

General Information about schooling in Australia:

- There are basically two types of schools at the primary and secondary levels in Australia. These are government (public) and non-government (private). Private schools are frequently religiously-affiliated, but typically provide a welcoming and accommodating atmosphere for students of all faiths (or none).
- Schools follow the Southern Hemisphere Schedule (except the International School of Western Australia), with school years starting in late January and ending in early December. Primary schools (Preprimary Year 6/ K-grade 6) require students to be 5 by 4/30 for K entrance. American students entering Australia during the Northern Hemisphere summer may need to repeat part of their previous grade to the end of the Australian school year in December. Schools, however, have the discretion to make grade placement decisions on an individual basis and typically do so considering a wide range of factors, including parent preference, academic achievement, and social development.
- Australian schools mostly follow the Australian National Curriculum In 2022 (Version 9.0) endorsed Foundations (pre-school-Year 10) curriculum which is based on learning progressions with nation assessment rubrics by subject area that aligns with grade level expectations.
- Australia (as a whole) has developed and published state-wide curriculum supplements and progressions. Many schools in Australia implement a hybrid of the Australian National Curriculum and local state curricula with an emphasis on the learning process that may result in more project-based learning and cooperative learning (which one may find different than the traditional US approach which is more curricular context focused). No school in Western Australia uses an American curriculum, and there is currently one international/IB school, located North of Perth.
- Years 7-12 offer electives.
- High Schools: students take similar courses to those offered in US schools and the courses can be leveled by ability/achievement. Grades may be determined by a curve or by criteria depending on state, school and program-satisfactory grades are Cs and above.
- Curricular differences seem to be the greatest in math and sciences. Maths and Science are "integrated," meaning that they spiral (for example: math curriculum throughout high school will integrate Algebra, Geometry, Stats, etc. rather than have isolated courses; same with the sciences).
- Australian schools do not cover U.S. history in significant length or breadth; U.S. civics is not in the curriculum. So, if you are returning to the U.S. when your child is in high school, you may have to supplement this U.S. graduation requirement with a U.S. History course through homeschooling or with an online program.
- Australian students study Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry, Calculus, Biology, Chemistry and Physics in a "spiral" curriculum (some of each in every academic year) rather than in separate years as in most U.S. schools. Thus a student who has progressed through the entire Australian curriculum in Years 7-12 will have acquired proficiency generally equivalent to U.S. students graduating from high school. However, transferring between an American school and an Australian school in the high school years is a complex process and requires considerable research on the part of the parents, including consultation with the school administrations to ensure both full coverage of math and science, as well as careful preparation for the transfer back to an American school at the end of one's tour of duty.
- The Australian university and college application system is based on a rank number (Australian Tertiary Admission Rank-ATAR)-through which they are assigned a rank 0-99.5, which helps determine their college/university placement in Australian universities, or a general/certificate of education track that will receive a senior school diploma. Because

the application system is based on rank number, high school grades are not a significant factor, which means the U.S. version of a high school transcript is not particularly relevant to schools in Australia. In Australia, there is never a need to show four years of performance on a single document since the grade 12 results, as represented in the ATAR and/or the senior school certificate, are the primary factor in domestic university placement.

- Face to Face AP courses and options for AP exam locations are minimal (no college-board testing centers and only a hand full of schools that offer the exam).
- Students with disabilities are supported with “reasonable adjustments” at any public Australian School. No school can reject a student based on learning needs.
- There are often additional costs for schooling in Australia that many families do not expect. Most of these fees are not covered by allowances and must be paid out of pocket by the family. All schools require some sort of uniform, though public schools are much less formal than private schools. Families must pay the cost of the uniform out of pocket. Schools also require students (years 3 and up) to attend a camp/outdoor education program each year. The costs of these can range from a few hundred to almost a thousand dollars per child. Finally, many of the schools operate a “bring your own device” program and have specific device requirements. Check with your school of choice to determine which laptop or tablets are acceptable for your student.