supervised by an approved relative, as defined by the Department of Home Affairs. A Temporary Welfare Waiver will not be approved during normal study periods without evidence of compassionate or compelling circumstances.

Offshore Absence Requests

When seeking to leave Australia during semester break to return to their home country or go on an overseas holiday a student must apply for an Offshore Absence Request.

Students must check RMIT Important Dates to confirm semester break dates before submitting this request. An Offshore Absence Request may be denied if the school in which a student is enrolled confirms classes, exams, or assessments are scheduled during the time requested.

An Offshore Absence Request **will not** be approved for absences during study periods without evidence of compassionate and compelling circumstances.

Late Curfew Requests

Students may apply for a Curfew Extension Request to attend a social engagement, event, or appointment. A Curfew Extension Request will allow a student to return to their approved accommodation after 10:00 PM but no later than 1:00 AM.

Applications for extension of curfew are required at least three days prior to the planned event, engagement, or appointment. RMIT assesses all such requests with consideration to student safety, and approval is not guaranteed.

Breach of Confirmation of Approved Accommodation and Welfare (CAAW)

A student may be found to be in breach of CAAW if they fail to comply with the conditions of their CAAW or the RMIT rules detailed above. Non-compliance is considered non-academic misconduct and may be subject to disciplinary action resulting in notification of withdrawal of CAAW.

RMIT is committed to supporting the welfare and wellbeing of all students and to fostering a safe environment that allows all students to flourish. If a student fails to comply with the conditions of their CAAW, RMIT policy, or accommodation rules, RMIT will:

1. immediately notify student parents/legal guardians,
2. initiate a welfare check to confirm student safety and assess the severity of the incident,
3. convene a meeting with student, parents/legal guardians, and RMIT Caregiver, and either:
    a. agree to a support and action plan to support CAAW or,
    b. agree to alternate welfare arrangements and the withdrawal of CAAW.

A student may appeal the decision to withdraw CAAW but, if the decision is upheld, a student must comply with the following options.

a) Cancel current enrolment and return to home country.
b) Apply for a leave of absence from studies and return to home country until 18.
c) Confirm alternate welfare arrangements by either –
    i. residing with a DHA approved relative in Australia until 18, or
    ii. transferring to another education provider.

IMPORTANT

RMIT will retain responsibility for student welfare and maintain welfare arrangements until alternate welfare arrangements are confirmed, the student departs Australia, or the student turns 18.

For more information see: Under 18 International Student Curfew Procedure / Document / Policy Register

THE U18 INTERNATIONAL STUDENT JOURNEY

Before Arrival

All international students under the age of 18 registered to the RMIT International Care Program **must** confirm airport pick-up before arrival. **This service is free**. Complete and submit the Under 18 Airport Pick-up Request form no more than one month prior to arrival and at least three business days before arrival.

IMPORTANT

Students may not arrive before the CAAW start date. Check for the earliest arrival date at:

- Arrival dates for under-18 students requiring a Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation and Welfare letter

If a student is travelling to Melbourne with a parent or legal guardian and wishes to travel and reside with them for a few days before checking into their approved accommodation, students must complete and submit a Temporary Welfare Waiver – Offshore. RMIT will assess the application and, if successful, notify the accommodation provider of the intended check-in date. **Please note**, all welfare waiver requests are subject to RMIT approval. Failure to confirm approval may impact CAAW.

Australian Customs and Quarantine Information

Before travelling to Australia, students need to make sure they do not bring any prohibited items into Australia, such as firearms, weapons, illicit drugs, protected wildlife and associated products.

Travelers must declare any of these items on arrival by completing an **Incoming Passenger Card** during the flight or before going through Customs. Importation of fresh or packaged food including dairy, egg products, meat, poultry, seafood products, seeds, nuts, fresh food, fresh vegetables, plant material, live animals and animal products are strictly controlled. A custom official can clarify whether an item needs to be declared. Failure to declare may result in serious consequences or penalties.

For further information please visit Arriving in Australia – Biosecurity.

Visa Conditions

Before arriving in Australia, students should ensure they understand the conditions of the Student Visa (subclass 500). Key conditions include:

- The main course of study must continue to be a course in the education sector that matches that on the student visa.
- A student must continue to have sufficient financial capacity to support study and stay in Australia.
- A student cannot transfer providers within the first six months without a release letter.
- A student must maintain satisfactory course progress.
- A student must notify the university of changes in contact details within 7 days.
- A student must maintain Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) medical insurance for duration of visa.
- A student under the age of 18 years must maintain adequate welfare and accommodation arrangements for the duration of their stay in Australia, or until they turn 18.

For further information, please visit Department of Home Affairs: Student Visa.

Overseas Student Health Cover

To apply for an Australian student visa, the Department of Home Affairs requires evidence of Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC). OSHC is a type of health insurance that helps cover medical costs while studying in Australia. International students and their dependents must maintain valid OSHC for the entire duration of their student and student dependent visas.

For further information, please review the Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) Fact Sheet.

OSHC through RMIT

- The offer letter includes a Medibank Comprehensive OSHC premium, calculated based on course and visa length. This premium is payable alongside payment of the enrolment deposit at offer acceptance. Upon receipt of payment, RMIT will organize OSHC on behalf of the student.

OSHC through another provider

- A student may choose to arrange OSHC with another Australian health insurance provider. Details of this cover must be provided to RMIT. A Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) will not be issued until this information is received.

Important Documents

International students should scan and make copies of important documents, (including but not limited to):

- Passport
- Student visa
- CAAW
- Confirmation of Enrolment
- Birth Certificate

Note: *It is important for students to keep both digital and physical copies in case of an emergency*.

Arriving in Melbourne

Airport Pick-Up Service

Once arrival details are confirmed, students registered to the Care Program must book the **free** Airport Pick-Up service. The airport pick-up service is **mandatory** for students who will be under RMIT approved welfare arrangements. The service picks students up from Melbourne International Airport and takes students directly to their approved accommodation.

This is a **free service**.

Airport pick up requests can be submitted up **to one month before the student's scheduled arrival date**, and are required **at least one week before scheduled arrival** date in Australia

Please note*: International students under 18 years of age cannot use ride-share such as Uber unless they are travelling with an approved relative*.

Care Program Check-In

Students registered to the RMIT International Care Program must meet with RMIT Student Wellbeing at the City Campus **within 24 - 48 hours of arriving in Melbourne or by the next business day**.

RMIT City Campus Map

An U18 Support Officer will complete student check-in and book the first meeting with a U18 Caregiver. In preparation for the first Care Program meeting, the U18 Support Officer will provide information and support to assist the student during the first few days in Melbourne, including:

- obtaining a student card
- registering for orientation
- obtaining a Myki card (public transport pass)
- wayfinding around the university
- setting up a bank account
- activating Medibank OSHC
- how to seek help from RMIT, and
- SafeZone App set-up, emergency contacts and supports

U18 Orientation Day

The Under 18 Orientation Day provides important information about U18 rules and conditions, student visa conditions, transitioning to university life, and what to expect from the Care Program. Orientation is run at the start of Semester one and two each year. Attendance is **COMPULSORY** for new students registered with the Care Program.

At the U18 International Orientation Day, students will:

- Connect with the Welfare and caregiver team
- Meet other U18 students
- Complete training on Gender-based violence and other mandatory compliance and enrolment modules
- Meet staff from support and social services across RMIT to hear about opportunities for connection, where to go for study support, and a range of activities and events
- Attend a tour of the university city campus
- Have a chance to ask any questions

Light refreshments provided.

Care Connect Meetings

Students registered in the Care Program are required to attend regular meetings with a caregiver through a blend of in-person, telephone and video call. In addition to individual appointments, there will be a range of Care Connect sessions, including in a group setting with peers. Students can access support and advice anytime through their time at RMIT.

Care Connect appointments are an opportunity to discuss anything the student may wish and are intended to support the personal experience of relocating to Australia and transitioning to university. Students may also use this time to seek assistance with studies, clarify university processes, link with support services, and raise any concerns about accommodation, studies, and/or life in Melbourne.

Students who are planning a holiday, expecting a visit from parents/legal guardians, or require a curfew extension must let the Caregiver know of these plans and they will assist with submission of the correct form.

Group sessions are an opportunity to connect with peers, build a support network, and learn more about the university. Group sessions may involve guest speakers from across the university, service showcases, group activities, and peer support opportunities.

These sessions are designed to enhance student experience at RMIT, beyond the academic.

RMIT University Pathways Students

Students attending RMIT University Pathways (UP) and enrolled in Foundation Studies or an English Language Program are subject to additional requirements as a condition of their enrolment. To satisfy student visa conditions, UP students must maintain a minimum 80% attendance of classes. RMIT UP runs compulsory weekly homeroom classes designed to support students both academically and socially.

RMIT UP also provides tailored academic support and in-house counselling and wellbeing services.

Turning 18

Once a student celebrates their 18th birthday, they are no longer subject to the conditions of CAAW and will no longer be required to comply with the Care Program.

Students and parents will receive an End of Care Arrangement letter/End of Care Program letter and may relocate from the approved accommodation, should they wish and the rental agreement allows.

While no longer a part of the under 18 international cohort, RMIT will continue to provide support, opportunities, and connection throughout the course of a student's enrolment.