

Tips for New Immigrants

Below are a few suggestions for new immigrants to BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA. We have tried to include our experiences, but it may not always be the same for everyone since it all depends on the individual circumstance. However, these are general tips that will apply to most immigrants. Insha - Allah we hope and make dua that it will be beneficial to all.

ACCOMODATION

- Initially, one would most probably start off by renting a unit within a secured complex. They are usually 3 or 4 bedroomed units. It is possible to get furnished units, although majority of them seem to be unfurnished.
- Most units tend to come with a 6-month lease.
- Check that the unit is not up for sale at the end of your lease period, although it is the duty of the manager to inform you of such an arrangement.
- Prices range from \$200.00 per week to \$350.00 per week. Depending on the area, size, furnished or unfurnished, etc.
- The most popular areas for units in the South Side are Runcorn, Eight Mile Plains, Calamvale and Kuraby. Most of these areas are also convenient for public transport, shops, Schools, Masjid and Maddressa.
- One can also rent a house. This will usually attract higher rents from \$300.00 per week up to \$500.00 per week.
- Common areas for a house are also Runcorn, Eight Mile Plains, Kuraby, Calamvale, Algester, and Stretton.

INSURANCE

- Bring with you a letter from your Motor Vehicle Insurance Brokers certifying that you have a no claim bonus, or better still, a letter certifying that you have not had any accidents and claims in the last 8 years. THAT WILL ONLY APPLY IF YOU HAVEN'T HAD ANY CLAIMS.
- Bring with you a letter from your Home Insurance Brokers certifying that you have a House Owners policy and a Householders policy with them and that you have not had any claims with them for however many years. AGAIN, THIS WILL ONLY APPLY IF YOU HAVEN'T MADE ANY CLAIMS.

The above two will assist you when you are taking out insurance for either a car or home in that your premiums will be almost half of what you would usually have to pay.

- IF YOU ARE AN AA MEMBER:
Bring with you a letter from the AA certifying that you have been a member with them for however many years you've been with them.

This will assist you if you decide to become a member of the RACQ. Your premium will be lower and you will get a higher-class membership.

- We have found RACQ to be very helpful in the event of breakdowns. Therefore we suggest that you become an RACQ member.

JOB – HUNTING/BUSINESS

- If you were coming on a skills visa, you most probably would want to begin to look for a job.
- You may not have a computer available to you immediately on arrival. So prepare a resume before you come, and preferably have a copy on disk. However, you may

have to adjust the resume depending on the job applications. But having something on hand will make it easier to produce another.

- Become a member of the local library.
- The local libraries have free Internet Access. One has to book usage time in advance. You can also update your resume using the library facilities. However printing will be at your cost.
- For job availabilities see HELPFUL WEBSITES under the Courier Mail. This is a newspaper that comes out everyday but the Saturday paper is more helpful. It will give one a view on job availabilities.
- Maybe you could actually apply for a job being advertised **before** arriving in Australia?
- For business availabilities see HELPFUL WEBSITES under the Courier Mail. This is a newspaper that comes out everyday but the Saturday paper is more helpful. It will give one a view on business availabilities.
- When looking for a business, you may contact the following agents to assist:-
 - Total Franchise Solutions
 - ABC Franchise Solutions
 - Hallmark Business Sales
 - Franchise Management Services
 - Benchmark Business Sales
 - Scan Business Brokers
 - Associated Business Sales
 - Business Brokers Queensland
- When in the process of buying a business, ask to see the last three years accounts.
- Another suggestion is to ask to see the **TAX** accounts for the last three years.
- You can also ask to do what is called a "Due Diligence". That is where you are given 28 or 35 days (or whatever you agree on) in which to go over their accounts and look into any matter relating to the purchase of the business.
- You can also ask to stand in and operate their business for two weeks to give you an idea of the cliental and passing trade.
- When in the process of buying a business, contact Smart Licence. SEE HELPFUL WEBSITES.
- Smart Licence is a government organisation that assists when purchasing a business. They can give information about the business, statistics of the area, projected views, etc. This information may cost a bit, but is very helpful.
- When looking for a business, keep a detailed record of what you do, whom you have met, business cards, business financial statements, etc. etc. This may be required when the 24-month survey comes up.

CAR BUYING & DRIVING LICENSES

- When purchasing a car, if it is new, there would probably be fewer concerns. However, if it is second-hand from a car dealer, check to see that they have a **COMPULSORY** new **MOTOR VEHICLE SAFETY CERTIFICATE**. You are entitled to ask to see the new **BLUE** Safety Certificate.
- When purchasing a new car, you can negotiate a better price. Maybe get extras put in at no extra costs.
- If you are purchasing a second hand car privately or from a dealer, get it checked by RACQ. It will cost you, not much, but it will be worthwhile in the long run.
- Make sure the car has a very good AC.
- Get yourself an International Drivers License/Permit from the AA in your country. It may come handy.
- Your current license is valid here for 3 months from arrival. It would probably be a good idea to prepare yourself in trying to get your Australian license within that period.
- You will have to undergo a written test and then the actual driving test. It is not difficult so do not panic.
- When buying a second hand car, try the Government Auctions as you may get a good car at a reasonable price from there. Don't panic about trying to buy a car upon

arrival. There is public transport available so it won't be too difficult getting around. SEE HELPFUL WEBSITES.

- Be aware of the speed limits. Here they are very particular and there are random speed traps.
- We from Zimbabwe and South Africa are used to Police setting up speed traps on the roadside. Here, laser guns attached to moving Police vehicles does speed traps.
- Be warned that sometimes the Police use unmarked cars.

CHILDREN – SCHOOL/UNIVERSITY INFORMATION

If you have a child transferring university

- They must bring with them a DETAILED course outline of ALL the subjects they have done.
- If applying for credits, the university here usually require the following info:
 - Course Content
 - Contact Hours
 - Methods of Assessment
 - Prescribed Texts
- Any extra information is always helpful and hassle saving.
- Bring a university transcript stamped by the registrar.
- With regards to acceptance at uni, you will need to get acceptance from QTAC before they can be accepted at the university. This can take a while, and often, late applications attract penalty fees. Therefore, plan it accordingly as you may get here and find that the child cannot get into university right away.

If you have a school going child...

- Bring with you at least their last three school reports if possible. Bring certified copies, which you can give in with the application.
- The more popular public schools are Warrigal Primary School, Runcorn High School and McGregor State High School.
- There are private schools also. The more popular being John Paul College.
- There are childcare centres for those parents who will be working.

MASJID/MADDRESSA

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| • Islamic Academy of Brisbane (Darul Uloom)
Tel:- 3392 1310 | 6 Agnes Street – Buranda – |
| • Islamic Association of Lutwyche
Tel:- 3857 5898 | 33 Fuller Street – Lutwyche – |
| • Islamic Council of Queensland
Tel:- 3219 7799 | Compton Road – Karawatha – |
| • Islamic Information Center of Queensland
Tel:- 3391 7867 | 6 Agnes Street – Buranda – |
| • Islamic School of Brisbane
Tel:- 3841 3645 | Compton Road – Karawatha – |
| • Islamic Society of Algester
Tel:- 3272 4111 | 48 Learoyd Road – Algester – |
| • Islamic Society of Darra
Tel:- 3375 4579 | 219 Douglas Street – Oxley – |
| • Islamic Society of Holland Park
Tel:- 3343 4748 | 309 Nursery Road – Holland Park – |
| • Islamic Society of Kuraby
Tel:- | 1408 Beenleigh Road – Kuraby – |
| • Islamic Society of Rochedale
Plains –
Tel:- 3841 2504 | 2674 Logan Road – Eight Mile |
| • Islamic Society of West End
Tel: - 3846 1573 | 12 Princhester Street – West End – |

- A madressah based on a prescribed syllabus from South Africa is being run at Kuraby Masjid. The madressa currently has 120 children attending. Should you wish to enrol your child at the madressa you can apply on line to the following address kadwa@hotmail.com
- Alhumdulillah the work of Dawah is being made in many ways.
- In Zimbabwe and South Africa we have gotten used to a very set Islamic lifestyle. Coming to Australia you will meet Muslims from all over the world thus resulting in the four Mazhabs coming together. One will need to be very tolerant and accept the fact that other people may think or do things differently. At the same time, this is an excellent opportunity to meet other Muslims from various parts of the world, since Australia's population has a very large proportion of immigrants.
- Some State Schools and most Universities provide facilities for Salaah.
- There is a burial section specifically for the Muslims at the local cemetery. Burials are performed in the proper Islamic manner. (i.e. not in a coffin)

MADRESSA through CORRESPONDENCE

- For those families migrating to Australia but settling in smaller centres may find that there are no Madressa facilities available for their children. However, one can do Madressa through Correspondence called ISLAM AT HOME.
- Islam at Home is a low cost, distant education course in Islamic studies for preschoolers to teenagers. It has been designed for those families or individuals wishing to learn about Islam who don't have access to local Madressa's or Islamic Schools but still wish to be able to give their children Islamic knowledge.
- Islam at Home is a series of textbooks and storybooks designed to help you to teach your children to understand Islam easily. They have been prepared with the objective of helping children in grasping the basic ideas, fundamental duties and historical facts of Islam and Islamic Culture.
- The Islam at Home course is sent out to parents on a monthly basis – twelve months of the year. It comprises of a textbook, storybook and a month information sheet. In the last month there is an exam which, if the student passes, they will receive a certificate and be able to progress to the next years level.
- For more information on the Islam at Home course please contact – Telephone 0414 858 550 – E Mail – info@islamathome.com.au

GROUPS OF INTEREST

- ISLAMIC FEMALE ASSOCIATION (IFA)
The IFA is a new venture aimed at promoting sisterhood amongst Brisbane's Muslim Female youth. Through social events, community involvement & workshops. To blend entertainment with awareness, while contributing towards and beyond our Muslim and Australian communities.
- FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIAN MUSLIM STUDENTS AND YOUTH (FAMSY)
- CRESCENTS of BRISBANE
A community based organisation fostering a healthy lifestyle through sport, entertainment, education and culture particularly amongst Muslims living in Queensland.
- ISLAMIC WOMENS ASSOCIATION OF QUEENSLAND (IWAQ)

DOCUMENTS

- Don't forget to bring all your important documents with you. DO NOT put them in the container, as you never know when the container will arrive.
- Do not put your valuables in the container. If possible bring it with you in your hand luggage.
- Bring letters of references from your previous employers.
- Bring certified copies of your documents. It may come in handy.
- Make sure a Commissioner of Oaths certifies all copied documents.

CONTAINER

If you are bringing a container –

- Do not bring any items such as untreated wood, e.g. miswaak, whole taj, whole lawang, whole mari, etc. This will be confiscated by quarantine.
- Make sure your shoes do not have any dirt on them. Clean off all the sand, grass, from the under side of the shoes, etc. If they have any dirt on them, quarantine will take them, get them cleaned and charge you \$50.00 a pair. If you do not wish to pay, they will then destroy them.
- If you are bringing golf clubs, make sure they are also cleaned thoroughly. Once again quarantine will charge you to clean them.
- Quarantine is very strict. You may get away with it, but you take the chance.
- If you are bringing spices, pack them into sealed packets. You can bring ground taj, ground lawang, ground mari. Please note, one's experience may not be the same as others. Your spices may come through or may not. Just depends. But generally, most people's spices have come through, and the main thing is to have it packed well and labelled.
- You may ask, do I need to bring spices? There are many spice shops and Alhumdulillah we do get most of the things here.
- If you are bringing electrical appliances that do not have fitted plugs, don't worry to get them fitted with plugs. The plugs are different here. However, appliances from Zimbabwe and South Africa do work here.
- If you are thinking of bringing your appliances that are fairly old. We suggest it may not be such a good idea. If the appliance gets faulty, to repair it costs quite a bit, and it may be more worthwhile buying a new one. Most appliances here come with a warranty. However, all this will depend on your financial position.
- Beds (base and mattress) are very expensive here. It is worthwhile buying new ones of good quality and bringing it with.
- If you are bringing new furniture, make sure there is no manufacturers labels left on, as customs will check it and charge you duty for any new furniture brought in.
- If you have good solid furniture like oak, it's probably a good idea to bring them. Oak furniture is hard to come by here and costs much more.
- Try not to bring bulky furniture. Homes are smaller here and you might have difficulty fitting them into the house. No doubt you can get big homes, so to have the bulky furniture may not be a problem. Of course, all this depends on the individual position.
- We suggest that you bring electrical fans with. Maybe 3 standing fans and 3 table fans. Most homes have fans in the Lounge and in the Master Bedroom. You will need these fans for the other rooms. You can be rest assured you will definitely use those fans here.

SHOPPING

- It is advisable to check all the ingredients on products when purchasing foodstuff. Many items contain Haraam ingredients.
- An innocent looking loaf of bread or fresh chips may contain beef ingredients.
- Initially grocery shopping is very time-consuming having to check all the ingredients. Eventually you will get to know what to buy and what not to buy.
- There are many Halaal Butchers and Indian Spice Shops. Contact someone you know for more details.
- Many supermarkets sell Halaal Chicken in their meat section. But please be observant and note if they are mixing and handling it with other Non Halaal items. Fish may be kept in the same counter and handled with Non Halaal products.
- Many big chain supermarkets have what they call Home Brands. These products are a lot cheaper than brand names. It is advisable to buy these, as it is a big saving. However, this does not apply in all instances, as sometimes it is better to buy brand name products. e.g. it is advisable to buy brand name detergents for the washing machine.

HEALTH

- On a PR status you are entitled to Medicare assistance.
- You can only register with Medicare 10 days after you arrive.
- On a PR status you are also entitled to a Health Care Card. But this may not apply in all instances.
- We advise to get in with a doctor as soon as you can. Also get to know about hospitals and the out patient facilities available. We pray that you never have to, but you never know when you may need to use this facility urgently.
- If you can afford it, it may be wise to get private health cover.

GENERAL

- If you have a PR (permanent residence) status and have children under the age of 18 you are entitled to Family Assistance benefits from Centre Link.
- For those who may not necessarily be moving to Brisbane, but perhaps another part of Australia, be aware that there are different states, and different laws/systems may apply depending on which state you're in.
- When obtaining a service, be sure to check all the options available by that service provider so that you will choose the one suitable for your needs.
- When choosing a service, be aware that there are many providers of that service and look for the one that gives the best rate for your requirements.
- Do not feel bound to any provider as one can change to another at any time.
- Moving to another country and starting a new life may not be easy. However, **be positive** in what you do. Do not look back, but remind yourself why you really came. Focus on that and always turn to Allah to help and guide you. Insha-Allah things will be easy. Aameen.
- Be prepared to do things that you may never have done before, i.e. doing daily household chores. If you are positive in doing that, then Insha-Allah it will be easy for you. If not, you may feel it a burden.
- As a family you have to work as a team More hands make light work.

HELPFUL WEBSITES

- University of Queensland (UQ) – www.uq.edu.au
- Queensland University of Technology (QUT) – www.qut.edu.au
- Griffith University – www.gu.edu.au
- Queensland Transport – www.transport.qld.gov.au/driving (for driving in Queensland)
- Accommodation – www.seqrents.com.au
- Queensland Tertiary Admissions Center (QTAC) – www.qtac.edu.au
- Immigration – www.dima.gov.au
- Business Licensing, Registration & Information Services – www.sd.qld.gov.au
- Jobs – www.careerone.com.au
- Public Transport Information – www.transinfo.qld.gov.au
- City Train – www.citytrain.com.au
- The Courier Mail – www.thecouriermail.com.au (a local newspaper that can be used for looking for jobs and businesses – in particular the Saturday paper)
- Smart Licence – www.smartsmallbusiness.qld.gov.au/smartlicence

PLEASE NOTE:-

These are just a few suggestions from our experiences. Our intention is to try and make it easy for new migrants. Things may not always work out as we have suggested. So please do forgive us for any shortcomings. Always turn to Allah for help and guidance. We make dua that Allah makes it easy for all. Aameen.