

# Podcast 50 – Universities in Australia

Learn English while learning about daily life in Australia,  
with Rob McCormack

*Podcast Number 50 – Universities in Australia*

<http://traffic.libsyn.com/slowenglish/podcast50.mp3>

Hi,

Education is a way to a better life. In Australia this has always been the case. I can remember when I was a young student in high school. The thing we all wanted to do was go to university. Getting a university degree was the way to get a good job and the path to having a happy and successful life. I was lucky enough to be able to go to university in Perth, Western Australia, where I studied to become a teacher. After I finished university, I became a high school teacher and that was the beginning of a great career for me. In this podcast, I will give you a brief overview about universities in Australia.



If you want further information about any Australian university, or about how to enrol, you should visit <https://www.studyaustralia.gov.au/english/study/universities-higher-education/list-of-australian-universities>

Today, many young people still see university as the best way to get a good job. Things have changed a little since I went to university in some respects, but it is still a great place to learn and to make friendships which last a lifetime. It's also the place where young people, and some not so young, can hear new ideas, learn new ways of thinking and also become passionate about things that are important. It's almost a tradition in Australia that university students question authority and question how things are currently done in society.



This is a good thing I think, as this is how our society matures, becomes more tolerant and more diverse. It is also how people learn to become the leaders of the future.

In Australia we have 43 universities attended by just over 1 million students. Of those, about 230,000 are foreign students and about 810,000 are domestic students. Unlike when I was 18, today there are many more school leavers who go on to further education. In fact, in 2013, 59% of all school leavers went on to do further study of some form, and 60% of those went to university. This means that, today, approximately one in every three school leavers go on to university. In 1983 for example, this was one in six so you can see that more and more Australians are now attending university.

Australian universities are generally well regarded in comparison to other universities in other countries. One way this is measured is by using one of the many university ranking lists which are developed each year. One of the well-known ranking lists is the Times Higher Education World University Rankings list. In 2014, it ranked Melbourne



University as number 33 in the world and the top ranking Australian university.



Melbourne University was founded in 1853 and is regarded as the most prestigious university in Australia. It is situated close to the centre of Melbourne. The next Australian university on the ranking list is the Australian National University, or ANU, as it is generally called. This is situated in Canberra, our capital city and is currently ranked 45 in the world on the Times Rankings list. It was founded in 1946. The third Australian university on the Times Rankings list is the University of Sydney, which is Australia's oldest university. It is ranked 60 in the world and was founded in 1850. It is situated in Sydney and has about 51,000 students. The fourth Australian university on the Times Rankings list is the University of Queensland. It is ranked 65. It has a number of campuses in the state of Queensland, with its major campus situated in Brisbane. The fifth Australian university on the Times Ranking list is Monash University, which has its major campus in the suburbs of Melbourne. It is ranked 83 on the Times Rankings list. Monash is Australia's biggest university,

with 53,000 students. Of course, there are many more great universities in Australia.



I attended the University of Western Australia after I left high school and I have very fond memories of my time there. During my working life, I also studied part time at the University of New England, in New South Wales, where I completed a masters degree by correspondence. I found that to be a real challenge, as it is hard to study part time while also working full time with a young family. But it was worth it. My masters degree taught me a lot about how to be successful in management and in business. I found that very useful in my job and I'm glad I put in the effort to complete the degree.

Of course, before you can study at university in Australia, you must apply and be accepted. For domestic students in Australia, there are a number of ways you can gain entry to university. For those who are completing high school, the process is a little different in each state of Australia, although the differences are only small. In my state of



Victoria, the process is to apply through VTAC, or the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre. Once the examination results for the Year 12 school examinations are released, VTAC calculates a special score for each student called an ATAR or Australian Tertiary Admission Rank. The ATAR is used by universities to compare all the students who have applied to do their courses. The ATAR is one of the pieces of information which universities use, although different courses may have other entry requirements, as well as a good ATAR score. To find out about the courses and the requirements they may have for entry, you should visit the website of the university concerned. For international students wanting to study in Australia, the process can involve applying direct to the university concerned. Again, visit the university website of your choice for further details, or perhaps start at <https://www.studyaustralia.gov.au/english/study/universities-higher-education/list-of-australian-universities> and follow the links.



If you have a question or a comment to make, please leave it in the comments box at the bottom of this page. Or, you can

send me an email at [rob@slowenglish.info](mailto:rob@slowenglish.info). I would love to hear from you. Tell me where you live, a little bit about yourself and what you think of my Slow English podcast. I will write back to you, in English of course. If you would like to take a short quiz to see if you have understood this podcast, you will also find it on my website. Goodbye until next time.

Rob

## Podcast 50 Quiz - Did you understand the podcast?

You can take the quiz as many times as you like.

Start quiz

### Vocabulary

accepted = when those running a course say that you can do the course

apply = when you ask if you can do a course

approximately = about

attended = to go to an event or course

authority = the people who are in charge, the bosses, the leaders

beginning = the start

business = the selling of products and services

calculates = to add, divide, multiply and/or divide

campuses = used to describe a university, its buildings and the area around it

case = the reality

challenge = when something is very difficult or hard

compare = look at two people or things and decide which is better

comparison = when you look at two people or things and decide which is better

concerned = the one you are talking about

correspondence = when you receive things only by mail. You don't go to the university

currently = now

degree = an award from a University to show that you have completed a course.

developed = produced, made

direct = to ask another person or organization something

diverse = to have things of many different types

domestic = lives in Australia

enrol = to sign up to do a course

entry requirements = the things you must have before you can start a course

examination results = when you take a test and you find out if you passed or not

fond memories = to remember something as being very good

foreign = not from Australia, from overseas

founded = started

further = more

in some respects = in some ways

international = from overseas, not from Australia

involve = when you must take some steps to do something

lists = when you write down many things of the one type

management = when you are a boss

masters degree = a high award from a university

matures = when something grows and changes

measured = to give a number which tells you how much

passionate = when you like something very, very much

path = the way

prestigious = people think it is very, very good

process = the steps you take in order to do something

ranking = to say one thing is better than something else

released = when something becomes available to others

school leavers = young people who have finished their schooling, usually 17 years old

situated = the place where something is found

society = describes all the people in a country and how they live



successful = when things are going well

teacher = a person who helps you learn, usually in a school

tolerant = when you show respect for the ideas of other people

top ranking = the best

well regarded = when people think something is very good