



Country and Education Guide : Australia



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Country Guide



General Country Information

Australia is the world's smallest continent, yet the largest island. Officially, the Commonwealth of Australia is a country in the Southern Hemisphere comprising the entire continent of Australia as well as several islands in the southern Indian and Pacific oceans.

Name of country: Australia

Capital city: Canberra

Key cities: Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney, Perth, Adelaide and Brisbane

Population: 21,507,717 (2011 national census)

Language: English

Currency: Australian dollar (AUD)

Time zones and climate

Time zones

Australian Eastern Standard Time
(AEST is UTC* +10 hours):

Covers the eastern states of Queensland, New South Wales (with the exception of the town of Broken Hill), Victoria, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory.

Australian Central Standard Time
(ACST is UTC +9 ½ hours):

The state of South Australia, the town of Broken Hill in western New South Wales and the Northern Territory.

Australian Western Standard Time
(AWST is UTC +8 hours):

Covers Western Australia

Daylight Saving Time: Clocks are advanced one hour in summer in New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory. The start and end dates vary every year.

* UTC = Coordinated Universal Time



Climate

Australia has warm summers (December – February) and mild winters (June – August). However, hot days are not unusual in northern Australia. The coldest regions are in the southeast of the country and the island of Tasmania.

City	Full year	Summer (Average temp.)	Winter (Average temp.)
Sydney	8 - 26°C	20°C	14°C
Melbourne	6 - 25°C	18°C	12°C
Perth	8 - 31°C	27°C	12°C
Brisbane	9 - 29°C	24°C	14°C
Darwin	19 - 33°C	30°C	23°C
Adelaide	7 - 30°C	30°C	12°C

Telecommunications

Calling Australia

IDD	Major cities' code	
country code : 61	Adelaide: 08	Hobart: 03
	Brisbane: 07	Melbourne: 03
	Canberra: 02	Perth: 08
	Darwin: 08	Sydney: 02

Emergency numbers: 000



Transportation

Australia has an excellent air, rail and road transport network and vehicles drive on the left.

Long-distance travel

The fastest way to get to other cities is by air, supported by Australia's domestic airlines and their subsidiaries, which serve all state capital cities and regional centres.

The main rail network links Perth to Adelaide, Melbourne, Canberra, Sydney, Brisbane and Cairns. There is also a railway from Adelaide to Alice Springs and Darwin.

Inter-state bus services are comfortable, easy and economical with frequent services and generally have air-conditioning, reading lights, adjustable seats and videos.

Driving is also an option with Australia's well-maintained roads and beautiful touring routes. Most car hire agencies accept driving licences from other countries, provided that they are in English. Otherwise, an international driving licence is required.

Local travel

Comprehensive public transport systems such as trains, buses, ferries, the monorail, light rail and trams, are available in all the main cities and towns supplemented by taxi services that charge by metre.

Cost of living

The cost of living in Australia is comparable and may be more affordable than most big cities in developed countries. Not surprisingly, the living costs are higher in urban centres and lower in regional areas.

Average cost of living

	AUD	USD*
Daily transport	1.50 to 6	1.56 to 6.24
Newspaper	2.30	2.39
Fast food set meal	8 to 10	8.32 to 10.40
Fresh milk per litre	1.30 to 3.40	1.35 to 3.54
Movie ticket per person	15 to 20	15.60 to 20.80
Museum entry fee	Free to 15	Free to 15.60
A loaf of bread	2 to 3	2.08 to 3.12
Usage of mobile service	10 to 50	10.40 to 52.00

* Exchange rate AUD1 = USD1.04

Above costs are indicative only and current.



Health and medical



Healthcare overview

Healthcare is comprised of both public (government-sponsored) and private doctors. General practitioners (GPs) provide the bulk of the medical care. There is no requirement to register with a particular doctor, so it is possible to see more than one GP. Healthcare costs are comparable to other developed countries, so health insurance is recommended. Overseas students are requested to purchase the Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) organised by the Australian government in order to be entitled to healthcare benefits. Healthcare expenses can be claimed with government-appointed private insurance providers.



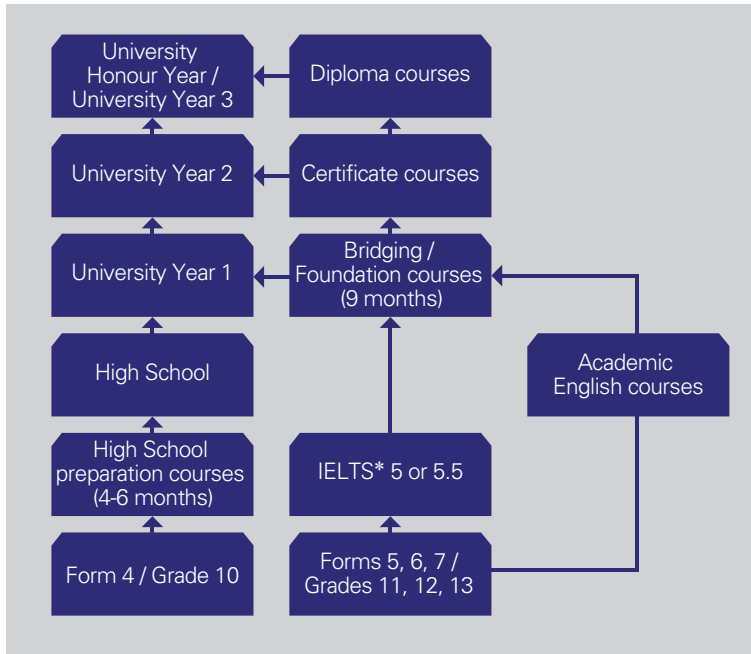


Education Guide

Education in Australia

With a wide range of courses to offer in Australia, students have the freedom to choose a path to achieve their personal goals and enjoy bright prospects after graduation. Conventionally, students would choose to go to institutions in the Eastern Coast, but in recent years, there has been a shift to the Western coast to places such as Perth, where students can experience Australia's simplicity and native culture.

Education system overview



* International English Language Testing System





Education system overview

Australia offers a superb education system from primary school all the way to postgraduate studies. The country has a 12-year secondary school system with three years of university education and is a popular destination for overseas students to continue their tertiary education. Secondary school graduates can enter Australian universities by finishing relevant bridging / foundation courses or diploma / advanced diploma studies.

Unlike other major overseas education destinations, a university bachelor's degree in Australia does not consist of an honours grading. Selective students will be invited by university departments to undertake a 1-year honours year programme. The decision to take the honours year or not does not affect the enrollment of master's degree in Australia. However in some other countries, universities may request Australian graduates to take the honours or a pre-master's course before the master's degree.

There are 39 universities in Australia under the management of the Australian Government. A secondary school certificate is required for entry to an Australian university. Students who have only completed Form 5 would need to finish a one-year certificate course and then a one- to two-year diploma course which would allow them to directly enter the sophomore year of university. Other pathways are a one-year foundation course and entry to the freshmen year; or after the foundation course, students can continue with a diploma course to enter the sophomore year.

Tertiary institutions use high school / upper secondary school (Grade 11 & 12) grades to take in students. Junior high / lower secondary students who want to go to Australia for high school / upper secondary education can take a high school preparation course and then study in Australia before advancing to tertiary education.

Tuition fees

Australia offers high-quality and internationally recognised education at a very competitive cost. The cost, however, depends on the course of study.

Average tuition fees per annum (for reference only)

Institution		AUD	USD*
Secondary School		9,000 - 18,000	9,360 - 18,720
Certificate / Diploma		13,000 - 18,000	13,520 - 18,720
Foundation Studies		19,000 - 35,000	19,760 - 36,400
University	Arts / Business	18,000 - 31,000	18,720 - 32,240
	Medicine / Sciences	23,000 - 33,000	23,920 - 34,320
Cost of living		9,000 - 14,000	9,360 - 14,560

* Exchange rate AUD1 = USD1.04

Above fees are current as of the 2013 - 2014 school year.



Student accommodation

Students who study in Australia can choose from a number of different types of accommodation, whether it's with other students or by themselves.

Accommodation Types	Description	Price Range
On-campus	Typical accommodation is a private room with shared bathroom. Some offer cooking facilities	AUD85 to AUD400 or more a week depending on whether meals are included
Off-campus	This is usually shared accommodation and requires payment of a refundable bond of two or four weeks rent. Telephone, gas and electricity are extra	AUD50 to AUD250 per week depending on location and facilities
Rental	Rental properties involve signing of a lease and paying a four-week refundable bond. Telephone, gas and electricity are extra	AUD100 to AUD360 per week for single room flats and AUD150 to AUD600 for multi-room flats / houses. Rents vary depending on location
Homestay	This involves living with an Australian family, and often arranged by the educational institution or privately by the student	AUD135 to AUD280 a week, usually inclusive of most meals
Budget hotels and guesthouses	Dormitory or a private room without meals. Electricity and gas are usually included	AUD15 to AUD45 per day

Secondary education

Australia offers a world-class primary and secondary education through public and private schools.

Types of schools

The Australian federal and state governments provide substantial funding for non-government schools, most of which have some religious affiliation. The Catholic Church runs the majority of the non-government schools in Australia.

Private institutions provide the university foundation year option. Lasting 6-9 months, this course facilitates overseas students in bridging closer to Australia's education system. It will also help students to gain essential knowledge studying research methods and academic subjects in an English-speaking country. At the conclusion of foundation year, students would have learnt sufficient techniques required for their university studies.



Higher education

Australia is a popular destination with students wishing to complete their higher education overseas and offers a range of options from vocational courses to business management and scientific research.

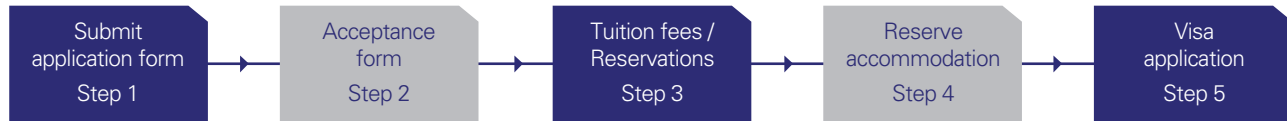
English language courses	Australia offers English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) courses. The National English Language Teaching Accreditation Scheme (NEAS) helps maintain the high standards of these courses
Vocational Education and Training (VET)	The VET sector offers thousands of courses that can lead to a career in a variety of industries
Technical and Further Education (TAFE)	The TAFE sector offers an array of courses and provides practical skills and training for a wide range of careers
Foundation courses	Many international students take foundation courses as a step towards gaining entry to Australian universities. These courses help newcomers adapt to Australia
Higher education - Undergraduate and Postgraduate	Australia's reputation for internationally recognised courses is a strong attraction for many and the country is a popular destination for both undergraduate and postgraduate students
MBA and management education	Australia's unique position as a bridge between eastern and western cultures gives business and management students the edge in the era of globalisation.
Study abroad and student exchange	Thousands of international students flock to Australia every year to take advantage of its education system
Online / Distance education	A wide selection of Australian qualifications are available

Applying to schools

Gaining entry to most Australian private schools is relatively easy provided all the basic requirements are met.

General process

Applicants may go through the following process:



Documentation

- 1 College/university application form
- 2 Application fee
- 3 Public English exam results or the institution's own English exam results (original/certified copy)
- 4 School report (recent 2 years)/Secondary school public exam results
- 5 Passport (original/copy)
- 6 One recent photo

Student visa application

Australia welcomes international students, but there are a few basic requirements. To obtain a student visa, you must:

- Have received a place at an educational institution
- Be in good health (passed a health check) and taken medical insurance
- Have the necessary finances
- Be proficient in English. You may be tested
- Be of good character
- For those under 18, accommodation/guardianship must be arranged

Applying to schools

Required examinations

Secondary schools

- As a prerequisite for boarding school entrance, special admission tests and language certificates may be required.
- Depending on the boarding school the Secondary School Admission Test (SSAT) or Independent School Entrance Examination (ISEE) may be required. International pupils may have to prove their English language abilities by means of the Secondary Level English Proficiency Test (SLEP) or the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).

Undergraduate

- STAT – Special Tertiary Admissions Test, aptitude test for non-school leavers
- UMAT – Undergraduate Medical Admissions Test, required for undergraduate entry to many Australian and New Zealand undergraduate-entry medical schools
- ATAR – Australian Tertiary Admissions Test
- GAT – General Achievement Test (VCE Students – Victorian Certificate of Education)
- HSC – Higher School Certificate

Postgraduate / Professional Schools

- GAMSAT – Graduate Australian Medical Schools Admissions Test
- LSAT – Law School Admission Test (some Juris Doctor programmes)
- IELTS (academic) – International English Language Test (for international students)



Frequently asked questions

1. Do I need health insurance when studying in Australia?

Yes. Australia has a special system of health cover for international students called Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) which costs around AUD 342 per annum (cost may change). Overseas students seeking care under the scheme pay the same fee as an Australian citizen. After an institution has accepted an overseas student, the government will issue a document called the Confirmation of Enrolment which states the duration of stay for which insurance cover is needed. OSHC is basic medical health care insurance and does not cover accidents, injury or death. Therefore it is advisable to obtain comprehensive international medical and accident insurance.

2. Can students work part-time while they are studying in Australia?

Yes, they can. Student visa holders can work part-time (up to 20 hours per week) while studying and have permission to work full-time during the summer holidays. Income over AUD 6,000 is taxable.

3. After obtaining their student visa, is there anything in particular which students need to be aware of?

Student visa holders are barred from changing their education provider and course of study. Students also need an attendance rate of at least 80 per cent in the first 12 months. Failure to abide by these terms can result in termination of the visa and the student will not be allowed to return to Australia for three years.

4. Is a medical check required when applying for the visa?

Yes. Students need to undergo a health check at a clinic designated by the Australian embassy or consulate. The clinic sends the report directly to the embassy or consulate.

Acknowledgements

The content and information in this guide is largely provided by EF Education First, a world leader in international education.

About EF Education First



Founded in 1965 in Sweden, EF Education First operates 400 schools and offices in over 50 countries and has a network of more than 35,000 teachers and staff. To date, EF Education First has helped over 15 million people to learn a new language, discover the world, or earn an academic degree.

As part of their mission to break down barriers in language, geography, and culture, EF Education First works with renowned organisations and educational partners on a global scale. Some of their collaborations include University of Cambridge ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) and being named the official learning provider for the 2008 Beijing Olympics and the 2014 World Cup in Brazil.

Besides the diverse range of overseas academic education programmes EF Education First offers, including escorted language tours for young students to cultural exchange and university connection courses with guaranteed placement, the institution also provides tailor-made career courses for working professionals.

For more information, please visit their website at www.ef.com.

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