



AUSTRALIA

Brief Background: The Australian government's *National Strategy for International Education 2025* sets out a 10-year plan to grow and sustain Australia as a global leader in education, training, and research.

In 2015 there were nearly 500,000 international students in Australia, with about 45 percent enrolled in Australia's 40 public and three private universities—or *unis*, as known in local parlance. In 2015 some 10,000 US students studied in Australia, including 1,000 undergraduates, nearly a thousand graduate students, and 500 enrolled in research degree programs. Most other American students were participating in short-term study abroad programs.

Many unis have several campuses, often in different states and cities. All universities are members of Universities Australia (<https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/>). Some universities also have formed groups of like-minded institutions.

Australia's Group of Eight (<https://www.go8.edu.au/page/about>) comprises Australia's eight leading research universities: University of Melbourne, Australian National University (ANU), University of Sydney, University of Queensland, University of Western Australia, University of Adelaide, Monash University, and University of New South Wales (UNSW). Go8 members are consistently ranked in the top 200 institutions worldwide (with 6 in the top 100) in the *Academic*

Ranking of World Universities from Shanghai Jiao Tong University, the *Times Higher Education World Rankings*, and the *QS World University Rankings*.

The Australian Technology Network of Universities (ATN) (<http://www.atn.edu.au/>) brings together five of the most innovative and enterprising universities in Australia: QUT (Queensland University of Technology), UTS (University of Technology Sydney), RMIT University (Melbourne), University of South Australia, and Curtin University (Perth). This network represents a new generation of universities focused on industry collaboration and research with real-world impact. Their focus: To produce work-ready graduates.

Innovative Research Universities (IRU) (<http://www.iru.edu.au/>) is a policy network of six comprehensive universities: Charles Darwin University, James Cook University, Griffith University, La Trobe University, Flinders University, and Murdoch University. IRU members seek to lead the way in collaborative teaching, language, research, and policy initiatives. More than 80 percent of research at IRU universities is ranked at world standard or above, according to *Excellence in Research for Australia 2015*.

The Regional Universities Network (RUN) (<http://www.run.edu.au/>) is a group of six universities with headquarters in regional Australia and a shared commitment to playing major roles in their regions. The institutions affiliated

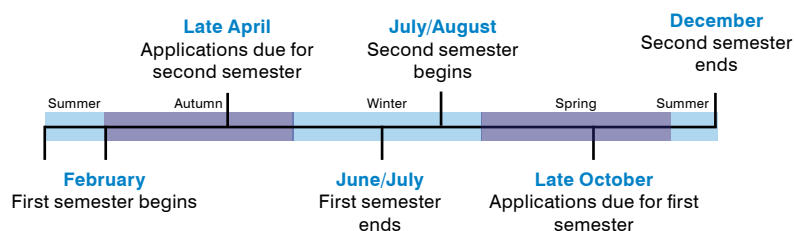
with RUN include Central Queensland University, Southern Cross University, Federation University Australia, University of New England, University of Southern Queensland, and University of the Sunshine Coast.

Good to Know: Students can typically earn an undergraduate degree in Australia in three years. However, there are exceptions that may require an additional year or two of study: professional fields (for example, veterinary science), honors programs, double bachelor's degree programs, or an area of study that requires research.

Australia's Educational Services for Overseas Student (ESOS) Act is designed to protect and promote the rights of international students on student visas. For example, institutions are required by law to provide access to orientation and support services, and accurate and timely information about fees and study options. Many free services are available to all students on all campuses, including academic guidance, skills and career advice, employment search support, and assistance to students with disabilities.

The term *course* generally refers to a program of study. Only rarely can students enroll at an Australian university with an undecided program of study, though options are available for students who want to change their course after enrolling. International students who want to change majors are urged to check with immigration officials to ensure they follow the correct procedure.

Academic Calendar: Most universities have two semesters: February to June/July, and July/August to early December, with breaks in between. Many courses allow students to begin their studies in either semester.



International students from the northern hemisphere often start in Australia's second semester, late July or early August. The student visa system caters to different enrollment terms. Many Australian universities have moved toward more flexible arrangements, (e.g., some have three semesters, some four) with the intent of making things more convenient for northern hemisphere international students.

Most Australian unis run orientation week—known as *O-week*—at the start of each semester.



Australia

“The biggest surprise for me was how much I fell in love with Australian culture and living in Sydney. Originally, I only intended on staying for a one-semester exchange program but ended up transferring to Macquarie University, enrolling as a full-time student and completing my undergraduate degree.”

—Brandon Chiwaya, New York (Macquarie University, Bachelor of Arts in international relations and politics, 2011)

Search: The Australian government's studyinaustralia.gov.au website offers general how-to advice and information for prospective international students. All institutions offering courses to international students in Australia must be registered through the Commonwealth Register of Institution and Courses for Overseas Students (known as CRICOS). Its website, cricos.education.gov.au, enables users to search by institution or by course of study. In addition, universitiesaustralia.edu.au offers institutional profiles and key contacts.

State governments and major city councils also host websites focused on services they provide for international students:

Adelaide: <http://studyadelaide.com>

Canberra: <http://www.study Canberra.com.au>

Northern Territory: <http://www.austaliasnorthernterritory.com.au>

Melbourne: <http://www.studymelbourne.vic.gov.au>

Perth: <http://studypertth.com.au>

Queensland: <http://www.studyqueensland.qld.edu.au>

Sydney: <http://www.study.sydne y>

Tasmania: <http://www.study.tas.gov.au>

Apply: There is no national application system for international students. However, Tertiary Admission Centres (TACs) process applications for institutions within a particular state. International students should check if the course they are interested in encourages direct application to the institution or application through a TAC.

Students apply to a course of study within a university. Many universities allow students to apply a year ahead of time. Admission is typically offered on a rolling basis, and students are encouraged to submit their application as soon as they can.



Deadlines: Applications are due in late October or late April, depending on whether a student intends to start in the first or second semester.

Application Fee: Varies by university. Can be up to 100 Australian dollars.

Admission Requirements: For a majority of programs, admission is based on completion of a high school diploma, AP exam scores, and scores on either the SAT or ACT exam. Full IB diplomas are also accepted. Some programs require a minimum high school GPA.

If a student is applying through a TAC, eligibility for a selected program is determined by converting a student's final results (GPA + SAT; IB) into an Australia Tertiary Admissions Ranking (ATAR) equivalent. This ATAR score is the result of the final year of high school for Australian students and is the primary metric used for entry into undergraduate programs.

If an international student is applying directly to a university, eligibility will be determined by assessing the final high school results (GPA + SAT; IB) against the cut-off entry requirements published by each university. Some courses may require additional components in an application, such as a statement of purpose, interview, or portfolio, but this is relatively rare at the bachelor's level. Essays and recommendation letters are generally not required or considered.

Upon Acceptance: Accepted students receive a *letter of offer*, which serves as a contract between the student and the institution. It sets out the course the student will be enrolled in, enrollment conditions, fees, and refund policies. The letter of offer is required to obtain a student visa.

Applicants are either offered a conditional place subject to final results (if they apply before final exam scores are released) or an unconditional offer if completed results are provided. Copies of final result statements and certificates must be notarized. Details on this step in the process will be provided to successful candidates.

If a student's qualifications are not sufficient to gain admission to an Australian university, he or she can enroll in a *foundation* year lasting six to twelve months. Successful completion of a foundation year results in admission to the university where the program was completed.

Tuition and Fees: Tuition and fees are regulated at the national level and tend not to fluctuate. Annual undergraduate bachelor degree charges range from AU\$15,000 to AU\$33,000 (this range does not include professional courses such as veterinary or medical), depending upon the program of study.

US undergraduates may be eligible for some scholarships, grants, and other forms of financial support offered by the Australian government, individual education institutions, and a number of other public and private organizations. Several Australian universities also accept US federal student loans.

More information on financial aid for international students can be found at: <https://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au/global/australian-education/scholarships>.

Housing: Australian university students traditionally live at home or off-campus, but more universities are building accommodations to attract international students. Most universities have comfortable and furnished apartment-style living on campus or close by, sometimes with cleaning and meals included. Some universities offer *residential colleges* that provide dining services; opportunities for social, sporting, and cultural events; and extracurricular academic programs for residents. Individual institutions should be contacted directly in order to ascertain the accommodations available and how the costs compare with securing housing on one's own.

Minimum cost of living, estimated by Australia's Department of Immigration and Border Protection, is AU\$19,830 a year. A shared rental is estimated to be anywhere between AU\$70 and AU\$250 per week, and on-campus housing is anywhere between AU\$85 and AU\$215 per week. Groceries and dining out range from AU\$80 to AU\$280 weekly. Students will also need to consider the cost of utilities, public transportation, and a phone plan when abroad. More information can be found at www.studyinaustralia.gov.au.

Visa and Other Permits: Students planning to pursue an undergraduate degree in Australia will be eligible for the Higher Education Visa (subclass 500). Visa information is available on the Australian government's Department of Immigration and Border Protection website: <http://www.border.gov.au/>. Australia also runs a Visa and Citizenship Information Service, located in Ottawa, Canada, which can be reached by phone at (613) 238-1040. In addition to a visa, students will also need to meet the Genuine Temporary Entrant (GTE) requirement stating they intend to stay in Australia temporarily for the purpose of study.

The visa application will require evidence of academic and language skills, evidence that the student has funds to support their study, and evidence of Overseas Student Health Coverage (OSHC). The cost associated with OSHC varies and all costs will be in Australian dollars. For more information on health coverage, visit: <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/Publishing.nsf/Content/Overseas+Student+Health+Cover+FAQ-1#insurersofferoshc>.

Visa fees vary depending on an applicant's circumstances. For more information see: <http://www.border.gov.au/Trav/Visa/Fees#>.



Australia

“Keep in touch with the friends you make, they will become your global network of contacts that will be very valuable as you progress in your future career.”

—Brandon Chiwaya, New York (Macquarie University, Bachelor of Arts in international relations and politics, 2011)

The higher education visa status allows students to work part-time (up to 40 hours over a two-week period) when school is in session, and unlimited hours outside term time. Following graduation, students are eligible to remain in Australia on their student visa for approximately two months, provided the course of study they completed was longer than 10 months. Students who wish to work in Australia—either temporarily or for a longer term—must apply for a new work stream visa, which is granted for durations of 18 months, two years, three years, or four years, depending on the level and type of degree achieved.

Advice from the Field: Students can apply to Australian universities through education agents, however this is not necessary. Note that under Australian law, an Australian university that works with agents must list all of its contracted agents on the institution's website. For more information on agents in Australia, visit: <https://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au/global/apply-to-study/education-agents>.