

Travelling on Public Transport in NSW

This factsheet is about public transport for international students, including how to pay and avoid fines.

What Is Public Transport?

Public transport includes:

- Trains
- Metro services
- Buses
- Light rail (trams)
- Ferries

The same ticket rules apply across all of these services.

Paying for Public Transport

You can pay for travel by:

- Using an Opal Card (Adult or Concession)
- Using a contactless credit or debit card
- Using a digital wallet linked to your card (such as Apple Pay or Google Pay)

You can buy an Opal card from newsagents, convenience stores, supermarkets, selected train stations, and Service NSW centres, or order one online through Transport for NSW.

Important:

- You must tap on when you start your trip and tap off at the end
- Always use the same card or device to tap on and off
- If you don't tap off, you may be charged the maximum fare

- If you don't tap on, you may be fined for not having a valid ticket

Tapping on and off helps calculate the correct fare and shows you have paid.

Concessions (discount fares)

If you use a concession Opal card, you must always carry proof that you are eligible.

You may be asked to show this at any time.

Most international students are not eligible for concession fares. However, some may qualify under NSW Government rules.

For example, you may be eligible if you receive:

- an Endeavour Scholarship
- an Australian Awards Scholarship
- a Research Training Program (RTP) Scholarship

Public Transport Rules

When using public transport, you must always:

- Carry a valid ticket (Opal card or contactless payment)
- Tap on and off correctly
- Give your correct name and address if requested by an authorised officer or police

Travelling on Public Transport in NSW

Authorised officers and police regularly check tickets. They may scan your Opal card or request proof of payment.

Fines

If you break the rules, you may receive a fine.

Authorised officers may issue:

- On-the-spot fines (around \$200) for not paying or concession misuse.
- Extra penalties if you refuse to give your name and address or give false details.

In some cases, a warning may be issued instead of a fine for first-time offenders.

A warning does not affect your visa status and does not go on your criminal record.

Tips to Avoid Fines

- Always tap on and tap off
- an Australian Awards Scholarship
- Make sure your card or device has enough money and is working
- If a machine is not working, try another reader or tell staff as soon as possible

What To Do If You Get a Fine

A. Pay the Fine

Pay before the due date to avoid extra fees.

B. Request a Review

You can request a review if:

- The Opal reader did not work
- It is your first offence and you usually pay correctly
- You were eligible for a concession and can prove it.

You may need to provide travel history or other documents.

C. Challenge in Court

You can choose to challenge the fine in court.

Before doing this, it is important to get legal advice because:

- The court may uphold the fine
- The court may record a conviction
- This could affect your visa status

D. If You Have Multiple Fines

You may be eligible for:

- Payment plans
- Fine reductions
- Work and Development Orders (WDOs) to work off fines if eligible.

Police & Your Rights

If police believe you have committed an offence, they can ask for your name and address. You must:

- Give your correct name and address

It is an offence to:

- Refuse to provide your details
- Give false or misleading information

This fact sheet is for information only and is not legal advice.

