



COVID-19 - International Education Agent and Provider Update

Last updated: 16 September 2020

- Information about Australia’s response to COVID-19 and the global impact on the education sector.
- For overall updates visit www.australia.gov.au for student specific visit studyinaustralia.gov.au/English/resource-hub
- Please forward feedback and additional links to: studyinaustralia@austrade.gov.au
- Thank you to Australian Government and State and Territory agencies and for their contribution to this resource.

LATEST NEWS	COVID-19 GLOBAL HEALTH UPDATE	BUSINESS SUPPORT & INFORMATION	STUDENT SUPPORT & INFORMATION	EDUCATION DELIVERY
TRAVEL	WELLBEING	SECTOR RESPONSES	STUDENT KEY MESSAGES	CONTACTS

Austrade is committed to ensuring all international students, education providers, agents and the broader sector are informed and supported during the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Working with other government agencies and state and territory partners, we are an aggregator of information.

ISSUE / LINK	KEY UPDATE / RESOURCE
LATEST NEWS	<i>(Note: Updates made this week are highlighted below in orange.)</i>
See links below for details (Note: Use Google Chrome if you have trouble accessing links.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Cabinet agreed in-principle to develop a new plan for Australia to reopen by Christmas. • Australian Government establishes a joint Global Business and Talent Attraction Taskforce. • Australian Government releases Priority Migration Skilled Occupation List. • New visa arrangements for Hong Kong passport holders now in effect. • Australia-Japan Foundation reopens its 2020-21 grant round. • Reform of the Export Market Development Grant. • IP Australia launches new initiatives to help SMEs protect their inventions. • National Skills Commission publishes Impacts of COVID-19 on businesses – Business’ operating capacity report and Emerging Occupations. • Safe Work Australia releases National guide for safe workplaces - COVID-19. • DESE new student data, research snapshots and reports. • ASQA releases 2020-21 ASQA Corporate Plan and governance changes for ASQA will soon come into effect. • TEQSA releases Course accreditation and re-accreditation policy (Registered providers), COVID-19 recovery – key considerations for providers, Independent Experts engaged by providers. • Updated country by country COVID-19 Austrade Market Reports. • NSW Government launches \$12 million Going Global Package. • NSW Government funds free accommodation for vulnerable international students. • Study NSW provides free food hampers to international students across the state. • Queensland International Education and Training Partnership Fund opens. • \$3 billion Victorian Business Survival and Adaptation Package. • Victorian Government updates International Student Emergency Relief Fund eligibility criteria.
www.australia.gov.au	For the latest government announcements visit the online Australian Government hub - providing the most up-to-date news, updates and advice from across Australia.



COVID-19 GLOBAL HEALTH UPDATE	
National three step plan to a COVIDSafe Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Cabinet on 4 September agreed in-principle to develop a new plan for Australia to reopen by Christmas and to boost the capacity for international arrivals where possible. • State quarantine requirements for interstate travel. Check State and Territory websites for the latest information on restrictions and exemptions. • You can also use the Australian Government COVID-19 Restriction Checker to navigate the various restrictions and find out more about restrictions on services.
Your Health	Advice on keeping you, yourself and the community safe. COVIDSafe App is now also available in Arabic, Simplified and Traditional Chinese, Korean and Vietnamese. Get the app from Apple App Store and Google Play .
Australia Statistics	Visit the Australian Department of Health Coronavirus (COVID-19) health alert website for daily reports on COVID-19 case numbers and the current situation .
Global Statistics	Daily status updates on the progression of COVID-19 globally from the World Health Organisation.
Infection control training	Thirty-minute online training session for workers, covering the fundamentals of infection prevention and control for COVID-19.
Social Distancing & Self-isolation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice on social distancing and self-isolation – keep 1.5 metres away from others wherever possible. • All travelers arriving in Australia are required to undertake their mandatory 14 day self-isolation at designated facilities.
BUSINESS SUPPORT & INFORMATION	
Australian Government Economic Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For information about the Australian Government’s Economic Response to the Coronavirus, visit The Treasury website. • Australian Government extends the JobKeeper payment to 28 March 2021. • Australian Government \$2 billion JobTrainer skills package to help Australians retraining and upskilling as the economy recovers from COVID-19. • Australian Government established a joint Global Business and Talent Attraction Taskforce to create jobs by attracting high value international businesses and exceptional talent to fill vital skills gaps. • Australian Government released Priority Migration Skilled Occupation List (PMSOL) with 17 occupations. • New visa arrangements for Hong Kong students, temporary graduates and skilled workers now in effect. • The Australia-Japan Foundation has reopened its 2020-21 grant round – Applications close at 2pm AEST on 6 October 2020.
Export Market Development Grants (EMDG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Government injected an extra \$49.8 million into the EMDG program in 2019-2020 – Applications are open. • Australian Government is backing Australian businesses to grow their exports and create jobs through reforms to EMDG. Join Austrade webinar: Reform of the Export Market Development Grant 17 September.
COVID-19 Export Capital Facility	A \$500 million COVID-19 Export Capital Facility established by the Australian Government to assist Australian exporters whose businesses have been impacted by COVID-19.
Higher Education Relief Package	The package is to support workers displaced by the COVID-19 crisis to upskill or retrain, and support universities and other higher education providers to continue teaching.
Higher Education Reforms	Australian Government’s Job-ready Graduates Package sets out new funding models and reform plans for higher education. The package also includes an additional \$400 million over four years for regional, rural and remote education initiatives ; a \$900 million National Priorities and Industry Linkage Fund ; and the creation of a National Microcredential Marketplace .
Regional University Centres	Australian Government announced 9 new Regional University Centres under the \$53.2 million Regional University Centres program. This latest additions bring the total number of Regional University Centres to 25.
IP Australia	IP Australia launched new initiatives to help SMEs protect their inventions, including a dedicated SME Portal , a go-to for patent tools, resources and information to help SMEs navigate the patent process and taking IP global.
State Government Support	Australian Capital Territory / New South Wales / Northern Territory / Queensland / South Australia / Tasmania / Victoria / Western Australia .

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSW Government launched \$12 million Going Global Package that includes grants of up to \$10,000 for eligible SME exporters through the Export Assistance Grant scheme. • Queensland International Education and Training Partnership Fund - Applications for the IET Partnership Fund – Provider Transition Round close at 5pm AEST 28 September. • Victorian Business Survival and Adaptation Package - \$3 billion in cash grants, tax relief and cashflow support will be delivered to Victorian businesses that have been most affected by COVID-19 restrictions to help businesses survive and keep Victorians in jobs.
National COVID-19 Commission (NCC) Advisory Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCC Advisory Board to concentrate efforts on recovery. • Planning tool to help businesses reopen and be COVIDSafe.
National Skills Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A snapshot in time: The Australian labour market and COVID-19. • Impact of COVID-19 on Businesses: Business’ operating capacity, the report provides information on business’ operating capacity, using data up to 31 July. • Emerging Occupations, a list of 25 emerging occupations that could offer a new pathway for those wanting to reskill or find new employment.
Safe Work Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 work health and safety guidance for workplaces across 23 industries to help businesses returning to work in a COVID safe environment. • National guide for safe workplaces - COVID-19.
Employer Obligations	Find out about your obligations as an employer at the Fair Work Ombudsman website.
Apprentices and Trainee Support	Australian Government is supporting small businesses to retain their apprentices and trainees through a wage subsidy .
VISA CONDITIONS	
Visa regulation	Visit the Department of Home Affairs website to keep updated on all developments.
Australian Government announced changes to student visa arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On 20 July, the Australian Government announced a number of changes to student visa arrangements to support international education. • Department of Home Affairs released “COVID-19 - Measures to assist international students and graduates”, providing guidance and FAQs to the COVID-19 new student visa measures.
EDUCATION DELIVERY	
Department of Education, Skills, and Employment regulations and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulatory information for universities VET, ELICOS and higher education providers. • New research snapshots and student data – International students in Australia up to 2019; Visa grants for international students intending to study ELICOS; June 2020 International student data sources; International Student Data June 2020 Infographic. • Australian Government launched new free, online Literacy Hub to help families and teachers work together to support children to develop their literacy skills.
ASQA latest advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Amendment Act 2020 coming into effect on 1 July 2020, ASQA created a Legislative changes webpage to help providers understand what these amendments mean. • Governance changes for ASQA will soon come into effect following the passing of National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Amendment (Governance and Other Matters) Bill 2020 on 24 August 2020. • ASQA released additional CRICOS guidance – reporting, education agents and protected amount. • ASQA released 2020-21 ASQA Corporate Plan, outlining planned activities and key strategies both for the year ahead and future years.
Australian Industry and Skills Committee (AISC)	The AISC Emergency Response Sub-committee is seeking feedback on rapid skilling for COVID-19 recovery.
TEQSA latest advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course accreditation and re-accreditation policy (Registered providers). • COVID-19 recovery – key considerations for providers. • Independent Experts engaged by providers provides guidance to providers on selecting a suitable independent expert to conduct a review or seek expert advice as part of their internal quality assurance processes. • TEQSA published decisions report January 2020 – March 2020. • TEQSA released academic integrity toolkit for international quality assurance agencies. • TEQSA releases Application Guide for Registration in any University Category: new providers, registered Higher Education Providers, Version 1.5.

Tuition Protection	The Tuition Protection Service (TPS) is mindful that international students and education providers are impacted by the restrictions on travel and other social distancing measures. Contact them with your concerns.
PRISMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CRICOS Providers exempt from 2020 and 2021 registration fees. • Guiding Principles for VET in schools delivered to overseas students.
Virtual and Online Delivery Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Austrade and Department of Education, Skills and Employment guide to online delivery, with a focus on China. • Austrade Japan Education Market Update, including recent developments in online education and student sentiment. • Austrade market insights on India's new National Education Policy. • Austrade insights on the Hong Kong market situation. • eSafety and Universities Australia Toolkit for Universities. • Updated My Skills homepage to cater to the growing demand for online training. • IELTS Indicator, an online English language test for students, is available in countries where IELTS testing has been suspended due to COVID-19. • PTE Academic testing resumed in Australia and a wide number of international student markets. • ISANA International Education Association online National Code Tutorial for professionals working in the international education sector to gain knowledge and understanding of the ESOS Act and National Code 2018.
State and Territory Education Advice	Australian Capital Territory / New South Wales / Northern Territory / Queensland / South Australia / Tasmania / Victoria / Western Australia .
STUDENT SUPPORT INFORMATION	
Study Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study Australia Partnership – All Australian state and territory study destinations work in partnership with Austrade and other Australian government agencies to deliver information and services to international students. • Course search tool – Study Australia website's new course search function enables international students to search and enquire about courses from a comprehensive list of CRICOS registered Australian education providers.
COVID-19 International Student Information	A dedicated website for Australia's international students providing central information from other government agencies. View Australian Government snapshot of health and wellbeing support, financial assistance and information sources available to international students.
COVID-19 Information – translations	A list of resources about COVID-19 in Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Armenian, Assyrian, Bengali, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Burmese, Chin Hakka, Chinese (simplified and traditional), Croatian, Dari, Dinka, Dutch, Farsi, Filipino, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Gujarati, Hazaragi, Hebrew, Hindi, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Karen, Kirundi, Khmer, Korean, Kurdish, Laotian, Macedonian, Malayalam, Maltese, Napali, Pashto, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Romanian, Russian, Rohingya, Samoan, Serbian, Sinhala, Slovak, Slovenian, Somali, Spanish, Swahili, Tagalog, Tamil, Thai, Tibetan, Tigrinya, Turkish, Ukrainian, Urdu, Vietnamese. The resources include fact sheets, guidelines and other publications.
International Student FAQs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequently Asked Questions and advice for international students, created by the Department of Education Skills and Employment. • 'International Students Ask' video series, created by Study Australia and Insider Guides, provide students with the opportunity to ask any question relating to studying in Australia during COVID-19.
International Student Work Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on international students' workplace entitlements, rights and obligations and regular updates on workplace entitlements and obligations during the COVID-19 crisis. • Overseas Students Ombudsman fact sheet about international student complaints related to the COVID-19 pandemic.
Mailbox for international students	Australian Government has provided a dedicated mailbox for international students - international.students@dese.gov.au .
Council of International Students Australia (CISA)	The Council of International Students Australia represents international students studying at the postgraduate, undergraduate, private college, TAFE, ELICOS and foundation level.
Student Health Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If an international student is showing symptoms of COVID-19, they should phone the National Coronavirus Helpline on 1800 020 080 for information and advice. If translating or interpreting services are required, call 131 450.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For most OSHC providers, visits to a GP are covered at 100 per cent of the government-recommended fee (known as the 'MBS'). Seek advice from your OSHC provider and/or the Australian Department of Home Affairs. • Department of Health OSHC factsheet and Deed for the Provision of Overseas Student Health Cover and Explanatory Guidelines for consumers. • Find a general practitioner – Health Direct and bulk billed Teleheath services.
Accommodation	<p>For advice on rights as a tenant contact the relevant state/territory authority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACT: Tenancy Advice Service ACT • NSW: Fair Trading • NT: Northern Territory Consumer Affairs • Qld: Residential tenancies Authority • SA: South Australia Consumer and Business Services • Tas: Consumer, Building and Occupation Services • Vic: Consumer Affairs Victoria • WA: Residential Tenancies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Homestay Network established an International Student Support Network to support vulnerable international students experiencing hardship due to COVID-19. • AskIzzy provides links to a range of service providers, and your local study cluster may also be able to help you with referrals.
State government support for international students	<p>Australian Capital Territory / New South Wales / Northern Territory / Queensland / South Australia / Tasmania / Victoria / Western Australia.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSW Government is funding up to 20 weeks of free accommodation for vulnerable international students in NSW during the current COVID-19 pandemic. • Study NSW works with Foodbank NSW & ACT to provide free food hampers to international students across the state including regional locations such as Armidale, Lismore and Wagga Wagga. • Victorian Government updated International Student Emergency Relief Fund eligibility criteria so more students can access the Fund.
#InThisTogether student stories	Austrade is uncovering inspiring #InThisTogether student stories on the Study Australia website .
TRAVEL	
COVID-19 and the border	For updates to Australia's immigration and border arrangements during the COVID-19 outbreak, including temporary visa FAQs and information in your own language please visit the Department of Home Affairs website .
Coming to Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Government announced on 19 March 2020 a travel ban for all non-residents and non-citizens of Australia effective as of 20 March 2020. • All travellers entering Australia will be required to undertake their mandatory 14 day self-isolation at designated facilities from 28 March 2020.
Leaving Australia	Australian citizens and permanent residents are restricted from travelling overseas from 25 March 2020, with exemptions for certain circumstances.
Consular Support	For consular issues for your staff and students, either in Australia or overseas, visit the DFAT website for Australian embassies and consulates overseas and foreign embassies and consulates in Australia .
WELLBEING	
Mental Health Service and Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Health information and resources on mental health and COVID-19. • Department of Education, Skills and Employment support for international students affected by COVID-19. • Department of Education, Skills and Employment released 'International Students and their Mental Health and Physical Safety' report. • The Australian Psychological Society guide for adults and children coping with COVID-19 stress or anxiety. • Insider Guides – tips for international students who are battling homesickness during the current restrictions.
SECTOR RESPONSE	

Education Provider Updates	A list of COVID-19 information pages for Australian universities, TAFEs and government schools.
Higher Education	Support and advice from Independent Tertiary Education Council of Australia for independent higher education providers.
ELICOS	Support and advice from English Australia for the English language teaching industry.
Schools	Support and advice from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent Schools Australia – https://isa.edu.au/ • National Catholic Education Commission – www.ncec.catholic.edu.au.
VET	Support and advice from Independent Tertiary Education Council of Australia for private VET providers.
Education Agents	Support and advice from the International Student Education Agents Association .
COUNTRY BY COUNTRY	
Regional market update on the impact of COVID-19	Austrade provides regular market updates with summaries from post around the globe.
In country support – Austrade’s Global Network	Austrade’s network of 1,100 staff is committed to helping you through this time. Our global network contact details can be found here .
Austrade education webinar calendar	As part of the response to COVID-19, and repositioning market intel and resources, this education webinar calendar include upcoming and recorded webinars and online seminars promoted by, produced with partners, or presented by Austrade.
KEY CONTACTS	
National Coronavirus Information Helpline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The National Coronavirus Information Helpline – 1800 020 080 – is available 24/7 for information and advice on COVID-19. • Translating assistance when seeking medical advice please call TIS – Translating and Interpreting Service on 13 14 50.
National Coronavirus WhatsApp	Up-to-date official government information about current and future measures.
Support for mental health and wellbeing during coronavirus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For personal crisis and mental health support services contact Lifeline on 13 11 14 or Beyond Blue on 1800 512 348 at any time. Go to the emergency support and assistance page for information about additional services.
Study Australia – shared resource for students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.studyinaustralia.gov.au • Study in Australia Facebook / Instagram / Weibo / WeChat
State-based International Student Study hubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study Canberra ACT - studycbr.com.au • Study NSW NSW - study.sydney • Study NT NT - studynt.nt.gov.au • Study Queensland QLD - studyqueensland.qld.gov.au • Study Adelaide SA - studyadelaide.com • Study Tasmania TAS - studytasmania.tas.gov.au • Study Melbourne VIC - studymelbourne.vic.gov.au • Study Perth WA - studyperth.com.au • Study Brisbane QLD - choosebrisbane.com.au/Study • Study Gold Coast QLD - studygoldcoast.org.au • Study Cairns QLD - studycairns.com.au
Australian Department of Education, Skills and Employment	https://www.dese.gov.au/news/coronavirus-covid-19 .
Australian Department of Home Affairs	Visit the Department of Home Affairs website for updates to Australia's immigration and border arrangements during the COVID-19 outbreak in your own language, including Arabic (عربي) Chinese - Simplified (简体中文) Greek (Ελληνικά) Indonesian (Bahasa Indonesia) Italian (Italiano) Japanese (日本語) Korean (한국어) Nepali (नेपाली) Persian (فارسی) Portuguese (Português) Spanish (Española) Vietnamese (Tiếng Việt) , and many more.
Commonwealth Ombudsman	The Commonwealth Ombudsman ensures safeguards for the community in its dealings with the Australian Government and have oversight of some private sector organisations.