





# **EDUCATION**

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*In Australia education is a priority and all states provide children with an excellent education.*

Primary schools and the early years of secondary school are compulsory. Education is provided to children aged from approximately 4 to 18 years of age.

The compulsory age varies from state to state but generally school is compulsory for children aged approximately 6 to 15 years of age. Many students stay on at school until they have finished year 12 at 17 or 18 years old.

Your children will attend school from Monday to Friday from about 9.00am to about 3.00pm. Your child will have to wear a uniform as most schools, both public and private operate a uniform policy.

## How can I find a school for my child?

To find a school in your State or Territory please refer to the relevant websites below.

Internet Schools Directory - [www.isd.com.au](http://www.isd.com.au)

Western Australia -

[www.eddept.wa.edu.au/schoolprofile/home.do](http://www.eddept.wa.edu.au/schoolprofile/home.do)

New South Wales - <https://www.det.nsw.edu.au> and

[www.schools.nsw.edu.au](http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au)

Victoria - [www.education.vic.gov.au](http://www.education.vic.gov.au)

South Australia - [www.education.gov.au/goved/go](http://www.education.gov.au/goved/go)

Queensland - [www.education.gov.au/goved/go](http://www.education.gov.au/goved/go)

Tasmania -

[www.education.tas.gov.au/dept/about/contact/schoolsatoz](http://www.education.tas.gov.au/dept/about/contact/schoolsatoz)

Northern Territory - [www.schools.nt.edu.au](http://www.schools.nt.edu.au)

Australian Capital Territory - [www.det.act.gov.au/schools/schools.htm](http://www.det.act.gov.au/schools/schools.htm)

## What types of schools are there in Australia?

There are different types of schools depending on how old your child is and what type of school you want them to attend. There are State Schools which are free, except in some cases you may have to pay a small school levy. There are also fee paying independent or private schools. Most children attend the school closest to where they live in Australia.

## Early childhood education in Australia

Early childhood education in Australia is not compulsory but your children may attend a pre-school, day care centre or playgroup between 3 and 5 years of age.

Places at pre-schools in Australia are often limited so you should enrol or register your children as early as possible. When your children attend pre-school they will take part in activities that develop their abilities, skills and knowledge of the world.

### Primary schools in Australia

As in Ireland most children start primary school in Australia at 5 years of age. The core subjects in all primary schools are based on 8 learning areas, English, Health and Physical Education, language other than English, Maths, Science, Society and Environment, Technology and the Arts.

### Secondary schools in Australia

Most children in Australia start secondary or high school at around 12 or 13 years of age. During the first 4 years of secondary study core subjects such as English, Maths and Science are compulsory. A broad range of elective subjects is also offered, including computing studies, languages, art, music, drama, commerce, history, geography, and technical subjects.

### Education in the Australian Outback

Australian children who live in the remote areas of the Australian outback get their primary and secondary education at home through correspondence schools and schools of the air.

Each state operates a correspondence school for children in isolated areas and the students receive and submit their assignments by mail.

### **Non-government schools in Australia**

The non-government school sector comprises Catholic schools (two thirds) and independent schools (one third). There are over 960 independent schools in Australia. Many of these schools have strong links with a church.

Independent schools include small and large day schools, boarding schools, co-educational and single-sex schools.

### **Home schooling in Australia**

Home education is a legal option for the schooling of children in all states of Australia. As a parent you take responsibility for guiding your children through a course of study at home.

The legal requirements for educating your children at home varies between different Australian states and territories so if you want to home school your children you need to find out what the regulations are for the state in which you will live.

## What options are available for post-Secondary training and education?

Education does not stop when you leave secondary school and there are many options for tertiary and vocational study in Australia.

All of the Australian education and training institutions offer high quality, internationally relevant courses because the Australian Government requires them to be registered and meet quality assurance measures. Excellence in teaching, research, facilities and support services is found across Australia's education and training system.

### Australian universities

There are 43 Australian universities to choose from. Australian universities are both teaching and research institutions offering a full range of academic and professional disciplines with qualifications ranging from diplomas to doctorates.

Australian universities have an international reputation for excellence and they can provide you with practical and career-orientated training so you can be confident you have the skills demanded by employers.

## What is the cost of tertiary education in Australia?

If you are an Australian resident you will pay part of the cost of your education, and the federal government pays the rest. The tuition fees at Australia's private universities are considerably higher than fees at publicly owned universities.

### **If you do not have Australian residency**

If you do not have Australian residency and want to study in Australia you will probably have to pay, up-front, fees for your course. This may be between AUD \$9,000/€5,500 approx. (2007 figure) and AUD \$19,000/€11,500 approx. (2007 figure) per year depending on what qualification you want to study towards.

## Applied learning - Vocational education in Australia

If you want vocational training you can attend a Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institution. TAFE can provide you with training that is both practical and career-oriented and you can develop your own career path through study and a mix of study and work.

TAFE offers courses in subjects such as computing, business studies, marketing, graphic design, tourism and hospitality.

Fees are charged for these courses and vary between institutions and states. As with university fees, if you do not have Australian residency you will probably have to pay, up-front fees for your course which may be between AUD\$5,500/€3,400 (2007 figure) and AUD \$18,000/€11,000 (2007 figure) per year.

Some TAFE courses are offered at degree level with the majority being at diploma or associate diploma level. Under Australia's national qualifications framework graduates can also progress into higher level courses including entry into universities for Diploma and Bachelor degree courses.

You can also undertake vocational education programmes in almost any Australian secondary school. These programs are based on the same competencies and lead to a recognised national qualification.

## How do I find out about enrolling my child in School?

Most schools start taking enrolments from Term 2 in the year before the child is to start school. Some schools advertise in major newspapers when they are taking enrolments. For information on when to enrol you should contact the school directly.

Normally you would enrol your child in a local school. However, if you have a specific reason for wanting to enrol your child in a school outside your home area you should contact your local Department of Education or equivalent (for more information on this please **see page 193**) about the possibility of out-of-area enrolments and how to apply.

You should however talk to your local school first about how the particular needs of your child might be met. Students living in the schools home area will always be given first preference.

When you contact the school to enrol your child the school will normally give you a student enrolment application form and an explanatory booklet explaining what information you will need to provide. You will need to give the school a range of information, which includes:

- Your child's name, date of birth, address, phone number, parents contact details. You may need to provide documentary evidence, for example, a birth certificate or passport
- Proof of your child's immunisation record
- Information about any medical condition or medication your child is taking. You should also provide a letter from your doctor and his/her contact details
- Any other information that will assist the school in providing for your child's education and welfare.

You may be required to pay a levy fee to the school. The levy you pay will contribute to the costs of your child's education program including items your child uses during the school year such as learning materials and stationery and the costs of services such as school excursions and school camps that is considered essential to your child's educational programme.

The amount payable is determined each year by each school in consultation with the school association. For more information you should contact the school directly.