

Policy - Australia

Entry Requirement for International Student in Australia

Standard Entry Requirements for Bachelor's Degree

- Study gap of more than 1 year is no longer accepted. Students who completed their year 12 having a gap of more than 1 year are not accepted.
- No married Cases – Married students are generally not accepted for undergraduate programs. However, in exceptional cases, some universities may consider the application if strong and verifiable marriage documents are provided.
- Backlogs Case by case – Having backlogs in year 12 is not accepted by most of the universities.
- Recent Refusal is not accepted – Students having past/recent visa refusals of any country, either a student's or a visitor's visa, are being accepted on a case-by-case basis by most of the universities.

Minimum Academic Entry Requirements for Universities and Colleges

Eligibility of international students for admission to Australian universities and colleges will depend on minimum English language proficiency and academic requirements. Below is a minimum standard requirement for a bachelor's degree program:

- Academic Score: GPA 2.7 and above in Year 12 or Diploma.
- English Proficiency: IELTS Overall 6.0 and each band no less than 6.0 (5.5 in some institutions); PTE Overall 50 and each band no less than 50.

It is essential to note that entry requirements may differ depending on the education providers.

Pathway programs such as Diploma and Foundation programs are accessible if international students do not meet the minimum academic entry requirement for a Bachelor's Degree.

Recognised Global Qualifications

1. International Baccalaureate (IB)

- Minimum required score is usually around 24–26 points
- Required score tends to be higher for competitive programs such as law and medicine which sits at 30–42+ points
- Must have completed the IB Diploma, not just individual courses.

2. A Levels (GCE Advanced Level)

- Minimum requirement is typically at least 3 A Level subjects, with a minimum of BCC–BBC. Top programs may require AAA–AAB for entry standard
- Some universities may also consider AS Level results in combination with A Levels.

3. Upper Secondary Education (e.g., Grade 12 equivalent)

- Student must have completed the final year of secondary education, which is equivalent to Australian Year 12
- Required grades vary depending on the country, but generally minimum GPA or average 60–70% is required. Programs like engineering, law, or medicine often require 80–95%
- Additional requirements: Some universities may require standardized test scores (e.g., SAT, ACT) or completion of specific prerequisite subjects.

4. General Secondary Education Certificate (e.g., IGCSE/O-Levels, national certificates)

- In some countries, the GSEC may not meet the equivalence of Year 12, and additional qualifications (e.g., foundation programs) or progress to A Levels / IB / Year 12 equivalent may be required

Standard Entry Requirements for Masters/ Postgraduate Degree

- Study gap 5-6 years are accepted with relevant employment history. – Those students who completed their bachelor's degree having a gap of 5-6 years with work experience in a relevant field are accepted.
- Married Cases Accepted — Those students who are applying for postgraduate courses are allowed to travel with their partner if their marriage is at least 1 year old.
- Recent refusal: Students having past/recent visa refusals of any country, either a student's or a visitor's visa, are being accepted on a case-by-case basis by most of the universities
- Recent Australian/New Zealand Refusal is not accepted. However, few universities accept refusal from other countries and some also accept past refusal of AUS and NZ if the applicant has a general refusal.
- Backlogs can be considered as per the university's policy. Having backlogs in Bachelor's degree can be accepted by most of the universities. Some of the universities can accept the profile having 8 or 15 backlogs depending on their admission policy.
- Maximum of 10 weeks of English courses can be added. If the students fail to meet the minimum English entry requirement, they have the option to enrol in English courses (English for Academic Purpose) for approximately 5- 10 weeks depending on their score. (Conditionally applicable with country's assessment level)

Minimum Academic Entry Requirements for Universities and Colleges:

Eligibility of international students for admission to Australian universities and colleges will depend on minimum English language proficiency and academic requirements. Below is the minimum standard requirement for a master's Degree program:

- Academic Score GPA 2.4 & above in Bachelor Degree
- English Proficiency: IELTS Overall 6.5 and each band no less than 6.0; PTE Overall 58 each band no less than 50

It is essential to note that entry requirements may differ depending on the education providers.

Pathway programs such as Graduate Diploma and Post-Qualifying Programs are accessible if international students do not meet the minimum entry requirement for a Masters Degree.

Intakes in Australian Universities

Most Australian universities have two main intakes per year, with the first intake usually in February and the second intake in July. However, some universities may also have additional mid-year intakes like April, July, November or December. Most of the providers offer intakes throughout the year.

Student Visa Application Process

Stages for Student Visa Application

The Australian student visa application (Subclass 500) involves five key stages.

1. **Offer Stage (Conditional Offer):** Documents are evaluated, and if eligibility is met, the application is sent to the university. A conditional offer is typically issued within 2-3 weeks.
2. **GS Stage (Unconditional Offer):** Students submit GS/Financial documents demonstrating a genuine intention to study temporarily. GS includes immigration, financial capacity, home country ties, and Australian circumstances. Universities verify documents before secondary verification by the DHA. GS approval takes about two weeks, extendable to 3-4 weeks. A GS Statement (150-word questionnaire, replacing a long SOP since June 2023) and an interview are required.

3. **COE Stage (Initial Tuition Fee Payment):** After GS approval, the unconditional offer is issued. Students accept the offer and pay the initial tuition fees, enrolment fee, and OSHC for the Confirmation of Enrolment (COE). COE processing usually takes 1-2 weeks.
4. **Visa Lodgement:** With the COE, students lodge the Subclass 500 visa application online via the DHA portal, paying the 1600 AUD fee. Necessary documents include COE, financials, academics, English proficiency, OSHC, Police Check/Character Certificate (ideally less than a year old), and the GS statement. Students must complete a Biometric test (for most countries) and a Medical Test with approved doctors. Processing time is approximately 60-90 days, and lodging is advised 2-3 months before the course start.
5. **Visa Grant:** After biometrics and medical tests, a decision is made in 2-3 months, resulting in a Visa Grant Letter or a Refusal Letter.

Dependent Visa Process (Spouse): Spouses can be included in the Subclass 500 application. Requirements include demonstrating temporary stay for study, a genuine and ongoing relationship (marriage/de facto evidence), and sufficient financial capacity for both. Work rights for the dependent vary: unlimited for Master's/Doctoral students, and up to 48 hours per fortnight for undergraduate students. The dependent needs OSHC/OVHC. The dependent visa can be applied for concurrently or as a subsequent entrant.

Successful Visa Tips: Thoroughly understand requirements (financials, academics, language). Ensure all documentation is accurate, up-to-date, and certified. Demonstrate strong ties to the home country. Explain any education/employment gaps. Use official channels and submit early. Be honest, as misrepresentation can lead to rejection. Prepare for a potential DHA interview by practicing clear responses

Australia Student Visa Lodgment Process

International students who wish to study in Australia must first apply for admission and obtain an offer letter and Confirmation of Enrolment from their chosen education provider before applying for a student visa. Following is a step-by-step process for lodging a student visa:

1. Documents arrangements

To proceed with the visa application, one should create an immigration account by visiting the official website of the Australian Department of Home Affairs. Collecting all the necessary documents, including COE, Financial documents, Academic Documents, English Proficiency Test, Health Insurance, and Statement of Purpose. There are no such steps to arrange the documents. Documents should be uploaded as mentioned in the Visa applications with the proper file name.

2. Online Visa Submission

Online Visa applications can be filled by visiting the official website of the Australian Department of Home Affairs. One should be very careful when submitting a visa application. One wrong information can lead to the rejection of the application, so correct and accurate information should be entered while filling the visa form. This visa application can be lodged by the agency representative /counsellor, the Migration Agent, or the student. Upon successful submission, the system typically generates a receipt or acknowledgment containing an application tracking or lodgement number. This number is essential for tracking the progress of the visa application.

Essential links:

- Visa Fee link: <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/fees-and-charges/current-visa-pricing>
- Online Visa Submission link: <https://online.immi.gov.au/lusc/login>

Visa subclass	Base application charge	Additional applicant charge 18 and over	Additional applicant charge under 18	Non-internet application charge	Subsequent temporary application charge
Student visa (subclass 500) - All other students	AUD 1,600.00	AUD 1,190.00	AUD 390.00	N/A	AUD 700.00

Medical examination

Generally, the immigration department will provide guidelines on approved panel physicians or medical facilities where the examination must be conducted. The booking process is usually initiated by contacting the approved panel physician directly. Medical examinations can be booked before or after submitting the visa application at the applicant's convenience timing. If the applicant is willing to apply for a medical examination before or after submitting the visa file, then they should create a Health Declaration ID to go for medical examination. Medical examination cost is varied as per the medical test centres. The specific medical tests required can vary, but a standard immigration medical examination often includes the following:

- Physical Examination: A general examination to assess overall health.
- Chest X-ray: To check for Tuberculosis (TB)
- Blood Tests: To screen for infectious diseases. (Required for medical students only)
- Urine Tests: To assess kidney function and detect certain medical conditions.

*** This medical test is mandatory for applicants applying for a Student Visa Subclass 500, although the requirements may vary for applicants from other countries.**

Biometrics

Biometric data is a part of visa application where applicant's fingerprints and facial image are required. Biometrics is done through the authorized service provider, and the appointment can be done online from a designated centre. The cost of Biometric is around AUD 50-100, the exact fee may depend on the type of visa or the country the application is applying from. It can be paid through Bank Transfer or online payment. Once the payment is done, then the bank will provide the Draft as proof of payment. It is done under the strict supervision of the authorized supervisor, who sends the results directly to the immigration department.

Required Documents:

1. Valid Passport
2. Biometric Appointment Letter
3. Visa Application Acknowledgment Letter
4. Biometric fee Payment Receipt/Bank Draft
5. Government-issued ID
6. Appointment Booking Confirmation

*Country-specific Additional requirements. It is advisable to check the official embassy or visa centre website for the latest requirement before the biometric appointment.

Ministerial Direction No. 111

Ministerial Direction No. 111 which relates to prioritisation of visa processing for offshore student applications, which came into effect on December 19 2024.

Key points to remember:

- All offshore student visa applications will be assigned as Priority 1 until a Provider's 'prioritization threshold' is reached, at which point, subsequent student visa applications for that particular provider will be processed as Priority 2. The priority threshold refers to 80% of an individual provider's 2025 allocations.
- Please note that as per MD 111, Visa applications from students to be enrolled with a TAFE Provider are excluded from the threshold and will therefore remain Priority 1 regardless of how many student visas have been granted for the respective TAFE Provider. This exclusion also applies to visa applications from students enrolled in a Higher Education degree with a TAFE Provider.

- Visa processing times:

- Offshore

Currently, the advice is for Visa applications to be lodged at least 8 weeks prior, To commencement to ensure smooth processing of Priority 1 visas.

Priority 2 visa processing times are expected to be around 12-16 weeks.

- Onshore visa processing times are currently between 5-6 months

Work Rights for International Students in Australia

International Students' Work Rights

From 1st July 2023, international students can work up to 48 hours every fortnight during term time and unlimited hours during holiday breaks. Students who have started studying a master by research or doctoral degree can work more than 48 hours a fortnight. If an international student exceeds the work limitation hours set by the Australian regulations, their visa may be cancelled.

Temporary Graduate Visa Subclass 485

The Australian Department of Home Affairs (Home Affairs) has introduced changes to the Temporary Graduate (subclass 2024). The former Post-Study Work visa (PSWV) will now be known as Post-Higher Education Work visa. Students who graduate with an Australian Bachelors, Master's or a Doctoral degree and meet the other eligibility criteria will the Post-Higher Education Work. Please see the Department of Home Affairs website for eligibility requirements.

The duration of the Post-Higher Education Work visa graduates is able to apply for will depend on the degree they attained,

- Bachelor degree (including honours) - up to 2 years
- Masters degree (coursework and extended) - up to 2 years
- Masters degree (research) and Doctoral degree (PhD) - up to 3 year

Students may also be eligible to apply for a Second Post-Higher Education Work visa (former Second Post-Study Work visa) for a further one year duration, if they have lived, worked and/or studied in a regional area while holding their first Post- Higher Education Work visa (former Post-Study Work Visa), and their first visa was granted on the basis of a degree or higher from an Australian institution located in a regional area. Please see the DHA website for eligibility requirements.

Basic Eligibility

You must:

- be aged 35 years or under when you apply. Applicants can be under 50 years of age when you apply if you:
 - are using a Master (by Research) or Doctoral Degree (PHD) to meet the Australian Study requirement or
 - hold a Hong Kong or British National Overseas passport
- hold an eligible visa
- have a recent qualification in a CRICOS- registered course
- apply for your eligible stream (it is not possible to change streams after you apply)

Post Vocational Education Work Stream (former Graduate Work stream)

This visa is for international students who have recently graduated with qualifications that are relevant to specific occupations Australia needs. It lets you live, study and work in Australia temporarily

To be eligible for Post Vocational Education Work visa in Australia, international students must be:

- be 35 years of age or under when you apply. Applicants can be under 50 years of age when you apply if you:
 - are using a Master (by Research) or Doctoral Degree (PHD) to meet the Australian Study requirement or
 - hold a Hong Kong or British National Overseas passport
- be in Australia when you apply for this visa
- hold an eligible visa
- can stay up to 18 months
- have a qualification relevant to an occupation on the skilled occupation list
- have applied for a skills assessment in your nominated occupation on the skilled occupation list.
- provide evidence of adequate health insurance for all applicants when you apply
- provide evidence you have applied for an Australian Federal Police check when you apply
- provide evidence of the required level of English with your application.

Post-Higher Education Work stream (former Post-Study Work stream)

This visa is for international students who have recently graduated with a degree from an Australian institution. It lets you live, work and study in Australia temporarily.

To be eligible for Post-Higher Education Work visa in Australia, international students must be:

- be aged 35 years or under when you apply. Applicants can be under 50 years of age when you apply if you:
 - are using a Master (by Research) or Doctoral Degree (PHD) to meet the Australian Study requirement or
 - hold a Hong Kong or British National Overseas passport
- be in Australia when you apply for this visa
- hold an eligible visa
- can stay usually between 2 and 3 years, depending on your qualification whereas Hong Kong and British National Overseas passport holders may stay for 5 years.
- have a recent degree in a CRICOS- registered course
- provide evidence of adequate health insurance for all applicants when you apply
- provide evidence you have applied for an Australian Federal Police check when you apply.
- provide evidence of the required level of English with your application.

Post-Higher Education Work Visa / Post-Study Work Visa (PSWV)

This visa is for Temporary Graduates holding a Post-Higher Education Work, Post-Study Work or Replacement visa with a degree from an Australian institution located in a regional area. It lets you live, work and study in Australia temporarily.

To be eligible for Post-Higher Education Work visa in Australia, international students must be:

- be aged 35 years or under when you apply. Applicants can be under 50 years of age when you apply if you:
 - are using a Master (by Research) or Doctoral Degree (PHD) to meet the Australian Study requirement or
 - hold a Hong Kong or British National Overseas passport
- be in Australia when you apply for this visa
- hold a Temporary Graduate visa in the Post-Higher Education Work, Post-Study Work, or the Replacement stream and have held a Temporary Graduate visa in the Post-Higher Education Work or Post-Study Work stream, as the main applicant
- can stay Between 1 and 2 years depending on:
- have a degree in a CRICOS Registered course from an education institution based in an eligible designated regional area, that led to the grant of your first Temporary Graduate visa in the Post-Higher Education Work or Post-Study Work stream
- have lived in an eligible designated regional area for at least 2 years before applying for your Second Temporary Graduate visa in the Post-Higher Education Work stream

- have evidence of adequate health insurance for all applicants when you apply.

Things to Consider About Studying in Australia

Studying in Australia is a life changing experience for international students. Similar to any significant decision, particularly one involving relocation to a foreign country, there are several aspects that student may want to consider before choosing to study in Australia. Some of them are listed here:

- Right course and university that matches with background and career goals.
- Financial planning covering tuition fees, accommodation costs, living expenses and other miscellaneous expenditures.
- Understanding the visa conditions and importance to comply with the requirements for obtaining a student visa.
- Explore about the scholarships and bursaries.
- Considering factors while choosing the accommodation like location, cost, and other facilities.
- Explore regarding the Post Study Work Visa.
- Familiarizing with the updated system like healthcare facilities and other available services.

- Be aware of the student support services provided by the university, including counselling, academic assistance, and career guidance.
- Understand the limitations and opportunities for a part-time job during the studies.
- Explore internship opportunities and industry connections for future career prospects.

For a successful study experience in Australia, it is advisable to conduct individual research by each international student to comprehend cultural norms, climate, and laws.

Permanent Residence in Australia

Permanent residency, also known as PR, signifies a non-citizen's entitlement to live, work, and study in Australia without any time restrictions. Although not equivalent to citizenship, PR in Australia grants individual rights and privileges that closely resemble those of an Australian citizen. This includes the capability to work, pursue education, access healthcare benefits and sponsor family members for residency. Attaining the PR status signifies that the individual is integrated to Australian lifestyle and population. Permanent residence visas permit travel and entry to Australia for five years from the date of grant. Here are some of the top courses that lead international students to Permanent Residence in Australia as of November 2023:

- Engineering
- Accounting
- Education and Teaching
- Medical courses
- Social work
- Trade Qualification courses
- Building and Construction
- Computer and Information Technology
- Nursing
- Hospitality
- Automotive
- Dentistry
- Painting and Decoration
- Plumbing and Technician

