K12 ACADEMICS — INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERIES

Studying in Australia

A guide for international students & families — how Australian higher education works, the Subclass 500 student visa, applying, English and financial requirements, and post-study work.

K12 ACADEMICS

Find Your Community

2026 EDITION

ABOUT K12 ACADEMICS

The world's largest education resource.

Online since 2004, K12 Academics has helped millions of families, students and educators **find the right school, college, camp, business and program in their community** — for every kind of learner.

WORLD-CLASS, AND WELCOMING

Australia is a leading study destination — home to globally ranked universities, taught in English, with a strong reputation for international students and post-study work options. The path runs through the **Subclass 500 student visa**, a CRICOS-registered course, and English and financial requirements. This guide walks it in **ten steps**.

General guidance, not legal or immigration advice. Australian visa rules, thresholds, and requirements change (recent updates to English, finances, and the Genuine Student test). The figures here are recent examples and **must be confirmed with the Department of Home Affairs, Study Australia, and your provider**.

1

STEP 01 OF 10

Understand Why Students Choose Australia

WHAT TO KNOW

Australia attracts students with **highly ranked universities (the "Group of Eight" among them), English-language study, a high quality of life, and strong post-study work options** — plus a long history of welcoming international students.

BY THE NUMBERS

Top universities	In English	Post-study work
Group of Eight & more	+ high quality of life	strong options

HOW TO HELP

Weigh Australia's **university quality, lifestyle, and post-study work** against tuition, living costs, and distance, to see if it fits your goals.

GOOD TO KNOW

Australia's post-study work visa and quality of life are major draws — balance them against the cost and travel distance.

2

STEP 02 OF 10

Understand the System

WHAT TO KNOW

Australian higher education includes **universities** (degrees), **TAFE** (vocational and technical), and private colleges. To enrol international students, a provider and course must be **CRICOS-registered** (on the official government register).

BY THE NUMBERS

Universities	CRICOS	Degrees or VET
+ TAFE & colleges	the official register	choose your path

HOW TO HELP

Choose a **CRICOS-registered course** that fits your goals (university degree or vocational/TAFE) — only CRICOS providers can enrol you as an international student.

WATCH OUT

If a provider or course isn't **CRICOS-registered**, you can't use it for a student visa — always check the register.

3

STEP 03 OF 10

Understand the Student Visa (Subclass 500)

WHAT TO KNOW

International students study on the **Student visa (Subclass 500)**, applied for online via **ImmiAccount** (Department of Home Affairs). Since 2025 you need a **Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE)** at application, plus you must satisfy the **Genuine Student (GS)** requirement.

BY THE NUMBERS

Subclass 500	CoE	Genuine Student
the student visa	from your provider	explain your intent

HOW TO HELP

Secure your **CoE**, prepare a strong **Genuine Student** statement, and apply for the Subclass 500 via **ImmiAccount** — following current Home Affairs guidance exactly.

WATCH OUT

The **Genuine Student** statement is a top reason for refusals — be honest, specific, and clear about your study plans and goals.

4

STEP 04 OF 10

Choose & Apply to Providers

WHAT TO KNOW

Apply directly to CRICOS-registered providers (each has its own process). Choose by **course, ranking, cost, city and climate, and post-study work relevance**. Australia's leading universities include Melbourne, Sydney, ANU, UNSW, Queensland, and Monash.

BY THE NUMBERS

Apply directly	CRICOS-registered	Fit
each provider's process	required	course, cost, city

HOW TO HELP

Research CRICOS-registered courses, confirm each provider's requirements and deadlines, and shortlist by genuine fit — academics, cost, and location.

GOOD TO KNOW

Australia's cities differ a lot in cost and climate — weigh location alongside the university and course.

5

STEP 05 OF 10

Meet Admissions Requirements

WHAT TO KNOW

Requirements vary by provider and course but generally include **academic transcripts, English-test scores, and sometimes a statement of purpose or portfolio**. Entry requirements are listed per course, and some are competitive.

BY THE NUMBERS

Transcripts	English scores	Per course
academic records	required	requirements vary

HOW TO HELP

Gather **transcripts and English scores**, and check each course's specific entry requirements and intake dates (Australia has multiple intakes per year).

GOOD TO KNOW

Australia's academic year starts in **February** (with a July mid-year intake) — plan around Southern Hemisphere timing.

6

STEP 06 OF 10

Meet English Requirements

WHAT TO KNOW

You must prove **English proficiency**, commonly with **IELTS (around 6.0), PTE Academic, TOEFL iBT, or others**. Tests must be taken **in person** (online/at-home versions aren't accepted for the visa). Some nationalities and pathways are exempt.

BY THE NUMBERS

IELTS ~6.0	In person	Some exempt
or PTE/TOEFL	online not accepted	by nationality/pathway

HOW TO HELP

Take an **accepted, in-person English test** and aim for your course's required score — or explore an **ELICOS** English pathway if you need to build up first.

WATCH OUT

The visa requires an **in-person** test — an at-home IELTS or TOEFL won't count, a common and costly mistake.

7

STEP 07 OF 10

Plan for Costs & Health Cover

WHAT TO KNOW

Budget **tuition (international rates), living costs, and mandatory Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)** for your whole stay. Scholarships (government, university, and external) exist but are competitive.

BY THE NUMBERS

Tuition	OSHC	Scholarships
international rates	required health cover	competitive

HOW TO HELP

Budget the **full cost** including **OSHC** (required for the visa), and pursue scholarships from the government and universities — some are generous.

GOOD TO KNOW

OSHC (health insurance) is mandatory for the entire visa period — arrange it before you apply.

8

STEP 08 OF 10

Meet the Financial Requirement

WHAT TO KNOW

For the visa you must **prove funds**: 12 months of tuition, travel, and living costs. The living-cost figure is set by the government and indexed — recently around **AUD 29,710 per year** for the student (more for dependents).

BY THE NUMBERS

Prove funds	~AUD 29,710/yr	Dependents
tuition + living + travel	living (indexed)	add more

HOW TO HELP

Prepare **financial evidence** meeting the current threshold (recently ~AUD 29,710/year living costs) — and confirm the exact figure, since it's indexed and rises.

WATCH OUT

The financial threshold is **raised periodically** — always check the current amount on Home Affairs before applying.

9

STEP 09 OF 10

Prepare for the Move

WHAT TO KNOW

Prepare for a **new academic culture (independent study, participation), Southern Hemisphere seasons, and practical setup** (housing, banking, transport). Providers' international offices support arrival and adjustment.

BY THE NUMBERS

Academic style	Seasons flipped	Int'l office
independent & participatory	Feb start	your support

HOW TO HELP

Plan **housing and arrival**, prepare for the academic style and flipped seasons, and use your provider's international student office for orientation and support.

WATCH OUT

Within 7 days of arriving you must give your provider your **Australian address**, and keep attendance/progress up — they're visa conditions.

10 STEP 10 OF 10

Thrive & Work After Study

WHAT TO KNOW

You can usually **work limited hours** (recently up to 48 hours per fortnight during term, full-time in breaks). After graduating, the **Temporary Graduate visa (Subclass 485)** can allow post-study work in Australia — a major draw.

BY THE NUMBERS

Work	485 visa	Community
~48 hrs/fortnight in term	post-study work	get involved

HOW TO HELP

Make the most of Australia: **work within the current limits**, build community, and explore the **485 Temporary Graduate visa** for post-study work — confirming current terms on Home Affairs.

WATCH OUT

Both the **work-hour limit** and the **485 visa** terms change — check the current rules before relying on them.

QUICK REFERENCE

Studying in Australia: The Essentials

A snapshot — figures change, so confirm everything with the Department of Home Affairs, Study Australia, and your provider.

The system

Universities (degrees), TAFE (vocational), and private colleges; the provider and course must be CRICOS-registered to enrol international students.

The visa

Student visa (Subclass 500), applied for via ImmiAccount; requires a Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE), the Genuine Student requirement, OSHC, and financial and English evidence.

English

Prove English (IELTS ~6.0, PTE, TOEFL iBT, and others), taken in person; some nationalities/pathways are exempt; ELICOS pathways exist.

Money

Budget tuition + living + travel + OSHC; prove funds (recently ~AUD 29,710/year living costs, indexed), more for dependents.

After study

You may work limited hours during study (recently ~48 hrs/fortnight); the Temporary Graduate visa (Subclass 485) can allow post-study work — confirm current terms.

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