



GEOS PERTH ST MARK'S INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE

CRICOS Registration Number: 01620G

Pre-Information Booklet



Things you need to know about:

- The College
- Perth
- Australia

www.stmarkspertth.com.au

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WELCOME

The College staff would like to thank you for your enquiry to GEOS Perth St Mark's International College. Should you decide to enrol, we look forward to your arrival and to helping you make your stay an enjoyable and successful one.

Our friendly teachers, administration staff and counsellors are all here to help and support you while you study and experience Australian life and culture. Set on a beautiful campus, GEOS Perth is located about 2 km north (seven minutes) from the City centre. Students have full use of our campus swimming pool, gymnasium, college canteen, fully equipped library, independent learning centre and computer laboratory with limited *free* email and unlimited WIFI internet access.

To help you be better prepared for your trip, we have compiled the following information which will help you adapt more quickly to a new country, climate, college life, customs and lifestyle.

The College prides itself in maintaining high standards and boasts many achievements and awards over the years. As an accredited College, we are bound by law to adhere to very strict guidelines. Students are encouraged to visit the website www.aei.dest.gov.au/esos for a detailed description of the National Code of 2007, which we are required to comply with.

PERTH AND FREMANTLE

The Swan River reflects the shining buildings of the City's commercial heart. Perth is a modern but relaxed city with a population of 2 million. It is blessed with many things – great weather, long sandy beaches and a wealth of attractions to keep you busy! Perhaps the most obvious attraction visitors will notice when arriving in Perth is King's Park. This natural Australian bushland is located within five minutes of the central city area. It is a must for sightseeing and photos of the city.

Perth is a multicultural society, drawn from many ethnic backgrounds. Some households may consist of a single parent with one or two children, a retired elderly couple, or several young adults sharing a flat or house after moving out from their parents' homes.

In Fremantle, you can relive the past by strolling the streets of terraced houses or visiting the magnificent historic buildings, galleries, museums and craft shops – definitely a place to visit.

For all information relating to public transport (buses, trains and ferries) including timetables, route maps and fares, visit the Transperth web-site www.transperth.wa.gov.au or telephone the Infoline (13 62 13)

TRAVEL FREE IN THE CITY

You can always travel free of charge on any Transperth bus as long as you board and alight within the Perth city centre – an area which covers all major shopping streets in Perth and Northbridge. If you are unsure whether you are within this area, just ask your bus driver.

There is also a free bus service, the *Central Area Transit (CAT)* system, which operates around central Perth. These buses are air-conditioned and are electronically controlled. You can get on the route at any of the CAT stops, brightly coloured red or blue, which also track the buses and can tell you how long it will be until the next available bus arrives. The orange CAT bus runs a free service in Fremantle. Please be aware that the College may only issue student travel concession cards if you enrol full-time for 6 weeks or more.

CLIMATE

Perth has a Mediterranean style climate with hot, dry summers and wet winters. The afternoon sea breeze (known as "the Fremantle Doctor") offers relief to coastal towns during summer. With an annual average of eight hours' sun per day, Perth is Australia's sunniest capital!

Summer	December - February	Average temperature 30C
Autumn	March - May	Average temperature 24C
Winter	June – August	Average temperature 18C & rain
Spring	September - November	Average temperature 22C



The summer sun is quite strong, and care should be taken to wear a hat and high factor sunscreen (SPF 30+) to avoid getting sun burnt.

CLOTHING

The dress standard in Australia is rather relaxed. Casual jackets and ties are not normally required in restaurants or bars. We recommend lightweight clothing for summer along with sunglasses, hat and sunscreen. In winter, a jacket, sweater and umbrella are recommended. For students who are over the age of 18 and wishing to go to nightclubs, they must adhere to the dress standard, being smart trousers and smart shirt and smart shoes.

ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES

Electricity supply throughout Australia is between 230 - 250 volts using a standard three pin plug, which is fitted to domestic appliances, so some visitors may need an adaptor socket. 110-volt appliances such as hairdryers and electric shavers cannot be used without a transformer.

TIME

Western Australia is on Western Standard Time (WST), which is eight hours ahead of GMT. WA is one and half-hours behind South Australia and the Northern Territory, and two hours behind all other states. From 2007 to 2010 WA is running on daylight savings.

Flying time to Perth:

Sydney	5 hours	Zurich	22 hours	Hong Kong	7.5 hours
Seoul	11 hours	Tokyo	10 hours		



DINING OUT

Perth boasts a wide variety of eating establishments to cater for all tastes - Chinese, Japanese, Australian, Indian, Italian, Greek and Thai just to name a few. Whatever your preference, you will find it in either Perth or Fremantle. Many of Perth's finest restaurants are along the banks of the Swan River, with marvellous night-time views of the city, yacht harbours and the riverside.

Located over the Horseshoe Bridge, just north of the railway line, Northbridge is the cultural and entertainment heartland of Perth, with cafes spilling out onto the pavement, superb restaurants, seafood and steakhouses, pubs and nightclubs. Entertainment varies too. There are karaoke restaurants and theatre restaurants, offering guitar and piano music and even belly dancing. For the most up-to-date information about what is on, pick up a local newspaper guide or magazine (Xpress) from Student Services.

You will discover that some of the restaurants will serve liquor and are licensed. Others are unlicensed and will mention that they are *BYO* (which means Bring Your Own liquor). Either way, be sure to complement your meal with the excellent range of Western Australian beers and wines. The legal drinking age is 18 years.

QUARANTINE

Australia has been an isolated continent for many years and is relatively free from pests and harmful insects. There are very strict quarantine laws controlling the importation of food and plants.

Travellers coming into Australia's international airports will have their luggage screened – either by detector dogs, x-ray machines or inspection of their bags. International students must declare food, wooden items or items of plant and animal origin that they are carrying with them.

All international travellers entering Australia who **do not declare** quarantine risk items, face an **on-the-spot fine of up to \$220**. This could happen as a result of failing to declare something as small as a piece of fruit! For more important information: www.aqis.gov.au

All Asian food products and most European food products are readily available in Australia and you do not need to bring these with you.



AIRPORT

Perth's international and domestic airports are located 16 km and 11 km respectively North East of the city. Shuttle buses, hire cars and taxis operate regularly from the airports, to Perth city and Fremantle.

For those students who do not request airport pickup, we advise that public transport is not available from our International Airport; therefore you will need to take a taxi. (*Swan Taxis* or *Black & White Taxis*) Transfer time from the International airport to the city is 30 minutes and 20 minutes from the domestic airport.

Currency exchange facilities (on the ground floor) are available at the Perth International Airport.

BANKING

The Australian dollar is the basic unit of currency and 100 cents is equal to one dollar. Notes come in denominations of \$100, \$50, \$20, \$10 and \$5, while coins are produced in \$2, \$1, 50c, 20c, 10c and 5c. Shops will round their bills up or down to the nearest 5c on the cash sales, but credit/debit card sales are charged at the exact amount of the sale. The most commonly accepted credit cards in WA are Visa Mastercard and Bankcard. American Express and Diners Club are also widely accepted.

Banking Hours are: Monday to Thursday 9.30 am - 4.00 pm
 Friday 9.30 am - 5.00 pm
 Some banks are open on Saturday.



MOBILE PHONES

Are you from Japan, Korea, Brazil, Chile or Philippines? Unfortunately your mobile will not work in Australia because in your country the IDON service is used and it is not compatible with Australia. These people need to consider getting a new mobile. We can help you with this on your first day at Orientation.

POST

Australia Post operates in the suburbs between 9:00 am – 5:00 pm from Monday to Friday. Letterboxes are located around the city and suburbs, and mail is collected several times daily. The nearest Post office is at 682a Beaufort Street, approximately ten-minutes walk from the College.

You can receive mail and parcels using St Mark's postal address or fax number.
Our postal address for letters is: PO Box 8480 Stirling Street B.C, Perth WA 6849
Our postal address for parcels is: 375 Stirling St, Perth WA 6000
Our fax number: +61 – 8 – 9227 9880
Please ask the sender to make sure that your name is clearly marked on your mail.

OVERSEAS HEALTH COVER

Medical insurance is recommended as Australia's Medicare system does not cover visitors, except where reciprocal agreements exist. If you study at St Mark's on a Working Holiday Visa or a Tourist Visa, **YOU MUST MAKE YOUR OWN HEALTH INSURANCE ARRANGEMENTS** (e.g. travel insurance) before you commence your studies.

If studying on a **STUDENT VISA** at St. Mark's, you are required to have "Overseas Student Health Cover" (OSHC), the cost of which will be invoiced at the time of enrolment.

Worldcare Assist will pay claims for:

- 85% of the scheduled doctors' fees and you pay the difference.
- the total cost of hospital treatment provided that treatment is in a public hospital and is provided by a hospital doctor.
- eye tests
- blood tests
- X-ray
- some medication

Worldcare Assist will not pay for the cost of dental treatment, physiotherapy or glasses. Waiting periods apply for the cover of medical conditions which existed prior to your arrival in Australia.

SHOPPING

The shopping hours in Australia are as listed below:

Monday - Friday 8.30 am - 5.30 pm
 Thursday 8.30 am - 9.00 pm
 Saturday 8.30 am - 5.00 pm



CITY ONLY

Monday - Thursday 8.30 am - 5.30 pm
 Friday 8.30 am - 9.00 pm
 Saturday 8.30 am - 5.00 pm
 Sunday 12.00 pm - 5.00 pm

FREMANTLE

Monday - Friday 9.00 am - 5.30 pm
 Thursday 9.00 am - 9.00 pm
 Saturday 9.00 am - 5.00 pm
 Sunday 12.00 am - 5.00 pm

Local Markets to visit are Fremantle Markets, E Shed Markets, Scarborough Fair Markets, Subiaco Station Street Markets, Subiaco Pavilion, Midland Military Markets and Wanneroo Week-end Mega Markets, to name a few. If you like having the experience of shopping for bargains, *Aussie Shopping Tours* can show you some of the best wholesale outlets and warehouses in Perth by luxury air-conditioned coach.

VISA REQUIREMENTS

It is essential that you have the correct visa enabling you to study at the College. If you are in Australia and you have a visitor's visa, you are permitted to study for 12 weeks, or if you are holding a working holiday visa, you are permitted to study for 17 weeks. It is very important that you tell us if you have already been studying at any other institution as you cannot study beyond 12 weeks on a visitor's or 17 weeks on a working holiday visa.

If you are applying for a student visa, you are required to study full-time and may not study part-time.

With a student visa, you may apply for a work visa once you have arrived and started your course. This enables you to work for 20 hours per week.

Students' attendance is closely monitored, and if your attendance falls below 80%, the College may be required to report your non-attendance to the DIAC and you may be asked to leave Australia (see also Monitoring Attendance.)

It is very important to note, that if you are on a student visa, you may not change colleges within 6 months of your course, unless the college that you are at agrees that you may change. Students must show compelling reasons for the need to change.

If the College cannot continue to provide you with the course for which you are enrolled, you may apply for a transfer to a College that can offer the course. Please ensure that you read and fully understand the refund policy and other conditions of enrolment.

It is very important that you adhere to the conditions on your visa.



GEOS Perth Soccer Team 2007



HELPFUL WEBSITES

- ☑ Learn more about Western Australia
<http://www.onlinewa.com.au>
- ☑ Tourist's guide to what's on in Perth
<http://www.whatson.com.au>
- ☑ Save time and money with free vouchers for Perth
<http://www.voucherbank.com.au>
- ☑ Lonely Planet Guide
<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/destinations/australia/perth>
- ☑ Discover Western Australia
<http://www.discoverwest.com.au>
- ☑ Information on music, movies, arts and fashion
<http://www.xpressmag.com.au>
- ☑ Information on Rottnest Island
<http://www.rottnest.wa.gov.au>

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Students wishing to enrol in one of the Cambridge Examination classes are required to complete a pre-test in order to ascertain their English level. Students are also required to sit another test upon arrival. The test can be taken at an overseas representative office or at the College for students already in Australia. The purpose of this pre-test is to ensure the provision of the best advice concerning course options and student placements.

The standard admission levels for Cambridge Course are as follows: FCE – Intermediate, CAE – Upper-Intermediate, and CPE – Advanced. Students wishing to enter IELTS or Business English courses must have attained an intermediate level.

Students wishing to enter Advanced General English classes are also required to demonstrate Upper Intermediate Levels under test conditions.

FOR STUDENTS UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE

Under Standard 8 of the National Code, the College has very strict rules for those students who are under 18 years of age. They are required to have a guardian. For students in a College homestay the host parents will be the guardians. Otherwise they need to live with an immediate relative over the age of 21 who will act as their guardian. The College will advise under aged students of the periods for which the College will assume welfare arrangements, which may be for the length of the CoE plus 7 days.

Where a student does not have a parent or suitable relative in Australia, the College is responsible for approving the accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements using the CAAW letter. The student may propose alternative arrangements, but the College must approve them.

Under aged students may not stay with any person under the age of 21 years of age.

CONDITIONS OF ENROLMENT

- Some courses require a prerequisite level of English language proficiency for entry.
- Students will be tested on or before the commencement of my course, and placed in an appropriate English language level.
- Students must complete all class work, assignments, activities and assessments in order to maintain satisfactory progress.
- Students must attend at least 80% of their course, and if they fail to do so, they may be reported to the Australian Government.
- Students must inform GEOS Perth immediately if they change their address in Australia.
- Students cannot change schools during the course without a written letter of release from GEOS Perth.
- School aged dependents accompanying students will be required to pay full fees at a private or government school in Australia as per their fee schedule.
- GEOS Perth can share information about the course and the student's progress with their parents, legal guardians and recruiting agents.
- GEOS Perth has the right to change its fees and conditions, cancel or defer courses, and to alter course timetables and class locations at any time without notice.
- A full week's tuition is payable in weeks comprising public holidays and no refunds, or extension of days, will be offered due to shortened weeks.

REFUND POLICY

- The Registration fee and Accommodation booking fee and High School Advisory Service fee are *non-refundable*.
- If the required visa is not granted, a full refund of tuition fees will be made, provided that sufficient evidence of visa refusal is given to the college by the refusing Australian Authority.
- If written cancellation of the enrolment is received 28 days prior to commencement, a full refund of tuition fees will be made.
- If written cancellation of the enrolment is received less than 28 days prior to commencement, a refund of tuition fees, less a cancellation fee equal to two weeks tuition, will be paid.
- If written cancellation is received on or within 4 weeks of commencement of a course then the student is entitled to a refund of 30% of the tuition fees, less administrative charges for that semester (20 weeks) and full refund of fees paid in respect of future semesters.
- No refunds will be made in respect to commencement of any course of duration 10 weeks and under or where a student cannot continue their course due to a breach of visa regulations. Students who are asked to leave the college due to a breach of college rules, or through the conviction of an offence in an Australian Court of Law, will be refunded 30% of the remaining tuition fees.
- Where the College cannot offer the course for which the student has enrolled, or should their VISA application be rejected, the College shall make the necessary refund within 2 weeks.
- Should the student cancel their enrolment, the College shall affect the necessary refund within 4 weeks. Provider default is covered by the provisions of the ESOS Act 2000 as amended and ESOS Regulations 2001.
- Refunds will be made to the student unless directed otherwise and in the case of under 18 students refunds will only be made to the student if directed to do so in writing by the legal guardian.

MONITORING PROGRESS/ATTENDANCE

Mastering anything requires effort, dedication and commitment. Learning English, or any language, is no exception. GEOS Perth has a range of General English classes, from Beginner to Advanced. Students progress from one level to another when they meet accepted course outcomes for each level in all macro skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking.

Students are regularly assessed and complete feedback on progress given. In addition staff will offer suggestions concerning strategies for successful achievement of expected outcomes.

In terms of Standard 11 of the National Code a student's attendance shall be regularly monitored. Students who are at risk of failing to meet attendance requirements will be notified that they are at risk of falling to 80% and that should attendance continue to fall they shall be reported under Section 19 of the ESOS Act. Students whose attendance falls below 80% shall be reported unless the student can demonstrate compelling evidence why non attendance should not be reported and attendance is not below 70%. Where the College notifies the student of its intention to report the student, the student shall have 20 days to access the College's appeals procedure.

DEFERRING/SUSPENDING A COURSE

In terms of Standard 13 of the National Code the College may grant deferral of commencement of studies or suspension of studies for students who request such a change to their enrolment status *on the grounds of compassionate or compelling circumstances*. Students are advised that such a request may have an effect on their student visa.

A student's enrolment may also be suspended due to conduct that is deemed to be inappropriate or unacceptable. Where the College initiates the suspension, the student shall have 20 days to access the College's appeals procedures.

In all cases the Secretary of DIAC via PRISMS shall be advised.



LIVING COSTS

Examples of **approximate** living costs:

Petrol \$1.30/Litre	Milk \$1.50/Litre	Movies \$15.00
Bread \$1.95 a loaf	Cheese \$8.00/kg	McDonald's Meal \$6.95 (Medium)
Beer \$2.60 (Middy in a bar)		Wine \$6.00 (Glass in a bar)
Beer \$36.00 (Carton from a Bottle Shop)		Wine \$10.00 (Bottle from a Bottle Shop)
Meal at a restaurant \$15.00-\$30.00		Taxi (Airport to the City) \$30.00
Public Transport \$0.80-\$3.00 One way		

INFORMATION FOR YOUR FIRST DAY

ORIENTATION AND TESTING PROCEDURE

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT **ALL STUDENTS**, INCLUDING PART-TIME AFTERNOON STUDENTS, ARE AT ST MARK'S FOR ORIENTATION, BY **8:30AM** ON THEIR FIRST DAY.

What to bring: Passport
 Passport size photograph
 Notepad /paper & pen

8.45 - 9.15 Welcome and Administrative procedures
9.15 – 10.00 Placement Test
10.00 - 10.30 Break
10.30 - 11.45 Orientation

In our Orientation programme you will learn about public transport, homestay and other accommodation issues, holidays, recreation activities etc. The College Grievance Procedure, Attendance Policy will be explained to you. You will also have a tour of the campus.

12.00 – 12.45 Lunch
12.45 - 14:45 Classes start

Part-time (mornings only) students can collect their placement from reception on the following morning.

TESTING

- **Writing** - Students have 15 minutes to write about their first day in Perth.
- **Speaking** – Students have a short conversation with one of the teaching staff. They may have to talk about their hometown, their job, their university, or something else that would hopefully interest them. This takes up to 5 minutes.
- **Reading/Vocabulary** - Students have to answer 20 multiple-choice questions. They are all sentences or short paragraphs with a missing word or phrase. Students have to choose from four alternatives. They have 20 minutes.



AN EXCELLENT WAY TO LEARN ENGLISH



WHERE TO FIND US

You can catch bus numbers *21,67,68* and *69* from Barrack Street, (opposite Murray Street) in Perth or outside the W.A. Museum on Beaufort Street. Or you can catch bus number *22* from the *Perth Busport*.

Remember to look for the *Queens Hotel* and then jump off at the next bus stop.

If you choose to walk from the city centre, this should take approximately 20 minutes. Stay on **Beaufort Street** until you reach the **Harold Street** corner.

You will find us on the corner of **Stirling Street** and Harold Street.



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