



ABBOTSLEIGH



Overseas Student Handbook

Contents

Letter from the Headmistress	4	Part C – The Australian education system	14
Welcome to Abbotsleigh	5	Courses available at Abbotsleigh	14
Part A – General information for overseas students studying at Abbotsleigh	6	Education in NSW	14
Useful contacts	6	University entrance	15
Contacts for support at school	7	Part D – Tuition Protection Service (TPS)	16
When to ask for help	8	Part E – Living in Australia	17
Wellbeing at Abbotsleigh	9		
Part B – Other useful information about Abbotsleigh	10		
Accommodation	10		
Attendance	10		
Banking facilities	10		
Casual employment	10		
Change of address	11		
Co-curricular opportunities	11		
Counselling	11		
Complaints process	11		
Educational guardian	12		
Enrolment conditions	12		
Extra tuition	12		
Government concessions	12		
Holidays	12		
Immigration and visa requirements	13		
Important school calendar dates	13		
Medical insurance	13		
Money	13		
Saturday School of Community Languages	13		

Letter from the Headmistress

Dear parents

I wish to take this opportunity to thank you for supporting your daughter during the time of transition to Abbotsleigh. It is my pleasure to welcome you and your daughter to the Abbotsleigh community. There are many exciting opportunities ahead for your daughter and I hope she will make good use of those. In addition, there are family events and parent organisations which you might find of interest. The Development Office will advise you of these at the beginning of the new School year.

This is an exciting new challenge for your daughter. We will support her to meet any challenges in the year ahead. Please contact the following staff members if you or your daughter have any concerns at any time:

Registrar

Your first point of contact for general issues

Mrs Colleen Fenn

02 9473 774

Director of Wellbeing and Counselling

Student support

Mrs Liz Cannon

02 9473 7836

Head of Boarding

For residential concerns

Mrs Katie White

+61 481 253 545

Director of Curriculum and Professional Excellence

For issues relating to academic progress
and HSC curriculum

Miss Isobel Royston

02 9473 7820

Communication is a key factor in preventing or resolving any possible issue of concern. Please make sure that you keep the Registrar updated with your contact details, including email address.

I look forward to a productive and fulfilling partnership as your daughter matures and grows in her academic ability in the years ahead.

Yours sincerely



Megan Krimmer
Headmistress

Welcome to Abbotsleigh

Our school

Why we exist

We empower amazing girls to do amazing things.

How we do things

Our teachers are role models who inspire each girl to reach her personal best. Their lessons last a lifetime.

What we do

Our holistic education underpinned by the Christian faith, helps our girls thrive today and tomorrow.

Abbotsleigh School Values

Chosen by the girls themselves

Integrity

We are honest and truthful

Respect

We value everyone for who they are

Courage

We dare to take risks

Compassion

We are kind and empathetic

Perseverance

We get up, we do not give up

Part A – General information for overseas students studying at Abbotsleigh

Useful contact numbers

International dialling

To make an international call from Australia, dial 0011, then the country code, city/region code and phone number. Australia's country code is 61.

Abbotsleigh Registrar

registrar@abbotsleigh.nsw.edu.au

02 9473 7777

International SOS

1800 234 601

Other useful contact numbers

Chinese/Australian Society

A counselling service for Chinese and Korean students

02 9787 8333

Department of Immigration & Citizenship

For immigration and visa information

131 881

Emergency services

Police, fire ambulance

000

Counselling services

Mrs Liz Cannon

cannonl@abbotsleigh.nsw.edu.au

02 9473 7836

Kids Helpline

1800 551 800

Lifeline

13 11 14

Department of Immigration and Citizenship

For immigration and visa information

immi.gov.au

Australian Education International

For Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS)

aei.gov.au

Overseas Students Ombudsman

For protection for overseas students and student rights and responsibilities within the ESOS framework

oso.gov.au

Medibank Private

toll free 24 hours 7 days a week

1800 234 601

medibank.com.au/oshc

AHM overseas student health cover

ahm.com.au/oshc

Study in Australia

studyinaustralia.gov.au

Education in Australia

education.gov.au

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

For contact details of your country's embassy

dfat.gov.au

Australian Customs Service

For information on what you can bring into Australia

customs.gov.au

Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service

aqis.gov.au

Tourism Australia

australia.com

Contacts for support at school

The School wants your experience to be a happy and safe one while you are being extended academically. There are many people at school who can support you along the way, whether it be in relation to your studies, wellbeing or queries regarding your student visa.

Matter	Contact
Emergency matters	Contact Emergency Services or your official point of contact for further assistance
Official point of contact for overseas students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dean • Boarding Coordinator (overseas boarders) • Year Coordinator (overseas day students)
<p>Wellbeing, welfare and pastoral care</p> <p>Contact these people if you feel unsafe for any reason or the behaviour of another person is worrying you in any way.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tutor/Classroom Teacher • Year Coordinator • Dean • Director of Wellbeing and Counselling • Head of Junior and Head of Senior School <p>If overseas student resides in Boarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistant Boarding Coordinator • Boarding Coordinator • Head of Boarding
Academic progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist subject teachers • Heads of Department • Head of Curriculum
Academic support for students whose first language is not English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English as an Additional Language/Dialect (EAL/D) Teachers
Cultural and Mandarin support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chinese teachers • Mandarin speakers in Boarding houses
Healthcare, including seeking medical attention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nursing Sister
Informal and formal complaints	<p>Refer to page 11 of this handbook and the following documents which you received during the enrolment and orientation processes: Overseas Student Transfer, Deferment, Cancellation and Complaints Policy; Grievance Policy – Students, Parents and Visitors. These policies explain how to make a complaint or appeal a School decision. The policies are available online abbotsleigh.nsw.edu.au/policies/</p>

Enrolments and visa/passport renewal matters	Registrar
Tuition and other fees	Director of Finance and Business Services
Quality of student learning, academic progress and wellbeing	Headmistress

When to ask for help

So that we can help you and ensure your safety, please contact one of the people above if you:

- Find yourself in a situation where you feel unsafe, or where the behaviour of another person is not appropriate or unwelcome, including any form of sexual or physical behaviour.
- Are feeling unhappy at school or in general.
- Are having difficulty fitting in.
- Think you have chosen the wrong subject.
- Think you need help in a particular subject or area of knowledge.
- Need help with choosing a career or finding out about your options for the future.
- Need to renew your health insurance.
- Need to renew your passport or visa.
- Change your address.
- Are not doing as well as you think you should be at school.
- Need to understand some rules or laws about Australian society.
- Are not well.
- Need to return home early or return to School late.
- Are having transport difficulties or are stranded anywhere.

The Registrar can assist with all visa information.

Wellbeing at Abbotsleigh

Positive behaviour and pastoral care

Abbotsleigh Wellbeing Framework

Strong Minds, Strong Hearts, Strong Hands

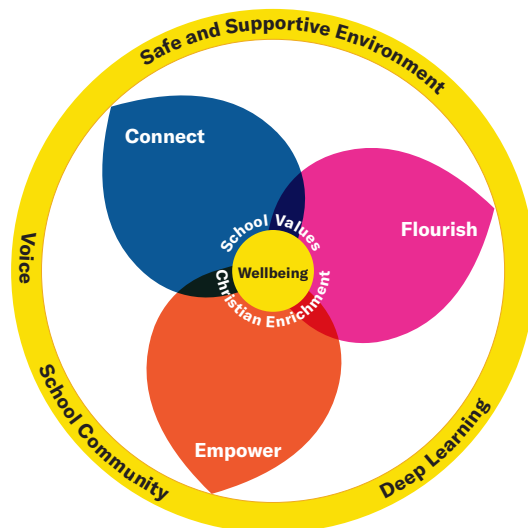
At Abbotsleigh we recognise the important connection between wellbeing, learning and flourishing. We proactively strive to enhance the academic, social, physical, emotional and spiritual wellbeing of each girl through our Pre K-Year 12 wellbeing framework.

Our staff are committed to providing a positive, caring and nurturing environment that supports each girl's growth and development. This enables her to flourish and be empowered to make a positive impact on her world today and tomorrow.

CONNECT We aim for all girls to be actively engaged in their learning and in their School so that they feel connected. Establishing positive and respectful relationships will help all girls to experience a sense of belonging and inclusivity.

EMPOWER We empower our girls to be strong global citizens who are compassionate and courageous leaders, act with integrity and have a positive and powerful impact on their world today and tomorrow.

FLOURISH We want all our girls to feel valued, respected and supported at school. Underpinned by our Christian faith and values, we aim to support girls to become resilient and adaptable critical thinkers who are equipped to persevere in their learning; to achieve, grow and flourish.



Part B – Other useful information about Abbotsleigh

Accommodation

All overseas students holding student visas and enrolled at Abbotsleigh must be enrolled as Boarding students, or as Day students living with their parents in Sydney. Boarding is a long-term commitment unless the School has previously agreed in writing to the contrary. Students enrolled as Boarders are expected to remain as boarders for the full duration of their enrolment at Abbotsleigh.

A change in status, either before or after commencement, is entirely at the discretion of the School.

There may be circumstances where the School may approve accommodation arrangements other than those described above. This approval would only be granted in exceptional circumstances and only if the alternative accommodation was a temporary arrangement.

Please refer to the Overseas Student Enrolment Policy available on the School's website for additional information regarding overseas student accommodation arrangements.

abbotsleigh.nsw.edu.au/overseas-students

Attendance

All Abbotsleigh students are expected to attend school and apply their best effort. Should concerns arise regarding a student's attendance record, punctuality, health or wellbeing, the School will be in contact with the girl's parents.

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship requirements for visa renewal are that students must have an attendance record of at least 80% of each term, be performing academically at a satisfactory level and have current medical insurance.

Please refer to the Overseas Student Enrolment Policy available at the School's website for additional information regarding attendance requirements for overseas students.

abbotsleigh.nsw.edu.au/overseas-students

Banking facilities

Upon arrival in Australia we suggest that students open a bank account with a bank that has a night and day facility. Passports are required for opening an account. We also recommend an access account where interest is calculated daily and an ATM plastic card can be used for your convenience.

Casual employment

To work casually you must have permission from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC).

Change of address

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship must be advised within 14 days of any change to your address.

The change of address form required by the Federal Government can be downloaded from immi.gov.au

Please ensure that the School is always informed in writing within seven days of any change to your address.

Co-curricular opportunities

There are lots of opportunities for you to experience different interests and for you to realise your potential. We encourage you to take advantage of the many opportunities that you will have to become involved in School events that occur outside the classroom. Extra curricular activities are available during school hours or after hours as part of the School's AbbSchool program.

Counselling

Any student who would like to visit the School counsellor may do so by making an appointment directly with the appropriate counsellor. This can be done by emailing the school counsellor in the first instance via cannonl@abbotsleigh.nsw.edu.au or by visiting her office. Staff may also refer students to the counsellor if they feel the student needs specialised help.

Complaints process

Abbotsleigh values the feedback it receives from students and parents. Responding to both affirmative and negative feedback demonstrates the School's commitment to open communication. Complaints about any aspect of the School's operations, service, personnel or another student, will be handled responsively, openly and in a timely manner.

Overseas students can see the Head of Boarding, Boarding Coordinator, Year Coordinator, School Counsellor or Chaplain for guidance as to who to see to resolve their complaint. In the event that this does not resolve the issue, it may be escalated to the Headmistress.

If an overseas student, or their parents/guardian is not satisfied with the decision, action or the way a complaint has been handled by the School, the student may contact the Overseas Student Ombudsman to investigate the problem. The Ombudsman services are free, independent and impartial.

ombudsman@ombudman.gov.au

oso.gov.au

Please refer to the Grievance Policy – Students, Parents and Visitors for additional information on how to make a complaint to the School or appeal a decision made by the School.

abbotsleigh.nsw.edu.au/policies

Educational guardian

Overseas students, who reside in the school's Boarding Houses, are required to have a responsible adult appointed as a local guardian for their daughter. Educational Guardians do not have any formal legal status and they cannot act on behalf of the overseas student's parents. The role of an Educational Guardian is to provide pastoral care and support to an overseas student in the event that the School is unable to contact the student's parents.

Enrolment conditions

Enrolment conditions are documented in the Conditions of Entry and Continuing Enrolment section of the School Enrolment Policy. These conditions are also summarised in the formal Enrolment Agreement between you and the School and may also be described in other School policy documents. abbotsleigh.nsw.edu.au/policies

The overseas student must have a current:

- visa
- passport
- health insurance

Some important enrolment conditions applying to overseas students include:

- residing in Abbotsleigh boarding or with parents in suburban Sydney
- achieve a **minimum** of 80% attendance each term.
- be performing satisfactorily (with sustained effort and diligence) with your studies, as described in the course outlines).

Extra tuition

Often overseas students need some extra help in particular subjects, especially English. Extra tuition may be arranged through the School at an additional cost. These classes are usually held outside of school hours.

Please note that after-school tutorials are available for Maths and Science two or three times a week and for English, by arrangement. These after-school tutorials are available within the normal day school program and are free of cost to Abbotsleigh students.

Government concessions

As a temporary resident, you are not able to access any government concessions for services provided to residents. This means that you will pay full price for transport, medical services and education. At Abbotsleigh we request that you take out overseas student health cover with Medibank Private (See Medical Insurance).

Holidays

The following arrangements are subject to visa conditions permitting:

- As most overseas students will live in Abbotsleigh's boarding residences which are not open during the holiday breaks, overseas students are required to spend vacations with their families either in Australia or in their home country.

Immigration and visa requirements

It is the responsibility of each overseas student to ensure that her visa to stay in Australia is valid, and to ensure her passport is current. The School Registrar is available to assist overseas students with their visas.

Important school calendar dates

Details such as terms dates and calendar events, will be given to you via the official School newsletter, The Shuttle, which is available electronically to all parents by email or through the Parent Portal. This newsletter will be of particular interest because it contains lots of information about what is happening at Abbotsleigh.

Medical insurance

Students need to pay their overseas health cover for the full anticipated study period before arriving in Australia and prior to the issue of their visa.

Money

Students are advised not to carry or store large amounts of cash or open cheques either on their person or in the house. Students are not to have large amounts of cash at School.

Saturday School of Community Languages

A number of students from the School choose to undertake their native language as a Higher School Certificate subject, which involves travelling to a Saturday Language School in the Sydney Metropolitan Area each Saturday morning. This is seen as part of their official school curriculum. Transport to and from Sydney is each student's personal responsibility. There are no tuition fees for Saturday School of Community Languages classes.

The Head of Curriculum is the contact person for this school and will receive regular progress reports along with reports of any absences. However, the Dean of Senior College or Head of Curriculum will be consulted in the case of Year 11 and 12 students as this Saturday activity may impact on the total number of units the student will sit for her HSC.

Part C – The Australian education system

There is a big difference in the way the Australian education system operates compared to other parts of the world. For example, value is often placed on the application of knowledge in different situations outside the classroom (e.g. at student camps, work experience and different School functions).

In high school, students tend to move from room to room, and not the teacher. Abbotsleigh has a uniform and there are rules about what and how you are to wear it.

Courses available at Abbotsleigh

- Primary Years K-6
- Junior Secondary Years 7-10
- Senior Secondary Years 11 and 12

Education in NSW

Schooling in NSW is normally split into three main parts. Very young children normally complete their primary schooling between the ages of 5 and 12. This program provides a core basis of knowledge across the main subject areas (called 'key learning areas') in preparation for secondary studies (that may commence in a junior high school or middle school).

The next four years of schooling go to make up an accredited certificate called the Record of School Achievement (ROSA). If a student is to graduate with this certificate (at the end of Year 10, (aged about 15 or 16 years), she must have completed a certain pattern of study or its equivalent. It is the Headmistress's decision whether to grant this equivalent study or not. This record of achievement will be awarded to students who leave school prior to receiving their Higher School Certificate (HSC). There will be no changes in the current curriculum requirements.

The next two years (senior high school) normally go towards attaining the HSC. Students can only enter this program if they have achieved the ROSA or its equivalent. This is why overseas students must supply recent reports of three years of education and pass an English test (as outlined in the entry section of the forms). This certificate has set requirements that students must complete as a pattern of study in order to qualify for it.

The HSC and the ROSA are accredited by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA). You can read the detailed requirements to achieve these certificates on the NESA website, <https://www.educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/home>. Note that the NESA and the School require students to undertake all of their studies with diligence and sustained effort. This means that students can get a warning letter about unsatisfactory performance if they do not meet their work requirements in the manner outlined to them.

These expectations will be made very clear through the School's Assessment Guides – these outline what you have to do to pass each course, when certain tasks are due and how to put in an appeal if something goes wrong. Students will receive an Assessment Guide at the start of each year from Years 7 to 12.

To be eligible to sit the HSC, students must comply with the entry requirements, course restrictions and rules and regulations set down by the NESA from time to time.

Overseas students will also be levied with a government charge. This charge is independent and over and above the School's tuition fees.

If you have been successful in your program of study by the completion of Year 12, the NESA has the power to award students with the HSC along with a Record of Achievement. This certificate describes what competencies you have achieved in each subject that you have completed at HSC level.

Universities then use this information to give an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR), which students require for entry into Australian universities. This score (which is out of 100) ranks all of the students in the State of New South Wales by comparing how well each one did. The courses at university that are more in demand tend to have higher ATAR scores as an entrance mark.

University entrance

The majority of overseas students aim to enter a university or some other tertiary training institution after Year 12. The Abbotsleigh Careers Advisor gives careful guidance regarding courses available and necessary applications. Overseas students are encouraged to attend university open days. The HSC can be used to gain entry to universities in a variety of Australian, American, European, British and Asian universities.

Part D — Tuition Protection Service (TPS)

The Tuition Protection Service (TPS) is an initiative of the Australian Government to assist international students whose education providers are unable to fully deliver their course of study.

The TPS ensures that international students are able to either:

- complete their studies in another course or with another education provider or
- receive a refund of their unspent tuition fees.

Australia has a well established international education sector with over 1200 education providers delivering a high quality education to international students. For many years now Australia has been a world leader in protecting the tuition fees of international students studying in Australia on a student visa. Recent changes to the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act have further strengthened protections for international students through the introduction of the Tuition Protection Service (TPS).

In the unlikely event your education provider is unable to deliver a course you have paid for and does not meet their obligations to either offer you an alternative course that you accept or pay you a refund of your unspent prepaid tuition fees (this is called a provider's 'default obligations'), the TPS will assist you in finding an alternative course or to get a refund if a suitable alternative is not found.

Student default occurs:

Under section 47A of the ESOS Act, an overseas student or intending overseas student defaults, in relation to a course at a location, if:

- the course starts at the location on the agreed starting day, but the student does not start the course on that day (and has not previously withdrawn); or
- the student withdraws from the course at the location (either before or after the agreed starting day); or
- the registered provider of the course refuses to provide, or continue providing, the course to the student at the location because of one or more of the following:
- the student failed to pay an amount payable to the provider for the course;
- the student breached a condition of his/her student visa;
- misbehaviour by the student (Note: the student is entitled to natural justice under subsection 47A(3)).

Provider default occurs:

Under section 46A of the ESOS Act a registered provider defaults, in relation to an overseas student or intending overseas student and a course at a location, if:

- the provider fails to start providing the course to the student at the location on the agreed starting day; or
- after the course starts but before it is completed, it ceases to be provided to the student at the location; and the student has not withdrawn from the course before the default day.

Part E — Living in Australia

This section is designed to give you a quick summary of some of the major differences between your own country and Australia. There is more comprehensive information available from the Study in Australia website: studyinaustralia.gov.au/english/live-in-australia

- **Roads and traffic** – In Australia, people drive on the left hand side of the road. If this is different to your country, you need to be very careful when crossing the road.
- **Water usage** – Australia is a much drier country than others. On top of that, it has been in drought for many years. Water usage must be managed carefully in each home.
- **Food** – In the Abbotsleigh boarding house dining room, food is served on a self select basis. There is at least one meat/fish dish, with a vegetarian option and a selection of salads and pastas.
- **Lifestyle** – Australians value their leisure time. Pollution levels are much lower compared to the majority of other countries and Australians enjoy their environment by participating in many outdoor activities. You may find this quite different if you have come from a large urban city.
- **Population** – The largest city in Australia is Sydney. Some international students may come from cities that have the population of the whole of New South Wales (NSW) or even the whole of Australia in them – such as Shanghai in China.
- **Telephone and internet** – In Australia, people have to pay for all telecommunications. Even local telephone calls are not free.



ABBOTSLEIGH

Junior School

22 Woonona Avenue
Wahroonga NSW 2076
02 9473 7700

Senior School & Administration

1666 Pacific Highway (Cnr Ada Avenue)
Wahroonga NSW 2076
02 9473 7777

Postal Address

Locked Bag 1666
Wahroonga NSW 2076

ABN 18 199 714 462

abbotsleigh.nsw.edu.au