

# School Education Factsheet

- The Australian school education system is governed by both states and territories. Its structure is comparable to the British system. Although the states each have their own education system and exam regulations, each system follows a similar model and receives extra funding from federal government.
- The majority of Australian schools are public (government-funded); a quarter of Australian schools are independently funded. The majority of these private schools are run by religious institutions. Others are financed through private foundations. However, private schools also receive government funding. Private 'International Colleges' specifically target Asian-Pacific students to whom they offer intensive English language courses.
- Mandatory subjects are English, mathematics, a foreign language as well as human or natural sciences. Whereas public schools generally cover a broad variety of subjects, private schools tend to provide more specialised classes. Public schools charge rather small tuition fees, whereas private school fees (depending on the school's reputation) can reach up to A\$20,000 per year.
- For reasons of tradition and discipline, students are required to wear school uniforms. In Australia, there are many single-sex schools for boys and girls, which in some cases include boarding homes to accommodate students.
- Schooling is compulsory from ages five to fifteen. After ten years of school education, students have the opportunity to take up training at either a public or private vocational institution. Students are eligible to study at university after successfully graduating from year 12 of Senior Secondary School.
- The universities selection process is based on the Universities Admission Index. This index takes into account the results achieved by students in their final school exams. In order to compare students' performances, the results achieved in the compulsory subjects and electives are closely assessed.
- Frequently discussed in education politics is the financial preference of the private sectors over the public sector that may raise questions with regards to securing equal opportunities (government funding of public versus private school system).
- Australian students performed above average within the OECD's PISA comparative studies (Program for International Student Assessment). Australian students ranked among top ten in all of the assessed areas of reading literacy, mathematical literacy and scientific literacy.
- There are two German schools in Australia. The German International School Sydney ([giss.nsw.edu.au](http://giss.nsw.edu.au)) is offering a bilingual Preschool for children aged three to five and a complete bilingual school education from Kindergarten up to Year 12. Their school curriculum is combining the German curriculum of Thüringen and the NSW syllabus for the Australian curriculum. Since 2014, the Deutsche Schule Melbourne ([dsm.org.au](http://dsm.org.au)) offers primary education from Prep Year to Grade 6.