Australian Government

Department of Education and Training

Country Education Profiles

Australia

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The document must be attributed as the Australia Country Education Profile.

About the Author

The Australian Government Department of Education and Training promotes mobility through qualifications recognition. The Australia Country Education Profile provides comprehensive information about education in Australia to improve understanding of the Australian education system and Australian qualifications.

To support mobility, the department engages domestically and globally on qualifications recognition policy and encourages improved recognition practices. It also engages in international policy dialogue on the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).

Other departmental information and services to support recognition include:

- Country Education Profiles—an online recognition tool providing guidance on the comparability of overseas qualifications to qualifications on the AQF, lists of recognised institutions and information about education systems for 126 countries
- professional development for recognition authorities
- providing qualifications recognition policy advice to Australian educational institutions, professional assessing authorities and state and territory governments
- assessments of overseas postsecondary qualifications for individuals for general purposes.

For more information see **www.internationaleducation.gov.au**

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Australian education system

Overview of the Australian education system

The Commonwealth of Australia consists of eight states and territories—the Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales, the Northern Territory, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria, and Western Australia.

There are three levels of Australian government: Australian (federal); state and territory; and local. Education and training is the responsibility of the Australian and state and territory governments.

School education

School education has a similar structure across Australia with minor variations between states and territories.

School education is 13 years and divided into:

- primary school which is seven or eight years—Foundation Year to Year 6 or 7
- secondary school which is three or four years—Years 7-10 or 8-10
- senior secondary school is two years—Years 11 and 12.

Postsecondary education

Postsecondary education is known as tertiary education. Tertiary education includes higher education and vocational education and training (VET).

Language of instruction

English is the official language of Australia and the main language of instruction. Some schools offer bilingual courses or courses in other languages. Indigenous languages may also be used in some regions.

Most schools offer students a choice of foreign language studies including Arabic, Bahasa Indonesia, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Mandarin, Modern Greek and Spanish.

Academic year

The school year is from February to December. Most states and territories have four terms per school year. Tasmania has a three-term school year.

In VET, the academic year is late January to mid-December. In some states and territories the academic year is divided into two semesters. Others use a three-term or trimester system.

In higher education, the academic year is from February to November. Most institutions use the semester system, where one semester is 16 weeks long, including a mid-semester break and exam period. Some institutions have a trimester system or summer and winter sessions which are in addition to the two semesters. Some institutions run courses year round.

Administration and finance

The administration and financing of education in Australia is shared between the Australian Government and the state and territory governments. The nature of the arrangements depends on the education sector and legislative responsibilities.

The Australian Government and the state and territory governments cooperate on education policy and planning through the Council of Australian Governments (COAG). COAG consists of a number of councils, each with a specific focus. COAG members are Australian Government and state and territory ministers.

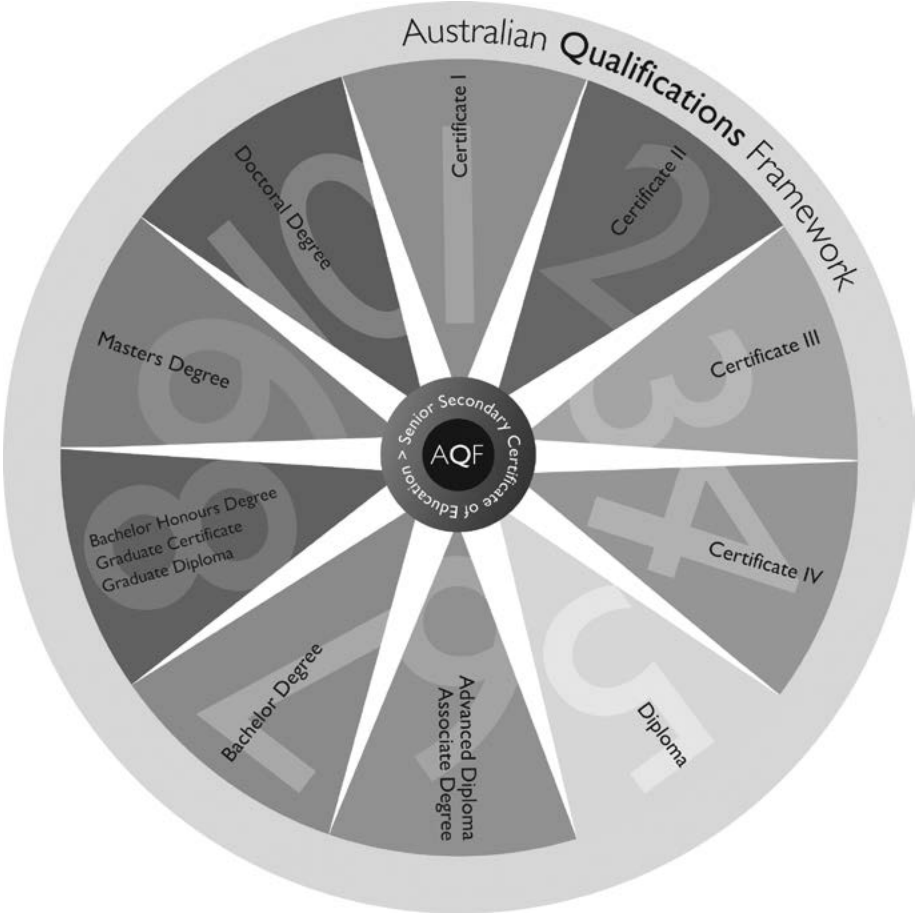
For more information see **www.coag.gov.au**

Australian Qualifications Framework

The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) was established in 1995 as a national policy that covers qualifications from all education sectors; higher education, vocational education and training (VET) and school education. The Australian Government Department of Education and Training is responsible for governance of the AQF in consultation with the state and territory governments.

The AQF emphasises flexible learning and supports pathways between education sectors, and from study into the workforce. The AQF is supported by policies on:

- learning outcomes for each AQF level and qualification type
- AQF specifications for the development and accreditation of qualifications
- registers of accrediting bodies, awarding bodies and qualifications
- issuing AQF qualifications
- linkages and pathways, including credit transfer and articulation
- adding and removing qualification types.



AQF qualifications are offered in the higher education, VET and school sectors. Some qualifications are offered in more than one sector.

For more information on individual AQF qualifications, see:
- Courses and qualifications, Higher education, page 8
- Courses and qualifications, Vocational education and training, page 20
- Senior secondary school, School education, page 36.

An AQF level refers to the complexity, breadth and depth of learning outcomes (known as level criteria). Each AQF level has qualification types. Qualification types also have descriptors based on learning outcomes that are more specific than the level criteria. Both the level criteria and qualification type descriptors are based on generic learning outcomes that include:
- knowledge—what a graduate knows and understands. This can be general or specialised, in a single area or a range of areas and can be discrete or cumulative.
- skills—what a graduate can do. This can be cognitive, creative, technical, communication and/or interpersonal.
- application of knowledge and skills—the context in which a graduate applies acquired knowledge and skills. This is described in terms of autonomy, responsibility and accountability. Contexts may be predictable, routine and known, or unpredictable, non-routine and unknown.

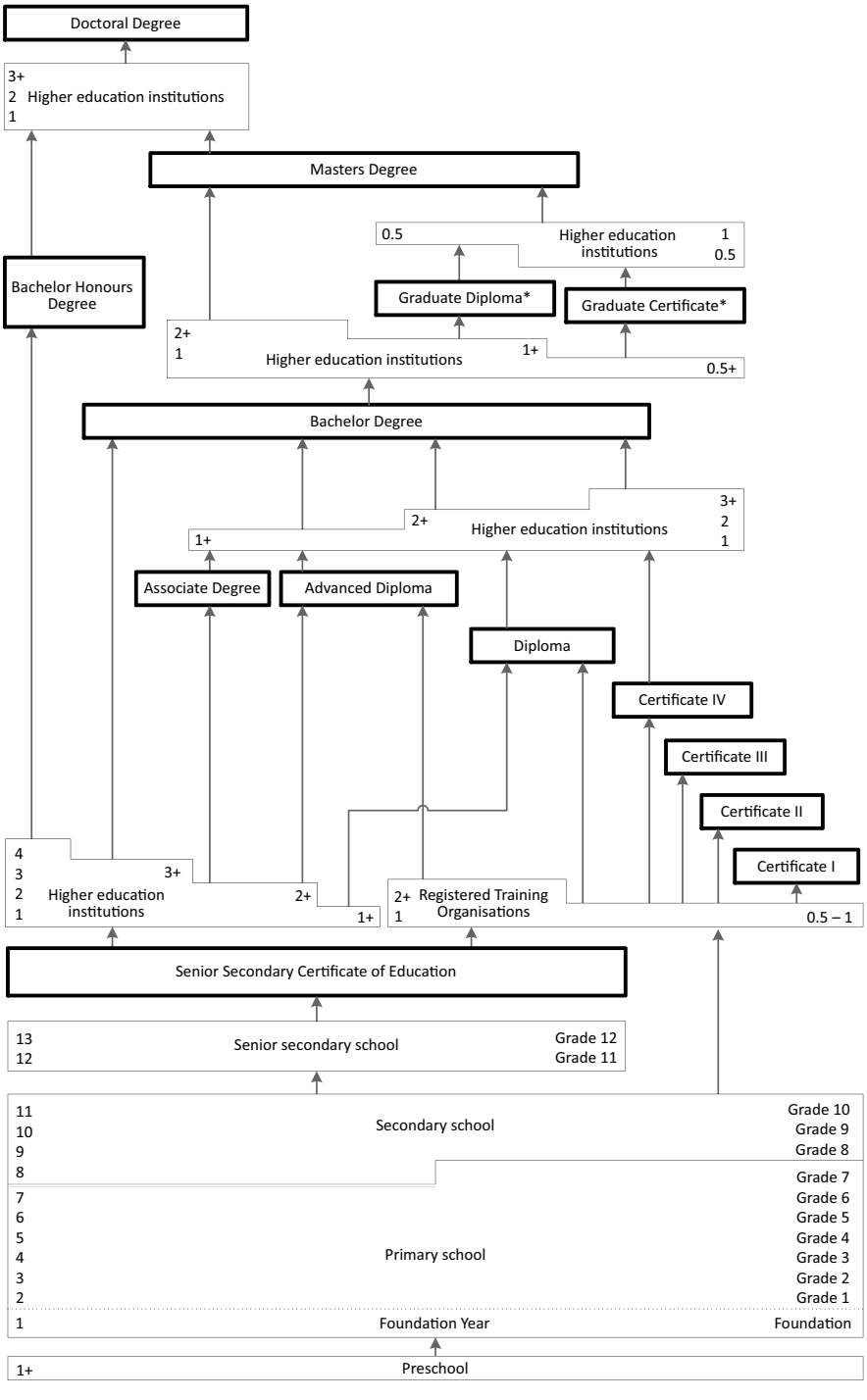
A qualification type descriptor will also have a notional volume of learning. This is described in terms of years of full-time study. The volume of learning is for guidance purposes. The volume of learning must allow for graduates to achieve the learning outcomes of a given qualification type and level.

AQF qualifications are quality assured and accredited by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA), the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) or the state/territory accreditation authorities, including those in the school education sector. The accrediting body depends on the sector of the qualification and the state or territory in which it is offered.

For more information, see:
- Accreditation and quality assurance, Higher education, page 16
- Accreditation and quality assurance, Vocational education and training, page 27
- Senior secondary school, School education, page 36.

AQF qualifications, organisations authorised to issue AQF qualifications and the organisations authorised to accredit AQF qualifications can be found on the AQF Register at **www.aqf.edu.au/register**

Diagram of the Australian education system



*Graduate Certificates and Graduate Diplomas are also awarded by Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) as vocational education and training qualifications

Higher education

Higher education in Australia

The higher education sector in Australia is made up of universities and other higher education institutions which award Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) level 5 to 10 qualifications. There are three main cycles of higher education which lead to the awards of Bachelor, Masters and Doctoral Degrees. There are also sub-degree undergraduate qualifications and other postgraduate qualifications.

Courses and qualifications

Courses can be taken either full-time or part-time, on campus, by distance or through online study. All courses, regardless of mode of study, are subject to rigorous quality assurance arrangements.

For more detail about the qualifications below see **www.aqf.edu.au**

Credit systems

Australia does not have a national credit system, though the AQF indicates the typical volume of learning required in years of full-time study and provides a credit transfer and articulation policy. As there are quality assurance arrangements in place to support national consistency and institutional autonomy, each institution has the flexibility to develop its own credit system to represent the quantitative load of a course of study.

For example, a Bachelor Degree may require a total of 24 credits at one institution and 600 credits at another. This does not mean that a Bachelor Degree requiring 600 credits is more substantial than a Bachelor Degree requiring 24 credits. It only means that the institutions are using a different credit system. Both Bachelor Degrees would have the same status as an AQF qualification. Credits are used to represent full-time study load, not contact hours. A subject may be worth 1 credit or 25 credits, and it may have different contact hours and study hour requirements depending on the system the institution uses. Therefore, the various credit systems used by Australian institutions cannot be converted into contact hours or study hours.

Undergraduate courses and qualifications

Diploma

Diploma courses prepare graduates for paraprofessional work or further learning based on an applied academic course. Knowledge and skills at this level demonstrate understanding of a broad knowledge base incorporating theoretical concepts with depth in some areas. They include the ability to analyse and plan approaches to technical problems or management requirements, transfer and apply theoretical concepts and/or technical or creative skills to a range of situations, and to analyse and evaluate information, applications or programmes. Courses are usually one to two years full-time.

Diploma graduates can continue to employment or further education in the higher education sector with up to one year of credit granted towards a related Bachelor Degree course. The Diploma is also offered as a vocational education and training (VET) qualification, see page 23.

Advanced Diploma

Advanced Diploma courses prepare graduates for paraprofessional or advanced skilled work or further learning. Knowledge and skills at this level include broad theoretical and technical knowledge of a specialisation or a broad field of work and learning. Graduates are expected to demonstrate specialised knowledge, problem-solving and analytical skills and communication in a range of specialised situations. Courses are usually one-and-a-half to two years full-time.

Advanced Diploma graduates can continue to employment or further education in the higher education sector with between one and two years of credit granted in a related Bachelor Degree course. The Advanced Diploma is also offered as a VET qualification, see page 23.

Associate Degree

Associate Degrees are more academically focused and prepare graduates for paraprofessional work or further learning. Knowledge and skills at this level focus on underpinning technical and theoretical knowledge. Graduates are expected to demonstrate initiative and judgement, problem-solving, decision making and analytical skills, and communication in a range of paraprofessional situations. Courses are usually two years full-time.

The Associate Degree and the Advanced Diploma are at the same level on the AQF. The difference is in their focus. Associate Degrees are more academically oriented, whereas Advanced Diplomas emphasise vocational or occupational specific skills.

Associate Degree graduates can continue to employment or further education with usually one-and-a-half to two years of credit granted towards a related Bachelor Degree course.

Bachelor Degree

Bachelor Degree courses include development of knowledge and skills in one or more specialisations. Courses focus on progressive development of knowledge, critical analytical skills, and research and problemsolving techniques, which prepares graduates for postgraduate study or for professional work.

Some institutions offer Bachelor Degrees which cannot be entered directly from senior secondary school and require a Bachelor Degree for entry. Most of these courses are in professional specialisations. They are known as graduate-entry Bachelor Degrees.

Students can enrol in a double or combined Bachelor Degree which leads to the award of two Bachelor Degrees. This is most common in arts, commerce, law and science. Such courses are at least four years full-time.

There is no prescribed length of study for a Bachelor Degree. Arts and science degrees can range between three to four years of full-time study, and professional degrees can range between three to six or more years of full-time study. Regardless of length or specific course requirements, all Bachelor Degree courses are quality assured and must conform to the AQF.

Bachelor Degree graduates are eligible for admission to Masters Degree study and other postgraduate qualifications such as the Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma.

Bachelor Degree course requirements

Bachelor Degree courses differ depending on the major subject area, the department and/or faculty and the institution. Courses are highly focused on the major field of study from the first year onwards, and there is no significant general education component. Courses include mandatory core subjects, specialisation subjects and elective subjects.

Professional courses include a higher number of compulsory core subjects, with few choices for specialisation or electives. Non-professional Bachelor Degrees allow for a wider choice of specialisations. Courses must normally have at least one major specialisation that is studied over the duration of the course. Many students undertake two or three majors. Universities have regulations concerning the minimum and maximum numbers of units to be completed each year. A unit is a component of a qualification, and in Australia it may also be called a module, subject or unit of competency.

Courses may involve lectures, tutorials, seminars, laboratory work, and fieldwork or supervised practical work. The number of class contact hours per week varies according to the nature of the course of study. Assessment usually involves exams, research assignments and reports, presentations, field or practical work, individual or group research and performance in tutorials, seminars and laboratory work.

Bachelor Honours Degree

Bachelor Honours Degrees focus on the development of advanced knowledge and skills in research principles and methods in one or more specialisations. A research thesis or significant project is required.

An additional year of intensive study after a Bachelor Degree is required, or it may be undertaken as a four-year integrated course. The additional year normally involves specialised study and research, and the submission of a thesis. Students specialise in one field of study, or more for a combined Bachelor Honours Degree. This is usually the field of study the student majored in. Bachelor Honours Degrees are available in most specialisations.

Bachelor Honours Degrees are usually awarded with the abbreviation 'Hons'—for example, BA (Hons)—and in a class or division—for example First Class or Second Class (Upper Division). Graduates with Honours in the First or Second (Upper Division) Classes may enter a Doctoral Degree course directly.

In the past Bachelor Degrees using Honours terminology on the basis of academic achievement were often awarded in some professional specialisations (for example, Bachelor of Laws with Honours). In such cases, an increased course load and/or thesis may have been required.

Postgraduate courses and qualifications

Graduate Certificate

Graduate Certificate courses are designed for professional or highly skilled work or further specialised learning. Graduate Certificate courses usually require one semester of full-time study.

Knowledge and skills at this level emphasise specialised theoretical and technical knowledge in either a new or existing discipline or professional area. Graduates are expected to demonstrate initiative, analysis, planning and evaluation in a range of specialised functions. Courses may extend the knowledge and skills gained in a preceding Bachelor Degree or other qualification.

A Graduate Certificate may be awarded if a student undertakes postgraduate study such as a Masters Degree but does not fully complete the course.

Graduate Diploma

Graduate Diploma courses are designed for professional or highly skilled work or further learning. Graduate Diploma courses usually require one year of full-time study, and cover a wider breadth and/or greater depth of knowledge in a particular field in comparison to the Graduate Certificate.

Knowledge and skills at this level emphasise advanced theoretical and technical knowledge in either an existing specialisation or area of professional practice or the development of new professional or vocational skills. Graduates are expected to demonstrate initiative, analysis, planning and evaluation in a range of specialised functions. Courses may extend the knowledge and skills gained in a preceding Bachelor Degree or other qualification.

A Graduate Diploma may be awarded if a student undertakes postgraduate study such as a Masters Degree but does not fully complete the course.

Masters Degree

There are three types of Masters Degree courses—research, coursework and extended. Most Masters Degrees require one to two years of full-time study following a Bachelor Degree. There are several other pathways to complete a Masters Degree.

Knowledge and skills at this level focus on analysis and evaluation of complex information, ability to generate and evaluate complex ideas and concepts, and communication and research skills to present coherent knowledge to specialists and non-specialists. Graduates are expected to apply knowledge and skills to new situations, exercise high-level autonomy and accountability and to deliver a substantial piece of research or a research-based project. All Masters Degrees include research principles, methods and skills and require the completion of a substantial piece of research, a research-based project, a capstone experience, a piece of scholarship or a professionally-focused project. Graduates can continue to a Doctoral Degree course.

Masters Degree (Research)

Masters Degree (Research) courses are designed to provide graduates with advanced knowledge for research, scholarship and further learning purposes. Courses are at least two-thirds research with a substantial thesis, which is externally examined. Courses normally require one to two years of full-time study, depending on the preceding qualification and if it is in a related specialisation.

Masters Degree (Coursework)

Masters Degrees (Coursework) courses are designed to provide graduates with advanced knowledge for professional practice, scholarship and further learning purposes. Courses normally require one to two years of full-time study, depending on the preceding qualification and if it is in a related specialisation to the student's previous qualification(s).

Masters Degree (Extended)

Masters Degree (Extended) courses are designed to provide graduates with advanced knowledge in preparation for professional practice and further learning. Courses usually require structured learning and independent research involving substantial collaboration with organisations engaged in professional practice. Courses are usually three to four years full-time.

Doctoral Degree

Doctoral Degrees are the highest level of academic study and focus on a critical understanding of a complex field of learning and highly specialised research skills. Graduates are expected to undertake research that makes a substantial original contribution to knowledge in the form of new knowledge or significant and original adaptation, application and interpretation of existing knowledge. Courses are usually three to four years full-time.

All Doctoral Degrees require completion of a thesis, dissertation or similar. It is usually examined by two or three expert academics of international standing, at least two of which must be external to the institution.

Doctoral Degree (Research)

Research Doctoral Degrees are by supervised research and an original thesis. At least two-thirds of the course must consist of research. Advanced coursework may be included to support research outcomes and the student's contribution to original knowledge.

Doctoral Degree (Professional)

Professional Doctoral Degrees require significant professional practice either prior to or as part of the course. Courses include structured coursework and independent supervised study. At least two years of the course consists of research. Research-based professional practice with a professional, statutory or regulatory body may also be included in the course to support research outcomes.

Admission requirements

Undergraduate admission requirements

Diploma, Advanced Diploma, Associate Degree, Bachelor Degree

Undergraduate admission is usually based on a student's Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR). The ATAR is calculated by a state or territory Tertiary Admission Centre (TAC) (see table on following page) based on a Senior Secondary Certificate of Education course of study. The ATAR is reported on a scale of 0 to 99.95 with increments of 0.05. It indicates a student's ranking relative to student cohort. For example, an ATAR of 90.00 puts a student in the top 10 percent of their cohort. The ATAR is used in all states and territories except Queensland, which uses a similar ranking system of Overall Positions (OPs) and Field Positions (FPs).

Other undergraduate admission pathways include:

- a vocational education and training (VET) qualification, such as a Certificate III or IV
- tertiary education preparatory short courses
- additional requirements such as an interview, portfolio of work, prerequisite courses, and/or work experience relevant to the study course
- mature-age entry for students over 25 years based on relevant work experience, an entrance exam, interview or portfolio of work.

Responsibility for domestic undergraduate tertiary admissions in each state and territory

State/Territory	Responsibility for domestic undergraduate tertiary admissions in each state and territory	Website
Australian Capital Territory	Universities Admissions Centre (UAC)	**www.uac.edu.au**
New South Wales	Universities Admissions Centre (UAC)	**www.uac.edu.au**
Northern Territory	South Australian Tertiary Admissions Centre (SATAC)	**www.satac.edu.au**
Queensland	Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC)	**www.qtac.edu.au**
South Australia	South Australian Tertiary Admissions Centre (SATAC)	**www.satac.edu.au**
Tasmania	University of Tasmania (UTAS)	**www.utas.edu.au**
Victoria	Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC)	**www.vtac.edu.au**
Western Australia	Tertiary Institutions Service Centre (TISCOnline)	**www.tisc.edu.au**

Bachelor Honours Degree

Entry to a Bachelor Honours Degree course is usually based on high academic achievement in a related Bachelor Degree course.

Postgraduate admission requirements

Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma

Entry is normally based on a Bachelor Degree but it can also be gained through relevant work experience, depending on the field of study.

Masters Degree

Entry is normally based on a Bachelor Degree.

For a research Masters Degree, a Bachelor Honours Degree, research-based Graduate Diploma, or preparatory course may be required, where credit may be granted towards the Masters Degree by research.

For a coursework Masters Degree, entry is usually based on a Bachelor Degree, though entry can be gained through a Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma, where credit may be granted towards the Masters Degree by coursework.

For a Masters Degree (Extended), entry is usually based on a Bachelor Degree.

Doctoral Degree

Entry is normally based on a research Masters Degree or a Bachelor Honours Degree (First or Second Class, Upper Division).

Credit transfer and recognition of prior learning

Credit transfer refers to the recognition of previous formal education to support higher education study, and so that the same study does not have to be repeated. Credit transfer is available in both undergraduate and postgraduate courses, at the discretion of the education institution. Credit can also be given for previous vocational education and training (VET) study. The Australian Qualifications Framework Qualifications Pathways Policy specifies the minimum amount of credit recommended for a range of VET and higher education qualifications.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) provides a process for individuals to seek recognition of previous training, work experience, professional development, professional licensing and exams and other work-based education and training.

Decisions about credit transfer and RPL are made separately from admission decisions. Students usually need an offer of enrolment before any decision on credit or recognition of prior learning is made.

For more information about credit systems, see page 8.

Types of institutions

There are three types of higher education institutions in Australia:

- universities
- other self-accrediting higher education institutions
- non-self-accrediting higher education institutions.

All higher education institutions are quality assured by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) and recognised institutions can be found at **www.teqsa.gov.au**. All higher education institutions that offer Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) qualifications must be registered with TEQSA.

Universities

The Australian higher education sector comprises of 43 universities; 40 Australian universities (37 public and 3 private), 1 Australian university of specialisation and 2 overseas universities. Universities operating in Australia must be established or recognised under federal or state and territory legislation. Universities are multi-disciplinary, self-governing institutions that are responsible for their own management structure, budgets, staffing, admissions, internal quality assurance (including course accreditation) and curriculum.

All universities can accredit their own courses, offer undergraduate and postgraduate courses, undertake research, contribute to higher education outcomes, demonstrate good practice in teaching and learning, be involved in the community, and offer quality higher education.

Australian universities differ in size. Enrolments range from 2,000 to more than 60,000 students. Universities can be located in major cities or in smaller regional centres. Larger universities usually have a number of campuses, including campuses outside Australia. Most universities are organised into faculties or schools but may also have specialised research centres or institutes.

Other self-accrediting higher education institutions

There is a small number of self-accrediting higher education institutions that are established or recognised under state and territory legislation and can accredit their own courses. These institutions generally focus on offering courses in a specific field of study. They are usually institutes, colleges or schools.

Non-self-accrediting higher education institutions

There are 123 non-self-accrediting higher education institutions registered by TEQSA to offer accredited higher education courses. They must meet TEQSA's registration standards in addition to offering at least one course accredited by TEQSA.

Accreditation and quality assurance

Quality assurance in higher education is the responsibility of education institutions, the Australian Government, peak bodies and sectoral stakeholders.

Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency

The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) is the national regulator and quality assurance agency for the Australian higher education system. TEQSA provides national consistency in the regulation of higher education and maintains Australia's reputation for high-quality education. TEQSA ensures that higher education institutions meet quality standards through registration and re-registration processes, as well as course accreditation and reaccreditation for education institutions without self-accrediting authority.

TEQSA's approach is underpinned by the three principles of: regulatory necessity, reflecting risk, and proportionate regulation. This means that TEQSA's regulatory approach differentiates between education institutions based on their track records and risk of future non-compliance with the *Higher Education Standards Framework*.

TEQSA also monitors the provision of education and training services to international students in Australia under the *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000*. For more information see Quality assurance of international education, page 54.

Higher Education Standards Framework

The *Higher Education Standards Framework* is the benchmark against which TEQSA registers and evaluates higher education institutions. The Standards cover quality assurance matters such as teaching and learning, research, governance and administration.

An organisation must comply with the *Higher Education Standards Framework* to be registered with TEQSA as a higher education institution in Australia. TEQSA has the authority to enforce these Standards under the *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011*.

Self-accrediting institutions

Self-accrediting institutions have authority to accredit their own courses as complying with the *Higher Education Standards Framework* instead of seeking accreditation from TEQSA. These institutions must be registered by TEQSA and meet the requirements to be self-accrediting institutions. All universities, and a small number of non-university higher education institutions, have the authority to self-accredit their courses.

Self-accrediting institutions have internal processes for accrediting new courses. This involves consultation with relevant industry or professional bodies, and formal consideration and approval by academic boards. Courses must be reviewed for reaccreditation at least every seven years.

For more information see **www.teqsa.gov.au**

Course accreditation

While self-accrediting institutions have authority to accredit their own courses, non-self-accrediting institutions must seek accreditation from TEQSA for every course that leads to the award of an AQF qualification.

To gain accreditation, TEQSA must be satisfied that the proposed course meets the relevant Standards under the Higher Education Standards Framework.

Accreditation may be granted for up to seven years.

Professional bodies

Professional bodies accredit higher education courses in certain occupations. This is additional to accreditation by TEQSA or a self-accrediting institution and ensures graduates meet requirements for registration, licensing and membership, or professional practice. For example, the Australian Medical Council is responsible for accrediting education institutions and their courses of study for the medical profession.

While accreditation approval by professional bodies is separate to course accreditation against the *Higher Education Standards Framework*, the Standards require courses to meet Australian occupational standards.

Administration and finance

The Australian Government has policy and financial responsibility for higher education. Higher education policies and courses are administered by the Department Education and Training, and funding is specified in the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*.

The Australian Government provides funding to higher education institutions. As a condition of funding, institutions must meet the quality and accountability requirements that are set out in the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*. The legislation requires that an institution must: operate at an appropriate level of quality; comply with an authorised accreditation authority listed on the Australian Qualification Framework Register; and be audited by an independent quality agency, i.e. the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA).

Fees

Higher education in Australia requires students to contribute to the costs of their tuition. The amount a student has to pay and when they have to pay depends on the type of student and education institution. Eligible students may enrol as a Commonwealth supported student if their course and institution attract a Government subsidy, or may enrol in feepaying courses for places that are not subsidised. The Government administers the Higher Education Loan Programme (HELP) which includes a number of loans to assist students with the upfront cost of their tuition fees. Students are only required to begin repaying their loan when their income exceeds a minimum repayment threshold.

For more information on financial assistance including scholarships see **www.studyassist.gov.au**

Vocational education and training

Vocational education and training in Australia

Australian vocational education and training (VET) provides high-quality, nationally recognised training.

Australia's VET sector is based on strong partnerships between governments, VET institutions and industry bodies. Governments provide funding, develop policies and provide regulation and quality assurance of the sector. Industry and employer groups contribute to training policies and priorities, and in developing qualifications that can deliver skills to the workforce.

Australia's VET sector is flexible, with multiple pathways to and from Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) qualifications. VET can be undertaken in schools, in the workplace, and in registered training organisations. Modes of delivery include full-time, part-time, online education, distance education, apprenticeships, traineeships and through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

Courses and qualifications

VET qualifications are competency based and focus on skills gained. The AQF supports flexible learning pathways.

Training Packages and accredited courses provided by Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) lead to the following AQF qualifications:

- Certificate I, Certificate II, Certificate III and Certificate IV
- Diploma and Advanced Diploma
- Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma (previously the Vocational Graduate Certificate and Vocational Graduate Diploma).

VET qualifications are offered at AQF levels 1 to 6 and at level 8.

For more detailed information about the qualifications described below see the AQF website at **www.aqf.edu.au**

Course length descriptions for VET qualifications provided below refer to the nominal volume of learning. However, the length of study can vary and depends on a student's ability to meet new skills and achieve competencies. This may be influenced by prior skills, the rate of achieving the new skills and competencies and assessment outcomes, and recognition of prior learning or current competence which could reduce the length of study.

Training Packages

Training Packages are developed to meet the training needs of an industry, or a group of industries, specifying the skills and knowledge required to perform effectively in the workplace.

Each Training Package includes three components:

- Units of competency: statements which define the skills and knowledge to operate effectively and how they need to be applied to perform effectively in the workplace.
- Qualifications: groups of units of competency brought together to form qualifications ranging from Certificate I to Graduate Diploma level, and which meet the requirements of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).
- Assessment requirements: the industry's required approach to assessment, including the qualifications required by assessors, the design of assessment processes and how assessments should be conducted.

Accredited courses

If there is no Training Package offered in a certain field, ASQA may accredit additional VET courses, which are usually known as accredited courses. To be eligible for accreditation, a course must be based on industry needs, must not duplicate outcomes of Training Packages and the final qualification must adhere to the Australian Qualifications Framework. Accredited courses address skill requirements for industry, enterprises and the community.

Courses consist of theoretical and practical studies linked to competencies or modules. The proportion of theory and practice varies depending on the field or occupation and the level of skills being developed. Practical training may be undertaken at the RTO or in the workplace.

National Register

Training.gov.au is the national register for VET qualifications and provides information about:

- Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)
- Training Packages and competency standards
- national qualifications based on Training Packages
- accredited courses not covered by Training Packages
- state and territory training authorities.

For more information see **www.training.gov.au**

Certificate I, II, III and IV

Certificates I, II, III or IV qualifications can be gained through a number of pathways including RTO-based training, school-based training, apprenticeship, traineeship, and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

In addition to literacy, numeracy and communication skills, students are expected to achieve competencies in their chosen field. The depth and breadth of these competencies becomes more complex with each certificate level. Graduates can progress to further VET or higher education or employment.

Certificate I

Certificate I courses are preparatory and graduates achieve basic functional knowledge and skills in a narrow area of work or learning. Knowledge and skills at this level relate to basic practical skills, basic communication skills and the ability to undertake routine and predictable activities with limited autonomy. Courses are usually six months to one year full-time.

Certificate II

Certificate II courses qualify graduates to achieve basic factual, technical and procedural knowledge in a defined work or learning context. Knowledge and skills at this level relate to the ability to undertake routine activities and apply known solutions to a limited range of predictable problems with autonomy and judgement. Courses are usually six months to one year full-time.

Certificate III

Certificate III courses qualify graduates to achieve factual, technical, procedural and theoretical knowledge and skills in a field of work or learning. The qualification is intended to lead to skilled work and further learning. Knowledge and skills at this level relate to the ability to undertake routine and some non-routine skilled technical tasks in known contexts, apply solutions to predictable problems and manage unanticipated issues. The ability to transfer skills and knowledge is introduced at this level, and courses emphasise responsibility for outputs and assuming limited responsibility for the work of others.

Courses are usually one to two years full-time. Many Australian Apprenticeships lead to a Certificate III, and commonly require three or four years of training or employment.

Certificate IV

Certificate IV courses qualify graduates to achieve a broad knowledge base including factual, technical and theoretical knowledge in a field of work or learning. The qualification is intended to lead to skilled work and further learning. Knowledge and skills at this level relate to specialised technical tasks or functions in a known or changing context, applying technical solutions to problems, technical communication skills, and supervision and leadership in the workplace. Courses are usually six months to two years full-time. Many occupations and fields of study are covered at this level including a small number of Australian Apprenticeships.

Diploma

Diploma courses qualify graduates for skilled or paraprofessional work or further learning. Knowledge and skills at this level demonstrate understanding of a broad knowledge base incorporating theoretical concepts with depth in some areas. They include the ability to analyse and plan approaches to technical problems or management requirements, transfer and apply theoretical concepts and/or technical or creative skills to a range of situations, and to analyse and evaluate information, applications or courses. Courses are usually one to two years full-time.

Diploma graduates may continue to employment or further education in the VET sector (usually an Advanced Diploma course), or in the higher education sector (usually with one year of credit in a related Bachelor Degree course). The Diploma is also offered as a higher education qualification.

Advanced Diploma

Advanced Diploma courses prepare graduates for paraprofessional or advanced skilled work or further learning. Knowledge and skills at this level include broad theoretical and technical knowledge of a specialisation or a broad field of work and learning. Graduates are expected to demonstrate specialised knowledge, problem-solving and analytical skills and communication in a range of specialised situations. Courses are usually one-and-a-half to two years full-time.

Advanced Diploma graduates may continue to employment or further education in the higher education sector (usually with between one and two years of credit in a related Bachelor Degree course). The Advanced Diploma is also offered as a higher education qualification.

Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma

Graduate Certificates and the Graduate Diplomas (previously the Vocational Graduate Certificate and the Vocational Graduate Diploma) offered in the VET sector are more vocationally oriented than the Graduate Certificate or Graduate Diploma in the higher education sector. Courses focus on industry competencies. They also provide a VET pathway from a Bachelor Degree for specialist industries or those that require specific occupational competencies.

Graduates may continue to employment or, under certain articulation agreements, continue to a Masters Degree course in the higher education sector.

For more information about Graduate Certificates and Graduate Diplomas, see page 10 and 11.

Australian Apprenticeships

Australian Apprenticeships is the national scheme for apprenticeships and traineeships. Australian Apprenticeships are contracts of training between an employer and the apprentice. Apprentices agree to achieve a level of competency through a combination of work-based training and training with an RTO. These courses can be taken either part-time or full-time and are based on Training Packages.

Courses lead to skills that are nationally recognised by the relevant industry, and to AQF qualifications. Australian Apprenticeships cover both traditional trade areas and non-trade areas in service and paraprofessional fields. Specialisations include agriculture, automotive, building and construction, business and finance services, community services and health, hairdressing, horticulture, information technology, manufacturing, public service, retail and telecommunications.

Approval of Australian Apprenticeships training arrangements is the responsibility of the state and territory training authorities working in cooperation with employers and RTOs. All training agreements are registered with the relevant state or territory training authority.

For more information see **www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au**

Assessment

Training Package qualifications and accredited courses are assessed against specified competency standards. Assessment is conducted during and/or at the end of the course.

Assessment is generally based on a combination of tests or exams, projects and practical exercises. Theoretical and practical aspects of the course are assessed by teaching staff within the RTO. Any workplace components are usually assessed by teaching staff from the RTO and/or qualified industry-based workplace assessors consistent with the requirements specified in Training Packages.

Statement of Attainment

Statements of Attainment are issued by RTOs to students who complete units of competency or modules from a Training Package or accredited course, but do not complete the entire course leading to an AQF qualification. A Statement of Attainment is not an AQF qualification, but indicates completion of one or more nationally-recognised units of competency or modules. A Statement of Attainment may be used for recognition of prior learning for admission into a VET course, for credit transfer for admission into a higher education course or for employment purposes.

Admission requirements

Entry to vocational education and training (VET) courses is flexible. There are many pathways into VET including:

- completion of Year 10
- completion of Year 12
- completion of a prerequisite qualification
- work experience
- demonstrated ability or interest
- an interview.

Courses that have an entry requirement of Year 12 do not usually require an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR). Courses may have prerequisites such as mathematics or English at Year 12 level.

Some courses have a prerequisite qualification. For example, entry to a Diploma of Community Services Management can be based on a Certificate IV in community service or a Certificate III in aged care. Consideration of a demonstrated ability or interest in the chosen field, work experience, or an interview are usually additional to a qualification requirement.

Pathways between VET, higher education and employment

The Australian education system supports articulation pathways between different levels of qualifications or different fields of training, and between education and employment. It also encourages articulation between sectors, for example from VET to higher education and vice versa. Movement between qualifications is based on articulation pathways outlined in the AQF Qualifications Pathways Policy.

The AQF Qualifications Pathways Policy relates to:

- Credit for entry into a qualification—direct articulation from one qualification to another, such as a Certificate II in one field which articulates to a Certificate III in several fields
- Credit towards a qualification—entry from one qualification to another with credit granted by the higher education institution or through negotiated agreements between institutions. Decisions and agreements are based on learning outcomes, volume of learning, course content and learning/assessment approaches.

Credit can be given in the form of:

- block credit—stages or years of a course
- specified credit—competencies in VET explicitly recognised as equivalent to units in higher education
- unspecified credit—in the form of course credit points or similar.

Recognition of Prior Learning

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is an assessment process undertaken by RTOs where individuals apply for an assessment of their current skills and knowledge.

RPL can lead to admission in a VET course, credit in a particular course or the awarding of a final qualification.

RPL assessment can be based on previous formal study, work experience, informal study undertaken for personal or recreational interests, industry- or workplace-based learning, and life experiences.

Types of institutions

Vocational education and training (VET) is offered by Registered Training Organisations (RTOs). RTOs award AQF qualifications and statements of attainment.

Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)

RTOs must comply with the requirements and standards of either the VET Quality Framework or the Australian Quality Training Framework. In Victoria and Western Australia, the state registering bodies remain responsible for RTOs that operate only within those states. RTOs in Victoria or Western Australia that operate in other states or territories or offer VET courses to international students are regulated by the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA).

There are approximately 5000 RTOs, including Technical and Further Education institutes (TAFEs), other government education institutions, and private education institutions. RTOs offer courses and award AQF qualifications. A few RTOs are also higher education institutions and are accredited to offer higher education qualifications such as Associate Degrees and Bachelor Degrees.

Public RTOs

Public RTOs include colleges, institutes, TAFEs and a range of specialist institutions. Some schools and universities are also public RTOs.

TAFEs are the largest providers of vocational education and training in Australia. They are owned and administered by state and territory governments. Some TAFEs are affiliated to universities. TAFEs offer a comprehensive range of courses on-campus, by distance education and online, in workplaces and in schools. TAFEs mostly operate on a two semester or three-term year. Courses are based on Training Packages or accredited courses that are accredited by ASQA or the relevant state or territory training authority.

Private RTOs

Private RTOs are sometimes referred to as private providers. They may be called colleges, schools or institutes. Some business or industry associations are also RTOs.

Some private RTOs offer assessment services only and do not offer education and training courses. They provide assessment services for employers who are offering workplace training or are seeking assessment of the skills of their employees in the workplace.

Adult and community-based RTOs

Adult and community-based RTOs include:

- major public service organisations such as fire services and hospitals
- community service organisations such as major charities, and sporting organisations
- organisations which have traditionally offered Adult Community Education (ACE) such as adult migrant education centres, adult learning centres and evening and community colleges.

Workplace-based VET

Workplaces may engage an RTO to offer courses for their employees. Some workplaces may also be RTOs. These are usually known as enterprise RTOs. Workplace-based courses include:

- workplace training in combination with off-the-job RTO-based training
- workplace training only
- workplace skills assessments.

Workplace training allows training courses to be customised to meet the needs of both employers and employees. It gives full-time employees access to learning and employees can gain recognition for years of learning on-the-job. It can provide a pathway to a nationally recognised qualification for employees if an RTO is involved in delivery and assessment of the training.

For more information see **www.training.gov.au**

Accreditation and quality assurance

The key elements of accreditation and quality assurance of the vocational education and training (VET) system are:

- quality delivery through the VET Quality Framework and the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF)
- the national VET regulator and state/territory regulators
- quality training products through Training Packages and accredited courses
- a national register of VET institutions and courses.

The VET Quality Framework and AQTF provide national consistency for institution registration, monitoring and enforcement of standards.

VET Quality Framework

The VET Quality Framework was introduced under the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011*, which also established the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) as the National VET Regulator (NVR). Mirroring on the AQTF, the VET Quality Framework provides the basis for a nationally consistent, high-quality VET sector.

The VET Quality Framework includes standards for registration, monitoring and quality assurance of the VET sector and standards for accreditation processes. These include:

- standards for Registered Training Organisations
- the Australian Qualifications Framework
- the Fit and Proper Person Requirements
- the Financial Viability Risk Assessment Requirements
- the Data Provision Requirements.

The VET Quality Framework is supported by the *Standards for VET Accredited Courses* which identify course design quality standards that must be adhered to.

Australian Quality Training Framework

States and territories that have not referred their registration and regulation powers to ASQA (Victoria and Western Australia) are required to meet the requirements of the AQTF.

The AQTF provides the basis for a nationally-consistent, high-quality VET sector. It includes standards for registration, auditing and quality assurance of the VET sector and standards for accreditation processes. These include:

- standards for Registered Training Organisations
- standards for state and territory registering bodies
- standards for state and territory accrediting bodies
- standards for accredited courses.

The AQTF standards were developed collaboratively with the Australian Government, state and territory governments, industry and training organisations.

Australian Skills Quality Authority

ASQA is the national VET regulatory authority. ASQA is responsible for regulating Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) in the Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales, Northern Territory, South Australia, Queensland and Tasmania. Victoria and Western Australia have not referred their regulatory powers to ASQA. Any RTO in these states that also operates in a state or territory that has referred their regulatory authority is under the jurisdiction of ASQA.

ASQA quality assures the VET sector by implementing the *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015* and the *Standards for VET Accredited Courses*. ASQA is also responsible for all RTOs that offer VET courses to international students under the *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000*.

Prior to ASQA, there was a VET regulatory authority in each state and territory that quality assured RTOs and accredited courses in their jurisdiction. Decisions made by these bodies in referring states and territories remain valid until they expire, or ASQA re-registers or re-accredits the RTO or course. In Victoria and Western Australia, the state regulatory authorities continue to operate.

Training Packages

Industry Skills Councils (ISCs) are responsible for the development and maintenance of Training Packages until 31 December 2015, when new arrangements will be in place for the development of training products (see Training product development for Australian industry on page 30). Training Packages are developed and validated through extensive research and consultation with industry stakeholders. Training Packages are then endorsed by the Australian Government and state and territory governments, and approved for use throughout Australia.

RTOs or organisations working in partnership with an RTO are authorised to deliver Training Packages.

Accredited courses

Accredited courses are usually developed by RTOs and accredited by ASQA or state and territory training authorities. ASQA accreditation decisions are based on the *Standards for VET Accredited Courses*. State and territory training authority accreditation decisions are based on the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) standards for accredited courses.

Units of competency

Training Packages and accredited courses comprise of units of competency. A unit of competency is a nationally-agreed statement of the skills and knowledge needed for a particular job or function. This includes the language, literacy and numeracy, and occupational health and safety requirements supporting the skills and knowledge. Units of competency are the basis for the recognition of skills, the development of training and the assessment of outcomes.

Industry Skills Councils

Industry Skills Councils (ISCs) represent their industry's interests in the VET sector. A main role is to assist in the development of Training Packages that meet industry needs. Part of this process is ensuring the quality and relevance of Training Packages. In doing so, ISCs consult with employers, unions and professional associations to inform their industry's training needs. They also liaise with the Australian and state and territories governments with regard to industry skills needs. ISCs will continue to operate until new arrangements for the development of training products are in place.

Australian Industry and Skills Committee (AISC)

The Australian Industry and Skills Committee (AISC) is the national body responsible for overseeing the national training system and will provide industry input on improving the quality and relevance of vocational education and training. The AISC comprises members nominated by the Commonwealth, all states and territories as well as by industry peak bodies.

Training product development for Australian industry

On 21 April 2015, the Australian Government announced the *New Arrangements for Training Product Development for Australian Industry*. The new model will place industry engagement at the centre of training product development and will cement industry's role in overseeing training product content.

The new model, which is expected to commence on 1 January 2016, will establish Skills Service Organisations (SSOs) to support Industry Reference Committees (IRCs) as the conduit for industry intelligence to guide the development of training products.

Administration and finance

The vocational education and training (VET) system is underpinned by national policies and strategies and funding that brings together key industry bodies, employers, governments, students and Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) in the delivery of high quality education and training.

Administration

Council of Australian Governments (COAG)

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG), through its relevant councils and committees is a key decision-maker for national policies in the VET sector. COAG councils consist of an Australian Government Minister and state and territory government ministers with responsibility for education and training and/or industry and skills portfolios.

Australian Government roles and responsibilities

The Australian Government, through the Department of Education and Training has a national policy leadership role in the VET sector. The Australian Government works with state and territory governments and industry to support a nationally consistent, coherent and high quality VET sector that delivers Australia's workforce needs. Other Department of Education and Training responsibilities include developing policy advice, research and analysis to inform policy debate, management of national courses and state/territory partnership agreements and legislation.

State and territory government roles and responsibilities

State and territory governments are responsible for administering VET in their jurisdictions including state-level planning, regulation of training institutions (usually referred to ASQA), allocation of funds to public and private training institutions, setting student fees and managing Technical and Further Education institutes (TAFEs). States and territories operate within the framework of national policies for VET to address specific priorities and needs in their jurisdictions. State and territory authorities report to their relevant Minister, who is a member of the relevant COAG council.

Finance

The Australian Government contributes about one-third of government funding for VET, with the other two-thirds coming from state and territory governments. This is based on a national partnership agreement. Australian Government funds are used to support national priorities. State and territory governments can allocate funding depending on their particular priorities. Funding may be provided outside the National Agreement to support identified objectives that will support long term reform in the VET sector and increase productivity.

Employer contributions to training in Australia include:

- payments associated with training courses and training provision
- paid time off work
- payment of fees, training materials, travel and subsistence payments
- training levies.

Most employer-provided training takes the form of short courses.

Fees

Students undertaking VET in Australia are usually required to contribute to their own tuition fees. The amount a student has to pay and when they have to pay depends on the type of student and education institutions.

However, a number of courses are subsidised (either partially or in full) by the state and territory governments in areas of priority for the relevant state or territory.

To support access and participation in vocational education and training, the Australian Government provides a range of student loans to help with the upfront cost of tuition fees. These loans allow students to enrol in a course at an approved VET institution, and repay the loan only when their annual income exceeds a threshold.

For more information on financial assistance including scholarships see **www.studyassist.gov.au**

School education

Structure and administration of school education

School education in Australia includes preschool, foundation (kindergarten, pre-primary, preparatory, transition or reception), primary school, secondary school (or high school) and senior secondary school (or college).

School education lasts for 13 years, from Foundation Year to senior secondary education (see table below). School is compulsory until to the age of 16.

Structure of school education

School level	Typical age at commencement	Sector of School in ACT, NSW, QLD*, TAS, VIC, WA*	Sector of School in SA	Sector of School in NT
Foundation Year Kindergarten (ACT, NSW) Pre-Primary (WA) Preparatory (QLD, Vic, Tas) Reception (SA) Transition (NT)	5	Primary	Primary	Early Years
Year 1	6	Primary	Primary	Early Years
Year 2	7	Primary	Primary	Early Years
Year 3	8	Primary	Primary	Early Years
Year 4	9	Primary	Primary	Primary Years
Year 5	10	Primary	Primary	Primary Years
Year 6	11	Primary	Primary	Primary Years
Year 7	12	Secondary	Primary	Middle Years
Year 8	13	Secondary	Secondary	Middle Years
Year 9	14	Secondary	Secondary	Middle Years
Year 10	15	Secondary	Secondary	Senior Years**
Year 11 (Senior Secondary)	16	Senior Secondary	Senior Secondary	Senior Years**
Year 12 (Senior Secondary)	17	Senior Secondary	Senior Secondary	Senior Years**

**From 2015, Year 7 transitioned to the first year of high school in Queensland and Western Australia.*

***In the Northern Territory Senior Years include Year 10, 11, 12. However, senior secondary studies are undertaken in Year 11 and 12 only.*

State and territory governments have primary responsibility for policy, funding and delivery of school education. Each state and territory has its own education department and agencies which are responsible for publicly-funded education. State and territory responsibilities for non-government schools include registration, inspection and supplementary funding.

Each state and territory determines its policies on organisation of schooling, curriculum development and implementation within the context of the Australian Curriculum, course accreditation, student assessment and certification.

The Australian Government's role in school education is to provide funding, coordination and to undertake research and analysis of national education policies. A key priority for the Australian Government is to provide a nationally consistent school system.

Types of schools include government schools, non-government schools (including faith-based schools such as Catholic or Islamic schools) and schools based on educational philosophies such as Montessori and Steiner. All schools must be registered with the state or territory government education department (see table below) and are subject to government requirements in terms of infrastructure and teacher registration.

School education authorities

State or Territory	Responsible body	Website
Australian Capital Territory (ACT)	ACT Government Education and Training Directorate	**www.det.act.gov.au**
New South Wales (NSW)	NSW Department of Education and Communities	**www.dec.nsw.gov.au**
Northern Territory (NT)	Northern Territory Department of Education	**www.education.nt.gov.au**
Queensland (QLD)	Queensland Government Department of Education and Training	**www.education.qld.gov.au**
South Australia (SA)	Department of Education and Child Development	**www.decd.sa.gov.au**
Tasmania (Tas)	Department of Education Tasmania	**www.education.tas.gov.au**
Victoria (Vic)	Victorian State Government Department of Education and Training	**www.education.vic.gov.au**
Western Australia (WA)	Western Australian Department of Education	**www.education.wa.edu.au**

Preschool

Preschool education is offered to children aged three to five. It is not compulsory. Courses are part-time and consist of several half-day sessions, or the equivalent in full days, and combine structured learning and creative individual activities.

Primary school

Primary school is from Foundation Year to Year 6 or 7. Foundation Year is known as either kindergarten, preparatory, reception, pre-primary or transition. The focus of the Foundation Year is on the overall development of the child in preparation for Year 1.

The primary curriculum focuses on developing English language and literacy skills, maths and numeracy skills, studies of society, health and creative activities. Information and communications technology, physical, social and science education are also covered.

Although assessments take place, there are no standard exam requirements for progression through primary school and no formal qualifications are awarded. Students progress to secondary school after completing the final year of primary school.

Secondary school

Secondary school is from Year 7 or 8 to Year 10. The first one or two years of secondary school are a general course undertaken by all students. In later years students take a core group of subjects and electives. Core subjects usually include English, maths, science, society and environment, languages other than English (LOTE), information and communications technology, creative arts and personal development, health and physical education. Some subjects are offered at advanced levels.

Senior secondary school

Senior secondary education covers Years 11 and 12. Senior secondary education offers several types of courses which prepare students for future study, employment, and adult life. The final school-leaving qualification is known generically as the Senior Secondary Certificate of Education (Year 12 award), which is an Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) qualification.

The Senior Secondary Certificate of Education is a multi-purpose award that serves as both a school-leaving certificate and as a qualification to access tertiary education in the higher education and vocational education and training (VET) sectors. Courses, especially those that prepare students for admission to tertiary education, are specialised. This prepares graduates for entry into specialised tertiary courses without the need for general education subjects. Year 11 and 12 subjects have significant academic breadth and depth.

Different names are used for the certificate in each state and territory which are awarded by the relevant state or territory senior secondary authority (see table on following page). There are also senior secondary awards outside the state and territory school systems, such as the International Baccalaureate. For more information about the International Baccalaureate in Australia see page 38.

Responsibility for senior secondary studies and senior secondary school qualifications

State or Territory	Name of Senior Secondary Qualification	Awarding body with responsibility for senior secondary studies	Website
Australian Capital Territory (ACT)	ACT Senior Secondary Certificate	ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies (BSSS)	**www.bsss.act.edu.au**
New South Wales (NSW)	Higher School Certificate (HSC)	Board of Studies Teaching and Educational Standards NSW (BOSTES)	**www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au**
Northern Territory (NT)	NT Certificate of Education and Training (NTCET)	Department of Education—Northern Territory Board of Studies (NTBOS)	**www.education.nt.gov.au/teachers-educators/ntbos**
Queensland (QLD)	Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE)	Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA)	**www.qcaa.qld.edu.au**
South Australia (SA)	South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE)	South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) Board of South Australia	**www.sace.sa.edu.au**
Tasmania (Tas)	Tasmanian Certificate of Education (TCE)	Office of Tasmanian Assessment, Standards and Certification (TASC)	**www.tasc.tas.gov.au**
Victoria (Vic)	Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE)	Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA)	**www.vcaa.vic.edu.au**
Western Australia (WA)	Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE)	WA School Curriculum and Standards Authority	**www.scsa.wa.edu.au**

Access to tertiary education

The Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) is a ranking used by higher education institutions to assist in the selection of school leavers for entry into undergraduate tertiary courses. It is an indicator of how well a particular student has performed relative to other students in their cohort.

The ATAR is calculated by a state or territory Tertiary Admission Centre (TAC) based on a Senior Secondary Certificate of Education course of study. The ATAR is reported on a scale of 0 to 99.95 with increments of 0.05. For example, an ATAR of 90.00 puts a student in the top 10 percent of their cohort. Tertiary institutions use TACs to undertake domestic admission on their behalf. The ATAR is not used in Queensland. Queensland uses a similar ranking system of Overall Positions (OPs) and Field Positions (FPs).

Other undergraduate admission pathways available to senior secondary students include:

- a school based vocational education and training (VET) qualification, such as a Certificate III or IV
- university preparatory short courses
- additional requirements such as an interview, portfolio of work, prerequisite courses, and/or a demonstrated interest or aptitude for the study course.

For more information on undergraduate admission, see page 12.

International Baccalaureate

The International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) offers three courses for primary, secondary and senior secondary education. These operate independently of the state and territory school systems.

For more information see **www.ibo.org**

Following successful completion of the senior secondary course requirements, students are awarded the International Baccalaureate Diploma by the International Baccalaureate Organization.

The International Baccalaureate Diploma is recognised for entry to higher education and vocational education and training courses. Students apply for admission through the Tertiary Admission Centre (TAC) for the state or territory they wish to study in.

Vocational education and training in schools

Vocational education and training (VET) is available at the secondary and senior secondary education levels. Courses are delivered in schools, TAFEs, Registered Training Organisations (RTOs), and through local employers and businesses. There are several options:

- completion of a Training Package or accredited course leading to a nationally-recognised VET qualification on the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), usually at Certificate I or II level
- VET subjects as part of a senior secondary course leading to a state or territory Senior Secondary Certificate of Education
- school-based apprenticeships and traineeships, which combine senior secondary studies, paid employment and training.

Students can combine these approaches. For example, a student can receive credit towards an AQF qualification and the state or territory Senior Secondary Certificate of Education for the same VET studies. Apprenticeship studies can also count towards the state or territory Senior Secondary Certificate of Education.

VET courses are reported on the Record of Achievement without marks but where relevant do reference other documentation such as what AQF qualification has been awarded. A Statement of Attainment is issued to students that have partially completed an AQF qualification.

In December 2014, a new framework for vocational learning and VET delivered to secondary students, *Preparing Secondary Students for Work*, was endorsed. The framework makes an important distinction between VET delivered to secondary students and vocational learning. Vocational learning is an important precursor to VET and helps secondary students explore the world of work, identify career options and equips them to make effective decisions about subject choice, post-school education and training and career pathways.

Curriculum and assessment

Australian Curriculum

The development of the Australian Curriculum is the responsibility of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) in consultation with state and territory education authorities. It has drawn on national expertise and built on the diverse curriculum development and curriculum experiences of states and territories.

The Australian Curriculum is a key driver in the goal for Australian governments to improve quality educational outcomes for all Australian students in a competitive and globalised world.

While the Australian Curriculum describes an expectation for all young Australians, each state and territory and the systems and schools within it are responsible for its implementation.

For more information see **www.acara.edu.au**

Assessment of school education

Until the end of Year 10, assessment methods include projects, written assignments and reports, group research and investigation, oral presentations, tests and classroom participation. Assessment may also include school-wide exams. State- or territory-wide external exams may also be conducted.

In Year 11 and 12, the most common methods for senior secondary evaluation include external exam, moderated school-based assessment, non-moderated school-based assessment and external scaling tests.

National Assessment Program

The National Assessment Program measures and monitors student achievement against national and international standards, and is administered by ACARA. It consists of three separate initiatives which measure educational outcomes:

- National Assessment Program—Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)—annual tests in reading, writing, language conventions and numeracy for all Year 3, 5, 7 and 9 students. This provides a nationally comparable system of reporting against agreed national benchmarks
- National sample assessments—every three years selected groups of Year 6 and Year 10 students participate in assessment of science literacy, civics and citizenship, and information and communication technology literacy
- International sample assessments:
  - every three years selected 15-year-old students participate in the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)
  - every four years selected Year 4 and Year 8 students participate in the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS)
  - every five years selected Year 4 students participate in the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) (subject to agreement).

For more information see **www.nap.edu.au**

My School website

The *My School* website provides nationally consistent school level information and comparable data for more than 9500 Australian schools and includes a range of information including their performance in the National Assessment Program—Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), student profile and financial information. Data is sourced from schools and state and territory education and non-government authorities. The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) is responsible for managing the *My School* website.

The *My School* website is a valuable tool for parents and carers, school leaders, school staff and members of school communities, as well as policy-makers. It helps parents make informed decisions about their child's schooling, and contributes to both policy discussions and public debates.

For more information see **www.myschool.edu.au**

Grading systems

Grading systems in higher education

There is no national grading system in Australia. Each institution has its own grading system, and there are variations of several main types of unit/subject grades (see table below).

The grading system is usually indicated on the transcript or Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement (AHEGS).

Descriptive grade	Percentage	Percentage	Letter grade	Numeric grade
High Distinction	85%-100%	80%-100%	A	7
Distinction	75%-84%	70%-79%	B	6
Credit	65%-74%	60%-69%	C	5
Pass	50%-64%	50%-59%	D	4
Fail (conditional)	46-49%	Below 50%	E/F	3
Fail	Below 45%	N/A	F	2
Low fail	N/A	N/A	N/A	1

Some institutions use a conditional or conceded pass, but the number of conceded pass results accepted in a course is limited to one or two per student. Failed subjects must be repeated or an alternative taken in its place to complete a course.

Classifications for Bachelor Honours Degrees

Bachelor Honours Degrees may be classified. There are four levels of classification. Each classification can be described in a number of ways:

- First Class, HI
- Second Class (Upper Division), Second Class Division A, Second Class Division One, HIIA,HII/i
- Second Class (Lower Division), Second Class Division B, Second Class Division Two, HIIB,HII/ii
- Third Class, HIII.

Second Class Honours may not be differentiated. Third Class Honours is rarely awarded. A Bachelor Honours Degree may be awarded in the Pass Class if the level of academic achievement is low.

Some institutions may use these classifications for individual subjects, (particularly in a Bachelor Honours Degree course).

Postgraduate grading systems

Most postgraduate qualifications are awarded unclassified, although exceptions may be made with research-based Masters Degrees. Some institutions award Masters Degrees ‘with Honours’ but unclassified.

Grading systems in vocational education and training

Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) are responsible for assessment and issuing transcripts. There are varying types of grading systems. Assessment is based on achievement of the competencies in a Training Package or accredited course and each competency is listed with achievement as 'Competent' or 'Not Yet Competent'. If a course includes graded subjects, an RTO may also give a grade similar to the above in the higher education sector.

If a student is given Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) for a subject or unit of competency, it will be indicated on the transcript by 'RPL'. No grade is given.

Grading systems in school education

Australian Capital Territory

Subject grades are reported on a 5 point scale from A to E, with A representing the highest level of achievement. Other possible grades generally given in vocational subjects are Pass, Participated, Status and Recognition.

Grade	Description
A	Very high level of knowledge and understanding
B	High level of knowledge and understanding
C	Sound level of knowledge and understanding
D	Limited knowledge and understanding
E	Very limited knowledge and understanding

New South Wales

In Year 11 subject grades are reported on a 5 point scale from A to E, with A representing the highest level of achievement. In Year 12 grades for each subject are divided into one of six bands (see table below). Band 6 indicates the highest level of performance and the minimum standard expected is 50. The 'average' performance in most subjects is usually a grade in the mid-70s (Band 4). Band 1 indicates that a student has not met enough of the subject outcomes for a report to be made.

Band	Band range
6	90-100
5	80-89
4	70-79
3	60-69
2	50-59
1	0-49

Northern Territory and South Australia

In Year 11 subjects are graded on a 5 point scale from A to E, with A representing the highest level of achievement. In Year 12 equivalent subjects are graded against subject specific performance standards from A+ with merit to E-, with A+ with merit representing the highest level of achievement.

Queensland

Subject grades are reported on a 5 level scale where VHA represents the highest level of achievement (see table below).

Grade	Description
VHA	Very High Achievement
HA	High Achievement
SA	Sound Achievement
LA	Limited Achievement
VLA	Very Limited Achievement

Tasmania

Subject grades are reported on a 5 level scale where EA represents the highest level of achievement (see table below). Subjects using competency-based assessment typically have an award of 'Pass' or 'Satisfactory Completion'.

Grade	Description
EA	Exceptional Achievement
HA	High Achievement
CA	Commendable Achievement
SA	Satisfactory Achievement
PA	Preliminary Achievement

Victoria

Grades are reported on an 11-point scale from A+ to E, UG (Ungraded) or NA. Note that plus (+) is used but minus (–) is not. UG indicates that the score achieved was too low to assign a grade. NA indicates that assessment was not submitted or the exam was not undertaken.

Western Australia

Subject grades are reported on a 5 point scale from A to E, with A representing the highest level of achievement (see table below). Other possible grades generally given in vocational subjects are Pass, Participated, Status and Recognition.

Grade	Description
A	Excellent achievement
B	High achievement
C	Satisfactory achievement
D	Limited achievement
E	Very limited achievement

Previous qualification systems

Australian Council on Awards in Advanced Education (ACAAE)

The rapid development of the post-secondary education sector in the late 1960s emphasised the educational differences between states and territories. The Australian Council on Awards in Advanced Education (ACAAE) was formally established in December 1971 to:

- support standardisation in advanced education courses
- promote consistency of nomenclature in the advanced education sector
- establish consistent relationships between courses and awards
- maintain a national register of awards, and
- promote understanding and appreciation of the award system in Australia and overseas.

The ACAAE was the national registration authority for courses and qualifications below university level. The approval and accreditation process was as follows:

- courses were developed by individual institutions (known generically as colleges of advanced education) in line with ACAAE guidelines
- colleges then submitted their courses to the state and territory accrediting agencies for assessment, which was normally a multi-stage process
- state and territory agencies submitted accredited courses for national registration by the ACAAE. Registration was normally five years.

The ACAAE was not responsible for the registration or accreditation of universities or university qualifications.

Australian Council on Tertiary Awards (ACTA)

In January 1985, the Australian Council on Tertiary Awards (ACTA) replaced the ACAAE. Its functions were similar, though changes were made to courses and nomenclature, particularly with the introduction in 1987 of a national award system in the Technical and Further Education (TAFE) sector. Before this each state and territory had their own qualifications systems for technical schools and TAFE colleges, and similar nomenclature had different meanings in different states and territories.

Under ACTA, the nomenclature of TAFE awards was linked to course classifications by stream as described in Register of Australian Tertiary Education (RATE) below.

Register of Australian Tertiary Education (RATE)

The Register of Australian Tertiary Education (RATE) was established in 1990 by the Australian Education Council of the Ministers responsible for education in the Australian, state and territory governments. RATE took over ACTA's functions in providing a framework, but did not register awards as ACTA and ACAAE had done. RATE award nomenclature was similar to that of ACTA, and continued the classification of TAFE courses by stream. The RATE system was phased out from 1995 and replaced by the Australian Qualifications Framework which was fully implemented by the end of 1999.

Accreditation of courses was carried out by higher education institutions empowered by legislative acts of establishment to accredit their own courses, and by bodies in each state and territory which accredited tertiary courses offered through TAFE institutes/colleges, non-self-accrediting higher education institutions, and private training and education providers.

Vocational education and training was developed in each state and territory to meet the needs of business and industry. Most vocational education and training was provided by TAFE colleges and institutes with only a small number of private training organisations offering courses. The curriculum combined theoretical and practical components relevant to the subject area and level of education/training. In many fields, practical training in the workplace was included.

Trade training was regulated by the states and territories and usually involved an apprenticeship combined with formal training at a TAFE college. Certificates awarded on completion were either called Trade Certificates or Craft Certificates. An apprenticeship would take three to four years to complete.

Certificate Stream 1000

Stream 1000 courses were for recreation, leisure or enrichment.

Certificate Stream 2100

Stream 2100 qualifications provided basic education and employment skills. Entry was usually open.

Certificate Stream 2200

Stream 2200 qualifications prepared students for further education, such as undertaking Year 12 study. Year 10 completion was normally required for entry.

Certificate Stream 3100

Stream 3100 qualifications were for semi-skilled workers. Educational entry requirements were usually minimal.

Certificate Stream 3200

Stream 3200 qualifications were for specific occupations, trades and crafts, required technical and/or practical skills in a range of related activities. Year 10 completion was normally required for entry but alternative entry requirements were also accepted, depending on the institution and the field of study.

Advanced Certificate Stream 3300

Advanced Certificate qualifications were at the level of trade technician, occupational technician, or technical supervisor but less than the level and breadth of specialisation required by a para-professional. Entry was normally based on completion of Year 10 though some courses may have required Year 12, or a TAFE Certificate course in a relevant field of study, and/or a period of work experience. Courses normally required one to two years of full-time study or part-time equivalent. Advanced Certificates developed the knowledge and skills necessary for specialised work and/or to work in first level supervisor, administrative or management positions. On completion, an Advanced Certificate could articulate to an Associate Diploma course.

Associate Diploma Stream 3500/3400

Associate Diploma qualifications were at the para-professional, associate or higher technician level. Associate Diploma courses were designed to provide the skills required to work in support of professionals or to work in technical, managerial and/or para-professional occupations. When offered at universities, the course had a more academic orientation. The Associate Diploma was a two-year full-time or part-time equivalent course, based on Year 12 entry or equivalent but may have required an Advanced Certificate course in a relevant field of study and/or work experience. Some Associate Diploma courses provided a pathway into specific courses at TAFE institutions or universities.

Diploma Stream 3600

Diploma qualifications were the major professional qualifications offered by TAFE institutions in the RATE system. They were also offered at some universities, particularly in teaching and nursing until these professions became degree-based by the mid 1990s. Diploma courses provided the depth and breadth of specialised skills required for some professional occupations, such as in the applied science and technology fields, design and performing arts field and in the hospitality industry. The Diploma required a high level of knowledge and practical skill with a greater depth of conceptual development appropriate for a position of primary responsibility in an occupation. Diplomas required three years of full-time study following completion of Year 12. Some Diploma courses provided a pathway into specified courses at universities.

Summary of previous qualifications systems

Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) 2nd Edition 2013–current	Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) 1st Edition 1995–2012	Register of Australian Tertiary Education (RATE) 1990–1999	Australian Council on Tertiary Awards (ACTA) 1985–1989	Australian Council on Awards in Advanced Education (ACAAE) 1971–1984
Doctoral Degree	Doctoral Degree	Doctoral Degree	Doctoral Degree	
Masters Degree	Masters Degree	Masters Degree	Master Degree	Master Degree (PG2)
Graduate Diploma	Graduate Diploma Vocational Graduate Diploma	Graduate Diploma	Graduate Diploma	Graduate Diploma (PG1)
Graduate Certificate	Graduate Certificate Vocational Graduate Certificate	Graduate Certificate	Graduate Certificate	
Bachelor Honours Degree				
Bachelor Degree	Bachelor Degree (including Bachelor Honours Degree)	Bachelor Degree (including Bachelor Honours Degree)	Bachelor Degree (including Bachelor Honours Degree)	Bachelor Degree (UG1) (including Bachelor Honours Degree)
Associate Degree Advanced Diploma	Associate Degree Advanced Diploma	Diploma Stream 3600	Diploma	Diploma (UG2)
Diploma	Diploma	Associate Diploma Stream 3500 Associate Diploma Stream 3400	Associate Diploma	Associate Diploma (UG3)
Certificate IV	Certificate IV	Advanced Certificate Stream 3300	Advanced Certificate	
Certificate III	Certificate III	Certificate Stream 3200		
Certificate II	Certificate II	Certificate Stream 3100		
Certificate I	Certificate I			
		Certificate Stream 2200		
		Certificate Stream 2100		

International education

International education in Australia

Australia provides high quality education and training to overseas students on a student visa and to students offshore.

Overseas students may be enrolled in higher education, vocational education and training, English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS), school education and non-award courses such as bridging courses or foundation courses.

Quality assurance of international education

Regulation of international education

The *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act)* ensures that overseas students studying in Australia receive high-quality education and training and receive the services for which they have paid.

All enrolments of overseas students in Australia on a student visa are also registered on a database called the Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS). It is a requirement under the ESOS Act that education institutions monitor overseas student compliance with certain student visa conditions, such as attending classes or making progress in their course. Through PRISMS education institutions report to the Department of Immigration and Border Protection on any overseas student that has breached a visa condition.

Australian education institutions are regulated under domestic quality assurance frameworks, but the ESOS Act provides additional regulation for Australian institutions that enrol overseas students studying in Australia on a student visa. The ESOS Act requires all courses in which overseas students are enrolled to be registered on the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS).

In order to be listed on CRICOS, an education institution must meet, and continue to comply with, strict requirements under the ESOS framework, which include:

- ensuring there are adequate resources to deliver quality education and training to a satisfactory standard
- protecting overseas students' tuition fees
- promoting overseas student safety and wellbeing
- assisting with monitoring the compliance of overseas students with their visa conditions.

For more information see **cricos.education.gov.au**

Tuition Protection Service

The Tuition Protection Service (TPS) is an initiative of the Australian Government to assist international students in the event that their education institution is unable to fully deliver their course of study. The TPS ensures that international students are able to either:

- complete their studies in another course or with another education institution, or
- receive a refund of their unspent tuition fees.

In the unlikely event that an education institution is unable to deliver a course that has been paid for and does not meet their obligations to either offer an alternative course or pay a refund of the unspent prepaid tuition fees (this is called a provider's 'default obligations'), the TPS will assist an international student in finding an alternative course or to get a refund if a suitable alternative is not found

Transnational education and training

Australia's education sector has a long history of providing high quality transnational education and training, also known as offshore or cross-border education and training. Transnational education refers to the delivery and/or assessment of courses and courses by an accredited Australian education institution in a country other than Australia. Transnational courses may lead to an Australian Qualifications Framework qualification or may be a non-award course.

The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) and the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) are responsible for ensuring an Australian education institution's offshore operations comply with Australian quality standards.

All Australian education institutions offering a course of study partly or fully outside Australia that leads to an AQF qualification are required to comply with Australia's quality assurance requirements. Furthermore, TEQSA and ASQA are authorised to regulate and ensure that an Australian education institutions' responsibilities are upheld and maintained where the education institution is involved in offshore education provision.

Education and training courses delivered offshore may take many different forms, including:

- a campus wholly-owned by an Australian education institution
- courses and courses offered in partnership with local education institutions
- twinning arrangements
- franchising of curricula or course where an accredited Australian education institution remains an identifiable partner
- distance education courses that contain a component of face-to-face instruction by local and/or Australian instructors
- education and training activities conducted on behalf of an Australian entity
- other face-to-face delivery undertaken in the name of an Australian education institution.

Recognition of Australian qualifications

Recognition of Australian qualifications internationally

Australian qualifications are highly regarded and widely accepted internationally. Quality assurance of higher education, vocational education and training and schools, and their respective qualifications, occurs through a multi-layered and inter-related framework across a number of key bodies including the Australian Government and state and territory governments. The Australian education system is also underpinned by internationally accepted principles of quality assurance. The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) supports transparency in the recognition of Australian qualifications overseas and the mobility of Australian graduates.

Recognition of Australian qualifications outside Australia is the responsibility of the relevant authority in-country. Countries that are party to UNESCO recognition conventions such as the Lisbon Recognition Convention or the Revised Asia-Pacific Recognition Convention, are guided by principles of good practice contained in these conventions.

The Department of Education and Training provides information to facilitate recognition by overseas authorities to ensure that Australian qualifications are appropriately recognised. In Australia, qualifications recognition methodology is based on research and analysis of qualitative and quantitative factors. Other countries may have different approaches.

Recognised institutions

Universities and other self-accrediting institutions

Institution name	Website
Australian Catholic University	www.acu.edu.au
Australian College of Theology	www.actheology.edu.au
Australian Film Television & Radio School	www.aftrs.edu.au
Avondale College of Higher Education	www.avondale.edu.au
Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education	www.batchelor.edu.au
Bond University	www.bond.edu.au
Carnegie Mellon University Australia	www.australia.cmu.edu
Central Queensland University	www.cqu.edu.au
Charles Darwin University	www.cdu.edu.au
Charles Sturt University	www.csu.edu.au
Curtin University	www.curtin.edu.au
Deakin University	www.deakin.edu.au
Edith Cowan University	www.ecu.edu.au
Federation University Australia (formerly University of Ballarat)	www.federation.edu.au
Griffith University	www.gu.edu.au
James Cook University	www.jcu.edu.au
La Trobe University	www.latrobe.edu.au
Macquarie University	www.mq.edu.au
MCD University of Divinity	www.mcd.edu.au
Monash University	www.monash.edu.au
Moore Theological College	www.moore.edu.au
Murdoch University	www.murdoch.edu.au
Queensland University of Technology	www.qut.edu.au
RMIT University	www.rmit.edu.au
Southern Cross University	www.scu.edu.au
Swinburne University of Technology	www.swin.edu.au
Torrens University Australia	www.tua.edu.au
The Australian National University	www.anu.edu.au
The Flinders University of South Australia	www.flinders.edu.au
The National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA)	www.nida.edu.au

Institution name	Website
The University of Adelaide	www.adelaide.edu.au
The University of Melbourne	www.unimelb.edu.au
The University of Notre Dame Australia	www.nd.edu.au
The University of Queensland	www.uq.edu.au
The University of Sydney	www.usyd.edu.au
The University of Western Australia	www.uwa.edu.au
University of Canberra	www.canberra.edu.au
University College London	www.ucl.ac.uk/australia
University of Newcastle	www.newcastle.edu.au
University of New England	www.une.edu.au
University of New South Wales	www.unsw.edu.au
University of South Australia	www.unisa.edu.au
University of Southern Queensland	www.usq.edu.au
University of Tasmania	www.utas.edu.au
University of Technology, Sydney	www.uts.edu.au
University of the Sunshine Coast	www.usc.edu.au
University of Wollongong	www.uow.edu.au
Victoria University	www.vu.edu.au
Western Sydney University	www.westernsydney.edu.au

Other higher education institutions

The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) maintains a national register of higher education institutions. Additionally, the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) website links to the state and territory accreditation authority registers of non-self-accrediting higher education institutions.

For more information, see:

- **www.aqf.edu.au**
- **www.teqsa.gov.au**

Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)

Registered Training Organisations are listed on the Training.gov.au website. The website contains information about the recognition status of institutions and the qualifications they award.

For more information, see **www.training.gov.au**

Glossary

ACAAE	Australian Council on Awards in Advanced Education
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
ACTA	Australian Council on Tertiary Awards
AHEGS	Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement
AISC	Australian Industry and Skills Committee
AQF	Australian Qualifications Framework
AQTF	Australian Quality Training Framework
ASQA	Australian Skills Quality Authority
ATAR	Australian Tertiary Admission Rank
BOSTES	Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards NSW
BSSS	Board of Senior Secondary Studies
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
CRICOS	Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students
ELICOS	English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students
ESOS	Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000
FP	Field Position
HSC	Higher School Certificate
IBO	International Baccalaureate Organization
ISC	Industry Skills Council
LOTE	Languages Other Than English
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy
NSW	New South Wales
NT	Northern Territory

NTBOS	Northern Territory Board of Studies
NTCET	Northern Territory Certificate of Education and Training
NVR	National VET Regulator
OP	Overall Position
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PRISMS	Provider Registration and International Students Management System
QCAA	Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority
QCE	Queensland Certificate of Education
QLD	Queensland
QTAC	Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre
RATE	Register of Australian Tertiary Education
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
RTO	Registered Training Organisation
SA	South Australia
SACE	South Australian Certificate of Education
SATAC	South Australian Tertiary Admissions Centre
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
TASC	Tasmanian Assessment, Standards and Certification
TCE	Tasmanian Certificate of Education
TIMSS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
TEQSA	Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency
TISC	Tertiary Institutions Service Centre, Western Australia
UAC	Universities Admission Centre
VCAA	Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority
VCE	Victorian Certificate of Education
VET	Vocational education and training (VET)
VTAC	Victoria Tertiary Admissions Centre
WA	Western Australia
WACE	Western Australian Certificate of Education

Sources

The Department of Education and Training has liaised with, and made extensive use of information on the websites of Australian education authorities.

The following are published sources used in the preparation of this edition of the *Australia Country Education Profile*.

Australian Qualifications Framework: First Edition July 2011, Australian Qualifications Framework Council, 2011.

Australian Qualifications Framework: Second Edition January 2013, Australian Qualifications Framework Council, 2013.

Australian Council on Awards in Advanced Education, *Second Annual Report*, 1973, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, ACT.

Awards Registered in the Years 1982-1987, Australian Council on Tertiary Awards, Woden, ACT.

Goozee, Gillian 2001, *The Development of TAFE in Australia*, National Centre for Vocational Education Research, Adelaide, SA.

Register of Australian Tertiary Education (RATE): Major Tertiary Course Award Levels in Australia, 1991, Australian Education Council, Carlton South, VIC.

Contact information

This section contains the contact details for Australian Government and national education authorities. For telephone calls or facsimiles originating from outside Australia, Australia's country code is '61' and the '0' is dropped from the area code.

National authorities

Austrade (Australian Trade Commission)

2nd Floor, Minter Ellison Building
25 National Circuit
FORREST ACT 2603
Tel: 13 28 78
Website: **austrade.gov.au**

Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority

Level 15, 255 Elizabeth Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000
Tel: 1300 4 ACECQA (1300 422 327)
Website: **www.acecqa.gov.au**

Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET)

Suite 101, Level 1 126 Wellington Parade
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002
Tel: (03) 9412 5900
Website: **www.acpet.edu.au**

Australasian Curriculum Assessment and Certification Authorities

Website: **www.acaca.bos.nsw.edu.au**

Australian Curriculum and Reporting Authority

Level 10, 255 Pitt Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000
Tel: 1300 895 563 or (02) 8098 3100
Website: **www.acara.edu.au**

Australian Research Council

GPO Box 2702
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Tel: (02) 6287 6600
Website: **www.arc.gov.au**

Australian Skills Quality Authority

GPO Box 9928
MELBOURNE VIC 3001
Tel: 1300 701 801
Website: **www.asqa.gov.au**

Department of Education and Training

GPO Box 9880
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Tel: 1300 566 046
Website: **www.education.gov.au**

Department of Industry and Science

GPO Box 9839
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Tel: 02 6213 6000
Website: **www.industry.gov.au**

Education Services Australia

PO Box 177
CARLTON SOUTH VIC 3053
Tel: (03) 9207 9600
Website: **www.esa.edu.au**

English Australia

PO Box 1437
DARLINGHURST NSW 1300
Tel: (02) 9264 4700
Website: **www.englishaustralia.com.au**

Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency

GPO Box 1672
MELBOURNE VIC 3001
Tel: 1300 739 585
Website: **www.teqsa.gov.au**

Training.gov.au

Website: **www.training.gov.au**

Universities Australia

GPO Box 1142
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Tel: (02) 6285 8100
Website: **www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au**

State and territory authorities

Australian Capital Territory

School education

ACT Education and Training Directorate
GPO Box 158
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Tel: (02) 6207 5111
Website: **www.det.act.gov.au**

Senior secondary education

ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies
Lyons Education Centre
GPO Box 158
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Tel: (02) 6205 7181
Website: **www.bsss.act.gov.au**

Tertiary admission

Universities Admissions Centre
Locked Bag 112
SILVERWATER NSW 2128
Tel: 1300 275 822 or (02) 9752 0200
Website: **www.uac.edu.au**

New South Wales

School education

NSW Department of Education and Communities
GPO Box 33
SYDNEY NSW 2001
Tel: 1300 679 332
Website: **www.dec.nsw.gov.au**

Senior secondary education

Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards NSW
GPO Box 5300
SYDNEY NSW 2001
Tel: (02) 9367 8111
Website: **www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au**

Tertiary admission

University Admissions Centre
Locked Bag 112
SILVERWATER NSW 2128
Tel: 1300 275 822 or (02) 9752 0200
Website: **www.uac.edu.au**

Northern Territory

School education

Northern Territory Department of Education
GPO Box 4821
DARWIN NT 0801
Tel: (08) 8999 5659
Website: **www.education.nt.gov.au**

Senior secondary education

NT Board of Studies
GPO Box 4821
DARWIN NT 0801
Tel: (08) 8944 9204
Website: **www.education.nt.gov.au/teachers-educators/ntbos**

Tertiary admission

South Australian Tertiary Admissions Centre (for admission to Charles Darwin University)
104 Frome Street
ADELAIDE SA 5000
Tel: 1300 138 440 or (08) 8224 4000
Website: **www.satac.edu.au**

Queensland

School education

Queensland Department of Education and Training
PO Box 15033
CITY EAST QLD 4002
Tel: (07) 13 74 68
Website: **www.education.qld.gov.au**

Senior secondary education

Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority
PO Box 307
SPRING HILL QLD 4004
Tel: (07) 3864 0299
Website: **www.qcaa.qld.edu.au**

Tertiary admission

Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre
PO Box 1331
MILTON QLD 4064
Tel: 1300 467 822 or (07) 3858 1222
Website: **www.qtac.edu.au**

South Australia

School education

Department for Education and Child Development
PO Box 1152
ADELAIDE SA 5001
Tel: (08) 8226 1000 or 1800 088 158
Website: **www.decd.sa.gov.au**

Senior secondary education

South Australian Certificate of Education Board of South Australia
60 Greenhill Road
WAYVILLE SA 5034
Tel: (08) 8372 7400
Website: **www.sace.sa.edu.au**

Tertiary admission

South Australian Tertiary Admissions Centre
104 Frome Street
ADELAIDE SA 5000
Tel: 1300 138 440 or (08) 8224 4000
Website: **www.satac.edu.au**

Tasmania

School education

Department of Education Tasmania
GPO Box 169
HOBART TAS 7001
Tel: 1800 816 057
Website: **www.education.tas.gov.au**

Senior secondary education

Office of Tasmanian Assessment, Standards and Certification
GPO Box 333
HOBART TAS 7001
Tel: (03) 6165 6000
Website: **www.tasc.tas.gov.au**

Tertiary admission

University of Tasmania
Private Bag 51
HOBART TAS 7001
Tel: (03) 6226 2999
Website: **www.utas.edu.au**

Victoria

School education

Victorian Department of Education and Training
GPO Box 4367
MELBOURNE VIC 3001
Tel: (03) 9637 2000
Website: **www.education.vic.gov.au**

Senior secondary education

Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority
GPO Box 2317
Melbourne Vic 3001
Tel: (03) 9637 2806
Website: **www.vrqa.vic.gov.au**

Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority
Level 1, 2 Lonsdale Street
MELBOURNE, VIC 3000
Tel: (03) 9032 1700 or 1800 134 197
Website: **www.vcaa.vic.edu.au**

Tertiary admission

Victorian Tertiary Admission Centre
40 Park Street
SOUTH MELBOURNE VIC 3205
Tel: 1300 364 133
Website: **www.vtac.edu.au**

Western Australia

School education

Department of Education
151 Royal Street
EAST PERTH WA 6004
Tel: (08) 9264 4111
Website: **www.education.wa.edu.au**

Senior secondary education

School Curriculum and Standards Authority
PO Box 816
CANNINGTON WA 6987
Tel: (08) 9273 6300
Website: **www.scsa.wa.edu.au**

Tertiary admission

Tertiary Institutions Service Centre
100 Royal Street
EAST PERTH WA 6004
Tel: (08) 9318 8000
Website: **www.tisc.edu.au**

Opportunity through learning

ED15-0091