

Schooling in Australia

If you are planning to come to Australia with dependants that are under 18 years old, it is important to review your rights and obligations in regard to schooling in Australia. You might already be familiar with the structure of the Australian Education System, however there are different processes in place when it comes to international students which you should familiarise yourself with.

Remember, this is general advice only. You should always do your own research and where necessary seek out the advice of professionals to help with your circumstances.

The Australian Education System

The age at which students commence in primary school varies slightly between states and territories, though most Australian primary school students begin in Foundation (also known as Kindergarten, Prep, or Pre-primary) at the age of five or six. Students then progress through Years (sometimes referred to as Grades) 1 to 6, preparing to transition to secondary school at approximately 12 years old. In Australia, students are required to complete Years 7 to 10 in all states and territories, making school compulsory until usually the age of 17, depending on location and the age at which they started.

The state and territory governments hold primary responsibility for school education in Australia under the Australian Constitution. The state and territory governments regulate government and non-government schools, including faith-based ones, within their respective jurisdiction. Additionally, state and territory governments oversee course accreditation, student assessment, and industrial awards for government and non-government schools and early childhood learning centres.

The Australian school education system comprises three sectors – government, Catholic and independent across three phases of schooling: early childhood, primary and secondary. These Australian education settings and schools are either fully government funded or a mix of government and privately funded.



You can search for **Government schools** in your state or territory below.

Australian Capital Territory	New South Wales	Northern Territory	Queensland
South Australia	Tasmania	Victoria	Western Australia

You can search for **Independent schools** in your area [here](#).

You can search for **Catholic schools** in your area [here](#).

School holidays

In Australia, school holidays occur four times a year. The actual dates of the school holiday breaks vary by days or weeks depending on the state or territory. There is usually up to around 91 days of holidays in a school year. Many schools offer school holiday activity programs during the holiday breaks, and it is advisable to check with the school about the exact dates of each break and the school holidays programs available.

Your school will also be able to advise of any “pupil free days” which occur in their school calendar. On pupil free days, also known as staff development days, students do not attend school and teachers are released from their scheduled duties with the purpose of completing school planning requirements and undertaking professional development.



Application process

The application process for enrolling a student in school varies across educational institutions. The enrolment documentation required can typically be found on the website of the specific school you are interested in applying for.

Usually, as part of the enrolment process the parent or caregiver is required to provide a copy of the prospective student's birth certificate and passport, any relevant information about medical conditions, and a copy of a valid visa. Fees for international students are usually expected to be paid by the parent or caregiver.

