

International Student Manual



MERIDEN
AN ANGLICAN SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Meriden girls
make their *marks.*

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SECTION 1

Studying at Meriden

From the Principal

The Meriden Vision

Why Choose Meriden?

Facilities and Services

School Map

Location

Key Support Staff

From the Principal

Welcome to Meriden. I am delighted that you are interested in learning more about the Meriden School community.



Established in 1897, Meriden is an Anglican day school for girls from Pre-Kindergarten to Year 12. The School is located in Strathfield, Sydney, and is very easily accessed by train and bus.

The priority at Meriden is high-quality teaching and learning. Through a broad range of subject choices, outstanding facilities, resources and well-qualified and dedicated teachers, each girl has the opportunity to develop her talents and interests and to learn well. Special attention is given to girls who need additional assistance with the learning of English.

Outside the classroom, the girls are encouraged in other areas of their learning, including music, debating, drama, sport, personal development and community service. Meriden offers a well-rounded and holistic education, producing well-informed and talented citizens. It is hoped that Meriden graduates will be confident and articulate, ready to make a positive contribution to their community.

At Meriden, every girl is known and valued. The staff members work closely with the girls and their families to ensure that the best possible education is offered. Consequently, the School is well-known for its warm community atmosphere, its pastoral care of each student, its fine buildings, its strong Christian values and clear teaching of the Christian faith, and its excellent academic and co-curricular results.

Furthermore, the girls are encouraged to contribute to the running of the School, making contributions to the decision-making of the School and providing ideas and initiatives for change and development.

We warmly welcome you to the Meriden community.

A handwritten signature in dark blue ink, appearing to read 'Lisa Brown', written over a horizontal line.

MRS LISA BROWN
Principal

The Meriden Vision

Meriden girls are defined by their passion and compassion, their joy and determination. The School's aim is always to provide girls with opportunities to thrive; to channel their curiosity, talent and convictions in ways that will help them live with spirit, purpose and kindness.



Our Vision

To deliver a leading and holistic education which balances academic achievement, cocurricular opportunities, the pastoral care of every student and a Christian foundation.

Our Mission

In order to be well-equipped to cope with and contribute to this world, we want Meriden girls to become:

- confident, articulate and responsible leaders;
- aspiring and academic achievers;
- well-informed and critical thinkers;
- well-rounded and resilient team-players;
- creative innovators and collaborative problem-solvers;
- compassionate, healthy and optimistic global citizens;
- women of integrity, appreciative of the Christian faith.

This vision rests firmly on the values which permeate the Meriden environment and community; excellence, grit, kindness, gratitude and hope.

In order to help Meriden girls to develop into women with these skills and attributes, we aim to enable the girls to speak with:

UNDERSTANDING through learning opportunities which allow them to master complex issues and concepts, be articulate and aware of current issues;

CONFIDENCE through opportunities for leadership, attainment of personal goals and recognition for achievements;

COMPASSION through opportunities for service and increased global awareness;

CREATIVITY through opportunities for the development of varied interests and talents;

HOPE through opportunities for healthy living, a deep personal faith and the development of resilience.

Why Choose Meriden?

Meriden values diversity and welcomes international students from many different cultures and backgrounds. Students from countries across the globe are part of the Meriden community. The School's inclusive and supportive community ensures a smooth transition into the day-to-day life of the School.

There are many reasons our international students choose to study at Meriden, including:

Meriden has an excellent record of consistently strong academic performance and our students proceed to universities in Australia and overseas to undertake a broad range of studies.

Meriden is centred on the Christian faith and offers a Christian education acceptable to all denominations. All staff support the School's Christian values of kindness, integrity, courage and respect.

Meriden's student wellbeing programs are developed and delivered by a highly-qualified team that specialises in girls' education. Our proactive model of care recognises that a strong sense of wellbeing is essential for students to achieve their aspirations and learning goals.

Our holistic educational approach aims to see every student reach her potential. The size and structure of our School balance two important factors: being large enough to cater to a broad range of interests, so every girl can find her niche, with limited class sizes to ensure every girl is individually known by all her teachers and peers.

Meriden offers a supportive environment for students from non-English speaking backgrounds while they develop their confidence in speaking English and improve their proficiency in the language. All students at Meriden are encouraged to speak English inside and outside the classroom. Immersion in the language gives them the opportunity to hear everyday English spoken by both native and non-native speakers. They are motivated to participate in class discussions and learn how to express their own ideas in English.

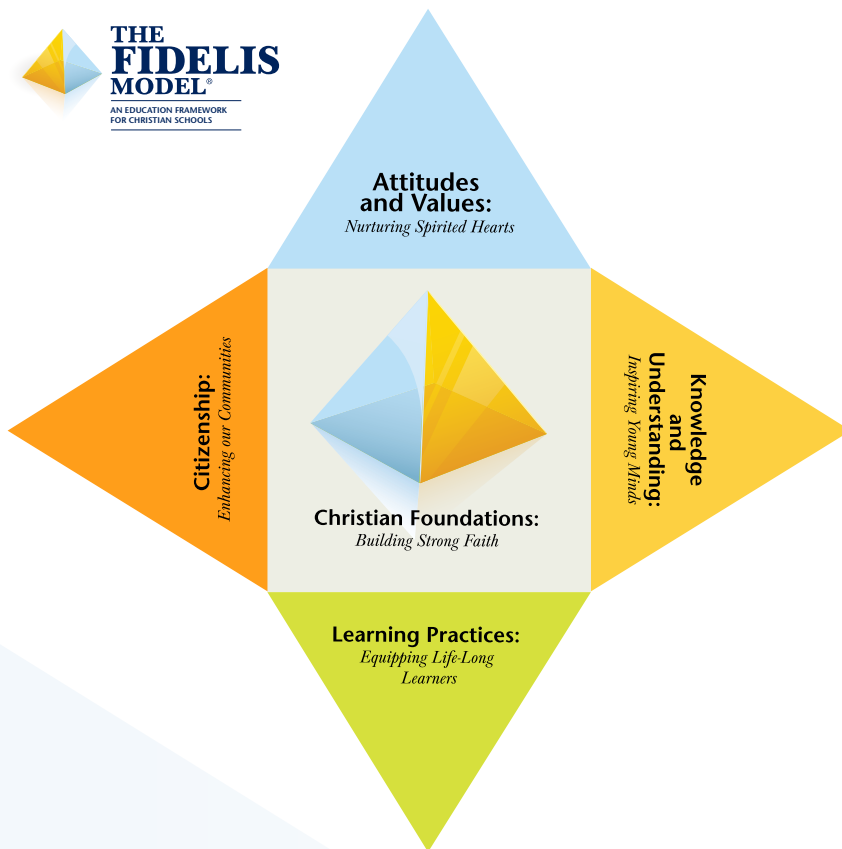
The Fidelis Model

The framework for teaching and learning at Meriden is *The Fidelis Model*. It is student-centred and based upon best educational practice.

The Fidelis Model was developed at Meriden by the School's senior staff to facilitate broad, enriching and holistic educational programs and activities for students across the entire school.

It provides the framework for:

- Christian foundations:
Building strong faith
- Knowledge and understanding:
Inspiring young minds
- Learning practices:
Equipping life-long learners
- Citizenship:
Developing global citizens
- Attitudes and values:
Nurturing spirited hearts.



Courses Offered

Meriden is a well-established school accredited with the New South Wales Education Standards Authority (NESA) to present candidates for the NSW Higher School Certificate. The School is registered with the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS), Meriden School CRICOS No. 02318F, and complies with the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act), the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 and the Australian Consumer Law.

Meriden offers enrolment into courses of primary and secondary education as accredited by NESA, leading to the award of the NSW Higher School Certificate.

Bilingual Staff

Many of our staff speak other languages and will be able to communicate with parents, legal guardians and carers in their own language.

Mode of Study

Courses for international students are full-time courses delivered on site at each of the School's three campuses. Meriden's delivery of the curriculum is predominantly face-to-face in a classroom.

Assessment Methods

School assessments and homework are an important part of the school program. Students may be required to complete assignments, oral presentations and examinations which contribute to their final grades.

These assessments help teachers to evaluate academic progress and prepare reports for parents/legal guardians.

Facilities and Services

Meriden holds proudly to its history, thriving in a long-established garden that has been a calming influence throughout the School since 1897.

To the beautiful setting and historic buildings have been added the technology and facilities of today – purpose-built classrooms, tennis courts, a swimming pool, performing arts venues and so much more, to ensure students grow and thrive while appreciating the past, looking to the future and embracing change. While our School takes pride in continually upgrading our physical facilities, it is the people who come to teach, learn, explore and play that make our school unique.

Meriden comprises three adjacent campuses – Lingwood (Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten), Junior School (Year 1 to Year 6) and Senior School (Year 7 to Year 12). Each campus is just a short stroll from the others, and this close proximity fosters a special sense of community and pride across all age groups at Meriden.

Lingwood Campus is a specially designed campus for four and five-year olds. The campus is equipped with a library, art rooms and outdoor learning areas. The Junior School campus is a hive of activity with approximately 480 girls from Year 1 to Year 6. The

campus features modern, light-filled classrooms, a state-of-the-art library and dedicated language centre, as well as a music centre, gymnasium, auditorium and outdoor learning area. Our junior students utilise the swimming pool and tennis courts on the Senior School campus. The Junior School is set on well-kept lawns that come alive during recess, lunch, physical education and sport.

Approximately 1,200 students enjoy learning in our Senior School which has a science wing, library and research centre, maths learning centre, music and drama centre with numerous performing art studios, maker space, design and creative arts wing, pottery studio, sports centre, swimming pool, tennis, netball and basketball courts, lecture theatre and auditorium. The Senior School campus has landscaped grounds with gardens and shaded areas.

The Meriden Tennis and Music Academies are open to all students from Pre-Kindergarten to Year 12. The School's many concerts, musical productions and drama performances take place in Wallis Auditorium.

Meriden provides a superb teaching and learning environment with a full range of facilities and resources to cater for all areas of study and interests. Our specialist ICT Department upgrades and maintains the school's multifaceted technology infrastructure and provides a Helpdesk for students and staff.

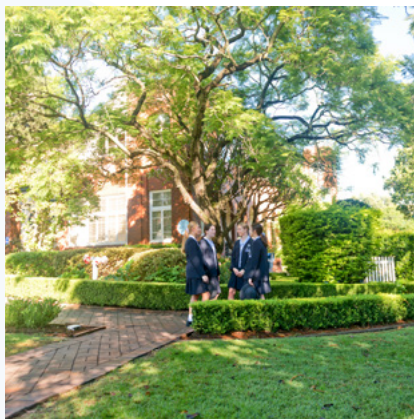
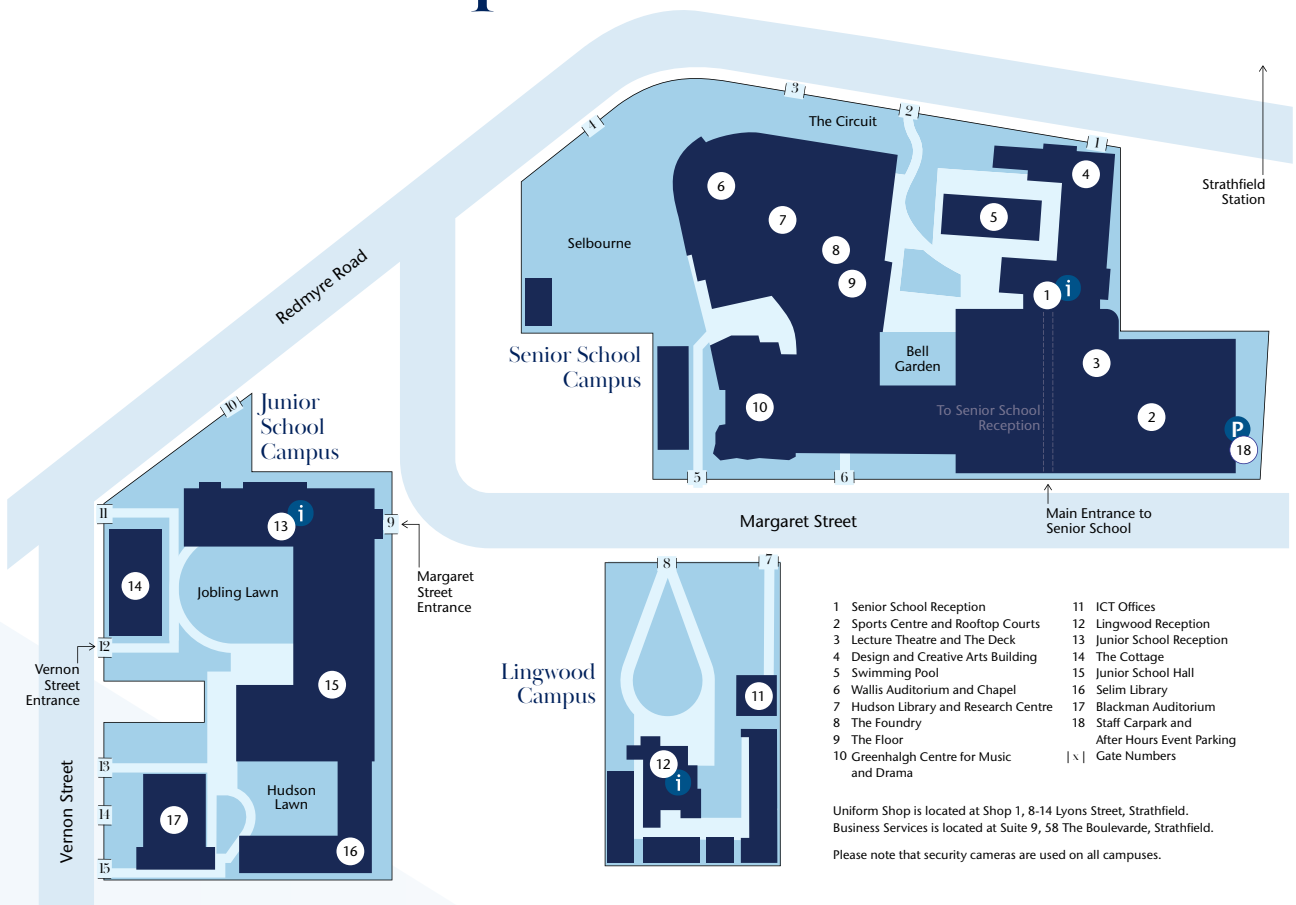
More information

More information for prospective international students can be obtained from:

- the Meriden website – www.meriden.nsw.edu.au
- a current Meriden Prospectus, the Schedule of Fees, and Application for Enrolment form
- relevant Academic Subject Information booklets
- undertaking a guided tour of the School
- the Commonwealth Department of Education website: <https://www.education.gov.au/international-education>



School Map

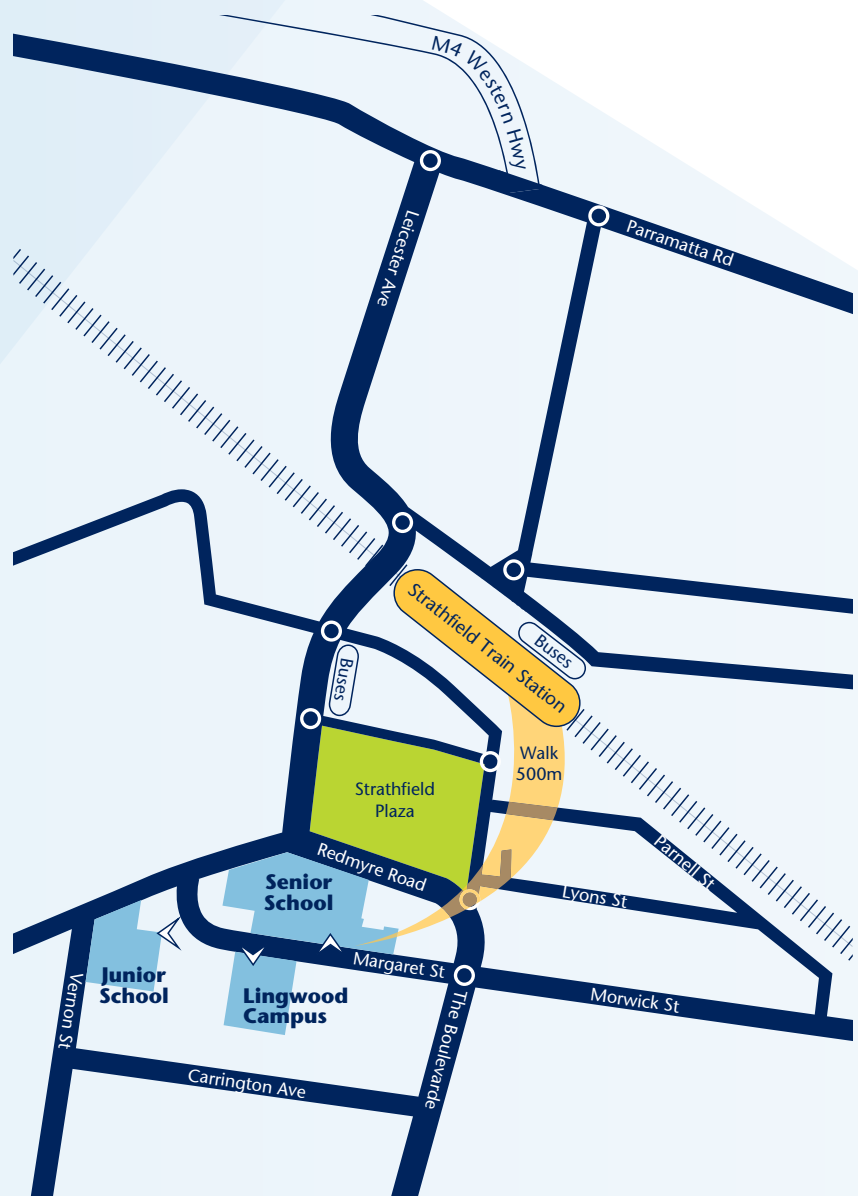


Location

Meriden's central location in Strathfield makes travelling from all areas of Sydney and surrounding regions convenient and direct.

Our students come from local suburbs as well as areas further afield such as St George and Sutherland Shire, the Hills District, Northern Districts, Central Coast and Blue Mountains.

Strathfield is well-served by public transport and the School is only a few minutes' walk from Strathfield train station and bus stops. The School currently provides (at an additional fee to students) its own bus services to and from various locations. More information about the bus routes can be found on the School's website.



Key Support Staff

At Meriden, staff and students are part of a learning partnership. Teachers guide and encourage the girls at every step of their educational journey and support girls in reaching their potential in the classroom and outside it. Listed below are the staff who are available to assist Meriden's international students.

Senior School

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT COORDINATOR meets regularly with new students and assists the Year Coordinator with the assimilation of students into their new surroundings. This staff member can assist with visa and passport renewals and tax file numbers, as well as issues that arise while studying in Australia. The homestay program is overseen by the International Student Coordinator;

HEAD OF STUDENT WELLBEING is responsible for the oversight of pastoral care of students and is a key point of contact for questions or concerns about the social and emotional wellbeing of the girls;

DEAN OF ACADEMIC CARE oversees student progress and meets with students to discuss their learning progression, assists students in subject selection and supports them in achieving their best;

YEAR COORDINATORS take care of the orientation process for new students and assist students with general enquiries about school life, such as cocurricular activities, medical help and timetable issues;

TUTORS care for their students' welfare on a daily basis;

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE/DIALECT (EAL/D) teachers provide English language support to students;

CLASS TEACHERS support students in their academic studies;

HEAD OF TERTIARY PATHWAYS provides guidance in areas such as subject selection, career planning, selecting appropriate tertiary study options and preparations to enter the workplace;

SCHOOL NURSES assist with health matters that a student may experience while at school;

SCHOOL COUNSELLORS are available for any counselling needs;

REGISTRAR checks the details of a student's enrolment and maintains records of providers, address, homestay family, confirmation of enrolment, attendance letters, Overseas Student Healthcare Cover, release letter and visa and passport renewals. The Registrar liaises with government departments including the Department of Home Affairs and the Department of Education (International Office). If an overseas agent has been engaged by the parents, the Registrar liaises with the agent.

Junior School

ENGLISH AS ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE/DIALECT TEACHER offers English language support for students;

DEAN OF ACADEMIC CARE checks that students are settling in well in their new environment;

SCHOOL COUNSELLORS are available for any counselling needs including homesickness and friendship issues;

CLASS TEACHERS care for their students on a daily basis;

YEAR COORDINATORS deal with matters that are of a more serious nature;

LEARNING SUPPORT COORDINATOR arranges support for learning difficulties, if required. The Learning Support Coordinator helps teachers to arrange enrichment and extension work;

SCHOOL NURSE assists with any health matters that students may experience while at school. The office staff also assist with health matters;

REGISTRAR checks the details of a student's enrolment and maintains records of providers, address, homestay family, confirmation of enrolment, attendance letters, Overseas Student Healthcare Cover, release letter and visa and passport renewals. The Registrar liaises with government departments including the Department of Home Affairs and the Department of Education (International Office). If an overseas agent has been engaged by the parents, the Registrar will liaise with the agent.



SECTION 2

Enrolment

Prerequisites to Enter a Course

Eligibility Prerequisites

Course Credit

Language Instruction

Entrance to Meriden School

Enrolment Conditions Specific to International Students

Prerequisites to Enter a Course

Meriden will consider enrolment applications from students wishing to apply for a student visa, subject to compliance with the conditions set by the School, and with the legislative requirements of the state of New South Wales and the Commonwealth of Australia.

Eligibility Prerequisites

Students need to:

- be age appropriate for the year level applied for;
- demonstrate an ongoing enrolment within the School; and
- achieve good passing grades in all academic subjects.

English language proficiency requirement prerequisites apply for students wishing to enter Meriden in Years 4 to 10 who are from non-English-speaking backgrounds (NESB). There are no English language proficiency requirement pre-requisites for NESB students in Kindergarten, Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3.

NESB students wishing to enrol in Years 4 to 10 must meet the following English language proficiency levels through testing by Australian Education Assessment Services (AEAS) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). Documented evidence of the achievement of the required level must be submitted with the Application for Enrolment.

YEAR	AEAS LEVEL	IELTS LEVEL
4*	≥ 30	Not applicable
5*	≥ 35	Not applicable
6*	≥ 40	Not applicable
7	≥ 61	Band 5.5
8	≥ 61	Band 5.5
9	≥ 71	Band 6
10	≥ 81	Band 6

* Applicants for Years 4 to 6 who do not meet the English language proficiency requirement prerequisites set out in the table above will not be refused enrolment on this criterion alone. However, if such a student is offered enrolment at Meriden, the parent/legal guardian will be required to pay, prior to commencement, an additional one full term's tuition fee. This fee provides for intensive English language instruction, provided by the School over the coming academic year.

During the enrolment interview process, the student must satisfy the following English language proficiency requirement prerequisites to determine whether her English is at an acceptable level to proceed with an offer of enrolment:

- demonstrate her ability to respond in written form in English to Meriden's Language Assessment (not literature based) prior to interview with the Principal, where possible; and
- demonstrate her English-speaking capacity during a personal interview held at the School.

The student may be required to undertake additional intensive English tuition at her own expense until a satisfactory level, including colloquial spoken English, is reached.

Exemptions to requirements for NESB students may be granted to students who live in an English-speaking country and have studied in an English-speaking school for at least twelve months.

Enrolment may only proceed after all language requirements are met.

International students or intending international students are obliged to provide translated and certified copies of school records for the previous years. These records will be used to inform the School regarding course entry level. For more information on enrolment please see the Terms of Enrolment Addendum for International Students on the School's website.

Course Credit

Course credit or recognition of prior learning is not awarded to international students as the differences between each country's education system can be too difficult to align. However, the Principal may exercise discretion in this matter within the parameters set by the New South Wales Education Standards Authority (NESA).

Language Instruction

All instruction is conducted in English. A specialist teacher is on hand to help students with English language including any language difficulties students may have with other subjects. In Years 7 to 12 all students will study English and most will have further English as an Additional Language/Dialect (EAL/D) support.

Entrance to Meriden School

Students who apply to enter Meriden are required to undertake an interview with the School Principal and a written English test. Academic results and translated school reports from previous years at school are carefully considered with the results of the English test, along with other information pertaining to eligibility of entry. Each application is considered as an individual case and students are advised of the year level which is recommended for their entry to the School.

More information about entrance to Meriden can be found on the School's website:

Tours and Open Mornings

<http://www.meriden.nsw.edu.au/enrolment/visit-meriden>

Request a Prospectus

<http://www.meriden.nsw.edu.au/enrolment/request-a-prospectus>

How to Enrol

<http://www.meriden.nsw.edu.au/enrolment/how-to-enrol>

Schedule of Fees

<http://www.meriden.nsw.edu.au/enrolment/schedule-of-fees>

International Students

<http://www.meriden.nsw.edu.au/enrolment/international-students>

Enrolment Conditions Specific to International Students

All students are expected to:

- abide by all the international student visa conditions;
- maintain satisfactory course progress for each study period (visa condition 8202);
- maintain satisfactory attendance (visa condition 8202);
- maintain approved welfare and accommodation arrangements (visa condition 8532) [if applicable];
- maintain Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) (visa condition 8501);
- continue to have sufficient financial capacity to support her study and stay in Australia, (visa condition 8516). Pay all required tuition and non-tuition fees;
- notify the School of the address where the student lives within seven (7) days of arriving in Australia. The School must be notified within seven (7) days of a change to the student's address or contact details (visa condition 8533);
- as a condition of enrolment, the student agrees to abide by all school policies for the duration of the student's enrolment. School policies are available in the Student Planner, the School website www.meriden.nsw.edu.au, the School intranet and upon request from the School; and
- avoid any behaviour identified as resulting in enrolment cancellation.

SECTION 3

Fees

Schedule of Fees

Tuition Fees

Non-Tuition Fees

Payment of Fees

Financial Administration

Payment Options

Fee Schedule for International Students

Upfront Payments

Refund of Fees

Default Information

Tuition Protection Service (TPS)

Complaints and Appeals

Schedule of Fees

Tuition Fees

The current Schedule of Fees for international students is available on the School's website.

All fees must be paid in Australian dollars.

With respect to the first course the student enters, the parents/legal guardians must pay the relevant annual tuition fee. (Please note that the School's tuition fees are subject to annual increases as directed by the School Council and this should be budgeted for accordingly).

Tuition fees are payable twelve months in advance, typically by the commencement date of Term 1. Where students have commenced part way through the school year, the advance period will be re-aligned accordingly.

Parents may choose to pay more than the required twelve months tuition fee prior to the course commencing. Contact Meriden Business Services to discuss the details for this option.

The parents/legal guardians acknowledge that there will be no refund, in whole or in part, if the student is absent from school due to illness, leave or suspension.

If the student changes visa status, e.g. becomes a temporary or permanent resident, the student will continue to pay the full international student fees for the duration of that twelve-month study period.

The parents/legal guardians agree to pay changes in tuition fees if changes are required as a result of the student having her study outcomes reassessed or a deferral of study.

NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL

If parents/legal guardians wish to withdraw the student from the School, or from any additional activity, the parents must provide the Principal with one full term's written notice. If such notice is not provided, the parents must pay to the School the fees for the total term or activity as per the School's fee schedule at that time.

Non-Tuition Fees

Application fee: AU\$275

Enrolment fee: AU\$2,750

Due and payable to the School on acceptance of offer.

Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) (visa condition 8501) is required for the entire duration of the student visa. Please note that visa start and end dates are not the same as the course start and end dates.

The parents/legal guardians must pay the cost of all other non-tuition fee expenses incurred by the School on behalf of the student. These include, but are not limited to uniforms, camps, texts, stationery, laptops and Music Academy tuition. The parents/legal guardians must also purchase the necessary bus and/or train pass for the student to commute to and from the School (cost depends on the distance from the School).

Payment of Fees

Financial Administration

The School Council of Meriden is subject to auditing by an external auditor. The School will therefore keep all necessary records that would allow the auditor to be satisfied with the sources of all the monies received for providing courses to overseas students and the ways in which the monies are spent.

Payment Options

Meriden requests all fees, levies and charges including enrolment fees, tuition and non-tuition fees and other charges be paid in Australian currency. Refunds will be paid in Australian currency where possible.

The School provides a range of options for the payment of fees and charges. Parents/legal guardians may pay fees using cheque, credit card (Visa, Mastercard or Amex), BPay or by International Bank Draft.

Fee Schedule for International Students

Meriden fees are reviewed each year. While it is expected there will be no change to the fee structure during the course of the year, the School Council of Meriden reserves the right to make alterations in the event of unforeseen substantial changes in running costs. In addition, students should be aware fees will increase from one year to the next. Sibling discounts apply where sisters are attending the School at the same time. These are outlined in the Schedule of Fees.

The tuition fees for international students are higher than the fees for Australian-resident students because the School is not entitled to receive government grants for international students. There are also additional administration costs for international students.

Upfront Payments

- **Application fee:** AU\$275
- **Enrolment fee:** AU\$2,750
This confirms the student's place at the School
- **AU\$ tuition fees for 12 months** (where students have commenced part way through the school year, the advance period will be re-aligned accordingly)
- **AU\$ Overseas Student Health Cover** – arranged by the student's family/legal guardian
- **AU\$ Homestay application fee** (if applicable) – currently at AU\$380

Refund of Fees

This section outlines the School's policy on refunding fees (including defaults by the student), and describes conditions for eligibility and guidelines for applying for a refund. Please read this section carefully prior to entering into any contract with the School or making any payments in relation to a registered course. A copy of the School's International Students Refund Policy can be found on the School's website or intranet (after enrolment).

Meriden tuition and non-tuition fees are payable in accordance with the International Students Fees Schedule and the Terms of Enrolment and Terms of Enrolment – Addendum for International Students available on the School's website.

The process for making a claim for a refund is that the parent/legal guardian must apply for a refund, in writing, to the Principal. Any outstanding debts to the School will be deducted from any refund. If the Principal approves any refund, the refund will be paid to the same person who initially made the payment of the fees.

Tuition fees

If a student withdraws from the course prior to the start date (other than because of a visa refusal by DHA), the School will seek a refund approval from the Principal. If granted, the School will refund the

tuition and non-tuition fees that have been paid, within twenty-eight (28) days. A portion of the Application for Enrolment and Enrolment fees will be retained by the School. The amount of refund will be the course fees, minus the lesser of 5% of the amount of the course fees received by the School or \$500.00.

If a student produces evidence that the application for a student visa has been refused by DHA, the School will refund the tuition and non-tuition fees that have been paid, within twenty-eight (28) days. A portion of the Application for Enrolment and Enrolment fees will be retained by the School. The amount of refund will be the course fees, minus the lesser of 5% of the amount of the course fees received by the School or \$500.00.

No refund will be given in the event that a student changes her student visa status to Temporary or Permanent Resident/Residency during the year.

If the student leaves Meriden during the course of a year, regardless of the reason, no refund will be made in respect of the remaining portion of the year.

If a student does not intend to continue at Meriden the following year, one full term's notice must be received in writing from the parent/legal guardian. A refund will be made upon receipt of the written

notice to the Principal, and after all outstanding expenses have been deducted. If one full term's notice is not given, one full term's fees will be retained by the School.

Where a student's enrolment is terminated for any of the following reasons, no refund of tuition fees will be made:

- failure to maintain satisfactory course progress and satisfactory attendance (visa condition 8202);
- failure to maintain approved welfare and accommodation arrangements (visa condition 8532);
- failure to pay any amount that they are liable to pay the School in order to undertake the course;
- any serious behavioural breach identified as resulting in grounds for expulsion from the School as outlined in the School's Policies.

Non-tuition fees

If the student withdraws from the course before the agreed starting day, the School will fully refund the non-tuition fees that have been paid. If the student withdraws from the course after commencement at the School, a pro-rata refund will be made for the non-tuition fees that have been paid. All refunds of non-tuition fees will be paid within 28 days.

Default Information

This information briefly outlines the circumstances of a default by a registered provider (the School) which can lead to an overseas student receiving a refund of tuition and non-tuition fees. Defaults by the School are covered by the School's International Students Refund Policy. A copy of this policy can be found on the School's website and intranet (after enrolment).

Any default by the School will be covered by the provisions of the *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000* (ESOS Act) and the *Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2019* (ESOS Regulations). These include:

- If Meriden, for whatever reason, is unable to deliver the course offered to the student, prepaid fees for that course will be refunded to the parent in full within fourteen (14) days of notification of cancellation.
- If for any reason the School is unable to continue to offer a course after the student has commenced, a full refund of fees will be made within fourteen (14) days of notification of course cancellation.

Tuition Protection Service (TPS) (www.tps.gov.au)

TPS is a placement and refund service to assist overseas students whose registered provider is unable to complete delivery of the student's course of study. The TPS ensures that overseas students can either:

- complete their studies in another course or with another registered provider; or
- receive a refund for unspent tuition fees.

Complaints and Appeals

This section outlines the complaints and appeals process. A copy of the School's International Students' Complaints Handling Policy may be found on the School's website and intranet (after enrolment).

The assessment of any complaint or appeal will be conducted in a professional, fair and transparent manner.

The vast majority of issues causing concern can be handled quickly and in an informal manner by the 'first point of contact' staff member. In most cases, these issues can be resolved through informal, verbal discussions with the appropriate staff member.

To lodge a formal complaint, the international student or parents/legal guardians of the international student must refer their formal complaint to the Head of Student Wellbeing (for students in Year 7 to Year 12) or Head of Junior School (for students in Kindergarten to Year 6).

The School will commence assessing a formal complaint from an international student within ten (10) working days from the date on which the formal complaint was lodged.

The School will give the international student or their parents/legal guardians an opportunity to present their case, including providing evidence, before a decision is made, at minimal or no cost. The international student may be accompanied and assisted by a support person at any relevant meetings.

The School will provide a written response, including detailed reasons of the formal complaint.

If an international student or their parents/legal guardians are not satisfied with the initial result of the School's complaints handling process, they can decide to internally appeal the School's decision to the Principal or the Principal's delegate.

If an international student or their parents/legal guardians are not successful in the School's internal complaints and appeals process, the School will advise the international student within ten (10) working days of concluding the internal complaints handling review of the international student's right to access an external complaints handling and appeals process (e.g. Overseas Student Ombudsman) at minimal or no cost.

The right to make complaints and seek appeals of decisions and action under various processes, does not affect the rights of the overseas student to take action under *Australian Consumer Law*, if the *Australian Consumer Law* applies.

If all other attempts at resolution prove unsuccessful, the student may also approach the Registering Authority which has the power to cancel the School's registration if a breach of registration provision is proved. Concerns about the conduct of the School should be addressed in writing to:

The Manager
CRICOS Registration
NESA
GPO Box 5330
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Complaints and Appeals – Contacts

Who	Why	How
Your provider – Meriden School	For policies and procedures that affect your enrolment at Meriden School.	Speak with the Registrar Phone: +61 9752 9444 Email: enrolments@meriden.nsw.edu.au www.meriden.nsw.edu.au
Commonwealth Ombudsman	To make a complaint about your provider. Free, independent and impartial.	www.ombudsman.gov.au/about/overseas-students
Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Framework	For your ESOS rights and responsibilities.	https://www.education.gov.au/esos-framework Phone: 1300 615 262 Department of Education (Cth)
Department of Home Affairs (DHA)	For Visa matters.	https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/ Phone: 131 881 in Australia Contact the DHA in your country
New South Wales Education Standards Authority (NESA)	For provider compliance, registration, and response to breaches by providers within the state of New South Wales.	educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/home Phone: +61 2 9367 8111 or 1300 088 111
Resolution Institute	External mediation services.	https://resolution.institute/web/default.aspx Phone: 1800 651 650 Email: infoaus@resolution.institute
Community Justice Centres	For access to external legal advice on dispute resolution and mediation services.	LawAccess NSW Phone: 1300 888 529 (Monday to Friday 9:00am – 5:00pm) https://www.lawaccess.nsw.gov.au/ Community Justice Centres Phone: 1800 990 777 https://www.cjc.justice.nsw.gov.au/ Email: cjc@justice.nsw.gov.au
Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National)	Access to interpreting services (provided by DHA)	Phone: 131 450 +613 9268 8332 (outside Australia) https://www.tisnational.gov.au/en/Contact-us

SECTION 4

Arriving at Meriden

Arriving at Meriden

The School Year

Outline of the Orientation Program

Textbooks and Stationery

Mobile Phones and Electronic Devices

Excursions and Camps

Parent Communication

Uniform

Homework

The Importance of Homework

Parental Assistance

Time for Homework

Arriving at Meriden

The School Year

The school year usually commences at the end of January and continues until mid-December. Year 12 students finish in November upon completion of their Higher School Certificate exams. There are four terms in each school year. Term dates are available on the school website and in the Student Planner issued to students. It is an expectation that students adhere strictly to the term dates and make their travel plans accordingly. Meriden allows some students to commence their studies during the year.

Outline of the Orientation Program

The following information is provided to international students on their first day:

ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL

KEY STAFF TO OFFER SUPPORT

Junior School

Head of Junior School
Dean of Academic Care
Year Coordinator
Class Teacher
Learning Support Coordinator
EAL/D Teachers
School Counsellors
School Nurse
Registrar

Senior School

Head of Campus
Head of Teaching and Learning
Head of Student Wellbeing
Dean of Academic Care
Year Coordinators
Tutors
International Student Coordinator
EAL/D Teachers
School Counsellors
School Nurse
Registrar
Head of Tertiary Pathways

DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENT PLANNER, LOCK, TIMETABLE AND ALLOCATION OF LOCKER

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- mobile phones
- emergency contact number of staff member
- assistance in reporting any incident involving actual or alleged sexual, physical or other abuse – call 0405 100 189 at any time. This is a 24-hour school emergency number.
- emergency number for police, fire, etc. is 000 in Australia
- buddy for the first week
- how to travel to and from school by Meriden bus services, trains and public buses
- uniform requirements

- how to seek assistance on and off campus
- outside school hours care (Junior School only)
- overseas health care
- complaints and appeals processes
- available student support services
- legal services available to students
- student visa conditions relating to course progress and attendance
- grounds for suspension or cancellation of enrolment
- rules and Code of Conduct
- subject selection, textbooks, etc.
- assessment policies and requirements
- camp information
- expectations of a Christian school
- cocurricular activities
- Hudson Library and Research Centre and Day 11 program
- canteen facilities.

Textbooks and Stationery

You will be provided with a textbook and a stationery list each year. Some books are now available in electronic format.

Mobile Phones and Electronic Devices

Mobile phones are not to be used during class time or in the playground during recess or lunch time. Whilst assisting in recovery of any lost electronic items, the School does not accept responsibility for the loss. If brought to School these items should be locked in lockers during the school day. If girls use their mobile phone during the school day it will be confiscated and parents will be notified.

All students enrolling from Kindergarten to Year 6 will be provided with a device from the School. In Years 7 to 9, parents are required to purchase a school-approved device. All students enrolling from Year 10 to Year 12 are able to purchase a device according to their own preference.

Excursions and Camps

Excursions and camps are an integral part of the curriculum and provide opportunities for research and learning experiences which are vital to the overall academic program. Attendance of students at excursions and camps is compulsory.

Parent Communication

Parents/legal guardians will be notified of student progress and mid-year and final examination results by the School. If any serious situation arises, parents/legal guardians will be notified immediately and the student will be counselled by their Year Coordinator. Every assistance will be given to students should difficulties arise. Parents/legal guardians will be provided with access to the school intranet, and can view relevant student information.

Uniform

The Meriden Uniform Shop is located at:

8-14 Lyons Street
Strathfield
behind the Commonwealth Bank
+61 2 9752-9492
uniform@meriden.nsw.edu.au

Meriden's uniform is compulsory and may be purchased at the Uniform Shop. The current uniform requirements and information are available on the School website.



Homework

Homework is an important aspect of a student's learning and needs to be completed on schedule. In the Senior School, each subject teacher sets homework of an appropriate level of challenge and relevance.

The Importance of Homework

The purpose of homework is to:

- reinforce and review the learning that has taken place in the classroom;
- investigate new content or elaborate on new content to deepen knowledge;
- practise a skill;
- provide more thinking time for concepts to be considered and consolidated;
- promote independent learning;
- encourage the development of good study habits, time management and planning;
- encourage the development of skills in learning how to learn;
- read specified texts or wide reading to develop strong literacy skills.

Parental Assistance

An appropriate space where a student can study without distraction is the most effective assistance parents or guardians can provide. When a student's parents or legal guardians take on the role of a sounding board it can help the student to summarise. When parents or legal guardians ask clarifying questions, it helps the student clarify her own understanding.

Time for Homework

The following is a guide to how much time a student should spend on homework each evening.

The recommendation takes account of the number of timetabled subjects a student has per day. The times suggested for each subject is calculated on the number of lessons there are in a day.

Years 7 and 8	Up to 1.5 hours of homework or study per evening (15-20 minutes per lesson)
Years 9 and 10	Up to 2 hours of homework or study per evening (20-25 minutes per lesson)
Years 11 and 12	Approximately 3 hours of homework or study per week-day evening

Each day students should record their homework in the Student Planner. At the end of each week, it is a requirement that the Planner be reviewed and signed by a parent/legal guardian. Tutors check Planners on a regular basis.



SECTION 5

Living in Australia

Student Care, Accommodation and Welfare Arrangements

Homestay Screening

Options for Students Under the Age of Eighteen Years

Monitoring of K-12 Accommodation Arrangements

Living Costs in Australia

Accommodation

Other Living Expenses

Minimum Cost of Living

Student Care, Accommodation and Welfare Arrangements

Where students under the age of 18 years are not being cared for in Australia by a parent or suitable nominated relative, Meriden School, as the registered provider, will ensure arrangements are made to protect the personal safety and social well-being of those students are appropriate (National Code: Standard 5).

If the student is under 15 years of age, she must reside with the parent while living in Australia.

If the student is 15 years or over and not in the care of the parent while living in Australia, the parents must provide their written approval for a nominated suitable relative to act as the student's carer. In the event of a change to this arrangement, written notification must be provided to the School by the parent. In all instances, the nominated suitable relative must be approved by the School.

Meriden defines a 'suitable relative' as a person who:

- is a grandparent, brother, sister, aunt, uncle or niece;
- is nominated by the parent of the applicant, or a person who has custody of the applicant;
- is aged at least twenty-five (25) years;
- holds Australian Citizenship or Permanent Residency for the duration of the student's enrolment at Meriden; and

- is of good character.

Homestay Screening

The accommodation, support and welfare arrangements of the student who is 15 years or over and is not in the care of the parent, must be approved by the School. Accommodation with full adult supervision must be within reasonable travelling time to the School. Meriden or its nominee reserves the right to inspect the accommodation to ensure that it is safe and suitable and in the best interest of the student. This requirement applies to all students who are not in the care of a parent or a suitable relative, including those students who are over the age of eighteen years, as the School wishes to ensure that the students are living in a suitable environment.

A screening of the student's accommodation arrangements will be carried out by the School's nominee at the beginning of each year. These screenings take place for each student and are organised for the safety and comfort of the student.

The School must be notified by the parent or suitable relative of any intention to change accommodation arrangements or address. If the student changes her arrangements without approval by the School, the Department of Home Affairs will be informed and this may affect the

student's visa.

If the homestay arrangements change during the year, the new homestay will be screened as soon as possible and an invoice sent to the parent for the cost of the screening.

Where the student is living in a homestay environment, the homestay family must not leave the student on her own overnight during term time and non-term time. Should the homestay family wish to go on leave for any reason, including holidays, the School must be notified twenty-eight (28) days prior to the family's departure so that alternative arrangements can be made for the student. All changes to accommodation arrangements must be approved by the Principal.

Meriden uses Oz Homestay for all homestay services. Its website is www.ozhomestay.com.au

Options for Students Under the Age of Eighteen Years

There are two options for students who are under the age of eighteen years:

1. **Parent Guardian Visa** – Meriden does not issue a CAAW. The DHA is the authorised authority to vet and grant this visa. Student resides with parent.
2. **Nominated Suitable Relative** – Meriden does not issue a CAAW.

Monitoring of K-12 Accommodation Arrangements

Parents of students in Kindergarten to Year 12 should note that the School will implement procedures to monitor the accommodation arrangements for all international students who are living with a parent or approved legal guardian. This monitoring may include parent/nominated legal guardian attendance at regular meetings with the classroom teacher or International Student Coordinator (in the Senior School) or the Dean of Academic Care (in the Junior School) and may also include visits to the student's home by a representative of the School or its nominee.



Living Costs in Australia

Knowing the average living costs in Australia is an important part of financial preparation. For reference purposes, following are some of the costs associated with living and studying in Australia (all costs are in Australian dollars).

The costs below are an approximate guide only. Students should be aware that these costs can vary depending on the study location in Australia.

ACCOMMODATION

Hostels and guesthouses	\$90 to \$150 per week
Shared Rental	\$85 to \$215 per week
Homestay	\$300 to \$350 per week
Rental	\$185 to \$440 per week

OTHER LIVING EXPENSES

Groceries and eating out	\$80 to \$280 per week
Gas, electricity	\$20 to \$50 per week
Phone and internet	\$20 to \$55 per week
Public transport	\$15 to \$55 per week

MINIMUM COST OF LIVING

The Department of Home Affairs has financial requirements that must be met in order to receive a student visa for Australia. From 1 October 2023, the twelve-month living cost (evidence of savings) is:

Student	24,505
Partner or spouse	\$8,574
Child	\$3,670

All costs per year are in Australian dollars. To convert to another currency, visit www.xe.com/currencyconverter

The Australian Government provides information and guidance on how to manage finances. Visit www.moneysmart.gov.au

The 'Insider Guides Cost of living Calculator' is also a useful tool to help estimate the cost of living in Australia:

insiderguides.com.au/cost-of-living-calculator

More information about life in Australia can be found in the Australian Government's *Life in Australia* booklet at the end of this Handbook.



SECTION 6

Enrolment

Enrolment Process

Application

Interview

Letter of Offer

Acceptance of Offer

Commencement Details

Tuition Fees

Eligibility

Deferral of Places

Holding of Places

Education Agents

Protection for International Students

Your Rights

ESOS Framework

Personal Information

Enrolment Process

Application

Please ensure you have all the required documents to submit with your application to Meriden:

- enrolment application fee of AU\$275
- certified copy of the student's birth certificate
- certified copy of the student's passport
- copy of immunisation history statement from Medicare Australia or equivalent overseas organisation (translated into English)
- translated copy of student's most recent school report
- NAPLAN report (if applicable)
- copies of Family Court Orders or Parenting Orders (if applicable)
- copies of any medical action plans and medical, psychological/psychometric and educational testing assessments (if applicable)
- copy of Family Census (translated into English) showing relationship of student's legal guardian
- copy of language school reports
- copy of AEAS or IELTS test results

Please ensure the above documents are uploaded to your online Application for Enrolment

Interview

Upon receipt of the Application for Enrolment form and application fee, the student will be placed on the list of applicants for the relevant year of entry. During the two years preceding the commencement date, an interview process will be undertaken with a senior member of staff.

Letter of Offer

Following the interview process, the Principal will write to notify the parents of the result of the enrolment application. Enrolment is offered in accordance with Meriden's Policy and Procedures of Enrolment available at www.meriden.nsw.edu.au.

Acceptance of Offer

If successful, the student's enrolment is secured on receipt of a signed Acceptance of Offer form together with the enrolment fee. This enrolment fee is considered a firm commitment and is non-refundable. In the event that an international student is unable to obtain a student visa, the School will provide a partial refund of the enrolment fee, in accordance with Australian government legislation.

All enrolments are subject to acceptance of Meriden's Terms of Enrolment available at: www.meriden.nsw.edu.au

Commencement Details

Parents will be notified of commencement dates, orientation days and any other relevant details in the term prior to commencement.

Tuition Fees

Tuition fees are payable in accordance with the date displayed on the fees notice. In the case of international students, fees are payable in accordance with government regulations.

NOTE: Where a student is already enrolled in the same course at another Australian provider, restrictions apply if the student wishes to transfer prior to completing the first six months of her first registered school sector course (National Code: Standard 7).

Meriden will not knowingly enrol an overseas student seeking to transfer from another registered provider's course prior to the

international student completing six months of her first registered school sector course, except where any of the following apply:

- the releasing registered provider or the course in which the international student is enrolled has ceased to be registered;
- the releasing registered provider has had a sanction imposed on its registration by the ESOS agency;
- the releasing registered provider has agreed to the international student's release and recorded the date of the effect and reasons for release in PRISMs.

Eligibility

Meriden considers applicants for enrolment who will enter Australia on a 500 Student Visa and are eligible for the courses listed under Courses Offered.

Deferral of Places

Deferral of a place to a later year of entry is subject to availability, regardless of status of enrolment. A paid enrolment fee does not guarantee a place in the deferred year of entry. The student will be placed back on the application list.

Holding of Places

If a period of absence from the School is sought, the student's place will be held provided:

- school tuition fees are maintained for the period of absence; and
- there are no existing debts to the School at the commencement of the period of absence.

Tuition fees paid during a period of absence will not be credited on the return of the student to the School.

Holding of places at the School are at the discretion of the Principal.

Education Agents

Families may choose to engage the services of one of our authorised Education Agents. A list of Education Agents is published on the School's website.

Protection for International Students

As an overseas student on a student visa, students must study with an education provider and in a course that can be found on the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) at www.cricos.education.gov.au. CRICOS registration guarantees that the course and the education provider where you study meet the high standards necessary for overseas students. Please check carefully that the details of your course, including its location, match the information on CRICOS.

Your Rights

The ESOS framework protects overseas student rights, including the right to:

- receive, before enrolling, current and accurate information about the courses, entry requirements, all fees, modes of study and other information from your provider and your provider's agent (if applicable). If you are under eighteen years, to ensure your safety, you will be granted a visa only if there are arrangements in place for your accommodation, support and welfare;
- sign a written agreement with your provider before or at the time you pay fees, setting out the services to be provided, fees payable and information about refunds of course money. Overseas students are required to keep a copy of the written agreement and receipts of

all tuition and non-tuition fee payments made to the School;

- seek a refund in certain circumstances for course money you have paid. Information about refund arrangements must be included in your written agreement;
- get the education you paid for. The ESOS framework includes consumer protection that will allow you to receive a refund or to be placed in another course if your provider is unable to teach your course.
- access complaints and appeals processes; and
- request to transfer to another education institution and have that request assessed by your education institution

You have the right to know:

- orientation details;
- how to use your provider's student support services;
- who the contact staff member is for overseas students;
- if you can apply for course credit;
- when your enrolment can be deferred, suspended, or cancelled;
- what your provider's requirements are for satisfactory progress in the courses you study;
- if attendance will be monitored for those courses;
- what will happen if you want to change providers;
- how to use your provider's complaints and appeals process.

Your responsibilities

Your responsibilities as an international student on a student visa are to:

- comply with your student visa conditions;
- ensure you have and continue to maintain your Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) for as long as you stay in Australia on a student visa
- meet the terms of the written agreement with your provider;
- tell your provider if you change your address or other contact details;
- maintain satisfactory course progress and attendance;
- maintain your approved accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements, if you are under the age of eighteen years.

The Tuition Protection Service (TPS) is a placement and refund service for overseas students which is activated on the event that your institution is unable to teach your course.

Personal Information

The School collects personal information, including sensitive information about students, parents and guardians as members of the Meriden community. The School's Privacy Policy recognises the related issues surrounding personal information it collects whilst respecting and maintaining the confidentiality of such personal information and the privacy of individuals.

The Privacy Policy sets out how the School manages personal information provided to or collected by it. The School may, from time to time, review and update this Privacy Policy to take account of new laws and technology, changes to the School's operations and practices and to make sure it remains appropriate to the changing school environment. Please refer to the School's Privacy Policy on the School's website for further information.

ESOS Framework

The Australian Government wants overseas students in Australia to have a safe, enjoyable and rewarding place to study. Australia's laws promote quality education and consumer protection for overseas students. These laws are known as the ESOS framework and include the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 and the National Code. internationaleducation.gov.au/Regulatory-Information

The ESOS framework sets out the standards that Australian institutions must meet in offering education and training services to overseas students. These standards cover a range of information you have a right to know and services that must be offered to you, including:

- orientation and access to support services to help you study and adjust to life in Australia;
- contact details of staff available to help overseas students;
- if you can apply for course credit;

- when your enrolment can be deferred, suspended or cancelled;
- what your institution's requirements are for satisfactory progress in the courses you study and what support is available if you are not progressing well;
- if attendance will be monitored for your course;
- a complaints and appeals process.

<p>Policy and Legislation</p>	<p>Provider Registration</p>	<p>Tuition Protection Service</p>	<p>International Education Agents Data Project</p>
<p>Australia provides rigorous protection for international students through the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act) and related legislation, which protects and enhances Australia's reputation for quality education, provides tuition protection and supports the integrity of the student visa program.</p> <p>Recent changes to ESOS legislative framework</p>	<p>The Department of Education is responsible for the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS). Only education institutions registered under the ESOS Act and listed on CRICOS can enrol overseas students to study in Australia on a student visa.</p> <p>Check Cricos Registration PRISMS FAQs</p>	<p>The Tuition Protection Service (TPS) is a placement and refund service for international students.</p> <p>Visit the TPS website for more information.</p>	<p>This Government initiative aims to provide data to institutions on the outcomes achieved by their agents, and to see the majority of agents recognised for their high standards and levels of service.</p> <p>More information</p>
<p>Standards</p>	<p>Information for Students</p>	<p>Schools Compliance</p>	<p>Further Information</p>
<p>The National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code 2018) sets nationally consistent standards for the delivery of courses to overseas students.</p> <p>Education institutions must comply with the National Code to maintain their registration to provide education services to international students.</p> <p>National Code 2018 factsheets</p>	<p>The Australian Government is committed to ensuring students have an excellent education experience in Australia.</p> <p>Its fact sheet for international students contains important information about their rights and responsibilities while studying in Australia.</p> <p>This fact sheet provides information on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – choosing and enrolling in a course of study; – support services available in Australia; – the rights and responsibilities of students on a student visa; – working in Australia; – making complaints and getting help. <p>For more information about studying in Australia visit Study in Australia.</p>	<p>The ESOS agency for Schools</p> <p>Under the ESOS legislation, the Secretary of the Department of Education is the ESOS agency for schools.</p> <p>The Department endeavours to perform the duties in a fair, transparent, efficient and effective way, consistent with the Regulator Performance Framework.</p> <p>The ESOS Agency for Schools RPF Report 2020-2021 contains assessment results against the Regulator Performance Framework (RPF)</p> <p>All feedback should be forwarded to the ESOS compliance mailbox.</p>	<p>Further information, including links and resources related to the ESOS legislative framework can be found here.</p>

SECTION 7

International Student Responsibilities

Student Responsibilities

Student Visa Requirements

Course Attendance

Course Progress

Deferring, Suspending or Cancelling Enrolment

Code of Conduct

International Student Responsibilities

As an overseas student on a visa, students have responsibility to:

- satisfy student visa conditions;
- provide all information to the School regarding contact details, including student mobile phone number, the address where they live and living arrangements, within seven days of arriving in Australia. Changes to the student’s address, mobile phone number, or email must be made known to the School within seven days of the change occurring. Overseas students with welfare and accommodation arrangements approved by the School are only permitted to change those arrangements with the written approval of the School. Speak with the School prior to moving or changing homestay arrangements;
- students who are living with a homestay host must inform the school directly if there are issues of concern regarding family, homestay host, safety, medical problems or accommodation;
- keep the School updated on any changes to medical and visa information;
- maintain a current passport, visa and Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC);
- meet the terms of the written agreement with your provider;
- follow your provider’s attendance policy;
- keep a copy of the written agreement supplied by Meriden and receipts of any payments of tuition fees or non-tuition fees;
- maintain attendance as required by your Visa conditions;
- maintain satisfactory course progress throughout your courses. This means that work must be completed as required and to a satisfactory standard. The Head of Student Wellbeing or Head of Junior School will monitor your course progress;
- if you are eighteen years of age, you must maintain your approved accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements.
- International Students Refund Policy
- International Student Transfers Policy
- International Students Marketing Policy
- Younger International Students Accommodation Arrangements Policy
- Younger International Students Policy
- Welfare and Accommodation Selecting, Screening and Monitoring Policy
- Monitoring Course Progress Policy
- Monitoring Course Attendance Policy

Students must abide by all Meriden Policies. Additionally, some policies relate specifically to international students and these are located on the School website in the International Students section under the Enrolment tab. They include:

- International Students Complaints Handling Policy
- Deferring, Suspending or Cancelling an International Student’s Enrolment Policy
- English Language Proficiency and Educational Qualifications Policy
- Recognition of Prior Learning Policy
- Recruitment of International Students Policy

Student Visa Requirements

International students must make satisfactory course progress and, where applicable, attendance as a condition of their student visa. Meriden will monitor students' course progress and attendance and will identify and offer support to those at risk of not meeting course requirements. The School must report international students who do not meet course progress or attendance requirements. If the School has assessed that the international student is not meeting course progress or attendance requirements, the School will issue the student a warning letter before issuing a Notice of Intention to Report letter notifying the student of the School's intention to report the student for breach of their visa and advising them of their right to access the School's internal complaints and appeals process. The School can only extend the student's enrolment in certain circumstances, e.g. compassionate and compelling circumstances supported by evidence.

Course Attendance

Meriden will monitor students' compliance with student visa conditions relating to attendance. To meet their visa requirements, students must attend at least 80% of the scheduled contact hours of the course in each semester of their enrolment.

Meriden monitors international students' course attendance by regularly checking the attendance register to assess whether students satisfy these requirements. Student attendance is recorded daily at each campus using an electronic attendance system.

Any absence from school (other than a school approved activity such as a school camp or excursion) is recorded as an absence.

Absences from the School of any duration without approval will be recorded as an absence. Late arrival to school will be recorded and will be included in the attendance calculations.

The student must provide a doctor's certificate for an absence of three days or more.

Any period of exclusion from class for suspension will not be included in the international student's attendance calculations.

The School will be proactive in notifying and counselling students who are at risk of failing to meet attendance requirements. If an international student does not attend school for more than five consecutive days without approval, or is at risk of not meeting attendance requirements, the School may decide to implement an intervention strategy before the international student's attendance drops below 80%.

Meriden considers an international student at risk of not meeting minimum course attendance if, after each term:

- the international student has not achieved at least 85% attendance of scheduled course hours;
- despite intervention strategies, the international student has continued to have absences that are not due to compassionate and compelling circumstances.

Meriden will report students under the ESOS Act who have breached the attendance requirements. Meriden will notify the DHA via PRISMS of the student not achieving satisfactory course attendance as soon as practicable where:

- the international student does not access the complaints and appeals process within twenty (20) working days;

- the international student withdraws from the complaints and appeals process;
- the complaints and appeals process results in a decision for the School.

Students will not be reported for failing to meet the 80% threshold where the student produces documentary evidence clearly demonstrating compassionate or compelling circumstances, e.g. medical illness supported by a medical certificate.

The following definitions are provided to further assist international students to understand:

1. “Compassionate and compelling circumstances”. These could include:
 - medical illness or injury which requires hospitalisation or impedes activities of daily living
 - a mental health condition of the student or a close relative that results in hospitalisation or functional impairment
 - death of a close relative
 - major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country which requires immediate emergency travel

- an adverse experience, e.g. being a witness to, or victim of, a crime that has impacted on the student (these cases should be where possible supported by police or psychologist reports);

- inability to begin studying on the course commencement date due to delay in receiving a student visa.

2. For other circumstances to be considered as compassionate or compelling, evidence would need to be provided to show that these were having an impact on the international student’s progress through a course.

3. Expected duration is the length of time it takes to complete the course studying full time. This is the same as the registered course duration on CRICOS.

4. School day is any day on which the School has scheduled course contact hours. Students are advised of the term dates for each year well in advance. It should be clearly understood therefore, that students are required to attend from the first scheduled day of each term and to attend for the whole day of the last day of term.

Copies of Meriden’s Monitoring Course Progress Policy and Monitoring Course Attendance Policy can be found on Meriden’s website and intranet (after enrolment).

Course Progress

The details of all the Secondary courses offered at Meriden contained in the Stage Booklets are available from the Enrolments Department.

The school year is divided into two semesters each of two terms. There are two main reporting periods – Semester 1 and Semester 2 – with the academic year commencing late in January and concluding mid-December. Vacation periods occur between each term.

The Dean of Academic Care, Head of Tertiary Pathways and Dean of Studies are available to assist international students with the selection of suitable subjects and courses. Meriden staff may offer advice to students by assessing their individual needs and ability and matching these with the educational outcomes for the available subjects and courses.

The School will implement intervention strategies for any student at risk of not meeting satisfactory course progress requirements. Where a student has been assessed as not achieving satisfactory course progress, the School will notify the parents and student and issue a warning letter regarding unsatisfactory course progress. If no improvement occurs, the School will issue the parents with a Notice of Intention to Report the student to the Department of Home Affairs for not achieving satisfactory course progress. The written notice will inform the parents of the process to appeal this decision and that the student has twenty (20) working days in which to do so.

YEARS K – 6

Satisfactory course progress for a primary student would be characterised by a student meeting the Stage Outcomes at the corresponding year level. This is decided in consultation with the Head of Junior School, Dean of Academic Care, Year Coordinator and classroom teacher.

YEARS 7 – 12

Satisfactory course progress for a secondary student is:

- meeting their Course Outcomes in each of their subjects; and
- making a genuine attempt at assessment tasks that contribute in excess of 50% of the available marks.

Meriden considers a student at risk of not meeting minimum course progress requirements if, after the first six months:

YEARS K – 6

- the student is failing to meet any of the Stage Outcomes. This is decided in consultation with the Head of Junior School, Dean of Academic Care, Year Coordinator and classroom teacher.

YEARS 7 – 12

- the student:
 - is failing to meet any of the Course Outcomes in any of their subjects. The Course Outcomes include assessment tasks and indicated classwork. This is decided in consultation with the Head of Teaching and Learning, Dean of Academic Care, Head of Department, as well as the EAL/D teacher.

- is at risk of not completing assessment tasks that contribute in excess of 50% of the available marks
- has not submitted an assessment task, or has submitted a task after the due date without a Doctor's Certificate or equivalent
- is failing to meet these requirements despite appropriate intervention, teacher assistance and/or support from the International Student Coordinator or Dean of Academic Care.

Copies of Meriden's Monitoring Course Progress, Attendance and Duration Policy, Unsatisfactory Course Progress or Attendance Policy and International Student Intervention Strategy Policy can be found on Meriden's website and intranet (after enrolment).

Deferring, Suspending or Cancelling Enrolment

An international student's enrolment can be deferred, suspended or cancelled. This may be initiated by either the student for compassionate and compelling circumstances, or the School for a student's breach of visa conditions, failure to pay fees, misbehaviour, or other breaches of School policies. A copy of the School's Deferring, Suspending or Cancelling an International Student's Enrolment Policy can be found on the School's intranet.

Code of Conduct

The student must:

- comply with the School’s rules and policies and with all lawful directions of Meriden staff;
- behave in accordance with the School’s values and not do anything that may bring the School into disrepute;
- wear the school uniform neatly and properly while at the School, at all school events and when travelling to and from the School;
- not possess, supply or consume any alcohol, vapes, illegal drugs or cigarettes at School, while travelling to or from School, or during any school-related activity.

Students who fail to respond to counsel and discipline may be asked to withdraw from the School.





SECTION 8

Support

Support Services

Safety

Useful Links and Resources

Employment – Fair Work

Support Services

There are many support services available for international students. These include services provided by a range of government agencies and non-government organisations.

Study NSW

Study NSW is a State government agency that supports international students in NSW. They provide a wide range of free programs to help live, study and work in NSW. You can text 0477 131 114 or find out more information about the services at www.study.nsw.gov.au

Free Legal Advice

Redfern Legal Centre provides free, confidential legal advice to international students living in NSW.

International students in NSW can get advice about issues such as housing problems, fines, debts, car accidents, employment, discrimination, family law, domestic violence, and complaints about colleges or universities. The centre can also advise how these problems affect student visas.

Visit the Redfern Legal Centre <https://rlc.org.au/our-services/international-students>

Redfern Legal Centre has made a film to highlight the legal problems many international students face when studying in Australia. International students are away from their usual support networks and many have a lack of understanding of Australian laws.

To access the service:

- call (02) 9698 7645.
- to call using a free telephone interpreter, call the Translating and Interpreting Service on 131 450.

Redfern Legal Centre can make arrangements to advise international students living anywhere in NSW.

Counselling and Support Services

There are a number of government and non-government providers of free counselling, crisis support, suicide prevention, relationship support, domestic violence and mental health services. A person can ask to remain anonymous when accessing these services. Many of these services can be accessed over the phone, through web chat, email, online forums and various information resources.

In an emergency, such as a life-threatening situation, car crash or fire, call 000 (triple zero).

Lifeline

Call 13 11 14 to access 24-hour crisis support and suicide prevention services. Visit the Lifeline website to find out more: <https://www.lifeline.org.au/>

Beyond Blue

Beyond Blue provides 24-hour support for mental health issues including anxiety, depression and suicide.

You can get support through web chat, email and an online forum on the Beyond Blue website: <https://www.beyondblue.org.au> or over the phone at 1300 22 4636.

Kids Helpline

Kids Helpline is available to talk about feelings you have about your studies and personal relationships.

This service is targeted at people aged between five and twenty-five years.

Call 1800 551 800 if you would like to talk to someone or visit the Kids Helpline website to find out more: <https://kidshelpline.com.au/>

Poison Information Centre

The Poison Information Centre provides advice on the management, assessment and treatment of poisonous products including non-prescription pharmaceuticals, household and industrial chemicals, and plant and animal venom.

Contact 131 126 if you need information about poisonous products.

Sexual Assault Counselling Services

If you, or anyone you know, has experienced or is at risk of sexual assault, call one of the state-based sexual assault counselling services. These provide free twenty-four-hour, seven days per week telephone counselling services (anonymous if you prefer). Many are connected to hospitals or government health departments to help you if the assault has left you with injuries.

Search online for 'rape crisis centre in Sydney' to contact a counselling service.

Gamble Aware NSW

Gamble Aware NSW provides free, confidential advice and support for those affected by gambling.

To find out more information about Gamble Aware and its free services that are provided in different languages, please call 1800 858 858 or visit www.gambleaware.nsw.gov.au

NSW Fair Trading

NSW Fair Trading is the state government agency that resolves disputes between consumers and businesses on issues such as shopping, refunds, renting, cars, buying and selling property, home building, product safety, scams and more. This information aims to help you understand your consumer rights and responsibilities in NSW.

Visit the NSW Fair Trading website: <https://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/help-centre/youth-and-seniors/youth/international-students>

Commonwealth Ombudsman

The Commonwealth Ombudsman can investigate complaints from international students about private schools, institutes and universities in Australia.

<https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/>
https://www.ombudsman.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0019/27460/02616-OSO-Making-a-complaint_web.pdf

NSW Ombudsman

The NSW Ombudsman is an independent and impartial integrity agency, accountable to the people of NSW.

The NSW Ombudsman can investigate complaints about NSW Government agencies, local council or community services including universities, TAFE colleges and public schools.

For more information (including translations in other languages) visit the NSW Ombudsman's website: <https://www.ombo.nsw.gov.au/>

Council of International Students Australia

The Council of International Students Australia (CISA) is the national peak student representative organisation for international students studying at postgraduate, undergraduate, private college, TAFE, ELICOS and foundation level.

Safety

Reporting a Crime

If you need to report a crime that is not an emergency, dial 131 444 for the Police Assistance Line, or ask a senior member of staff to contact the local police station for you. You can also report a crime in person at your nearest police station.

Crime Stoppers NSW

To provide crime information anonymously, contact Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.

Road Safety

In Australia, cars drive on the left-hand side of the road, which may be different from your country, so it is important to pay attention to the direction that traffic is flowing and follow road safety rules:

- always look right, left and right again to check for traffic before crossing the road;
- avoid stepping out on the road from behind a parked car;
- never assume an approaching driver or rider will stop for you;
- avoid walking around while wearing earphones;
- look up from your phone when crossing the road;
- always cross at a pedestrian crossing or at traffic lights with pedestrian indicators;
- always wear helmets when riding bikes.

Personal Safety

While Australia is generally a safe place to live and study, it is still important that you take precautions to reduce the chance of an incident occurring.

GOING OUT

When you are going out with friends or by yourself, here are some simple things to consider:

- always plan your trip home, especially at night. You may want to pre-book a taxi or arrange transport with a friend. Always make sure you have enough money to get home;
- try to travel with a friend or in a group;
- keep your bag and belongings close to your body and where you can always see them;
- never hitch hike;
- if you don't have a mobile phone, make sure you have a phone card or money to make the phone call;
- where available, use pedestrian walkways and cross the street at pedestrian crossings or lights;
- leave valuables at home if you don't need to take them with you. This includes jewellery, electronic equipment such as iPads and your passport;
- don't carry large amounts of money with you. You can access your money at ATMs found in shops, supermarkets, petrol stations, shopping malls, bars, shop fronts and many other public places.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Public transport is reliable and widely used in Australia, particularly in metro and urban areas. A number of security measures have been implemented to maximise the safety of public transport users including security officers and guards, help points, good lighting and security cameras. However, you should still use caution when travelling on public transport. Following are some tips to remember:

- avoid isolated bus, rail and tram stops;
- check transport timetables to avoid long waits, particularly at night;
- train carriages nearest the driver or guard are lit and safest at night;
- if you find yourself left in a train carriage on your own or with only one other person you may feel more comfortable moving to another carriage.

CITY OF SYDNEY SAFETY TIPS

City of Sydney Council worked with the NSW Police to put together personal safety tips in a variety of community languages to help you avoid crime and remain safe during your stay in Sydney.

TEN TIPS FOR STAYING SAFE

1. PLAN YOUR TRAVEL

If you are planning a night out, be sure to check the times of the last train, bus or ferry, or book a taxi. Let someone know where you are going and what time you plan to return home.

2. ATM SAFETY

Be aware of others around you when using ATMs (Automatic Teller Machines). Try not to use them at night or in poorly lit areas, and always keep your PIN hidden.

3. KEEP BAGS SAFE

Carry your bag close to you with the clasp facing inwards. If someone grabs your bag, let it go – your safety is more important. Report the theft to the police.

4. TRAVELLING AT NIGHT

It is always best to travel with friends but, if you do need to travel alone, let people know where you are going and sit close to the driver or other passengers.

5. CARRY A TAXI NUMBER

Always take a taxi phone number and some money, just in case your plans change unexpectedly.

6. TAKE A LICENSED TAXI

If you are not sure how to find a licensed taxi, ask Reception. Sit in the back of the taxi, directly behind the driver if possible.

7. CONCEAL VALUABLES

Keep items such as your mobile phone and wallet out of sight.

8. AVOID CONFRONTATION

If you are being threatened or hassled, it is safer to walk away.

9. WALKING ALONE

Try to avoid walking alone at night, but if you must:

- stick to well-lit, busy streets where you feel safe, and walk confidently;
- avoid listening to headphones or talking on your mobile so you can stay fully focused on your surroundings;
- avoid dark, isolated areas and do not risk taking an unfamiliar short cut. Remember, cars drive on the left in Australia, and take extra care when crossing the roads.

10. DRINKING AND DRUGS

Never accept drinks from strangers or leave your drink unattended, to avoid the risk of your drink being ‘spiked’ with drugs or alcohol. If you are with someone who has had so much to drink as to be unwell or passed-out, have had their drink spiked or taken drugs, get them to the nearest hospital or call 000 immediately.

Using the Internet

When using the internet you should protect yourself against spam, online scams like ‘phishing’, online bullying and identity theft. You can find out more information about protecting yourself online at <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/12-your-right-information-accessing-information-through-internet>

Many Australian internet service providers also offer guidance, so check their websites as well.

Scams

Australia is facing an epidemic of scams. Scammers are constantly looking for new ways to deceive victims. This includes fake websites, misleading customers about the origin of a call, using company call centre hold music to sound authentic. Scammers are using increasingly sophisticated tactics to intimidate and steal from international students living in Australia. International students should act cautiously if something feels wrong.

<https://www.education.gov.au/international-education/resources/scams-targeting-chinese-students>

Home Safety

Safety at home is important, no matter where you live. Here are some tips to help keep you and your home safe:

- always keep your doors locked when you are home and when you go out;
- lock windows when you go out, or in rooms you are not in while at home;
- do not let strangers into your house;
- be careful of the information you give out to strangers through the internet, on social networking sites, or over the phone;
- if you are not at home or are going on holidays do not make this information available to strangers;

- smoke alarms will alert you to smoke on the property, so don't remove the batteries or tamper with them. If you live in a rental property, hostel or hotel it is the law to have smoke alarms fitted. If your property doesn't have them, talk to your landlord or real estate agent;
- if you come home to find evidence of a break in (broken window or door lock), contact the police from a safe location.

Sun and Water Safety

The Australian sun can be very hot and may be stronger than what you are used to in your home country. There are some steps you can take to protect your skin:

- wear sunscreen protection (such as SPF50+ water resistant sun cream) and apply before you go outside;
- apply sunscreen at least 25-30 minutes before swimming and ensure you re-apply sunscreen after swimming;
- wear a hat and UV protective sunglasses;
- avoid spending long periods of time in the sun between 10am and 3pm, as this is when the sun is strongest;
- make sure you follow these tips even when it isn't sunny – you can still get burnt on cloudy or overcast days.

Australia has many beautiful beaches and waterways, but it is important to take care when swimming. Here are some tips for staying safe in the water:

- never dive into a body of water if you are not sure how deep it is;
- only swim at patrolled beaches (a beach where there are lifeguards on duty – look for signs) and always swim between the red and yellow flags;
- many Australian beaches have 'rips'. These are strong underwater currents that can be hard to spot but which can draw you away from the shore quickly. If you do find yourself in a rip, try not to panic or swim against it. Stay with your surfboard or floating device if you have one. Swim gently parallel to the beach out of the rip zone, or wave and call for assistance from lifeguards or other swimmers and surfers.

For more information on water safety visit the Surf Life Saving website: <https://sls.com.au/>

Fire Safety

Fire awareness is essential in Australia, even in city and urban areas.

If you experience a fire emergency, follow these steps:

1. Call 000 from any phone or mobile – it is a free call even from a mobile phone.
2. Say the word "fire" to the operator.
3. If you do not speak English, tell the operator your language and wait for instructions.
4. Answer the questions the operator asks.

TIPS FOR FIRE PREVENTION

Following are some tips to help prevent fires:

- make sure your house or room has a working smoke alarm;
- wiring and electrical devices can overheat from too much use, especially in older buildings, so don't overload power boards or double adaptors;
- keep electric heaters and radiators at least a metre from your bed, furniture or any curtains;
- remember to turn off all appliances when finished cooking. Most household fires occur in the kitchen when grease, oil or other flammable cooking materials are left on the stove and forgotten.

WHAT TO DO IF THERE IS A FIRE

In case there is a fire at home, plan a way to get out in advance. Don't block doorways or windows, and make sure you can open your windows – they can get stuck in older buildings. Have a specific place for keys and your phone, so if you need to leave in a hurry you know exactly where they are and can call emergency services.

If you are out in the bush when there is a fire, pay attention to media reports on television, radio and internet, which tell you when you should evacuate the area.

Personal Support – Sexual Assault

24 HOUR CONTACT NUMBERS

In an emergency, phone 000 or your local police station. Otherwise you can phone your local sexual assault service. In a non-emergency you can contact the NSW Police Force Customer Assistance Unit on 1800 622 571.

NSW Sexual Violence Helpline
1800 424 017

Full Stop Australia
(Sexual, domestic and family violence) 1800 385 578
<https://fullstop.org.au/>

Child Protection Helpline
13 21 11

Lifeline
13 11 14

Domestic Violence Line
1800 656 463

Kids Helpline
1800 551 800 or online at
<https://kidshelpline.com.au/>

Westmead Hospital 24 Hour Line
02 9828 5217

Royal Prince Alfred Hospital (Camperdown) 24 Hour Line
02 9515 6111

Other important contacts

If you are an adult sexual assault victim, you can contact your local Sexual Assault Service, based in your Area Health Service, for help with crisis counselling as well as medical and ongoing counselling needs, help in reporting a sexual assault to the police and preparing for any court hearings or making a victim impact statement. These services are free and confidential.

A centre in the Inner West area is **Sexual Assault Services Bankstown**.

After hours 02 9828 3000
or for other areas visit:
<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/parvan/sexualassault/Pages/health-sas-services.aspx>

Useful Links and Resources

As an international student you may find these web links useful.

DEPARTMENT OF HOME AFFAIRS	<p>Check your visa details in VEVO and find more information on living in Australia on a visa at the Department of Home Affairs website: https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/</p> <p>Update your ImmiAccount at https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/immiaccount</p> <p>Understand your workplace rights at https://www.fairwork.gov.au/tools-and-resources/fact-sheets/rights-and-obligations/visa-holders-and-migrant-workers-workplace-rights-and-entitlements</p> <p>Update your details (including passport) at https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/change-in-situation/passport-details</p>
FAMILY SAFETY	<p>Learn about Australian laws concerning domestic and family violence, rights of family members and other important information for families coming to live in Australia from the Department of Social Services website. https://www.dss.gov.au/family-safety-pack</p>
LIVING AND STUDYING IN AUSTRALIA	<p>Study Australia is the official Australian Government site for studying in Australia. This website will prove invaluable to students wishing to study in Australia. It contains a wide range of information covering aspects such as: culture, history, money matters, safety and courses. https://www.studyaustralia.gov.au/</p>
AUSTRALIAN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION	<p>The National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 is a legislative instrument made under the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 and sets nationally consistent standards to support providers to deliver quality education and training to overseas students. National Code of Practice 2018 https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2017L01182</p>
EDUCATION SERVICES FOR OVERSEAS STUDENTS (ESOS)	<p>The ESOS legislation makes sure training providers meet nationally consistent standards in education delivery, facilities and services and provides tuition fee protection for international students. Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 Education Services for Overseas Students Framework</p>

International students

Like many international students, you may get a part-time or casual job to help pay your living expenses while you study in Australia. It is important that you know your rights in the workplace and rules for your visa.

Your workplace rights and protections

All people working in Australia have basic rights and protections in the workplace, including minimum pay and conditions. You continue to have the same entitlements and protections under the Fair Work Act as other employees regardless of your migration status under the [Migration Act 1958](#). The Fair Work Ombudsman makes sure that these rights are protected and enforced fairly under Australia's workplace laws.

If you're a migrant worker in breach of your visa conditions, you can still ask for our help to receive your minimum entitlements. We are an Australian Government agency who helps regulate Australian workplaces. You can't get into trouble or have your visa cancelled for contacting us to ask for information about your pay or other workplace rights.

We have an arrangement with Home Affairs to support visa holders who come to us for help. Under this arrangement, visa holders can seek help without fear of visa cancellation, even if they've breached their work-related visa conditions. For more information see our [Visa protections - Assurance Protocol page](#) at fairwork.gov.au/assuranceprotocol

This fact sheet will help you understand your basic workplace rights, where to obtain further information, and how to seek assistance from the [Fair Work Ombudsman](#). For more information, contact the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94 or visit fairwork.gov.au

All references to an award or agreement in this fact sheet include modern awards, enterprise agreements, and award or agreement-based transitional instruments.

What is the difference between full-time, part-time and casual work?

Full-time employees

Full-time employees generally work 38 hours per week and receive pay for a full week's work as well as conditions like paid annual leave and sick leave. A full-time worker is also entitled to notice of termination of their employment. This means that if your employer no longer wants to employ you, they have to provide a period of notice (or payment instead of the notice period) depending on how long you have worked there.

Part-time employees

Part-time employees work regular hours each week, but less than the 38 hours of full-time employees. Part-time employees get the same minimum entitlements (such as sick leave and annual leave) as a full-time employee, but on a pro-rata basis.

Casual employees

An employee is casual if:

- they're offered a job
- the offer doesn't include a firm advance commitment that the work will continue indefinitely with an agreed pattern of work
- they accept the offer knowing there is no firm advance commitment and become an employee.

A regular pattern of work doesn't automatically mean the employee is permanent. Casual employees do not get paid sick leave or annual leave and are not usually entitled to notice of termination. This means a casual employee can be terminated at any time. Find more information about [casual employees](#) at fairwork.gov.au/casual

Fixed term employees

Some employees may also be hired on a fixed term contract. A fixed term contract is a contract of employment that has a set end date (for example, the contract ends after a set period of time or a season). Employees on fixed term contracts who are engaged on a full-time or part-time basis have similar conditions and entitlements as permanent (ongoing) employees. Find more information on

[fixed term contracts](http://fairwork.gov.au/fixed-term-employees) at fairwork.gov.au/fixed-term-employees

Regardless of your type of employment, you must have permission to work in Australia and hold a valid work visa. It is important you understand the rules of your work visa before starting a job, including the number of hours you are allowed to work each week. For information on visa requirements, contact the [Department of Home Affairs website](http://www.homeaffairs.gov.au) at homeaffairs.gov.au or phone 13 18 81.

What are my minimum rights and conditions at work?

All employees in the national workplace relations system receive basic minimum entitlements known as the National Employment Standards (NES).

The NES include:

- maximum weekly hours of work
- requests for flexible working arrangements
- parental leave and related entitlements
- annual leave
- sick and carer's leave (also known as personal/carer's leave), compassionate leave, and family and domestic violence leave
- community service leave
- long service leave
- public holidays
- notice of termination and redundancy pay
- superannuation (super)
- the Fair Work Information Statement and Casual Employment Information Statement
- the right for casual employees to become permanent employees in some circumstances.

Please note, only certain NES entitlements apply to casual employees. Find out more about the [NES](http://fairwork.gov.au/nas) at fairwork.gov.au/nas

Your minimum rights and conditions at work may be set by a legal document like an award, an agreement, or a contract of employment. Ask your employer which one applies to you to find out how you are affected.

If an award or agreement does not apply, all employees in the national workplace relations system will receive basic minimum pay, conditions

and protections under Commonwealth workplace laws.

If you are asked to sign any type of document agreeing to specific work conditions, make sure you read it very carefully and understand it before signing. Keep a copy for your records. You should not feel undue pressure to sign any agreement with your employer. If you do, contact the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94.

Your award or agreement should tell you things like:

- your minimum rate of pay – your employer can pay you more than the minimum if they want to, but they can't pay you less
- when you will be paid – you should be paid at least once a month
- if you are entitled to more money (such as penalty rates) for working nights, weekends or public holidays, or overtime pay for working outside your regular hours
- if you should be paid an allowance for doing certain tasks
- the minimum number of hours per shift you can be rostered and paid for
- when you should be taking breaks during your shift
- how much notice you need to give your employer if you want to resign from your job
- the right for casual employees to become permanent employees.

Find more information about [awards and agreements](http://fairwork.gov.au/employment-conditions) at fairwork.gov.au/employment-conditions

What is not okay at work?

- Unpaid work trials for any period beyond what's reasonably required for you to demonstrate the skills required for the job. What's reasonable will vary depending on the nature and complexity of the job but could range from an hour to one shift.
- Not being paid for meetings or training and the time you spend opening and closing the business.
- Not being given a pay slip – you should receive a pay slip within one day of being paid.
- Receiving goods or services instead of pay.

- Being pressured, forced or threatened to sign a workplace agreement.
- Being sacked because you were sick or injured.
- Being discriminated against, including not being hired, or being sacked, because of a protected attribute – see our [Discrimination page](#) for more information at fairwork.gov.au/discrimination
- [Pay secrecy](#) – you have the right to talk about (or not talk about) your current or past pay, and ask other employees the same thing. For more information go to fairwork.gov.au/pay-secrecy
- [Bullying or sexual harassment in the workplace](#) – everyone has the right not to be bullied, sexually harassed or discriminated against at work. See fairwork.gov.au/bullying-harassment

There are other general workplace protections that all employees have. For more information see our [Protections at work fact sheet](#) at fairwork.gov.au/factsheets

If you feel like any of these things are happening to you, you should contact the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94 for assistance.

Can my employer deduct money from my wages?

Your employer can only deduct money from your wages if the deduction is reasonable and:

- you agree in writing and it's mainly for your benefit
- it's allowed by a law, a court order, or by the Fair Work Commission
- it's allowed under your award, or
- it's allowed under your registered agreement and you agree to it.

For example, if you accidentally break something, your employer can't deduct money from your wages.

Even if the deduction is authorised under a term in an award, registered agreement or contract of employment, the term has no effect if:

- the deduction is directly, or indirectly, for the employer's benefit, and is unreasonable, or

- the employee is under the age of 18 and the employee's parent or guardian has not authorised the deduction in writing.

Employee authorised deductions

Your employer can only make employee authorised deductions where the deductions are mainly for your benefit.

You can make a one-off written authorisation that gives your employer permission to deduct money from your pay, even where the amount can change from year to year.

An employee's written agreement to a deduction must be genuine and can be withdrawn in writing at any time. You can't be forced to agree to a deduction.

Find more information about [deductions](#) at fairwork.gov.au/deductions

If you are concerned about deductions from your wages, contact the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94.

Can my employer pay me in cash?

Your employer may choose to pay you using cash, cheque, money or postal order, or through electronic funds transfer into your bank account.

It is acceptable for your employer to pay you in cash as long as tax has been taken from your earnings and sent to the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

Generally, you should also be receiving superannuation. You should check your pay slip each time you are paid to make sure this is being done.

'Cash in hand' is a term used to describe cash payments where tax has not been taken out – this is against the law.

Contact the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94 if you are unsure about your pay arrangements.

My employer wants me to sign an individual flexibility arrangement, what do I do?

Employers and employees can enter into individual flexibility arrangements (IFAs) which alter the way a modern award or enterprise agreement applies to an employee. This can change the way some entitlements, such as penalty rates or allowances, apply in your employment.

An employer can't force you to enter into an IFA. If you feel that you are being pressured to do so, you should contact the Fair Work Ombudsman.

Fair Work Infoline: 13 13 94

www.fairwork.gov.au

In order to create an IFA, the employer is required to ensure that you are better off overall than you would be normally under the award or agreement. This may mean that you receive additional benefits in one area, to compensate for those changed in another area. If you believe that you are not better off overall, you should not enter into the IFA. If you wish to seek further information, contact the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94.

Am I an employee or independent contractor?

Employees work for another person under a contract of employment in return for regular pay. They will usually also be subject to an award or agreement.

Independent contracting is where one business works for another business. Generally, independent contractors will use their own equipment, choose the hours they work, and decide how the work is done. This is different than working on a fixed term contract.

Some employers disguise employment relationships as an independent contracting arrangement to avoid paying legal minimum rates of pay, tax, and entitlements like annual leave and sick leave. This is called 'sham contracting' and it is against the law.

Find more information about [independent contractors](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/contractors), at [fairwork.gov.au/contractors](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/contractors)

When should I contact the Fair Work Ombudsman?

If you believe you are not receiving your minimum rights and conditions at work or having workplace issues, contact the Fair Work Ombudsman for free information and advice. Remember, visa holders can seek help without fear of visa cancellation, even if they've breached their work-related visa conditions. For more information, see our [Visa protections - Assurance Protocol page](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/assuranceprotocol) at [fairwork.gov.au/assuranceprotocol](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/assuranceprotocol)

CONTACT US

Fair Work Online: www.fairwork.gov.au

Fair Work Infoline: **13 13 94**

Need language help?

Contact the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on **13 14 50**

Hearing & speech assistance

Call through the National Relay Service (NRS):

For TTY: **13 36 77**

Ask for the Fair Work Infoline **13 13 94**

Speak & Listen: **1300 555 727**

Ask for the Fair Work Infoline **13 13 94**

The Fair Work Ombudsman is committed to providing you with advice that you can rely on. The information contained in this fact sheet is general in nature. If you are unsure about how it applies to your situation you can call our Infoline on 13 13 94 or speak with a union, industry association or a workplace relations professional.

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Fair Work Infoline: **13 13 94**

www.fairwork.gov.au



Life in Australia

Australian values and principles

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Portfolio Media and Engagement Branch
Department of Home Affairs
PO Box 25
BELCONNEN ACT 2616

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Background information

This information is intended for people who are applying for a visa to live in Australia, either permanently or on a temporary basis. It provides an overview of Australia, its history, way of life and the values we share.

Australian values include:

- respect for the freedom and dignity of the individual;
- freedom of religion (including the freedom not to follow a particular religion), freedom of speech, and freedom of association;
- commitment to the rule of law, which means that all people are subject to the law and should obey it;
- parliamentary democracy, whereby our laws are determined by parliaments elected by the people, those laws being paramount and overriding any other inconsistent religious or secular “laws”;
- equality of opportunity for all people, regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, race, or national or ethnic origin;
- a ‘fair go’ for all that embraces
 - mutual respect;
 - tolerance;
 - compassion for those in need;
 - equality of opportunity for all; and
- the English language as the national language, and as an important unifying element of Australian society.

These values are outlined in the **Australian Values Statement**.

Australian Values Statement

Most visa applicants must sign an Australian Values Statement, acknowledging Australian values and undertaking to act in accordance with them.

Applicants who need to sign an Australian Values Statement will be informed of this when lodging an application. Where a visa application requires that you sign an Australian Values Statement, it will be set out in the application form. The application form will also advise age requirements for signing the Australian Values Statement (this varies depending on the type of application being lodged).

Before signing the Australian Values Statement, applicants are encouraged to have read, or had explained to them, information on values provided by the Australian Government. The information within this booklet will help applicants understand Australian values before they sign the Australian Values Statement.

People currently outside Australia who are applying for a Humanitarian visa are required to sign the Australian Values Statement during an interview. These applicants will not be expected to have read this booklet, as the contents will be explained to them at interview. This different process recognises the difficult circumstances often faced by Humanitarian visa applicants outside Australia.

If you are approved under the offshore Humanitarian Programme, you are encouraged to attend an Australian Cultural Orientation (AUSCO) Programme before leaving for Australia. The AUSCO Programme provides information about travelling to and settling in Australia and is held in various locations in South Asia, South East Asia, Africa and the Middle East. Additional courses are provided in other locations as needed.

The **Australian Values Statement** is as follows:

For all relevant visa applicants (including temporary visa applicants)

I confirm that I have read, or had explained to me, information provided by the Australian Government on Australian society and values.

I understand that Australian society values:

- *respect for the freedom and dignity of the individual;*
- *freedom of religion (including the freedom not to follow a particular religion), freedom of speech, and freedom of association;*
- *commitment to the rule of law, which means that all people are subject to the law and should obey it;*
- *parliamentary democracy whereby our laws are determined by parliaments elected by the people, those laws being paramount and overriding any other inconsistent religious or secular “laws”;*
- *equality of opportunity for all people, regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, race, or national or ethnic origin;*
- *a ‘fair go’ for all that embraces:*
 - *mutual respect;*
 - *tolerance;*
 - *compassion for those in need;*
 - *equality of opportunity for all;*
- *the English language as the national language, and as an important unifying element of Australian society.*

I undertake to conduct myself in accordance with these values of Australian society during my stay in Australia and to obey the laws of Australia.

For permanent visa applicants, the above, plus:

I undertake to make reasonable efforts to learn the English language, if it is not my native language.

I understand that, if in the future I meet the legal qualifications for becoming an Australian citizen and my application is approved, I will need to pledge my loyalty to Australia and its people.

If you are lodging a paper application form, you will need to sign the Australian Values Statement.

For online applications, the main visa applicant will be asked to ‘agree’ to the Australian Values Statement. If the online application includes dependent applicants who have reached a certain age, the main visa applicant will also need to agree that any secondary applicants have been advised of, and agree to, the Australian Values Statement. In these circumstances, the main visa applicant is making the statement on behalf of themselves and their dependents.

Australian Values and Principles

Australia's shared values, based on freedom, respect, fairness and equality of opportunity, are central to our community remaining a secure, prosperous and peaceful place to live and have helped Australia to become one of the world's most successful multicultural societies.

While shared to some extent by many other countries, these values have been adapted to Australia's unique setting, shaped through the settlement in Australia of millions of people from all over the world. Although they may be expressed differently by different people, their meaning remains the same. These values define and shape our country and culture and are a reason why so many people want to become Australian.

Australia's first inhabitants were the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, who have the oldest continuous cultures and traditions in the world. The first migrants were mostly from Britain and Ireland and this Anglo-Celtic heritage has been a significant and continuing influence on Australia's history, culture and political traditions. Subsequent immigration waves have brought people from all around the world, all of whom have made their own unique contributions to Australia and its way of life.

The statement of shared values does not seek to make everyone the same with the same beliefs. These values have been promoted and discussed by Australians over many years and have helped Australia to welcome millions of people from many ethnic groups and traditions.

The aim is to help new residents and prospective Australian citizens understand the basic values that have helped to create and sustain our successful multicultural society. In Australia, people have many freedoms. However, everyone is required to obey Australia's laws, which have been put in place by democratically elected governments to maintain an orderly, free and safe society.

Our values

Respect for the freedom and dignity of the individual

In Australia, individuals must respect the freedom and dignity of others, and their opinions and choices.

It is against the law to be violent towards another person. Violence of any kind, including verbal and physical abuse, is illegal. Australians believe in peaceful disagreement and above all the right to be safe and free from violence and intimidation.

Freedom of religion

Australia has no official national religion and people in Australia are free to follow any religion they choose. The government treats all citizens equally, whatever their religion or beliefs. However, religious practices must not break Australian laws. People in Australia may also choose not to follow a religion.

Religious laws have no legal status in Australia. Australian law must be followed by everyone in Australia, including where it is different from religious laws.

Religious intolerance is not acceptable in Australian society. All people should be provided equal opportunity to pursue their goals and interests regardless of their ethnicity or religion as long as they are obeying Australian law.

Freedom of speech

People in Australia should be able to express their ideas freely, so long as it is within the law. In Australia, people are free to meet in public or private places for social or political discussion. People are also free to say and write what they think about any topic and to discuss their ideas with others. Newspapers, television and radio outlets have the same freedom.

It is never acceptable to promote violence against another person or group of people (such as because of their culture, ethnicity, religion or background) because it is against Australian values and law. It is also illegal to make false allegations or encourage others to break the law. Other people's freedom of speech and freedom of expression must be respected, as long as such expression is lawful.

Freedom of association

In Australia, people are free to join or leave any group voluntarily as long as it is within the law. People are free to join any legal organisation, such as a political party, trade union, religious, cultural or social group. Individuals cannot be compelled to join an organisation or forced to leave it.

Australians can gather freely with others, including to protest against a government action or an organisation. Australians are allowed to peacefully protest against the actions of the government, because tolerance of peaceful public protest is an essential part of democracy. However, all protests must be within the law. This means they must be peaceful, and must not injure any person or damage property.

Commitment to the Rule of Law

All Australians are protected by our laws and legal systems. Australians recognise the importance of laws in maintaining a peaceful and orderly society.

Under the Rule of Law, all Australians are equal in relation to the law and no person or group is above the law. In Australia, everybody should obey the law and not break it at any time, otherwise you will face penalties. You should follow the law even if no one is watching.

Australian laws apply to all people in Australia. This means regardless of your background or culture, you must follow Australian laws.

Parliamentary democracy

Australia's system of government is a parliamentary democracy. Our laws are determined by parliaments elected by the people. This means that Australian citizens are involved in how the country is governed. The power of the government comes from the Australian people because Australian citizens vote for people to represent them in parliament.

Equality of opportunity for all people

Australian society values the equal rights of all people, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, race, or national or ethnic origin. There are a number of laws in Australia that protect a person from being treated differently from others.

The law is applied in Australia so that people from different backgrounds are not given preferential treatment.

Men and women have equal rights in Australia and should be provided equality of opportunity to pursue their goals and interests. It is against the law to discriminate against a person because of their gender.

Both men and women have the right to make their own independent choices about personal matters, such as marriage and religion, and are protected by the law from intimidation or violence.

A 'fair go' for all

In Australia, we believe that everyone deserves a 'fair go' and people should not be limited by any kind of class distinction. Everyone, regardless of their background, is given an equal opportunity to achieve success in life. Ensuring that everyone has the same legal rights is an important aspect of fairness in Australian society. What someone achieves in life should be a result of their hard work and talents.

Many new migrants in Australia have become leaders in business, their profession, the arts, public service and sport through their hard work and enterprise.

Mutual Respect and tolerance for others

Australia values the principles of mutual respect and tolerance. This means listening to others and respecting their views and opinions, even when they are different from your own. People should be tolerant of each other where they find that they disagree.

Racism has no place in Australia. This includes creating or sharing racially offensive material on the internet or other publications and making racially abusive comments in a public place or at a sporting event.

If you experience racism, you can also make a complaint to the Australian Human Rights Commission.

See: [Human Rights Commission](#).

Compassion for those in need

Australians value 'mateship'. We help each other in times of need. For example, this might mean taking a meal to an elderly neighbour, driving a friend to a medical appointment, or visiting someone who is sick, frail or lonely.

In this spirit of mateship, Australia has a strong tradition of community service and volunteering — to look out for each other and strengthen the community. Volunteering is a great opportunity to share knowledge, learn new skills, and increase your integration into and sense of belonging to the Australian community. There are many opportunities to volunteer in Australia.

English as the national language

Australian society values the English language as the national language of Australia, and as an important unifying element of society. People living in Australia should make an effort to learn English.

It is important to learn to speak English because it helps to get an education, a job, and better integrate into the community. It is essential for economic participation and social cohesion.

Australian society today

One of the defining features of Australian society today is the cultural diversity of its people and the extent to which they are united by an overriding and unifying commitment to Australia.

Another defining feature is the democratic nature of Australian society. This does not mean that everyone is the same or that everybody has equal wealth or property. It means that with hard work and commitment, people without high-level connections or influential patrons can succeed.

Within the framework of Australia's laws, all Australians are able to express their culture and beliefs and to participate freely in Australia's national life. Australia holds firmly to the belief that no-one should be disadvantaged on the basis of their country of birth, cultural heritage, language, gender or religious belief.

In order to maintain a stable, peaceful and prosperous community, Australians of all backgrounds are expected to uphold the shared principles and values that underpin Australian society.

Laws and social customs

Community behaviour in Australia is governed by a combination of formal laws and informal social customs.

All people in Australia must obey the nation's laws or face the possibility of criminal and civil prosecution. People are also expected to generally observe Australian social customs, habits and practices even though they are not normally legally binding.

Australian laws are made by the Australian Commonwealth, state and territory parliaments. The police have the job of keeping peace and order in the community and to bring people they believe have broken the law before courts of law. People in their local communities and neighbourhoods also help each other in the event of trouble and report anything unusual or suspicious to the local police station.

Australia has a national police force called the Australian Federal Police, which investigates crimes against federal laws including drug trafficking, illegal immigration, crimes against national security and crimes against the environment. All states of Australia and the Northern Territory have their own police forces, which deal with crimes under state or territory laws. Policing in the Australian Capital Territory is undertaken by the Australian Federal Police.

Although police officers may arrest people and give evidence in court, they do not make the final decision on whether or not people are guilty of crimes. This is decided by the courts.

Police and the community strive to maintain good relations in Australia. You can report crimes and seek assistance from the police. If you are questioned by police, remain calm, be polite and cooperative with any lawful requests they may make.

Character requirements

The focus of the Australian Government is on keeping communities safe and ensuring the wellbeing of all Australians. Entry and stay in Australia is a privilege not a right. The Government does not tolerate behaviour which is criminal or poses a risk to the safety or good order of the Australian community. Those who choose to break the law and fail to uphold the standards expected by the Australian community should expect to lose the privilege of remaining in Australia. Migrants may have their visa or citizenship refused or cancelled if they do not pass the character test.

A non-citizen may fail to pass the character test in a number of ways, including if the person has:

- a substantial criminal record, which includes being sentenced to more than 12 months imprisonment, or
- been convicted of child sex offences, or
- there is a risk that the person, if they were allowed to enter or to remain in Australia, would endanger the Australian community or a segment of the community.

A person who has had their visa cancelled is removed from Australia as soon as reasonably practicable. They may be excluded, in some cases permanently, from returning to Australia.

Domestic and Family violence

Everyone has the right to experience positive and safe relationships with their families, friends and loved ones. Violence towards another person is illegal in Australia and is a very serious crime. This includes violence within the home and within marriage, known as domestic or family violence. Domestic and family violence includes behaviour or threats that aim to control a partner by causing fear or threatening their safety. Domestic and family violence can include hitting, isolating a family member from friends and family, or threatening children or pets. Domestic and family violence is not accepted and is against the law.

A person who commits these crimes can go to jail, whether they are a man or a woman. No one should accept being treated badly or harmed.

If you or someone you know is in danger you should contact the police.

See: [respect](#) and [1800respect](#)

Discrimination on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, age or disability

Commonwealth laws prohibit discrimination on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, age and disability in a range of areas of public life under the Sex Discrimination Act 1984, the Age Discrimination Act 2004 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1992. The Australian Human Rights Commission is responsible for handling complaints under these laws.

See: [Human Rights Commission](#).

Online safety

Online abuse is not accepted in Australia. This is sometimes called cyber abuse. Examples include sharing sexual photos or videos online without consent, stalking a person online, or making racially abusive comments about a person online. Many forms of cyber abuse are illegal in Australia.

See: [esafety](#)

Australian workplace rights

People working in Australia, including both sponsored and non-sponsored visa holders, have rights and protections at work. These cannot be taken away by contracts.

Minimum pay rates and workplace conditions are set by Australian law.

The Australian Fair Work Ombudsman's visa holders and migrants webpage provides information on what you need to know before you start work, pay rates, leave arrangements and employee entitlements.

See: [Visa holders & migrants](#)

The Fair Work Ombudsman can give you further information and advice about your workplace rights and obligations, and has workplace information translated into different languages.

See: [Fair Work Ombudsman](#)

More information

The *Beginning a Life in Australia* booklet provides helpful settlement information and links to other websites and resources for newly arrived migrants, humanitarian entrants, and their sponsors and service providers.

See: [Beginning a Life in Australia](#)

Contact NSW Fair Trading

NSW Fair Trading is the state government agency responsible for protecting consumers' rights. We provide free assistance and information on shopping and renting rights. We can provide information to consumers about options to resolve disputes with traders and in some cases our staff can attempt to negotiate a solution.

Visit the NSW Fair Trading website for more information on these topics in English and community languages.

To lodge an online enquiry or complaint go to www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au, or call 13 32 20 if you have a problem.



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NSW Fair Trading - What we do

- Shopping and consumer guarantees
- Retirement villages
- Renting, buying, selling a home
- Co-operatives, associations and charitable fundraising
- Home building and renovating
- Product safety
- Strata and community living
- Resolving disputes

www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au

Enquiries 13 32 20

Language assistance 13 14 50 (*ask for an interpreter in your language*)

TTY 1300 723 404 for hearing impaired

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This publication must not be relied on as legal advice.
For more information about this topic, refer to the appropriate legislation.

Consumer guide

for international students



NSW Fair Trading
February 2019



In Australia, every person has consumer rights and responsibilities, and our trade practices are different from many other countries. Every person has the right to be protected from unfair business practices.

This brochure gives basic information and tips about your consumer rights and responsibilities in NSW. You can find more on the NSW Fair Trading website.

Shopping rights

The Australian Consumer Law (ACL) gives you rights when you buy goods and services in Australia, including rights to repairs, replacements and refunds.

Repairs, refunds, replacements

To make a claim about faulty products or services you need to show a receipt or other proof of purchase, such as a credit card or bank statement so traders can provide a remedy. A remedy could be a refund, repair or replacement.

Businesses must give you a receipt for goods or services purchased valued at \$75 or more. You can ask for a receipt for a transaction under \$75 and the business must give it to you within seven days.

In some situations, you are entitled to a refund for a product you buy. For example, if you bought a microwave but it does not do the job that it is supposed to do. However, there are also situations where you may not be entitled to a refund for example, if you damage the microwave by not following the instructions on how to use it correctly.

A sign in a store that states 'No refunds' is illegal, as it implies you will not be provided with an appropriate remedy, even if the goods you bought are faulty. Signs that state 'No refunds will be given if you have simply changed your mind' are legal.

Go to the NSW Fair Trading website to read more about refunds, and when they do and do not apply.

Shopping online

Follow these tips when shopping online from Australia:

- Check the seller's business details by calling them before your first purchase.
- Compare prices, postage, delivery, refund and return policies.
- Read customer reviews about the seller.
- Check if the site is secure before paying. Look for a key or closed padlock icon at the bottom or top of the computer screen.
- Never give your password or personal bank details.
- Check the exchange rate, sales tax and import duties (overseas seller).
- Print out the payment or order confirmation and keep it in a safe place.
- Go to the NSW Fair Trading website for more information.

Buying a car

Before you buy a car from a private seller, follow these tips:

- Shop around and check prices.
- Check the car's service history (log book) if buying a used car.
- Ask the seller to take you for a drive to test the car.
- Pay a mechanic to do a car safety inspection for you, as there is usually no warranty.
- Do a Personal Property Securities Register (PPSR) search online at www.ppsr.gov.au to check if the car has money owing (debt) from a previous owner. A car with debt could be repossessed (taken away) from you.

For more information watch the *Buying a used car* video in 7 community languages including English at www.youtube.com/NSWOFT

ServiceNSW is the one stop shop in NSW for all transactions relating to cars and driving eg driver licence and car registration. Call 13 77 88 or go to www.service.nsw.gov.au for more information.

My next car app

Download our free app before buying a used car. It helps you compare cars, do a PPSR search and gives great tips for anyone looking to buy a car. (For Android and iPhone).



Mobile phones and data plans

If you are planning to buy a mobile phone or data plan, follow these tips:

- **Shop around** – Look at different types of plans, compare prices, services and network providers. Consider using pre-paid services.
- **Read the contract** – If you decide on a plan (pay monthly), read the terms and conditions, including the small print, before signing. Make sure you understand the terms for cancelling the contract.
- **Check the payments** – Find out what your monthly payments will be and if you will be charged at a higher rate if you exceed your call or data allowance.
- **Check network coverage** – Check coverage maps on the provider's website and contact the provider to find out the quality of reception in the areas you will use the service.
- **Keep your contract** – Make sure you keep your receipts, warranty and other paperwork. You may need them if you have an issue with the phone or service provider.

For problems with phone cards, mobile phones and internet services call the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman (TIO) on 1800 062 058 or go to www.tio.com.au

Gift cards/vouchers

A gift card or gift voucher is a card/voucher loaded with an amount of cash. It enables you or the person you give it to, to buy goods and services. There are some important things to remember when buying gift cards/vouchers:

- Check the expiry or issue date.
- Treat your gift card like cash – if you lose it, it's gone.
- Read the terms and conditions about getting 'change'.

Changes to the laws about the sale and use of gift cards in NSW will start on 31 March 2018. Go to the NSW Fair Trading website for more information.

Credit card chargeback

Chargeback is a refund facility available from credit card providers. It may be possible for you to request a chargeback from your credit card provider if:

- goods or services that you have ordered have not been provided, but your credit card has been charged.
- a transaction is made with your credit card without your approval or authorisation.
- a transaction is illegal such as a forged signature, or use of an expired credit card.

A time limit may apply for the use of this facility.

For further information regarding chargeback, contact your credit card provider.

Scams

A scam is a trick or a fraud when you pay money but get nothing back for it, or you get something that is worth much less than the money you paid. Scams can be anywhere – in the mail, email, internet, in person or over the phone. Scams can include offers of work, requests to transfer money, rental scams, mobile phone scams and online shopping and auction scams.

Here are some tips to avoid scams:

- If an offer sounds too good to be true then it probably is.
- Never send money or give personal details to a person or business you do not know.
- Never use public computers to do shopping or banking online.
- Do not respond to or open unknown emails or click on the links provided in them.
- Do not be pressured to make a decision on the spot. Take time to do your own research and ask lots of questions.
- Keep your computer secure with up-to-date anti-virus software.
- Always check if the site is secure before paying online.

Report scams to SCAMwatch and read about the latest scams at www.scamwatch.gov.au/report-a-scam

Renting

When you start renting a house or unit, you must be given the NSW Fair Trading fact sheet *New tenant checklist*, which has important information about your rights and responsibilities. This fact sheet is in community languages on the Fair Trading website. Some important things to know are:

- **Renting advertisements** - Check renting advertisements are real by visiting the property and checking the company or person's details. If you are overseas, ask a friend or a relative to check them for you.
- **Agreement or lease** – To rent a house or unit you have to sign a Residential Tenancy Agreement with a landlord or agent. This is a legal document called a lease. It explains what the tenant (you) or landlord can do and cannot do. It includes the amount of rent you need to pay, how and when to pay it, and the lease term - which is usually for 6 or 12 months.
- **Rental bond** – When you agree to rent, you must pay a rental bond, which should be no more than the amount of 4 weeks rent. Your agent or landlord must offer you the option to use the Rental Bonds Online service.
- **Other costs** – You will be required to pay up to 2 weeks' rent in advance.

Having trouble with your landlord or agent?

Contact our free complaint service if you have tenancy issues or disputes. We can assist with a range of matters and can help negotiate an agreement. You can lodge a complaint online via the NSW Fair Trading website or call 13 32 20 to discuss your matter further.

You can also contact your local Tenants' Union Tenants Advice and Advocacy Service - call 81 17 3700 or go to www.tenants.org.au

Are you a boarder or lodger?

If the landlord, or 'operator', keeps control over your room and the rest of the accommodation, you may be a boarder or a lodger. Boarders living in a 'registrable' boarding house have a basic set of rights called 'occupancy principles'. For more information, search for 'boarding houses' on the NSW Fair Trading website.



Education and training

Here are some tips when planning your study:

- Check if the institution you wish to study with is registered to deliver training - go to cricos.education.gov.au
- Do not pay any course fees to a training provider until you have signed a written agreement.
- Read the agreement and the terms and conditions carefully before you sign any paper work with a training provider.
- You cannot transfer to another education provider before completing six months of your principal course and without a release letter from your provider.
- Check your written agreement to see what your provider's policy says about transferring to another provider, as well as fees and refunds.
- If you have received your letter of release from the training provider, only then can you complete your enrolment, and sign a written agreement with the new provider.

Contact the International Students Office of your institution or call Australian Education International on 1300 615 262 if you have questions or problems.

If this does not resolve the problem with your private school, college or university, the Overseas Students Ombudsman may be able to help. Contact the Ombudsman on 1300 362 072 or go to www.ombudsman.gov.au

Strata laws

If you live in a unit or townhouse you may be living in a strata scheme. There are rules, called by-laws, which people who live in strata and their visitors must follow. For example, these may affect where you can smoke, and where you can park your car (tenants should also refer to the conditions of their lease).

Visit the NSW Fair Trading website for access to information in community languages, or call 13 32 20 to talk to our friendly customer service officers.

If things go wrong

If you have a problem with something you have bought, follow these steps:

1. Contact the seller:
 - Explain the problem and how you want the situation resolved.
 - Keep the receipt and any other documents that relate to the sale (such as credit card and bank statements, warranty or quote).
 - Write down the names of the people you speak to, what was said and the date you contacted them.
2. If you cannot come to an agreement with the seller, call NSW Fair Trading on 13 32 20 or lodge an online complaint from the website. We may contact the seller to help negotiate a resolution.
3. If the problem remains unresolved, contact the NSW Civil & Administrative Tribunal (NCAT). NCAT provides low-cost tribunal services to help resolve a wide range of disputes. Call 1300 006 228 or go to www.ncat.nsw.gov.au

NSW Fair Trading language resources

For more information about your shopping and other consumer rights, watch the *My Consumer Rights* animatic videos in 11 community languages including English at www.youtube.com/NSWOFT

All our community language resources can be accessed from the languages section of the NSW Fair Trading website.







Enquiries

This booklet, along with information on our website, will guide you through the enrolment process at our School. However, it is only until you visit our campuses, staff and students that you can fully appreciate the full Meriden experience.

PHONE (61 2) 9752 9444

(AEST 7:30am – 4:30pm)

EMAIL enrolments@meriden.nsw.edu.au

www.meriden.nsw.edu.au

POSTAL ADDRESS

Meriden School
The Registrar
PO Box 78
Strathfield NSW 2135
Australia

STREET ADDRESS

The Registrar
Meriden School
3 Margaret Street
Strathfield NSW 2135
Australia



MERIDEN
AN ANGLICAN SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

3 Margaret St Strathfield 2135 Australia
T 61 2 9752 9444 **F** 61 2 9752 9400
E enquiries@meriden.nsw.edu.au
www.meriden.nsw.edu.au
Meriden School CRICOS No. 02318F