



Practical Information for International Students





Message from USP International

Dear Student,

Congratulations on being accepted to study at The University of the South Pacific (USP), Laucala Campus in Suva, Fiji.

We have put together this information for you to help you prepare for your Study Abroad at USP. Please read through this document carefully as it will help you to understand the necessary steps you need to take in order to prepare for your Study Abroad. If you are in doubt or do not understand anything that we have outlined, feel free to contact us via Skype, Email, Facebook or even call us. We are more than willing to assist where we can.

All the best,

USP International Team

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USP International Staff



Mr. Anitelu St. John
EU Projects Officer



Ms Nonu Pesamino
International Customer Relationship
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International Mobility Officer



Ms. Lillian Fuata
International Students Officer

Who is an International Student?

You are an international student if :

- You hold a citizenship of a country other than the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Niue, Nauru, Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tokelau, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu; **and**
- You have been issued with an Official Offer letter from the USP International Office or one of the USP faculties.

Note: If you are not sure, you must email international@usp.ac.fj to verify your student status before you proceed with any preparations as outlined in this document.

Who can use this information?

This information is intended for all international students enrolled at the Laucala Campus in Suva, Fiji. International students who are enrolled at other USP Fiji Campuses may use this information.

International students who are enrolled at other USP campuses in the region may contact USP International office via email for assistance; or contact the regional campus for practical information and assistance.



Study Permit

As an international student studying at USP, you must make sure that you meet all the requirements to study in Fiji.

- You **must** apply for a Study Permit via the USP International Office **before** you enter Fiji. If you are not issued with a pre-approved study permit letter, you may not be permitted entry into the country. Most airlines will require a copy of your study permit letter before permitting you to board your flight to Fiji.
- Please **do not apply** for a study permit at a Fiji consulate or embassy in your home country.
- You must pay for your study permit application fee directly to USP and not Fiji Immigration.

Cost and Payment Method

- All students enrolled in the following programmes: Preliminary, Foundation, IEP, Certificate, Diploma, Bachelors Degree, Study Abroad, Exchange, Graduate Certificate or Diploma, Postgraduate Certificate or Diploma and Masters by coursework will pay a total of **FJD \$513 (\$200 for non refundable bond and \$313 for permit cost).**
- All students enrolled for a Masters thesis and PhD will pay a total of **FJD \$867.**
- This payment is to be made directly to USP through a wire transfer or online; and a receipt must be emailed to international@usp.ac.fj
- To make an online payment, go to www.usp.ac.fj / Quick Links/Online Payments/Other. To make a wire transfer, email USP International Office

Important Notice: Approval to Conduct Research in Fiji (Separate Permit required)

All students undertaking a Masters by Research and PhD will need to apply for approval to conduct research from the Ministry of Education if their research will be conducted in Fiji. This needs to be approved prior to a study permit.

Documents & Important Deadlines

Semester 1:

- **December 15th:** deadline to pay for study permit fees + submit study permit application form and documents via email.

Semester 2:

- **May 30th:** deadline to pay for study permit fees + submit study permit application form and documents via email.

Required documents:

- Study Permit application form
- **Return** air ticket
- Medical report
- Police Clearance/Report
- Evidence of funding/Sponsorship
- 4 passport-sized photographs
- A copy of your passport biodata page
- A copy of your USP Offer Letter

Note: Your return ticket should be back to your home country. If you are studying for more than 1 year, you may have an ‘open ticket’.

Your **Medical report** can be issued by your GP stating that you are fit to undertake studies abroad. A **police report** or a police clearance is basically a letter from your Police department stating that you have a clear record.

Evidence of funding can be a bank statement and a personal letter to say that you or your parents are funding your studies; or a sponsorship letter if you are on a scholarship/sponsorship.

***You need to bring your original documents when you travel to Fiji.**

Important Notice: Lodging study permit applications

As per advise from Fiji Immigration, all applicants must be physically outside of Fiji when submitting an application for a study Permit. No applications will be received by individuals who are physically residing in Fiji.

Accommodation

On campus

- Accommodation may be available but **not** guaranteed at the Standard Halls of Residence and the Waqavuka Flats.
- You may apply for accommodation via the USP International Office. Please do not send your application directly to the halls.
- The standard rate for 2016 for the Halls of Residence is FJD\$2,362 (10th Hall) and FJD\$2475 (11th Hall) per semester and does not include breaks, or early check-in and late check-out.
- The standard rate for the Waqavuka Flats is USD 3,875 per semester and does not include breaks, or early check-in and late check-out.
- You may check into your on campus accommodation on Saturday before Semester starts and check out on Saturday after exams conclude. Please note the fees stated above will **only** cover your stay from the Saturday before classes start to the Saturday after exams. Any additional stay will be charged on a pro-rated basis. Please click [here](#) to check daily rates.
- If you wish to apply for on campus accommodation, submit your application via email to international@usp.ac.fj by **5th June** (for July start) or **5 January** (for February start). **Remember, accommodation is not guaranteed; and late applications may not be considered.**
- The Halls will provide you with a bed sheet and pillow case, and a general kitchen area. You are required to bring your own towel, cooking utensils and food. You can buy these at a reasonable price in recommended stores in Suva.



Off Campus

- While USP International is not obliged to secure your accommodation, we will provide assistance where possible.
- The [USP Campus Life website](#) provides a database of off campus accommodation, which you may use to search for off campus accommodation.
- Rent is paid on a monthly basis in Fiji and may not include utility bills. Landlords/owners usually issue a contract and require a refundable bond/deposit as well as the first months rent upfront. The bond/deposit may be refundable towards the end of your stay. Conditions apply; so its important that you read your terms and conditions carefully.
- Most landlords may not be willing to rent their apartment/flat for a short term lease, i.e. anything less than a year. If they do, you will be required to pay a non-refundable bond.
- You may be required to pay your utility bills. Electricity bills can range anywhere between FJ\$10-\$200 per month, while water bills can range between FJ\$10-\$15 every three months.

Course Registration

- USP International will assist with course registration for students enrolled at the Laucala Campus.
- Exchange students and Study Abroad students must send a ‘Course Request list’ with their preference of 4 courses before they arrive in Fiji.
- All other students, i.e. Foundation, Certificate, Diploma, Unclassified Studies, IEP and Bachelor’s Degree students will register for their courses during the international student orientation.
- Postgraduate students must visit their respective faculty for advising and assistance in course registration.
- All students must be aware of the important dates to add course and drop courses. Any student wishing to add or drop after the deadlines will not be accommodated.
- You must attend all your classes and tutorials. This is a major condition of your Study Permit. If you do not attend your classes and USP International is informed, we will notify Fiji Immigration. This may affect your Study permit.
- While we do our best to assist you with course registrations, it is your responsibility to ensure that you are registered in your classes by the deadlines. Please check the [online](#) calendar for academic dates and course descriptions.

Orientation

- USP International organizes an International Student Orientation every semester. The orientation is usually 4 days long and starts on a Wednesday before the commencement of the semester.
- Orientation is **mandatory** for all new students, so please make sure you are aware of the dates and attend the orientation.

Insurance

- As an international student, you **must** purchase comprehensive ‘Medical and Travel’ insurance for the duration of your stay at The University of the South Pacific. Please ensure that your insurance covers common risks like lost, stolen or damaged personal items, medical emergency, travel delays, etc.
- If you do not have an insurance policy, The University of the South Pacific will not be liable for any lost, stolen or damaged personal items.
- All students will be required to provide proof of insurance upon arrival at The University of the South Pacific.

USP Medical Scheme

- As an international student, you are required to purchase USP’s Medical Scheme every semester. The cost is approximately USD \$25 per semester. This is not an insurance cover. It will allow you to visit the USP medical center/USP doctor and also cover your prescriptions that will be prescribed to you by the USP doctor.
- If you consult any private medical practitioners in Fiji, you must cover the cost yourself. USP will not be liable for any costs incurred.

Pre-departure

- Plan your travel so that you have everything you need while you are studying abroad at USP.
- Check your ticket to see the maximum weight allowed—most airlines allow about 23kg; so make sure you pack only what you need—light clothing, medication, shoes, etc.
- Make sure you have your USP Offer letter, passport, air tickets, travel insurance, study permit approval letter and all necessary documentation with you at all times during your travel.
- Charge your laptops and phones in case you need to use them when you are in transit, etc.
- Check with your travel agent to see whether or not you require a transit visa. If you do, make sure you apply for this well in advance.
- Don't forget to email a copy of your travel itinerary to USP International before you travel so that they are aware if you need pick up services from the Nausori/Suva airport or the Suva holiday Inn.
- If you are travelling for the first time and are unsure of what to expect, please let us know via email and we can arrange for a Skype session with you. We have a team of experienced travelers!



Arrival

- You must [email](#) a copy of your confirmed travel ticket to the USP International Office.
- You are recommended to arrive at the Nausori/Suva airport. Once you arrive at the Nausori/Suva airport, our office staff will pick* you up and bring you to USP/your accommodation.
- If you arrive at the Nadi airport instead of Nausori/Suva, then you will need to arrange your own transportation to Suva/USP. Students are advised to **refrain** from using mini-buses and private taxis at all times! Mini-buses can be very unreliable.
- All registered taxis in Fiji will have a LT/LH registered number plates and must operate on a meter, flag fall at FJ\$1.50 or \$2 after 10pm.
- Recommended transport from Nadi to Suva and vice versa are Coral Sun or TT buses, Sunbeam Transport and Pacific Transport. They charge approximately FJ\$15-\$22 one way. You must take care of your belongings at all times.
- If you do not have any Fijian currency, try to change some money at the currency exchange booth at the airport. It is always handy to carry some local cash in the case you need to eat or use a phone booth, etc.

* allocated arrival dates

What to expect...

- **Safety:** Just like any other country, you need to be well prepared. In general, Fiji is a safe place, BUT you need to be careful when moving around, talking to strangers, shopping, traveling, at home, etc. Pick-pocketing can be a common issue in Fiji. You need to take care of your belongings at all times and be mindful of where you are going. Try not to carry too much valuables or flash them around in public. If you give an opportunity for someone to steal your belongings, it will happen. If you are careful, you should be okay. Whether you reside on campus or off campus, you need to make sure that your doors and windows are locked while you are away. You need to make wise decisions about whom you invite to your residences. If you need police assistance, dial 917, for Fire and Ambulance, dial 911.
- **Shopping:** In general, Fiji does not have multinational stores or food chains, however, there is more than enough places for you to shop around for clothes, shoes, groceries, personal items, etc. Recommended places are Rups Big Bear, Vinod Patel for general household items. Recommended supermarkets include Food 4 Less, RB Patel, MH and Shop n Save. Most large supermarkets, etc. accept major credit cards. Fresh fruits and vegetables are readily available from the local Suva market.



- **Traveling:** It can rather fun traveling to other islands within the Fiji group and perhaps within the South Pacific region. All international students must fill out the travel log when traveling during weekends, holidays, etc. This is not to monitor your every move but to make sure we know where you are during times of any unforeseen circumstance. This will also help us to get hold of you in the event of any family emergency, etc. We advise students to travel in groups and seek assistance from the international office when planning trips. Buses and inter-island connecting ferries are readily available to connect you to the different parts of the islands. You may qualify for discounts with your USP ID card, so its always good to ask companies if they offer USP special prices, particularly on ferries and resorts/backpackers.
- **Climate & Weather:** Fiji has a tropical maritime climate which is divided into the hot & wet period and cool & dry period. The hot & wet period is normally from mid November to mid– April, while to cool and dry period is from May to October. Average temperatures can range between 20—26 degree Celsius (68 to 79 degrees Fahrenheit) during the cooler periods and 23-30 degree Celsius (73-86 Fahrenheit) during the hotter periods. You can expect a lot of humidity and rain, so its probably best for you to travel with light clothing and perhaps carry an umbrella/raincoat or buy one in Fiji.



University Services: While we will always try our level best to assist you where we can, we cannot always guarantee that you will be provided with instantaneous responses or services. It is important to understand that USP is located in a developing country, and as such, the turnaround time can be longer.

- **WI-FI and INTERNET:** is available at hotspots around campus, including selected residential areas. You will be provided with 3GB internet quota per month. If your allocated quota is used up, you will need to purchase internet credit. WI-FI and internet connection may not be the fastest on campus, and intermittent interruptions will occur from time to time, especially during adverse weather conditions.
- **Maintenance/Repairs:** If your accommodation needs any repairs or maintenance work, the housing office will need to be notified. Again, please remember that you are in a developing country, and the turnaround may be longer than expected.
- **Classes & Tutorials:** This may be quite different from what you are used to, especially the methodologies and strategies used. Lecturers may integrate a combination of indoor and outdoor learning, and where classes are more practical like Geography, Marine Studies and Tourism, for example; you may be required to participate in mandatory fieldtrips/excursions. A standard class may have between 3-5 contact hours per week per course. If you are registered for practical courses, you may have more contact hours.
- **Tutorials** are mandatory at USP and must be attended, as they weigh about 10% of your final grade.
- **Opening hours:** The International Office opens from 8:00am to 5:00pm from Monday to Friday, except on public holidays and long weekends. If there are any unforeseen circumstances such as a Cyclone, etc. the University may be closed; however you will be notified.

General advise to students...

The USP Region covers 12 countries in the South Pacific, and has 14 campuses. You will be based at the Laucala Campus in Suva, FIJI

Fiji is a developing country and can often be associated with a number of challenges. One needs to have an open mind and be aware of the challenges and the slower pace of life, compared to more developed countries. For example, you will not have access to the most developed infrastructure or have the fastest WI-FI connection. Fijians live a simple life and are thankful for the little things they have, and as such, it is only polite to be appreciative of everything that is available in Fiji. It is important to understand that Fiji is a tropical country, and you will experience heat, humidity, excessive rainfall in the Eastern division, etc.

Our advise is for your to come with an open mind and immerse yourself in the local community. This is the best way for you to make the most use of your study abroad experience!



TESTIMONIALS

"I didn't know what to expect traveling to Fiji on my own! But every doubt went away when I met the amazing staff and students at USP. I feel that I have made lifelong friends in both the locals and International students."

Bettina Steen
Study Abroad Programme
Norway, 2011



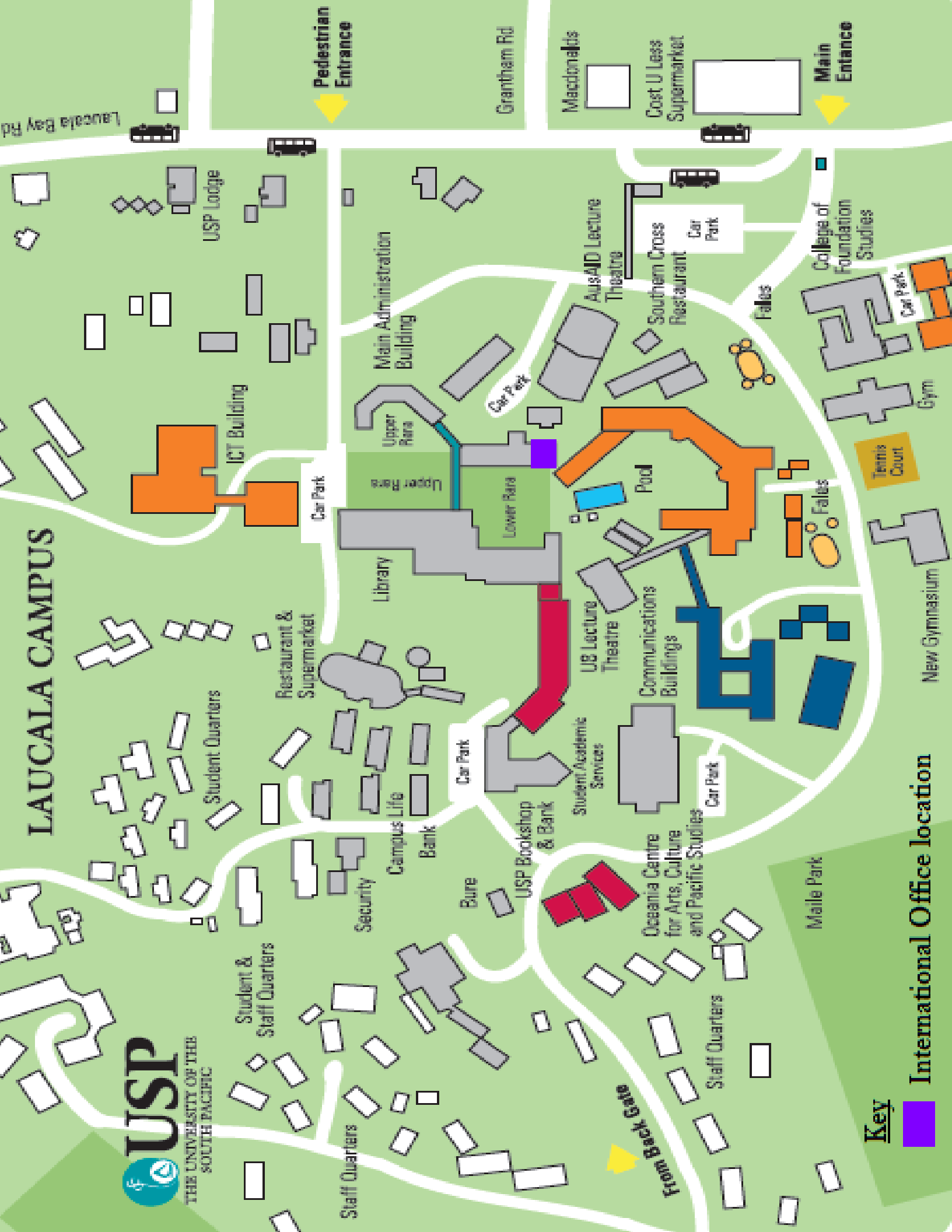
"It's a wonderful experience that I have studied at University of South Pacific. While I have studied I made many friends from other countries and I really enjoyed staying in Fiji. This is one of the most valuable experiences that I had in my life."

Jiyeon Kang
English Language Programme
Korea, 2010

“
I've enjoyed
learning from
my classmates,
who come from
countries all over
the Pacific
”

"I've had a great experience at USP. Campus is beautiful, green, and an oasis of quiet and shade after the city. I've found professors and administrators both accessible and helpful, especially when I've been proactive. The class sizes in my postgraduate program are nice and small, and I've enjoyed learning from my classmates, who come from countries all over the Pacific."

Birtany Gallagher
Postgraduate Programme
USA, 2009



LAUCALA CAMPUS



Pedestrian Entrance

Grantham Rd

Macdonalds

Cost U Less Supermarket

Main Entrance

USP Lodge

Main Administration Building

AusAID Lecture Theatre

Southern Cross Restaurant

College of Foundation Studies

ICT Building

Upper Rara

Car Park

Fales

Car Park

Gym

Tennis Court

New Gymnasium

Library

Lower Rara

Pod

Communications Buildings

US Lecture Theatre

Student Academic Services

Oceanica Centre for Arts, Culture and Pacific Studies

USP Bookshop & Bank

Bure

Security

Campus Life

Bank

Restaurant & Supermarket

Student Quarters

Student & Staff Quarters

Staff Quarters

Staff Quarters

Maile Park

From Back Gate

Key

International Office location

Resources

- www.international.usp.ac.fj (Programmes & Courses)
- <http://www.fijime.com/> (Tourism & adventure)
- www.facebook.com/usp.international.office (Meet other students)
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sYihNAi7Hrc> (Video)
- <http://www.tourismfiji.com/fiji-weather.html> (Climate/Weather)
- <http://geography.about.com/od/fijimaps/a/fijigeography.htm> (Geography))
- http://www.luxuryhideaways.net/fiji/fiji_culture_history.htm (History & Culture)

Contact US

Mailing Address: The University of the South Pacific

International Office, Laucala Campus

Private Mail Bag, Suva, FIJI

Physical Address: CELT Building, First floor above ground level

Tel: +679 323 2743 Fax: +679 323 2001

[Email](#)

[Facebook](#)

[Website](#)

Study Explore Enjoy Fiji!

APPENDIX 1

Students who wish to bring their dependents to Fiji:

This is of extreme importance and must be treated as such. All students who intend to have dependents accompany them into Fiji or have them join at a later date must liaise **directly** with the [Department of Fiji Immigration](#) **prior** to your arrival in Fiji. Information on permit requirements for: *Special purpose permit to reside with a family member* can be found on the [Immigration website](#) under Permits > # 12.

The application form can be found [HERE](#).

Please note that your Study Permit must first be approved before you can lodge your dependent's application(s) or otherwise advised by Fiji Immigration only. Be prepared to pay a refundable bond for your dependent to Fiji Immigration and this amount must be clarified in the initial discussions to avoid complications later. Bond charged by Fiji Immigration may defer for different countries; and may be charged per person/per dependent, so please contact Fiji Immigration to find out details.

It is recommended that students make all the necessary preparations for their dependents/family before they arrive into Fiji; i.e. permits, accommodation, etc. It is also recommended that students seek advise and clarification from Fiji Immigration before making any travel reservations for their family.

This issuing of permits is at the sole discretion of Fiji Immigration Department and not The University of the South Pacific. The University will not be held liable nor responsible for any delays; denial of applications and bond payments.