

Australian Legal Information

For International Students

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Smoking, alcohol and drug use

In Australia it is illegal to smoke cigarettes or drink alcohol if you are under the age of 18. Purchasing cigarettes or alcohol for, or selling them to anyone under 18 years of age may be punishable by law.

It is an offence to drive a motor vehicle with a blood alcohol of 50mg of alcohol per 100ml of blood or higher (.05). If the driver is under 25 years of age and does not hold a full driver's licence, any blood alcohol level is illegal. Drink driving is considered a serious offence in Australia and is punishable under criminal law.

Illegal drugs classified as narcotics, include: heroin, cocaine, angel dust, cannabis, hashish, amphetamines, (speed, uppers) and tranquilisers. The Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act 1981 (Vic) sets out that it is illegal to possess, supply, traffic in or cultivate the illegal drugs stated above, as well as any others. If a person is convicted of supplying dangerous drugs, the maximum penalty is 25 years imprisonment.

Information regarding alcohol and other drugs services in Victoria is available from the **Victorian Department of Human Services**.

w: www.health.vic.gov.au/aod/

p: **03 9096 9000** or **1800 888 236**

Domestic violence

Domestic violence is the abuse of a person by a family member or partner.

Types of abuse that can occur include: verbal, financial, social, sexual, physical, psychological or damage to property.

Where the relationship between the persons involved is that of a spouse, de facto partner or they are both the parents of the same child, a domestic violence Protection Order may be available. This order is commonly made for two years and can restrict contact between the people involved.

Immigrant Women's Domestic Violence Service.

w: www.iwdvs.org.au

p: **03 8413 6800**

Relationships Australia

w: www.relationships.org.au

p: **1300 364 277 (enquiries line)**

Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service of Victoria

offer 24-hour crisis support and referral to emergency accommodation for women and children.

p: **03 9322 3555 or 1800 015 188**

Centre Against Sexual Assault (CASA)

w: www.casa.org.au

p: **1800 806 292**

p: **03 9496 2240 (Northern CASA)**

Tenancy

A "tenancy" usually exists where a person (the Tenant) pays money to another person (the Landlord) for the right to occupy the landlord's premises (house, flat, room) for some definite period of time (a term). The Residential Tenancies Act 1994 defines the rights and responsibilities of tenants, their lessors and agents in a wide variety of situations.

Make sure you have all dealings with your landlord or agent in writing and document any agreements made in conversation in written form. Always keep your receipts as proof of payment.

Fact sheets on the responsibilities and rights of tenants and landlords, as well as free legal advice are available in a number of languages from the Tenants Union Victoria (TUV) at 55 Johnston Street, Fitzroy or via:

w: www.tuv.org.au

p: **03 9416 2577**

Working in Australia

International students who possess student visas are automatically granted permission to work in Australia. Students are limited to 40 hours work per fortnight while studying full-time, but may work full-time during the holidays.

For immigration and visa enquiries contact DIAC's Victorian Offices

w: www.immi.gov.au

p: **131 881**

p: **131 880 (citizen enquires)**

The Refugee and Immigration Centre also provides a free information service.

w: www.rilc.org.au

p: **03 9413 0101**

(Advice Line available on Wednesdays 10am to 4pm and Fridays 2pm to 4pm.)

Temporary visas for students

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) administers immigration law and issues visas and residency rights. Student visas are available to people who intend to enter Australia temporarily for full-time study.

A student visa is granted if the applicant who accepts a full-time course of study registered by the Australian Government, has adequate means of support and arranges health insurance.

Courses and study requirements

NMIT's International Office can provide basic immigration information in relation to course and study requirements.

p: **03 9269 1666**

Australian Law—the basics

Legal Age

A person 17 years or over is considered an adult under criminal law and can be charged with matters relating to criminal offences.

A person 18 years and over is considered an adult under general law.

Eighteen is the legal age for lawfully drinking, smoking, driving with a licence in Victoria and attending nightclubs, casinos and other licensed venues.

Legal rights and obligations when dealing with the police

A person is not required to go to a police station to answer questions unless they have been arrested.

Police have the right to question anybody; however, the person is not normally legally obliged to answer.

If a person is arrested and does not give their name or address, this may result in a refusal of bail by the police.

Before a police officer starts to question a person in custody for an indictable offence, the officer must inform the person of the right to communicate with a relative, friend or lawyer.

People with low level English have a right to an interpreter in any police questioning.

An accused person in custody also has the right to have an interview recorded electronically.

Legal Information Services

p: 1800 677 402

NMIT Student Counselling Service

NMIT provides a confidential, free counselling service that can support students dealing with some of the issues mentioned in this brochure

Appointments

The counsellors are rostered at the following campuses on selected days.

Preston	Building C	Room 103
Fairfield	Building Q	Room 106
Collingwood	Building A	Room 224a
Heidelberg	Building A	Room 112
Epping	Building M	Room 207.

To make an appointment with a counsellor phone Student Services on:

p: 03 9269 1314 (9am- 5pm Monday to Friday)

or drop in when the counsellor's door is open.

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