

A photograph of Flinders Street Station in Melbourne, Australia. The station is a large, ornate, yellow stone building with a prominent dome. In the background, modern skyscrapers are visible against a blue sky with light clouds. The street in front of the station is busy with people and vehicles.

English STUDENT HANDBOOK

2009 Version 7

**WELCOME to ABILITY Education
Melbourne Campus**

Important: please read this handbook carefully.

Flinders Street Station – Melbourne City

Orientation

- 9am** Students go to reception and receive:
- 1 Test Question form
 - 2 Enrolment/Test answer form
 - 3 Student Handbook
- 9:15am** You speak to the Programme Manager. She will test your English. You can then stay and use the student computers or take a break and return at 11am.
- 10:00am** The Director of Studies and Student Services Manager welcome you and speak to you about the College.
- 10:30am** We give you your **level**, **timetable** and **textbook**. You will meet your teacher and **join your new class**.

Class times:

	Shift 1	Shift 2	Shift 3
Lesson 1	08.00 – 09.30	08.45 – 10.15	11.45 – 13.15
Break	09.30 – 09.45	10.15 – 10.30	13.15 – 14.00
Lesson 2	09.45 – 11.45	10.30 – 12.30	14.00 – 16.00
Break	11.45 – 12.30	12.30 – 13.15	16.00 – 16.15
Lesson 3	12.30 – 14.00	13.15 – 14.45	16.15 – 17.45

Students attend classes from Monday to Thursday.

Staff

Director of Studies Nicola Gray
Campus / Student Services Manager Aaron Caasi

Classes

General English classes - 6 levels

Beg Beginner
Elm Elementary
Pre Pre Intermediate
Int Intermediate
Upp Upper Intermediate
Adv Advance

Other classes

IEL IELTS Preparation

Materials Fee & Book Policy

Ability Education's materials fee covers the cost of –

- All student text books
 - All photocopied homework materials
 - All photocopied class material
 - Student homework diaries
 - Exam papers and Practice tests
- On the first day students are given a new text book concurrent with their level. The students **MUST** write in their books in pencil.
- As their English improves they receive a replacement book. The student erases the pencil from their text book and swaps it for their next text book. This book could be second-hand or new.
*NO book will be accepted with either pen or pencil inside.
- If a student changes from General English to an ESP course the procedure is the same. The student erases the pencil from their text book and swaps it for their next text book. This book could be second-hand or new.
- If a student fails to hand in their book, or hands in a book with pen inside, the costs are as follows.

Course	Second-hand book	New book
General English	\$20	\$45
IELTS	\$40	\$65
EAP Prep	\$15	\$35

- Ability will consider buying a student's book if the company has a shortage of a particular second-hand book. The book must be clean and free of pen. Ability is under no obligation to buy a student's book. The purchase prices are as follows.

Course	Second-hand book
General English	\$20
IELTS	\$40
EAP Prep	\$15

Contact Details

It is a condition of your student visa that you keep Student Services up to date with your current address and phone number. As part of our services you will be informed about activities and events via SMS on your mobile phone.

Promotions and Transfers – moving to a higher class

As your English improves, your teacher will move you to a higher class. Sometimes, you can choose to go to a similar class at the same level, eg. From Upper-Intermediate to IELTS Preparation.

If you want a transfer like this, please fill in a form from Student Services **at least** 1 week before you wish to change. Please note: transfers must be approved by Education and cannot be guaranteed.

Transfer to a different provider

If a student wishes to transfer from Ability Education to another provider they need to be aware of the following:

- The student has been with the college for more than 6 months: In this case, the student can only transfer with the approval of the CEO and the knowledge of the Marketing Director. If the student is on a student visa, they must be issued with a Letter of Release. If the student is not on a student visa, no letter is required.
- If the student has been with the college for less than 6 months, the student can only transfer with the approval of the CEO and the knowledge of the Marketing Director, and if on a student visa, they must be issued with a Letter of Release.
- If the student is on a student visa, regardless of the number of months the student has been with the college, PRISMS must be notified.
- The Letter of Release is free.

The grounds on which a transfer to another provider will be granted:

- Ability Education no longer offers the course the student enrolled for
- The student needs to change providers due to special circumstances
- The student provides documents to support their case

If a student is refused a transfer, the student:

- Will be notified by email and letter
- Is free to go if they have been with the college for more than 6 months. If they do go, PRISMS must be notified.
- Is not free to go if they have been with the college for less than 6 months and therefore must be given a letter from the CEO, explaining the reasons for not being released (Appendix 23).

Students will be informed with 5 working days whether their request for a transfer will be granted. For refunds please note policies of refund on your enrolment form and on our website.

Attendance

- ☑ If you are on a **Student Visa** and your cumulative attendance falls below 80% you will be phoned and asked to explain why your attendance is low and how you are going to improve it.
- ☑ If your attendance fails to improve then an Attendance Warning Letter will be placed on the attendance notice board.
- ☑ If your overall attendance fails to improve (and you cannot possibly reach an attendance rate of 80%) then you will be given an Intention to Report letter and you may be reported to Immigration. Students have 20 days after receipt of the letter to appeal a decision. It is the student's responsibility to check the website daily.
- ☑ If you are sick for 3 days or more in a week, and you are on a Student Visa, you must bring a medical certificate to Student Services.

Student Services are available to help you with:

- ☑ **Holidays** - fill in a holiday form and give it to Student Services by Tuesday the week before your holiday. Holidays cannot be granted after this time.
- ☑ **Student cards** - for student discount offers and cinemas, but it is not good for trains, trams or buses and is not legal photo ID.
- ☑ **Tax file number** – you will need a tax file number to work in Australia.
- ☑ **Activities** – you can ask us about activities and book excursions.
- ☑ **Appointments** – make appointments with Education and Marketing staff.
- ☑ **Proof of study letter.**
- ☑ **Health Insurance** – make claims for health insurance.
- ☑ **Homesick or having trouble adjusting to life in Australia** – come and talk to a friendly staff member, we can help you.
- ☑ **Problems and questions** – we are here to help you with any problems. If you need help in your language, we can make an appointment with someone who can speak to you.

Translation Service - If you want a translator to talk to a government department, call **131 450**. You can explain the problem to someone who speaks your language, and they will help you explain the situation to the department.

Accommodation You may like to arrange your own private accommodation. ABILITY Education can help you with Homestay or Share Student Accommodation. Please contact Student Services should you have any problems with your current accommodation or you would want to arrange for accommodation.

These services are available to students at NO costs

Assessment Policy

General English - Students are assessed weekly and the assessment reflects the textbook. You will be assessed on grammar, writing, listening and speaking, and overall performance in class.

IELTS – Students are tested every week and receive immediate feedback on their progress; there is also the actual exam towards the end of the course.

EAP – Assessment is in the four macro skills and a writing evaluation checklist.

Homework

Teachers arrange with each class the amount of homework required.

Counselling

- Academic issues must be discussed with the teacher or the Program Director
- Personal issues must be discussed with the Student Services Manager

Grievance (complaint) Procedure

- 1) Talk to Student Services to fill out the ‘Comments Registration Form’. This form will be given to a staff member to help you with your problem. They will contact you for an appointment within 10 working days.
- 2) If you are not happy with the solution to your problem, talk to the Student Services Officer to fill out the ‘Non-compliance Appeals Form’. They will tell a higher manager about your complaint who will contact you within 10 working days. They need to give you a written copy of the grievance outcome.
- 3) Finally if the complaint is not resolved, go to the Student Services Officer so they can help you contact the Consumer Affairs Victoria (1300 55 81 81) or ACPET (03 9416 1895).

**These services are available to students at NO costs.*

***You can bring a support person to any meetings you have with management.*

****While your grievance is being solved you will be enrolled in normal classes.*

*****The school will immediately make any changes necessary once a solution has been agreed on (by both internal and external decision makers).*

Legal Services

If you need legal advice contact (03) 9269 0120 or online www.legalaid.vic.gov.au

Student Refunds

Before *initial* course commencement date

For ABILITY Education's refund policies please refer to the back of the enrolment form or the table on page 7. The amount of refund a student is entitled to will depend upon the amount of notice.

After *initial* course Commencement

Once a student has started their course (or series of courses) there is no refund for students who wish to cancel or shorten their course structure. Students may be granted a refund after they have commenced their course due to extreme reasons such as for health reasons or a death in the family the following steps need to be taken:

1. 3 forms of evidence of the situation:
 - a. Medical certificate
 - b. Evidence of a return airfare
 - c. A signed letter from the student stating the reasons for a refund and final day of study.
2. This evidence is taken to the Marketing Director who will make a decision of the validity. Refunds are considered on a case by case basis and the refund amount can be between 50% to 80%.

Please note that students may not transfer tuition weeks to other students.

Refund Policy

Notice of cancellation	Refund
If a student's visa application is rejected. (We will need to see the original letter from the Australian Embassy/Consulate rejecting the application)	100% of tuition, accommodation, material fees and Overseas Student Health Cover fees. No refund on enrolment fee, accommodation placement fee, guardian arrangement and guardianship (police) check fee.
ABILITY Education cancels a course	100% of tuition, accommodation, material fees, Overseas Student Health Cover fees and enrolment.
More than 28 days' notice of initial course cancellation is given before the student's initial course starts	80% of tuition fees, 100% material fees and 100% Overseas Student Health Cover fees. No refund on enrolment fee. For accommodation fees please see Accommodation refund table
28 days or less notice of initial course cancellation is given before the student's initial course starts	50% of tuition fees for 1-24 course weeks and 100% for the remainder. 100% refund for materials and Overseas Student Health Cover.
Cancellation on or after the initial course starts	No refund
If a student breaches their visa conditions resulting in their studies being cancelled	No refund

Code of Conduct - Please DO NOT

- Say bad things about people from another country, religion, gender or ethnic group.
- Speak in your own language while at school.
- Use your mobile phone in class.
- Use the computer during class time.
- Leave the classrooms, common rooms or kitchen untidy.
- Smoke in the front of the school or inside the school (including toilets).

Facilities & Resources

Computer Room – There are student computers that can be used during break times while the school is open. Please do not download music, videos or applications. Saving of data to the computer hard drive is not allowed.

Printing & Photocopying – Is charged at 20 cents per page.

Student Common Room – The student common room is outside the lift. There is a kitchen off the hall where you will find a fridge, microwaves, and tea and coffee making facilities.

Ability Web Portal (Online)

Check your:

- Attendance
- Class
- Holidays
- Enrolment dates
- Contact details

Find information about:

- Activities & excursions
- School news & events

To use Ability Web Portal

1. Go to our website <http://www.ability.edu.au/webportal>
2. Click “Students”
3. **New Users:** Click on “Register”, then enter your ID number (add four zeros as the leading zeros if your id number only has four digits) and First name (exactly as it appears on your Student Card) to register. After registration, check your email to find your password.
4. Login and enjoy the Ability Web Portal.

Emergency & Health Services

Emergency - Police, Ambulance & Fire Brigade – phone 000

Health Service – Students who have Worldcare Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) can see doctors at the:

Medical One, 23 QV Terrace, 292 Swanston St. Melbourne Phone: 8663 7000 (just across the Ability Education campus) *Gap fee \$5.00*

As part of your Worldcare Overseas Student Health Cover all you need to pay for a general medical check up is the gap fee of \$5.00 at the Medical One clinic. If you require a translator please request this with your doctor’s appointment as Worldcare doctors can use a translator’s phone service to help translate for you. See or call Student Services (8080 7877) if you have any questions or you need help booking an appointment or if you require a medical clinic near to your residence.

Specialist Counseling

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| • Lifeline | 13 11 14 |
| • Salvation Army | 1800 627 727 |
| • Centre Against Sexual Assault | 1800 806 292 |
| • Beyond Blue | 1300 224 636 |

Mental Health Services

If you have experienced any of the following:

- Alcohol or substance addiction/abuse
- Death of a family member or friend (bereavement)
- Psychological problems
- Depression
- Gambling addiction
- Or any other mental condition that is effecting the state of your mind negatively

...and would like help then Student Services can put you in contact with the Department of Human Services - Mental Health & Drugs Division that has experienced counsellors.

Psychological problems - **1300 767 299**; Alcohol / Substance abuse - **9096 5139** / Gambling addiction- **1800 858 858**

Holidays

Students need to apply for holidays by 6pm on Tuesday the week **before** the holiday is required. Holiday application forms are available from student services.

Accommodation and airport pick up: cancellation and refunds policy

Cancellation and refund policies for Homestay	
Booking fee:	No refund
Guardian placement fee (for students under 18 years old):	No refund
guardianship (police) check fee	No refund
Airport transfer service: 2 working days' notice must be given of any changes to details of inbound flights	If less than 2 working days' notice is given for a change of flight details, then no refund
Accommodation deposit: Cancellation after the accommodation booking has been confirmed: 2-4 weeks' notice:	compensation payment equivalent to 1 weeks accommodation fee to the accommodation provider
1-2 weeks' notice:	compensation payment equivalent to 2 weeks accommodation fee to the accommodation provider
Under 1 week notice:	No refund
After a student has commenced their stay	No refund
A student wishes to change their homestay after they have commenced their stay	A student must repay the booking fee, give 2 weeks notice to the current homestay and pay a minimum of 4 weeks accommodation with the new homestay
Cancellation and refund policies for student accommodation	
Booking fee:	No refund
Airport transfer service: 2 working days notice must be given of any changes to details of inbound flights	If less than 2 working days notice is given for a change of flight details, then no refund
Accommodation deposit: Cancellation before students start their accommodation:	A charge equivalent to 2 weeks' accommodation will be incurred. Note that if a student arrives later than the starting date of their booked accommodation, they will be charged for the days they have missed.
Cancellation after the students start their accommodation:	No refund

Changing courses

If you change your mind on the courses you have chosen and wish to study different courses within Ability there may be a charge involved:

If you change:

Original course	New Course	Admission fee
From General English	To <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Business English or• IELTS or• EAP or• Cambridge (PET, FCE or CAE)	Free
From a Day course	To an Evening course	\$50
From an Evening course	To a Day course	\$50
From a Sydney course	To a Melbourne course	\$50
From a Melbourne course	To a Sydney course	\$50
Before the course starts from: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Business English or• IELTS or• EAP or• Cambridge (PET, FCE or CAE)	To any other course	\$50
After the course starts from: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Business English• EAP• Cambridge (PET, FCE or CAE)	To any other course	\$100

Changing course structure

If your course involves more than one start and finish date and you wish to shorten or lengthen the break between the courses there will be a \$50 admission fee.

Questions & Answers

How many students will there be in my class?

You should only have a maximum of 16 students in the class. There will often be less. The classes change every week as some new students arrive on Monday morning and other students leave on Friday afternoon.

How many students will there be in the class from my country?

The school tries to keep different students in each class so that everyone has to speak English. However, sometimes students from a particular country leave and a lot of students from your country may arrive. We don't know what class they will go into until they do the test. It may take a few weeks for the good mixture of students to come back to your class. Be patient.

What if the teacher is speaking too quickly for me?

If you want the teacher to speak more slowly, please ask the teacher. Often this is only a problem for the first one or two weeks, until your ear can hear English easily.

What if I don't like the way my teacher teaches me?

You should try to talk to your teacher first. Remember, you will probably not be taught in the same way as you were in your country. The teacher can explain why the things they do will help you to learn. If you are still unhappy you can go to the Director of Studies and talk to her. However, we do not allow you to change to another class for this reason.

Can I stay in the same class at the same level for a long time?

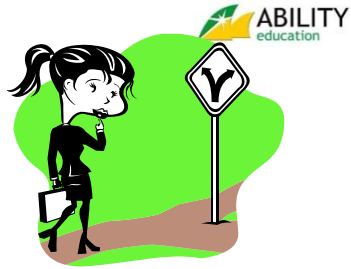
Your level depends on your skills. When your skills improve, you can go up to the next level. The time you stay on one level depends on how long it takes you to develop your skills. Generally, the more English you use, the quicker you will learn. School is only five hours a day – that leaves another ten hours for practising. The more practise you do, the faster you will improve.

When can I go up to the next level?

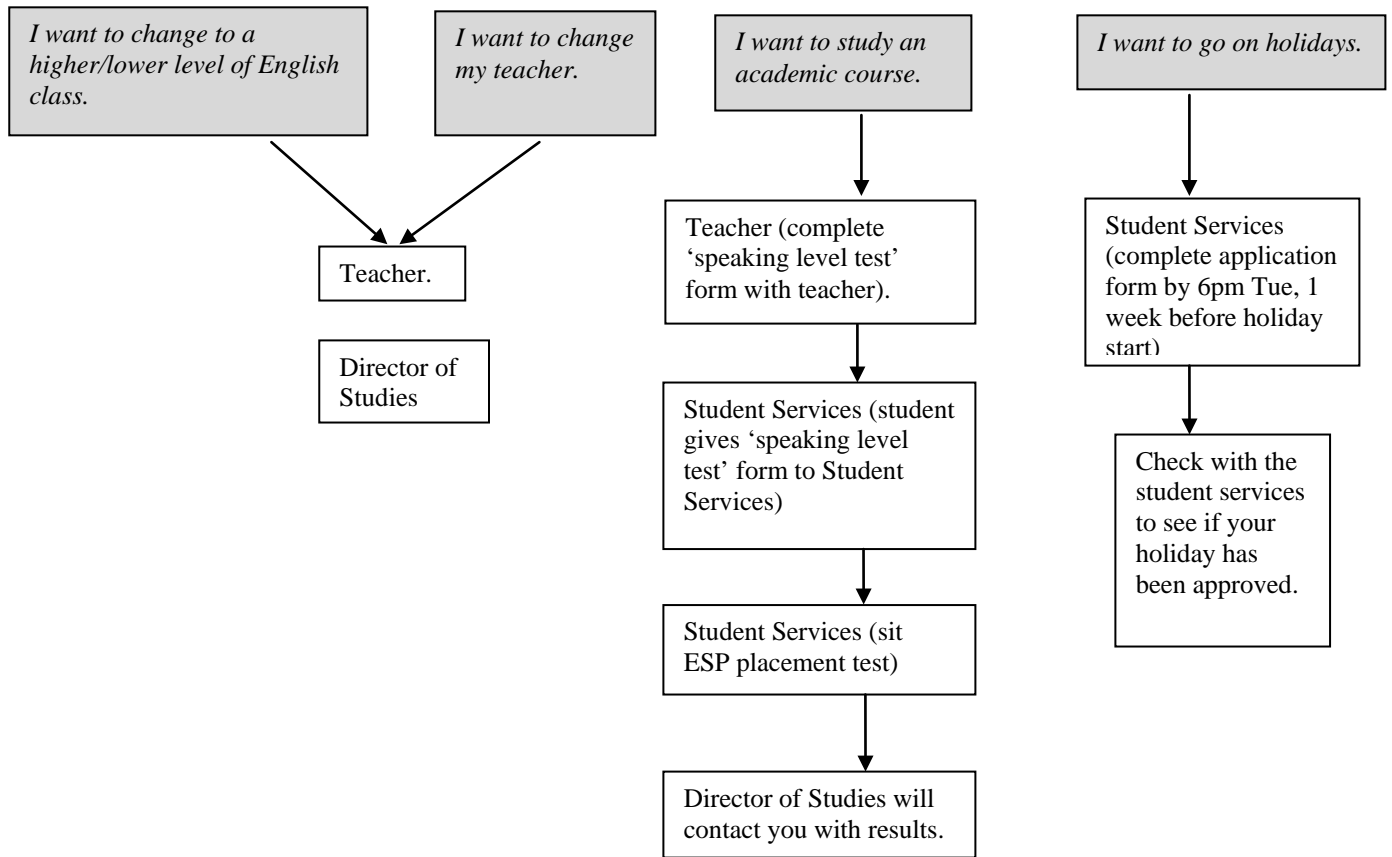
We give you a test every week. This is the way that the teacher knows you can understand. If you continually get good marks in all (writing, speaking and listening) tests, the teacher will ask the Programme Manager to put you up to the next level. Your teacher will tell you to stay if you are not ready for the next level

Can I change from General English to another English course?

Yes, you can change to an English for Special Purposes (ESP) course eg IELTS. You will first need to do a speaking evaluation with your teacher then come to student services to complete the relevant entry test. You will be notified by the education department with the results of the test.



WHO TO TALK TO?





Escape the daily grind.

Gloria Jeans - Level 1, QV
96546311
10% discount on everything



Virgin Active Gym - 138 Bourke St
Student Discount - \$19.95 per week.
(\$125 joining fee)
Student needs to take a letter from
us confirming they are "full time".

We hope you enjoy your time at ABILITY Education.



infomelbourne@ability.edu.au

www.ability.edu.au

CRICOS NO. 03112A

LEVEL 4, 213-215 Lonsdale Street, MELBOURNE VIC 3000? AUSTRALIA

TELEPHONE: (03) 8080 7877 FAX: (03) 9639 7855

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Level 1, QV 15% discount

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