

# Frequently asked questions for our International Student Programs during COVID-19

Updated 16 April 2020

## Can I remain in my homestay residence when schools move to online learning at the commencement of Term 2?

As long as your homestay provider is able to provide adequate supervision (taking into consideration your age and maturity), you will be able to access online learning under the same guidelines as domestic students. Online learning is considered a suitable learning program for all students.

A dedicated education learning website is now available to support all students learning from home in the event of a lengthy school closure or an extended student absence. Parent information including curriculum resources is available at [www.qld.gov.au/learningathome](http://www.qld.gov.au/learningathome) as well as many other education resources and websites.

## Can I participate in a non-routine travel activity on weekends or while learning from home?

No. Students must follow the Australian government advice and regulations that have been put in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19. This includes keeping outings and interactions with other people to a minimum. Students should only leave their homes to participate in essential activities such as a medical appointment or essential shopping. EQI will not approve of any activity that does not meet current [Australian federal](#) and [state government](#) guidelines.

## Is there additional support for students in Year 12 who may be struggling to complete all of their assessment due to COVID-19 disruptions?

The Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority ([QCAA](#)) has announced that **one piece of internal assessment** (out of four) will be removed from each syllabus. This is to relieve some of the stress and pressure on Year 12 students and teachers, as they continue to work towards their Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE). Teachers will be provided with supplementary information to advise students about the adjustments of upcoming assessments as well as workloads.

More information from the QCAA about COVID-19 related disruptions can be [found here](#).

## If my homestay parent is considered an essential worker, can I attend school?

Yes. If you are supervised and participating in learning activities set by your regular classroom teachers.

Information from Queensland Health about what are considered essential services can be [found here](#). In addition information regarding the type of learning provided by the Department of Education can be [found here](#).

## How will home learning impact my attendance record?

In Term 2, schools will not be recording student attendance. New arrangements to mark the roll will be put in place. A staff member will be allocated a group of students to connect with each day and record the attendance/absent status.

It is important that students remain in contact with their school every day to ensure their attendance is recorded and they meet minimum attendance as outlined in the [EQI standard terms and conditions](#).

**Will online delivery of my school work during Term 2 impact my course progression or could it be considered a reason for a refund?**

Schools will start home-based learning for at least the first five weeks of Term 2 (from 20 April 2020 until 22 May 2020) with a reassessment by the Queensland government made and announced after that time.

Overseas students are expected to participate in any online learning activities provided by their school. Online delivery during COVID-19 is considered a suitable alternative to maintain teaching and learning in the event of an extended school closure or self-isolation. An online format of course delivery *will not* be considered a reason for a refund or reduction of tuition fees.

Homestay providers are required to supply study facilities to their student that include a desk, a chair and sufficient lighting to complete their school work. If there are any concerns about completing your studies via online delivery, please direct them to your school as soon as possible.

To find out more about how you can prepare for online learning, please visit [Learning@home](#).

Students must follow [Australian federal](#) and [state government](#) guidelines about staying at home.

**I am a non-resident of Australia. Will I commence my program in Term 2, 2020?**

The Australian Government has imposed restrictions to all foreign nationals (excluding permanent residents of Australia). As of 20 March 2020 9:00pm AEDT foreign nationals are no longer able to enter Australia. This restriction will stay in place until further notice from the [Australian government](#).

If you were to commence in Term 2, 2020, you will need to defer your studies to another academic term or withdraw.

**If travel restrictions are lifted can I start my enrolment midterm?**

EQI may review your request on a case-by-case basis depending on which program you were entering. In most cases, EQI would suggest postponing your enrolment to the next term.

**I would like to immediately return to my home country and book a flight that leaves as soon as possible. What does EQI need me to do?**

Please complete the [Travel and activities request form](#) and return it to your school coordinator and [EQI](#), copying in your homestay provider. At a minimum, we will accept an email from your parent or agent advising us that you are withdrawing from the program – please send this email advice and a copy of your itinerary to your school coordinator, [EQI](#) and homestay provider.

**My course is finished but I cannot return home due to travel restrictions/ limited international flights?**

In the event that your flight is delayed or cancelled you should notify your school coordinator and agent. If you require advice after-hours, weekends or during the school holidays you can call free call 1800 QSTUDY (+61 1800 778 839). This is our free support phone service for international students studying in state schools in Queensland, homestay providers, parents and agents.

You may need to contact the [Department of Home Affairs](#) regarding your visa expiry date. Your school will organise an extension to your welfare arrangements either with the current homestay provider or an emergency homestay provider until a flight is confirmed.

EQI will provide funding for up to an additional two weeks for any student who is in this situation.

### **Can I defer my studies in Queensland due to COVID-19 ?**

Yes. You can defer your studies prior to arrival with EQI due to COVID-19, as this is both a compassionate and compelling circumstance. For information regarding deferring your enrolment prior to arrival (the commencement of your course) please see [Enrolment - Subclass 500 \(schools\) visa procedure](#) under the [Enrolment tab](#).

If you would like to defer your studies please submit the [Request to defer commencement form](#).

### **I am a continuing student. Can I suspend my enrolment and return home immediately?**

*Note, under current [Australian Government COVID-19 travel restrictions](#), offshore international students cannot enter the country. Please carefully consider current travel restrictions when making the decision to suspend your enrolment.*

Yes. You can suspend your studies and return to your home country for reasons related to COVID-19. This is considered both a compassionate and compelling circumstance and will not affect your attendance requirements.

The duration approved will depend on your age and the course you are registered in as defined in the entry and course requirement standards. No extensions to the following duration for suspensions of enrolment will be provided:

- Year 12 – maximum of ten weeks only
- Year 11 – maximum of ten weeks only
- Year 10 - maximum of twenty weeks only
- Year prep to Year 9 - maximum of twenty weeks only
- High School Preparation – maximum of ten weeks only

**Any suspension beyond this will require a new Confirmation of Enrolment and you may be required to repeat an academic year.** Students that are onshore can request a suspension of enrolment on a case by case basis.

### **I am a continuing student. Can I suspend my enrolment and remain in Queensland but choose not to engage in home based learning?**

No. Schools in Queensland remain open and will be providing appropriate teaching and learning to all students. If you remain onshore, you must attend and fulfil your learning obligations.

For more information regarding a temporary suspension please refer to the [Suspension of enrolment - Subclass 500 \(schools\) visa procedure](#).

To submit a temporary suspension of your enrolment, you will need to submit the following:

- [Temporary suspension request form \(PDF, 220KB\)](#)

**Will I be entitled to a refund if I suspend, withdraw or defer my enrolment because of COVID-19?**

Yes, we consider the COVID-19 situation both a compassionate and compelling circumstance and your refund will be considered based on the following:

1. Any student withdrawals due to COVID-19 two weeks or longer before commencing the program, will not incur any additional fees and a full refund will apply.
2. Any student withdrawals due to COVID-19 less than two weeks before commencing the program, a full refund less the homestay placement fees will apply. \*
3. Any student withdrawals due to COVID-19 after commencing the program, a full refund of unused tuition and non-tuition fees will apply from the date of leaving the program. \*\*
4. No administration fee will apply (first request) to any student deferrals to 2021. For students opting to defer, favourable refund terms are still available after deferral if COVID-19 circumstances still exist at a future date. Compassionate and compelling circumstances relating to COVID-19 need to be demonstrated when submitting the refund request. Standard refund terms apply for changes of mind.

\* The homestay placement fee will not be refunded as a homestay placement has already taken place for the student

\*\* The homestay placement fee and two week homestay fee will not be refunded.

In case of deferral, EQI may re-allocate prepaid fees to future enrolments if parents choose to defer their child's commencement rather than withdraw.

If you make the decision to withdraw or suspend your enrolment there is a refund available. You will find our Refund Policy outlined in the Standard terms and conditions.

The amount of your refund depends on the circumstances set out in the refund policy. If you are entitled to a refund please submit: [Refund request form \(PDF, 405KB\)](#)

**What will my Overseas Health Cover (OSHC) provider cover me for if I contract COVID-19?**

If you suspect or are diagnosed with COVID-19, contact your OSHC provider immediately to find out what you are covered for. This will depend on the provider's policies and your level of cover. If your OSHC is with Allianz Global Assistance, you can find important [information for customers about COVID-19 here](#).