

# Teach in Australia

How to secure a job  
as a teacher in Australia





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# About this guide

Are you thinking of teaching in Australia, or are you already here?

The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) can assist you start your teaching journey in this beautiful country. Skilled teachers are in high demand all over Australia, from bustling cities to charming regional towns and stunning remote locations. Exciting opportunities await you!

This guide covers how to find and apply for teaching jobs in Australia. It briefly explains:

- what you need to do before starting
- how to get started
- how to apply for teaching roles
- how induction and probation periods work
- how to maintain employment and advance your career.

Securing work as a teacher in Australia requires planning. This applies to casual relief roles and ongoing positions.

This guide is for prospective migrant teachers seeking employment in the Australian education workforce. Please note that the information in this guide is not exhaustive, but it does include:

- advice about what your application should cover
- suggestions about how to write a resume and cover letter
- advice about how to respond to selection criteria and prepare for an interview
- links to external resources from across different states, territories, systems and sectors.

The employment process can differ depending on the school system or sector you apply to. This guide ensures you have the information you need to get started.





# What to do before starting

Before you start looking for a teaching job in Australia, we suggest:

- knowing your visa and work rights
- registering as a teacher.

## Know your visa and work rights

Check your Australian visa and work rights. It's important to know the rules and conditions for your visa. Your visa may limit:

- what type of work you can do in Australia
- how many hours you can work
- what job you can do.

If you want to teach in Australia, you must follow your visa's rules and conditions for work.

To check your Australian visa and work rights, visit [Visa Entitlement Verification Online \(VEVO\)](#).

You can also find information about work restrictions on the [Department of Home Affairs website](#).

### Skilled migrant worker visas

If you're moving to Australia and want a skilled migrant visa, you must complete [an AITSL skills assessment](#). This is mandatory for the visa process.

Not all work visas require a skills assessment, so please check the [Department of Home Affairs website](#) for more information.

## Register as a teacher

Teachers must register to teach in the state or territory they wish to work in. To register, apply to the relevant state or territory's teacher regulatory authority. For information about how to become a registered teacher, visit our [Become a registered teacher webpage](#).

Early childhood teachers (ECTs) in Australia work in various settings, such as kindergartens, childcare centres, special education settings, government and non-government primary

schools, and across metropolitan, rural or remote areas. Although registration may not be mandatory in all locations, some state and territory legislation requires it. Further, some employers may have specific qualification requirements, such as completion of a 4-year ECT degree, as part of their employment policy.

For more information about requirements for ECTs, please visit the [Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority \(ACECQA\) website](#).

### Mutual recognition of teacher registration

In Australia, states and territories recognise teachers' registrations from other states and territories. This is called mutual recognition and allows teachers from one jurisdiction to apply for registration in another jurisdiction.

Teacher regulatory authorities share information about registered teachers who apply for mutual recognition. They do this under the Commonwealth Mutual Recognition Act 1992 and the Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Act 1997.

The information shared between teacher regulatory authorities includes any:

- instances of deregistration
- disciplinary action taken
- disciplinary procedures currently underway but not completed ongoing investigations
- conditions applied to a registered teacher.



# How to start your job search

Once you've checked your visa and work rights and registered as a teacher, it's time to start your job search. We suggest:

- understanding the Australian education system
- understanding the recruitment process
- following our tips for finding a teaching position.

## Understand the Australian education system

The Australian education system is made up of 3 sectors:

- government schools
- Catholic schools
- independent schools.

Depending on the sector, schools are either fully funded by the government or funded by a mix of government and private contributions.

For more information about the 3 sectors within each state and territory, please refer to the websites listed in the following table.

## Understand the recruitment process

In Australia, schools usually manage their own recruitment processes. Each sector, state and territory may have different employment and registration requirements. Please make sure you have the right qualifications and registration for the jobs you apply for.

The different sectors, states and territories individually decide how to advertise teaching jobs. And each sector has different:

- enterprise agreements
- employee benefits
- employment terms, conditions and requirements.

### Government

[Australian Capital Territory](#)

[New South Wales](#)

[Northern Territory](#)

[Queensland](#)

[South Australia](#)

[Tasmania](#)

[Victoria](#)

[Western Australia](#)

### Catholic

[Australian Capital Territory](#)

[New South Wales](#)

[Northern Territory](#)

[Queensland](#)

[South Australia](#)

[Tasmania](#)

[Victoria](#)

[Western Australia](#)

### Independent

[Australian Capital Territory](#)

[New South Wales](#)

[Northern Territory](#)

[Queensland](#)

[South Australia](#)

[Tasmania](#)

[Victoria](#)

[Western Australia](#)



## HOT TIP

Recruitment agencies in Australia can help you find full-time, part-time, or casual relief teaching positions. They can also give you tips on how to apply for these positions.

### Tips to find jobs you can apply for

These tips will help you find teaching positions in the different sectors.

#### Tips for government schools

Government schools usually advertise on each state or territory's Department of Education website. Find the links for each state and territory's [Department of Education careers page on our website](#).

Use these websites to search job listings across various schools and locations within each state or territory.

Please note that when you apply to a school, that school's recruitment team or principal are the only people with access to your application.

#### Tips for Catholic schools

Catholic schools advertise on each state or territory's Catholic education authority websites. Some states have more than one Catholic education authority. For links to these websites, visit the [National Catholic Education Commission website](#).

To work in the Catholic sector, you may need further accreditation. The recruitment team may raise this during the application process, for example during an interview.

#### Tips for independent schools

Independent schools usually advertise on their websites or through recruitment agencies. You can also find roles on job search engines, such as SEEK and LinkedIn.

For more information about the independent sector, visit [Independent Schools Australia's website](#). This representative body supports independent schools.

#### Tips for early childhood settings

In Australia, ECTs work in a range of settings across metropolitan, rural and remote areas. This includes kindergartens, childcare centres, special education settings, and government and non-government primary schools.

Private education centres advertise on job search engines, such as SEEK.

Government education centres advertise jobs on each state or territory's Department of Education website. Find the links for each state and territory's [Department of Education careers page on our website](#).

# How to apply for teaching jobs

Once you've ensured you have the correct qualifications and registration to work as a teacher, it's time to start applying for jobs.

We suggest:

- creating a strong resume
- writing a cover letter
- responding to key selection criteria
- preparing for your job interview.

## Create a strong resume

A strong resume is an essential part of applying for jobs in Australia. It's also known as a curriculum vitae (CV) and shows potential employers your work experience, skills and qualifications.

To help applicants, many employers include advice about how to apply for a job with them. For example, the [Victorian Department of Education](#) and the [Teach Queensland](#) websites include guides for creating resumes.

Also, there are many free online resources to help you create a strong resume no matter which state, territory or sector you apply to. These tools can help you create a resume specific to Australian teaching jobs.

For example, in Australia, resumes do not include personal information, such as:

- a photo
- birth date
- race
- gender, sexuality or marital status
- religion or political leanings
- hobbies or interests (only include these if they link to an aspect of the job you're applying for).

These tools can also help you format your resume so that it includes the essential information employers are looking for.

The following tips cover our advice for creating a strong resume.

## HOT TIP

If you're not getting noticed by employers, you can get help from a professional service. They can review your resume and give advice to improve it.

### Tips for creating a resume

- Arrange your resume chronologically – start with your most recent job.
- Limit your resume to 2 to 3 pages unless the job advertisement says otherwise.
- If you have questions about how long to make your resume or what to include, talk to the contact person identified in the job advertisement.
- Customise your resume to the position you're applying for, rather than using a general version that could apply to any job.
- Be enthusiastic.
- Include only the most appropriate experience that relates to the job advertised. For example, you don't need to include your secondary school achievements if you have a university degree. Employers don't want to read through all your personal details.
- Include your academic achievements, including majors, diplomas and any awards or fellowships you were granted
- Include volunteering or unpaid work relevant to your field. Alternatively, if you still need teaching experience in Australia, include all unpaid work or experience. This allows you to show that you have experience with Australian culture.
- Check your resume for grammatical errors and spelling mistakes.

## Write a cover letter and respond to selection criteria

### Cover letter

For teaching jobs in Australia, you will need a cover letter to go with your resume. A cover letter is your first chance to make a good impression – use it to show what skills and experience you have to offer.

Australian cover letters might be different from those in other countries. For advice about how to write a cover letter, visit the [Teach Queensland website](#), which provides a guide for writing cover letters for teachers.

The following tips cover our advice for writing a cover letter.

### Selection criteria

Some job applications, especially for government schools, require applicants to respond to key selection criteria. These are the skills, attributes, knowledge and qualifications that the employer has identified as essential job requirements. You can find these in the position description attached to the job advertisement.

Make your responses brief and give the employer a clear idea of your skills and experience. There are many ways to respond to selection criteria. One popular method is to provide examples of your teaching experience using the [STAR approach](#): situation, task, action and result.

You could also follow the advice from the NSW Department of Education about [responding to selection criteria](#) and [developing a great application](#). These resources are helpful no matter where you apply to teach in Australia.

If you apply for a teaching position in Victoria, the [Careers Victoria website](#) has guidelines and examples to help candidates answer selection criteria for Victorian jobs.



### Tips for writing a cover letter

- Use a clear format – you can find examples online to help you set out your letter.
- Include your name and contact information
- Include an appropriate greeting to the person recruiting you.
- Include information about your most important skills and experience that show your ability to meet the advertised role's requirements.
- Avoid including information about irrelevant work experience.
- Don't mention how much money you'd like to earn – save this for your interview.
- Research the school you are applying to and include some of this research in your letter to show your interest in the role.
- Include a strong ending that makes you an attractive candidate to the potential employer.
- Finish with your signature.

## Prepare for your interview

### Interview questions

To prepare for an interview, you can find common questions online and practise your answers. The [Queensland Government](#) and [Teach Queensland](#) websites provide advice about preparing for interviews, which can be useful helpful no matter where you apply to teach in Australia.

We suggest preparing by using the job description and selection criteria as a guide. The interviewer may ask questions about these to see if your skills and experience match what they're looking for.

Generally, Australian interviews are quite formal. Treat your interview as an opportunity to highlight your skills, experience and professionalism. During an interview, describe your past work experiences using positive language. For example, if the interviewer asks why you left your last position, we suggest that you highlight your career achievements and goals. This is better than speaking negatively about a previous role.

While you should emphasise your teamwork and collaboration, make sure to discuss your own skills and accomplishments. When describing your achievements, we suggest using 'I' rather than 'we'. For example, 'I led a team of teachers to update our school's science program'.

### Interview format

During the recruitment process, employers may contact you for an interview. They usually do this when they see a potential match between your application and their requirements. Employers may hold online or in-person interviews. Usually, a group of school leaders or teachers will interview you.

Typically, towards the end of an interview, you can ask questions to understand the position better. As part of in-person interviews, you may also tour the school.

At the end of the recruitment process, the prospective employer will let you know whether you were successful. If you were unsuccessful, make sure you ask for feedback. Mostly, employers can provide detailed and specific feedback. Use this to improve your performance for future interviews.



## HOT TIP

Prepare questions you can ask at the end of the interview to show your interest in the position. Don't be concerned or anxious about asking questions – Australian employers prefer employees who actively communicate.

### Discrimination

Anti-discrimination laws prohibit Australian employers from discriminating against job applicants and employees. These laws apply at federal, state and territory levels to protect employees from discrimination based on their:

- race
- skin colour
- age
- disability
- pregnancy
- sex
- sexual orientation
- gender identity
- marital status
- religion
- other protected characteristics.

Employees have legal rights and recourse if they believe they have experienced discrimination in the workplace, including during the recruitment process.

Please note that certain job requirements or specific circumstances may be exempt or excepted from anti-discrimination laws.

If you have experienced workplace discrimination, we suggest seeking legal advice or contacting the relevant anti-discrimination body or commission in your state or territory.

# How to start your new job

Once you've secured employment in an Australian school, you will need to know about:

- participating in the induction program
- completing your probation period
- joining a union.

## Participate in induction programs

Generally, Australian workplaces have an induction process for new employees. In schools, this includes a formal program and support to give teachers the information they need to be successful in their roles.

While the format may vary slightly between schools, induction allows teachers to learn, practise and refine their role while teaching. Induction works best in schools that have a strong culture of collaboration and professional growth, and effective processes for feedback and professional learning.

## Complete your probation period

Australian workplaces also usually have a specific probation period for new employees. You shouldn't worry about this – it's simply used to confirm that a new employee's performance meets the organisation's expectations.

To successfully complete your probation:

- participate actively in your workplace
- make sure you understand all expectations for your role and contract
- meet with your supervisor regularly and ask for feedback on your performance.

Probation period procedures differ between workplaces. If you're worried about your probation, discuss this with your supervisor.

You can check any probation-specific requirements and policies in your contract. This information is usually available on your respective state, territory or sector's website.

For more information about probation, visit the [Fair Work Ombudsman website](#).

## Consider joining a union

In Australia, employees are not required to join a union, but they may choose to. A union can be a valuable resource and advocate for migrant teachers. It can provide support, guidance and representation to protect your rights and ensure your workplace is fair and equitable.

Generally, employees covered by a union-negotiated enterprise agreement are bound by its terms and conditions, regardless of whether they're union members. Make sure you check any relevant policies or agreements in your workplace.

But industrial relation laws and regulations can vary throughout Australia. Make sure you check the specific rules and regulations in your state or territory.





# Maintaining employment and career advancement

Once you've completed your probation period, you'll need to know about:

- maintaining the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers
- advancing your career.

## Maintain the Teacher Standards

The [Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](#) (the Teacher Standards) clarify what teachers should aim to achieve at every career stage.

Australian teachers need to demonstrate the Teacher Standards at a minimum of the Graduate career stage (which equates to provisional teacher registration) every year.

The majority of teachers are first registered with provisional registration in Australia. Moving from provisional to full registration is a continuum of professional growth for a teacher as they transition from the Graduate career stage of the Teacher Standards to the Proficient career stage.

Australian teachers meet with their supervisors for regular performance and development conversations each year. This allows teachers to reflect on their professional practice and continuously improve their skills. These conversations are vital to teacher development and student success: they ensure that teachers provide the best education for students.

During these conversations, teachers usually identify areas of the Teacher Standards to focus on for professional growth. Teachers will set performance goals for the year, collect evidence of their accomplishments and discuss their performance and development.

## Advance your career

Teachers' pay, level of responsibility, and leadership opportunities are determined by the teacher pay scales which are published by the governing body in each state and territory. These scales may vary depending on the state, territory, or sector you work in.

Many schools and sectors initially employ teachers on a temporary contract. After an established period, schools may offer teachers a contract for ongoing employment.

Australian teachers can develop their careers by pursuing different roles, such as middle or senior leadership, depending on the opportunities available in their state, territory or sector.

To explore these opportunities, discuss your career goals with your school leaders and ask for informal leadership opportunities as part of your performance and development conversations.

Also, Australian teachers in some states, territories and sectors can become [Highly Accomplished and Lead teachers](#) (HALTs). HALT certification shows leadership and commitment to excellence in teaching.

This certification can help you progress professionally and be recognised for your skills while you continue teaching.

States, territories and sectors also offer alternative pathways to recognise excellence in teaching and provide career opportunities. For more information, visit your employer's website.



# Glossary

TERM	DEFINITION
<a href="#">Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA)</a>	The independent national authority that assists governments in administering the National Quality Framework (NQF) for minimum qualification levels and quality improvement for early childhood education and care.
<a href="#">Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL)</a>	<p>A Commonwealth company wholly owned by the Australian Government. It provides national leadership for the Australian states and territories in promoting excellence in teaching and school leadership.</p> <p>AITSL is the assessing authority for individuals who wish to migrate to Australia as a skilled migrant under one of 8 teacher occupations.</p>
<a href="#">Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (the Teacher Standards)</a>	<p>The Teacher Standards are a public statement of what constitutes teacher quality. They define the work of teachers and make clear the elements of high-quality and effective teaching that will improve educational outcomes for students.</p> <p>The Teacher Standards are organised into 4 career stages: Graduate, Proficient, Highly Accomplished and Lead. The Teacher Standards explain what you should aim to achieve at every stage of your career so you can improve your practice inside and outside the classroom.</p>
<a href="#">Cover letter</a>	A cover letter, also known as an application letter, is a document that accompanies your resume and provides extra information about skills and experiences related to the job you're applying for. It typically includes 3 to 4 paragraphs that highlight your skills, experience and achievements in relation to the position you're applying for.
<a href="#">Curriculum vitae (CV)</a>	A CV is a detailed document highlighting your professional and academic history. CV is short for the Latin phrase curriculum vitae, which means 'course of life'. CVs typically include information such as work experience, achievements and awards, scholarships or grants you've earned, coursework, research projects and publications of your work. A CV is also referred to as a resume.

TERM	DEFINITION
Department of Home Affairs	Home Affairs is the Australian Government department that brings together Australia’s federal law enforcement, national and transport security, criminal justice, emergency management, multicultural affairs, settlement services and immigration and border-related functions, working together to keep Australia safe.
Induction	The term ‘induction’ means a formal program and other support to help teachers learn, practise, and refine their professional role while teaching. It is common practice for Australian workplaces to hold formal induction processes with their new employees.
Probation	Probation periods are often implemented at the start of the employment relationship. Probation periods allow an employer to confirm that employees are suitable for the role they’ve been hired to do. An employer defines the length of the probation period. It often ranges from 3 to 6 months, beginning when the employee starts employment. While on probation, employees receive the same entitlements as other employees.
Qualification	A qualification is an award or credential granted by a higher education or further education institution or other recognised vocational or professional body on completion of an approved course of study or training, or both.
Selection Criteria	Key selection criteria are the skills, attributes, knowledge and qualifications that the employer has defined as being essential for the requirements of the job and can be found in the position description (which will be published alongside the job advertisement).
Skilled Occupation Lists	A list of skilled occupations, determined by the Department of Home Affairs, which may be eligible for migration visas.
Skills Assessment	An AITSL skills assessment is an assessment of an individual’s qualifications and English language proficiency to determine comparability against the criteria for a skilled worker in the nominated occupation..

# Glossary

TERM	DEFINITION
System and sector	<p>There are 2 main education sectors across Australia: government and non-government schools. Non-government schools are classified as either Catholic or independent schools.</p> <p>The term 'system and sector' refers to the employers and representative bodies across the 3 types of schools: government, Catholic and independent.</p>
Teacher Registration	<p>The mandatory licensure for a teacher to practice teaching and be employed as a teacher in Australia.</p> <p>For more information see <a href="#">AITSL's list of Teacher Registration Authorities</a>.</p>
Work rights	<p>It's important to know the rules for your visa. Your visa may limit the type of work you can do in Australia. Some visas have rules about how many hours you can work (for example, international students) or what job you can do (for example, a seasonal worker).</p>
Workplace rights	<p>Everyone working in Australia has the same basic workplace rights and protections, regardless of citizenship or visa status. Contracts or agreements cannot take away your basic workplace rights.</p>

# Acronyms

ACECQA	Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority
AITSL	Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership
ECT	Early childhood teacher
CV	Curriculum vitae
HALT	Highly Accomplished and Lead teacher
ITE	Initial teacher education
STAR	Situation, task, action, result

# References

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