MACQUARIE GRAMMAR SCHOOL™

Macquarie Grammar School

International Student Pre-Arrival Handbook

CRICOS Provider Code: 03330B

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Principal's Message



Dear Students,

On behalf of the entire Macquarie Grammar School community, I extend a warm, and heartfelt welcome! This handbook is designed to guide you as you embark on your academic journey with us.

At Macquarie Grammar, we believe that education is more than the acquisition of knowledge; it is the cultivation of character, the nurturing of emotional intelligence, and the pursuit of truth. Our school crest, with its guardian lions embodying courage and the open book representing Truth and Virtue, speaks to these core values. The red lions stand as a reminder to approach challenges with bravery, and the blue is for wisdom, sincerity, and intelligence.

We are an inclusive community, and we deeply value the diverse perspectives and experiences that each of you brings to our school. We're committed to providing a supportive and enriching environment where you can thrive academically, socially, and personally. Additionally, we are committed to helping you understand and settle into the Australian way of life. To ensure a smooth transition, we have organised a special Orientation Day programme that will assist you in adjusting to both Macquarie Grammar School and the vibrant city of Sydney.

MGS is a CRICOS-registered provider and is committed to Australian education regulatory standards and the welfare of all international students. As you integrate into our community, embrace the opportunity to explore new horizons, challenge yourselves, and build lasting friendships. Our dedicated teachers are here to support your English language development and provide the knowledge and skills necessary for completing both Junior and Senior education. We hope this will also help you pursue your future goals, whether that be gaining entry to an Australian university or other tertiary institutions.

Take pride in your heritage, share your stories, and contribute your unique talents to our vibrant community. Together, we can create a truly enriching and transformative experience for all.

I wish you all the very best as you begin this exciting chapter. Welcome to the Macquarie Grammar School family!

Ms Ellena Papas
Principal
Macquarie Grammar School

Introduction

At Macquarie Grammar School, we are dedicated to providing a world-class education that empowers students to excel academically, develop personally, and become responsible global citizens. Our tailored curriculum, small class sizes, and supportive, family-oriented environment create an ideal setting for international students to thrive.

This handbook is designed to support you throughout your journey at Macquarie Grammar School, ensuring you make the most of your experience. It's provided to you, in line with national and NSW education regulations, before or at the time of enrolment.

All information is presented in plain English as required by Australian law, and you are encouraged to discuss any part you do not understand with Admissions or the Student Support team.

For more information about our school, please visit our website: www.macquariegrammarschool.edu.au.

School Details and Campus Opening Hours

- School Address: 225 Clarence Street, SYDNEY, NSW 2000
- Telephone: (02) 9299 6768
- Reception Opening Hours: 8:00 am – 5:00 pm, Monday to Friday
- Student Support Contact: sso@mgs.edu.au
- Admissions Enquiries: enrolments@mgs.edu.au
- CRICOS Provider No: 03330B
- 24/7 Emergency Contact (student welfare/critical incident): 0438 709 871

Vision and Values

At Macquarie Grammar School, we are guided by our motto: *"Learn with Virtue, Lead with Truth."* Our values, symbolised in our crest, reflect the courage of the lion, the pursuit of truth through the open book, and the aspirations represented by the Southern Cross stars. These elements inspire us to encourage students to reach their full potential while upholding integrity, character, and a commitment to excellence.

Why Choose Macquarie Grammar School?

- Bespoke Curriculum: Tailored programs that cater to individual learning needs and goals.
- High School Preparation (HSP) Program: A specialized program designed for international students to transition smoothly into high school.
- Small Class Sizes: Personalized attention from teachers ensures every student is supported.
- Big Family Atmosphere: A welcoming community where students feel at home.
- Global Perspective: A diverse student body fosters cultural exchange and prepares students for a globalized world.

Courses

All MGS course offerings are registered with CRICOS and delivered face-to-face at our Clarence St, Sydney campus. Course durations and details are provided pre-enrolment and on our website.

Course CRICOS codes:

- High School Preparation (Course Code: 085591B)
- Junior Secondary (Years 7 to 10) (Course Code: 077151D)
- Senior Secondary (Years 11 and 12) (Course Code: 077152C)

Student Recruitment and Selection

MGS assesses applicants' academic and English qualifications per our published entry requirements for each year group (see website/Pre-Enrolment Info). Recognition of prior learning (credit) applications are assessed per our Credit/RPL Policy and decisions provided in writing. All applicants take a school-based placement test on arrival, regardless of external results, to confirm suitability for mainstream study. All assessments are recorded, with outcomes provided in writing (NESA 3.5.4).

When prospective students apply to Macquarie Grammar School for entry into Years 7–12, the following criteria apply:

Upon receiving an application, the Admissions Officer will assess the applicant's educational qualifications—whether obtained in Australia or overseas—to ensure they meet the requirements for study at the Junior or Senior Secondary level. The applicant will also be evaluated to determine whether they possess the required entry-level competencies for their intended course of enrolment.

Once an admission decision has been made, the student's English language proficiency, including their literacy skills, will be assessed. Even if an English test result (e.g. IELTS) is provided, the student will still be required to take the English Placement Test to confirm their suitability for mainstream entry—unless they have studied in an English-medium school (such as an international school in their home country) with satisfactory English results over the past four years.

If an applicant does not achieve a satisfactory result in the English Placement Test, they will be advised to enrol in the High School Preparation (HSP) Program for an appropriate period.

Applicants must also provide evidence of their academic background to demonstrate their ability to succeed in their chosen course. This evidence must be submitted in the form of original or certified documents at the time of application. Please refer to the School's Recognition of Prior Learning Policy (NESA 3.5.3).

Selection for enrolment will be based on the applicant's ability to meet the academic and English language entry requirements. Entry requirements, including minimum English and academic levels, are set out in your pre-enrolment information (NESA 3.5.1, National Code 2.1a),

Fees and Refund Policy

All fees (tuition, non-tuition, application) and the $650 non-refundable administration fee are disclosed in your Written Agreement and on the MGS website. The conditions and process for refunds, including in visa refusal, withdrawal, and compassionate grounds, are set out fully in the Refund Policy. Refund applications are considered within 28 days. Refund disputes may be appealed via the Complaints and Appeals process and/or the Overseas Student Ombudsman. Nothing limits your rights under Australian Consumer Law.

For detailed information regarding our fees and refund policy, please visit our website: https://www.macquariegrammarschool.edu.au/fees/

Student Accommodation and Welfare Policy

Students under 18 require approved welfare and accommodation arrangements. If not living with a parent or DHA-nominated relative, MGS will arrange, approve, and regularly monitor homestay/guardianship and issue a CAAW letter for your visa. Any change in accommodation or guardian, for any reason, must be requested and approved in writing by MGS. You will receive regular home visits, and in emergencies, may contact the 24/7 school emergency number or police (000). Our full Welfare and Child Protection Policy is available on our website and during orientation.

Child Welfare and Protection Obligations

In accordance with these obligations, Macquarie Grammar School ensures that all overseas students under 18 years of age receive age- and culturally appropriate information on:

- Who to contact in emergency situations, including the contact details of a nominated staff member, and
- How to seek assistance and report any incident or allegation involving actual or alleged sexual, physical, or other abuse.

Macquarie Grammar School has documented procedures related to child welfare and safety and will implement these procedures should any concerns arise regarding the welfare of a student under 18.

Accommodation and care options for overseas students under 18 years

Macquarie Grammar School approves the following accommodation and care options for overseas students under 18 years of age:

1. Living with a Parent or Relative Approved by the Department of Immigration

In this case:

- The school does not provide a welfare letter (CAAW) via PRISMS. The student's family must complete Form 157N and provide proof of the relationship to the Department of Immigration at the time of visa application.
- The Department of Immigration must also approve any changes to the welfare arrangements.

- If the adult responsible for the student's welfare holds a Student Guardian Visa (subclass 590), they must meet all visa conditions, including not leaving Australia without the student unless there are compassionate and compelling circumstances and the school has approved alternative welfare and accommodation arrangements for the student.

The school requires holders of Student Guardian Visas to:

- Maintain Overseas Visitor Health Cover for themselves and any dependent children.
- Notify the school immediately of any changes to their address or contact details.
- Advise the school of any compassionate or compelling reasons to travel overseas, or if they will be absent for an extended period, to care for the student.

If valid reasons exist for travelling overseas and alternative care arrangements are approved by the school, the school will provide documentation approving temporary arrangements.

If valid reasons do not exist or if the school cannot approve alternative arrangements, the student must travel overseas with the student guardian. The school will determine whether attendance requirements are affected by the student's absence.

2. Living in School-Approved Accommodation and Welfare Arrangements

In this case, Macquarie Grammar School will generate the welfare letter (CAAW) via PRISMS to accompany the student's Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE).

Macquarie Grammar School approves the following accommodation and welfare arrangements for students under 18 years of age:

- **Homestay and Guardian Program** managed by homestay providers approved by Macquarie Grammar School, including carer arrangement through International Student Alliance (ISA).
- **Private accommodation and care arrangements** requested by the parent, but approved by the school, that meet all relevant state and Commonwealth legislative requirements.

The school will maintain approval of accommodation and care arrangements until:

- The student completes their course and departs Australia,
- The student turns 18 years of age,
- The student has alternative welfare arrangements approved by another registered provider,
- A parent or nominated relative, approved by the Department of Immigration, assumes care of the student,
- Macquarie Grammar School notifies the Department of Immigration that it is no longer able to approve the student's welfare arrangements.

Accommodation and care arrangements are checked before approval and at least every six months thereafter to ensure they meet the student's age and needs. All adults involved in providing accommodation and welfare arrangements must have a Working with Children Check (WWCC).

3. Vacation Periods

During school vacation periods, students under 18 years of age for whom Macquarie Grammar School has issued a CAAW must:

- Return home to their parents, or
- Continue living in homestay arranged and approved by the school.

4. Accommodation for Students Aged 18 and Older

Students over the age of 18 must maintain school-approved accommodation arrangements, including:

- The **Homestay Program**, including private arrangements requested by a parent.

During school vacation periods, the following accommodation options are available for students aged 18 or older:

- Return home to parents, or
- Continue living in homestay, with details recorded by the school.

Ensuring Student Welfare

Macquarie Grammar School will contact the student's parents/legal guardian and notify the police and other relevant authorities if the student cannot be located and there are concerns for their welfare. If a student refuses to maintain approved accommodation and welfare arrangements, the school will report this to the Department of Immigration and advise the student to contact the Department to understand the implications for their visa.

In the event of a critical welfare issue, if deemed necessary, a parent, legal guardian, or approved relative must agree to travel to a designated location within three days to assume care of the student until the situation is resolved to the school's satisfaction.

If a parent or nominated guardian wishes to assume welfare responsibility, they must notify the school and provide written evidence of a guardian visa grant as soon as practicable.

Homestay

Students must stay with a Macquarie Grammar School approved homestay provider, with a maximum travel time of one hour to the school. The host family must be English-speaking. Mixed-gender students are not allowed, unless they are from the same family.

Students are expected to return to the homestay by 5:30 pm each day and must obtain guardian permission to stay out later than 5:00 pm. Students are required to stay at the homestay every night and are not permitted to sleep elsewhere.

Students must respect the host's home and adhere to house rules, engage with the homestay family daily, and maintain a clean and tidy bedroom. Smoking, vaping, alcohol consumption, and drug use are strictly prohibited. Macquarie Grammar School staffs will conduct homestay visits twice a year.

The student's bedroom will be furnished with a bed and bed linen, a wardrobe, a desk, a lamp, and a chair. Heating and cooling equipment may be provided but are not guaranteed in all homes. If available, these should be used sparingly and turned off when not in use or before bedtime. Any

personal heater or electric blanket brought by the student must be approved by the host, and for safety reasons, many hosts may not allow these items in the bedroom.

All MGS homestay hosts are child-safe screened and have valid Working with Children Checks. Your accommodation is checked by our school welfare team before and during your stay. Student welfare visits/checks are at least every six months, or more frequently if needed. In urgent cases (illness, emergency, welfare risk), MGS will immediately organise alternate accommodation and notify your parents/guardian.

Meals
In Australia, it is common to purchase and freeze large quantities of meat, so reheated meals are typical.

- **Breakfast** is generally self-serve, including items like toast, cereals, fruit, milk, and yoghurt.
- **Lunch** usually consists of light meals such as sandwiches and fruit, particularly on weekends. If preferred, students can discuss alternatives with the host. Hot lunches are uncommon, although some hosts may offer leftovers from the previous dinner.
- **Dinner** is the main meal of the day and an opportunity for students to engage with the host family. If a student expects to be late or miss dinner, they must inform the host in advance. If the student would like dinner to be saved, they should make a request accordingly.

After dinner, students are expected to assist with cleaning up, as shared household responsibilities are common in Australian homes. Cooking is not allowed under the standard homestay arrangement, except for preparing quick meals like instant noodles.

Arranging Visas

Most international students wishing to study in Australia are required to hold a student visa. Some other visa holders may also be eligible to study as international students. While many students choose to apply for their visa online, the application process can be complex. For students from certain countries, it may be beneficial to seek the assistance of an accredited education agent who can guide you through the process, given their knowledge and experience. You should contact the school to inquire if the school have any accredited agents in your country.

Please ensure you allow sufficient time for visa processing, as the process may take longer depending on your country of origin. It is important to submit your visa application well in advance of your course start date to avoid delays.

MGS issues the Confirmation of Enrolment (eCoE) and (for under 18s) the CAAW letter only after you and your parent/guardian sign your Written Agreement and all fees are paid. These are required for your student visa application to the Department of Home Affairs.

Visa Conditions

If you are granted a visa, you must abide by its conditions. Failure to comply with these conditions could result in the cancellation of your visa. These conditions include (but are not limited to):

You MUST:

- Attend at least 80% of scheduled classes.
- Achieve satisfactory academic progress as per visa and school policy.
- Complete the course within the duration specified in the CoE
- Remain with the principal course for 6 calendar months, unless issued a letter of release from the provider to attend another institution
- Notify MGS within 7 days of any changes to your address or emergency contact.
- Maintain approved Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) while in Australia
- Work no more than allowed by your visa (usually 48 hours/fortnight during term for students aged 18+).
- Any breaches must be immediately reported to the school.

For a full list of mandatory and discretionary student visa conditions please visit https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/already-have-a-visa/check-visa-details-and-conditions/see-your-visa-conditions?product=500

Documents to Bring

You should prepare a folder of official documents to bring with you to Australia, including:

- Valid passport with Student Visa
- Letter of Offer
- Confirmation of Enrolment (eCoE)
- Insurance policies if purchased from an agent
- Original or certified copies of your academic transcripts and qualifications
- Other personal identification documents, e.g. birth certificate, ID card
- Medical records and/or prescriptions
- CAAW if you are under 18 years of age.

If you are travelling with your family you will need to include their documents as well. Ensure all documents, including certified academic records and original identification, are carried in your hand luggage for visa and school enrolment purposes. In case you lose the originals, make copies that can be left behind with family and sent to you.

Attendance and Punctuality

Students must arrive at school by 8:30 am every day to be ready for the 8:45 am roll call. On Mondays, students must attend the Assembly in the Assembly Hall at 8:45 am. On other days, students go directly to their Homeroom. If a student has an early class at 8:00 am, arrival is required by 7:45 am. Any student who arrives late must report to Reception to obtain a Late Note.

You are required by law to attend a minimum of 80% of classes. Repeated unexplained absences or lateness will trigger a written warning, intervention, and potential reporting to Immigration if unrectified. You have a right to support and to appeal any adverse attendance/progress determination.

Attendance is measured based on the duration of time a student is present for their course. Arriving late to any class will negatively impact attendance records. Attendance Warning Letters

will be issued at the following thresholds: below 95%, 90%, 85%, and 80%. Upon receiving the fourth warning letter (below 80%), the student will be reported to the Department of Home Affairs, and their enrolment and visa may be cancelled.

A medical certificate is required for each day a student is absent. The parent or guardian must notify the Student Services Officer (SSO) if the student is unable to attend school.

Other School Policies

Key policies—including Refund, Complaints & Appeals, Transfers, Welfare/Accommodation, Academic Progress & Attendance, and Child Protection—are available at www.macquariegrammarschool.edu.au/policies and are provided with your pre-enrolment and orientation packs. Speak to Student Services for a printed copy or any clarification.

These include:

- Student Policies
- Academic Policies (ELICOS and General)
- Student Support and Welfare
- Administrative and Staff Policies
- General School Policies

Please take the time to review these policies, as they outline key information regarding the school's expectations and procedures.

Frequently Asked Questions

Where can I find...	Campus
Academic Staff (Teachers)	Level 8
Student Services	Level 8
Reception Desk	Level 8
Computers for Student use	Level 8
IT Helpdesk	Level 8
Marketing and Recruitment Office	Level 8
Student Kitchen Facilities	Level 4 and 8
Vending Machines	Level 8
Student Recreational Space	Level 4 and 8

I want to....	What do I do?	When
Change my address or telephone number	Report to Level 8 Reception to update personal details.	Within 7 days of change
Change my name	Complete a Change of Personal Details form at the Reception Counter on Level 8 and bring your passport or any relevant documentation	

Withdraw the school	See the Admissions Officer to complete a Request form.	
Apply for Special Consideration for my exams	See the Director of Academics and submit a Special Consideration Form.	Within 5 working days of the examination
Apply for an extension for my assignment	See your Teacher and submit a Request for Extension on Assignment	Prior to the due date of the assignment

Q: What do I do if I have a complaint or want to appeal a decision?

If you ever feel unhappy with any aspect of your course, treatment, accommodation, or any decision made by the school, you have the right to make a complaint or appeal.

- Step 1: Talk to a trusted staff member, the Director of Operations and Student Wellness, or Student Services to see if your concern can be resolved quickly and informally.
- Step 2: If not resolved, you can make a formal complaint in writing. Ask for a copy of the Complaints and Appeals Policy or find it on our website.
- Step 3: You can bring a support person to any meeting. We'll respond in writing within 10 working days, and your enrolment will continue during this process.
- Step 4: If you are not satisfied with the school's decision, you can request an external review from the Overseas Student Ombudsman (www.ombudsman.gov.au), who is independent and free.
- Contact: Student Services, Admissions, or the International Student Coordinator can assist at every step.

All complaints are handled fairly, confidentially, and at no cost. You will not be disadvantaged for raising concerns.

Q: What should I do in a critical incident or emergency?

- If you are in immediate danger or need urgent help: Dial 000 for police, ambulance, or fire.
- For any school-related emergency (welfare, illness, missing homestay, accident): Call the school's 24/7 Emergency and Welfare number: 0438 709 871
- School staff will ensure you are safe, help you get medical/psychological support, and notify your family/guardian if needed.
- Critical incident support and follow-up are managed under our Critical Incident Policy (available online/by request).
- All incidents are treated with care, sensitivity, and full legal compliance.

Q: What support is available if I am sick or feeling unwell?

A

- See the campus Reception or Student Services for help; we can refer you to our school nurse/wellbeing staff and arrange appointments as needed.
- For after-hours health problems, your Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) provides access to doctors, clinics, and emergency care.
- If seriously unwell, call 000 or the school's 24/7 emergency number for help.

Q: Who can I contact for help if I'm struggling or unsure what to do?

- Speak to the Director of Operations and Student Wellness, a teacher, or Student Services at any time.
- Contact school welfare officers for advice on accommodation, bullying, or emotional support.
- For independent help, contact the Overseas Student Ombudsman (www.ombudsman.gov.au), Kids Helpline (1800 55 1800), or Lifeline (13 11 14).

Quick-Reference Contact List

- Student Support Office: 02 8228 3022, sso@mgs.edu.au
- 24/7 Critical Incident/Welfare/Emergency: 0438 709 871
- Overseas Student Ombudsman: www.ombudsman.gov.au | 1300 362 072