Family Members in Australia

You can apply to bring your dependants (spouse/partner and children) to Australia on a student dependant visa if you are enrolled in a formal tertiary course which lasts for at least one year. The Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) will process your dependants’ entry to Australia. Friends or other members of your family, such as parents or siblings would need to apply for a visitor’s visa if they want to visit you in Australia. A visitor’s visa is issued usually only for a period of 3 months.

International Families Program

Adjustment to life in Australia can present some special difficulties for family members, particularly partners of students. With a partner concentrating on University studies and without family and friends nearby, non-studying partners may not have the chance to make friends and practise English. Non-studying partners may be isolated at home alone or with young children. Some have children attending school who learn English very quickly.

The International Student Services Unit provides a program for the partners of international students which includes English classes and discussion meetings. The ISSU understands that it can be difficult for the partners of international students to adjust to life in Australia away from friends and family and with their partner concentrating on study. The English classes and discussion meetings provide an opportunity to make friends and talk with other partners in a similar situation as well as improving English conversation skills. English classes arranged by ISSU are offered twice a week throughout each semester. Newly arrived partners can register for classes at any stage throughout the year at the ISSU Office.
Support for Families of Students

Counsellors at the International Student Services Unit are also available to discuss any issues or concerns such as childcare, finding employment, or feelings of homesickness and adjustment difficulties with partners/spouses of international students. The families of international students are also welcome to participate in the trips and other activities organised by the ISSU.

Spouse/Partner Work Entitlements

Spouses/partner work entitlements depend on the regulations of the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA). Generally, students are limited to 20 hours work per week while the student’s course of study is in session. Dependents of Undergraduate, Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma courses are also limited to 20 hours work per week while University is in Session. Dependents of Masters and PhD students (including partners/spouses of AusAID students) can work full-time. Information about finding work and practising skills for job interviews is provided in the ISSU International Families Program.

Study For Spouses

A spouse/partner on a dependant visa can also study in Australia as a full-fee paying international student for a maximum of 3 months. If your spouse/partner wants to study for more than 3 months, they must apply for a student visa in their own right. Part-time studies are permitted for spouses and a pro-rata fee charged. Information about courses at the University of Sydney is available from the International Office.

Schooling for Dependents

In Australia, children attend Primary School (Years 1-6) and Secondary School (Years 7-12). School education is compulsory for all children between the ages of 6 and 15 years. Your place of residence in Sydney determines the school your child can attend. Once you have found permanent accommodation in Sydney you should enrol your child at school. International students with school age children should contact the NSW Department of Education and Training.

The State Education System is mainly co-educational. It is not always possible to arrange enrolment at a boys-only or girls-only school as there is often a waiting list at these schools. If you are interested in a single-sex school for your child/children, you are encouraged to apply as possible as soon as possible after your arrival.

School Fees

If you are intending to bring school age children with you to Sydney, you should be aware that you will need to pay fees for any primary and secondary schooling.

Holders of temporary visas, including temporary resident visas, student visas, visitor visas and bridging visas, enrolling in New South Wales government schools will be required to pay a Temporary Visa Holders Education Fee. A non-refundable application fee also applies.

Dependants of overseas students with full scholarship from the Australian Government or publicly funded higher education institution (visa class B) are exempt from the education and application fees.

In the case of visitors, enrolment is for
a maximum period of twelve weeks. Fees must be paid for the full twelve weeks. Students holding visas that are in a fee exempt category will also be exempt from paying that application fee. All other students must pay the non-refundable application fee. In exceptional circumstances the application fee may be refunded. Payment must be made by credit card, bank cheque, bank draft or Australian money order and made payable to the NSW Department of Education and Training. Information about all aspects of schooling is available at the ISSU or you may contact the International Students Centre, 827-839 George Street, Sydney (PO Box 707, Broadway NSW 2007), Australia. Ph: 9217 4801 or 1300 302 456. Email: isc@det.nsw.edu.au. Website: www.det.nsw.gov.au

Before enrolling in school, all students must provide evidence of their immunisation status.

Information about schools can be obtained by contacting the Department of School Education Office closest to where you live. District offices are located in Bankstown, Blacktown, Bondi, Fairfield, Granville, Hornsby, Liverpool, Mt Druitt, Northern Beaches, Parramatta, Port Jackson, Ryde, St George and Sutherland. The entire list of district offices and their addresses and telephone numbers can be found in the L-Z section of the White Pages Telephone Directory under ‘School Education, Department of Education and Training’ - and by using the ‘School Locator’ at the following website: www.schools.nsw.edu.au

The current school fee rates for holders of temporary visas are:

- Primary school Years K-6 ______________ AUD $4,500
- Junior High School (or IEC) Years 7-10 ______ AUD $4,500
- Senior High School (or IEC) Years 11-12 _____ AUD $5,500
- Non-refundable application fee _____________ AUD $110

School Terms 2005

| Term 1 | Friday 28 January to Friday 8 April |
| Term 2 | Tuesday 26 April to Friday 1 July |
| Term 3 | Monday 18 July to Friday 23 September |
| Term 4 | Monday 10 October to Wednesday 21 December |

School Terms 2006

| Term 1 | Monday 30 January to Thursday 13 April |
| Term 2 | Monday 1 May to Friday 30 June |
| Term 3 | Monday 17 July to Friday 29 September |
| Term 4 | Monday 16 October to Thursday 21 December |

www.schools.nsw.gov.au
Childcare

Childcare Services and Facilities

The system of childcare in Australia may be quite different from the system in your home country. If you are used to having your family help with child minding, then it will take some time for you and your child to adjust to a child care centre. There is a high demand in Sydney for places at child care centres and the cost of child care can be quite high (approximately $40-$60 per day) and can vary from centre to centre. Staff in the centres are usually helpful and you can discuss any concerns you have with them.

Long Day Care

Long Day Care centres provide full-time and sometimes part-time care for children aged approximately 6 weeks - 5 years. Care is usually available from 8am - 6pm, Monday - Friday. Most of the staff in these centres are trained childcare workers or nurses. They provide educational programs and activities to meet the developmental needs of children in a caring and stimulating environment.

Most Long Day Care centres have long waiting lists (often 1 year or more), so put your name down as soon as possible. Sometimes there are places readily available for specific age groups—usually 3 to 5 year olds. Priority for places in most childcare centres is given to working parents, those seeking work and students.

We strongly advise you to put your name on waiting lists for more than one child care centre to give yourself the best possible chance of securing a place for your child. You may do this by writing to centres before you come to Sydney. See page 68 for contact details of Childcare Centres affiliated with the University of Sydney.

Family Day Care

Family Day Care provides home-based childcare for children aged 6 weeks - 5 years. This can be on a full-time or part-time basis, with a minimum usually of 2 full days per week. The hours for this care are usually 8am - 6pm but there is some flexibility. As the children are cared for in small ‘family’ groups in carefully supervised private homes, it is particularly suitable for the younger age range. A co-ordinator matches care providers with families requiring care. Child Development Officers supervise the care providers’ homes on a regular basis.

If you require further information regarding child care centres or schooling before you come to Sydney, please contact the International Student Services Unit. Further information about child care centres and the different types of child care is available from ISSU.
Childcare Centres Affiliated with the University of Sydney

Boundary Lane Children’s Centre H09
University of Sydney  NSW  2006
Telephone: 9351 4130

Centres run by Sydney University Union :
Carillon Avenue Child Care Centre
48-90 Carillon Avenue, Newtown  NSW  2032
Telephone: 9557 2344

Laurel Tree House
61 Arundel Street, Glebe   NSW   2037
Telephone:  9660 8857

Union Child Care Centre
Raglan Street, Darlington   NSW   2006
Telephone:  9351 7879

Waiting List Enquiries : Michelle Klarnett : Pager # (02) 9962-9202

Ngallia Child Care Centre
East Street, Cumberland Campus
University of Sydney, Lidcombe   NSW   2141
Telephone:  9351 9700

Melanie Alexander Nursery School
62 Watkin Street, Newtown  NSW  2042
Telephone: 9557 1521

Opening hours range from 8am - 6pm Monday to Friday.
Costs range from $48 - $60 per day and depend on the age of your child.

For further information contact the Childcare Information Officer, Lisa Saban.
Tel (02) 9351-5667
Email childc@stuserv.usyd.edu.au

www.usyd.edu.au/childcare
Financial Assistance for Child Care

Child Care Benefit is a type of government assistance available to Australian residents and to a limited category of international students. Under Australian Government guidelines, only those international students who are directly sponsored or subsidised by the Australian government (AusAID or IPRS scholarship holders) are eligible for this form of assistance.

The amount of Child Care Benefit you receive depends on your income. You need to complete an application, available from most childcare centres or Centrelink (or Family Assistance Officers within Centrelink) and lodge this with Centrelink who will need details of your income to assess your eligibility for the benefit. You will also require a Tax File Number. Please ask the ISSU for more information on Tax File Number applications.

Activities for School Age Children

There are lots of activities available for children both after school and during school holidays. Activities include art and craft classes, sports, excursions, and holiday camps. If you would like to find out more about activities close to where you live, you can contact your child’s school or your local council.