



AMBASSADE
DE FRANCE
EN AUSTRALIE

*Liberté
Égalité
Fraternité*



Preparing to study in France

Guide for Australian students



1.. Life in France

2.. Administrative steps

3.. To do upon arrival

4.. Welcome Services

5.. What next?

France at the heart of Europe

A perfect location for studies

FRENCH, AN INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE

French is spoken by more than 300 million people in the world and is the official language of 32 countries across 5 continents. French, alongside English and German, is a working language of the European Union. French is also the **third most spoken language of business** and the second most used language for international media.

EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY ALLIANCES

The 64 European University alliances, comprising 560 European institutions, including 63 French institutions, give students the opportunity to study at one or more European campuses. Students will benefit from international, multidisciplinary and innovative training, thereby gaining **the skills necessary to embark on their career paths**.

ENHANCED QUALITY OF LIFE

Students have access to diverse types of assistance, discounts and other systems that will **improve their quality of life**. These include a modern healthcare system, efficient public transport networks, housing allowances, university restaurants, discounts at cultural and sporting institutions, etc.

A COVETED PANORAMA OF CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

France continues to be **a world leader in culture** thanks to the wide array of activities on offer each day. These cover literature, cinema, museums, operas, cafés, gastronomy, fashion and more. Festivals, shows and other dynamic events take place throughout the year, pointing to the country's openness to cultures from around the world.

<https://www.francefestivals.com/>

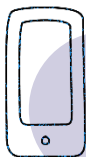
BUDGET

The cost of living in France



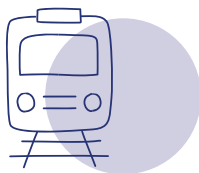
Accommodation

Paris		Other Regions
Monthly Rent		
400€ - 650€	CROUS	150€ - 550€
600€ - 1 200€	Private Flat	280€ - 700€
600€ - 1 100€	Flatshare	350€ - 400€
Housing insurance		
Between 80€ to 100€ per year		
Security deposit		
1 – 2 months' rent (returned at the end of contract)		



Everyday costs

Internet	20 - 50€ / month
Phone plan	From 2€ / month
Private insurance	20€ / month
Gym membership	15€ - 30€ / month



Transport

Paris		Other Regions
75,20€	1 monthly transport card (city : bus, tram, métro)	20€ - 35€
350€	1 annual card	250€ - 300€

Card for city bikes

10€ / month (changes
in cities)

Card Avantage Jeune 12-27 SNCF*

49€ / year

**This card is available to everyone up to the age of 27 and offers discounts on all train tickets in France.*



Activities

Paris		Other Regions
9€	1 cinema seat	5€ - 7,50€
5€ - 15€	1 museum entry	5€ - 10€
2€ - 3,50€	1 swimming pool pass	1,50€ - 3€

** You will often have access to discounts and special rates upon presentation of your student card or if you are under 26.*

Useful Glossary of terms

French Term	English Meaning
<i>Bail</i>	Lease agreement
<i>Caution/ Dépôt de Garantie</i>	Security deposit / Rental bond
<i>Justificatif de domicile</i>	Proof of residence (Usually an electricity or internet bill)
<i>RIB (relevé d'identité bancaire)</i>	Bank account number
<i>Facture</i>	Bill
<i>Casier Judiciaire</i>	Background Check



Working while studying



The law allows foreign students to work in France up to **964** hours per year, equivalent to **60%** of the full work week in France.

Working while studying is helpful to cover some expenses but cannot cover the full cost of living, so plan ahead with your savings.

Several online resources facilitate job hunting for students:

- [Jobaviz](#): a job offers platform managed by the CROUS that helps students find a job matching their profile.
- [CIDJ](#): The *Centre d'Information et de Documentation Jeunesse* publishes job offers for students on its website.
- [France Alumni](#): Members of the France Alumni network have access to many job offers from companies looking for multicultural profiles. Users can use an interactive search engine to seamlessly find a job and/or an internship.

Internships

You can apply for an internship while studying in France. Work experience in a company, university or lab is legally required to be remunerated at a fixed rate (around 600€ per month) and can complement your studies.

STUDENT DISCOUNTS



Cultural Offer

Discounts at museums, theatres and cinemas + free access to libraries.



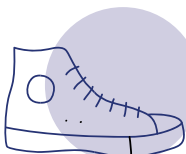
Transport

Transport companies offer preferential fares to students.



Meals

Access to 450 university restaurants in France: €3.30 per meal (starter-main course-dessert) + offers in certain restaurants.



Shopping

Many shops offer special deals for students. Simply present your student card when making a purchase.

A number of sites will help you take advantage of the benefits reserved for students. Here are just a few:

[Https://mes-aides.gouv.fr/](https://mes-aides.gouv.fr/),

[Http://www.etudiant.gouv.fr/](http://www.etudiant.gouv.fr/),

<http://www.jeunes.gouv.fr/>.

VISAS

The only official, up-to-date source of information about visas is the France Visas website. Advice contained in the following document is provisional and may be subject to change without notice.



PAPERLESS ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESSES

The visa granting process has been simplified:

- Your visa application is a top priority in consulates.
- The France-Visas portal will facilitate your administrative procedures by allowing you to easily upload supporting documents.
- Once in France, you can validate your visa online without having to physically go to an office.

Steps for your visa

Please ensure you read the information that is specific to the Student Visa. Applying for a visa is solely the responsibility of the student, not the Embassy or University.

1. Find out whether you need a visa.

Whether or not you need a visa depends on your nationality, age, activity and the length of your stay. Complete the Visa Wizard to verify whether you need a visa.

2. Complete the online part of your application and prepare the required documents.

When filling out the questionnaire online:

- Your purpose of stay is “Study – Student”.

- The EEF procedure does not yet apply in Australia. You should leave this field blank.
- Take note of your Registration Number (FRA*****etc.) because you will need this for the next step.
- Your passport type is an **Ordinary Passport**, not Official

3. Book an appointment at a Visa Collection Centre.

After you complete the online part of the visa application, you must **book and attend a visa appointment in person at a Visa Collection Centre (VFS)**. These are available in Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth and Sydney. You can book an appointment at any one of these, depending on which city is easiest to get to from your home.

You can attend your visa appointment a maximum of **three months** before the commencement date of your program of study as listed on your acceptance letter or enrolment certificate. You must also wait a minimum of **three weeks** before your planned departure for your visa to be processed. If the appointment booking calendar is full, keep checking the calendar daily, as new slots will become available 60 days in advance.

If you are waiting on documents, it is best to still book the appointment and attend with a letter explaining the delay, and explain you will provide them as soon as they are received.

If an emergency appointment is necessary, students should first contact the Collection Centre.

Contact VFS:

Email: info.fraaus@vfshelpline.com

Call Center : +61 (0)2 8278 4160

Website: <https://visa.vfsglobal.com/aus/en/fra>

4. Attend your visa interview with all the necessary documents.

At the end of the online questionnaire, the website will produce an official list of the required documents which you must prepare and present at the appointment. You must bring all the required documents to your visa appointment.

The list of documents changes depending on the type of visa you apply for, but *may* include the following:

- **The visa application form** (downloaded from the website and signed)
- **Travel document** (passport) + Australian visa/residence permit if you are an international student. (Passport expiry date must be at least 3 months longer than your planned stay.)
- **ID photograph**, official passport format (get this at your local post office easily)
- **Certificate of enrolment** (or pre-registration) from the French university, or a letter of confirmation (not nomination) of your exchange from your home university.
- **The last degree you completed** where applicable
- **Proof of sufficient funds** (at least 615€/month for 6 months) to cover the duration of your stay. This can be **proof of a bank account in Australia** with money in it, and a signed letter explaining you will open an account in France upon arrival (you cannot open a French bank account from overseas, so ignore the part about a French account deposit). OR a **signed letter from a parent/legal guardian** who provides for you, along with their proof of funds and ID.
- **Proof of accommodation** in France, or a letter outlining your accommodation plans.

Bring the **receipt of appointment confirmation** once you've booked it.

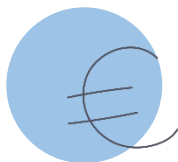


Avoid booking holidays or arriving in France too early before your study program until you have received your visa because you cannot leave the country without your passport, and you cannot complete the application in another country.

VALIDATE YOUR VISA UPON ARRIVAL

The long-stay visa (VLS-TS) issued by the French consulate in Australia must be validated in France to be valid as a residence permit. The VLS-TS is valid as a residence permit for the duration of its validity. It must be validated online, **within 3 months of arrival** in France on:

<https://administration-etrangers-en-france.interieur.gouv.fr/>



**Small fee to pay
to validate**



**Obligatory step
to remain in
France**



ACCOMMODATION

STUDENT OPTIONS



Public student residences

Simple accommodation structures with a fixed rent (CROUS residences).

Private student residences

Student accommodation offered by agencies.

Find out more here:

Private residences

Rental of a private room or flat.

Flatsharing

Sharing accommodation with one or more other people.

Host family accomodation

This is often a room in a flat or house.



Useful links

Student residences

www.etudiant.gouv.fr

www.lokaviz.fr

www.adele.org

www.residenceetudiante.fr

Individual advertisements

www.paruvenu.fr

www.pap.fr

www.seloger.com

www.leboncoin.fr

Private renting for students

www.immojeune.com

www.uniplaces.com (Paris seulement)

www.location-etudiant.fr

www.locservice.fr

Flat sharing

www.appartager.com

<https://livin-france.com/>

www.recherche-colocation.com

www.leboncoin.fr

GUARANTOR

In France, people wishing to rent a private flat are asked to provide a guarantor (*garant*). This is a person who assures the payment of rent for the renter, i.e. who undertakes to pay the rent if the student can no longer afford to do so. The guarantor must be French.

Foreign students often struggle to find a guarantor, so the government or some private agencies offer guarantor services.

The main service for all students without a guarantor is **Visale**.

Visale is a free rental guarantee scheme available to all students under the age of 30. It can be accessed online at:

www.visale.fr



You must apply for the Visale document **before** signing your rental contract



FINANCIAL AID FOR RENTING

Foreign students are entitled to financial rent aid with the same benefits as French students.

Two types of financial aid for renting exist in France, from the Caisse d'Allocation Familiale (CAF):

(ALS)

Allocation de logement
à caractère social (Social
housing allowance)

The applicable aid
depends on the **type
of accommodation**

(APL)

Aide personnalisée au
logement (Personalised
Accommodation Help)

The amount varies
based on the **rent and
the income** of the
student

Aid cannot be
accumulated



BANK ACCOUNT

Getting a bank account is a [right recognised by French authorities](#). A foreign student can open a bank account in any bank in France. The different banks have branches in most cities; just open the door and make an appointment with an advisor.

It can be very handy to get a bank account in France, in particular for paying bills (electricity, telephone, rent) and subscriptions (transportation, Internet). It is especially important to have a French account if you have a paid job or internship to allow your employer to pay you wages. It is also easier to be reimbursed for healthcare expenses.

Three documents are needed to open a bank account:

- Passport or official equivalent
- proof of residence (a rental contract or an internet/electricity bill)
- and an enrolment certificate or a student card



If you don't yet have proof of long-term accommodation, you can use the address of the international relations service of your institution.

Find out more here:



INTERNET AND PHONE SERVICES

Many operators offer deals of around €30 per month with free calls to all fixed telephones in France and several other countries, unlimited internet access and digital TV.

The main operators are:

- [Bouygues Télécom](#)
- [Free Mobile](#)
- [Orange](#)
- [SFR](#)
- [La Poste Mobile](#)
- [Lebara Mobile](#)
- [Lycamobile](#)
- [Réglo Mobile](#)

They have many offers, some including the handset, pre-paid or plan. A French bank account is needed for mobile phone plans but not for pre-paid cards. Have a look on the internet to get an updated [plan](#) or [sim-card](#) price comparison. E-sims are a new popular option for short term stays.

UNIVERSITY ENROLMENT

Standard university enrolment fee (CVEC)

Before enrolling in a higher education institution, students in initial training must prove that they have paid the *Contribution Vie Étudiante et de Campus* (CVEC). This is equivalent to the Student Services and Amenities Fee in Australia.

This contribution is 'intended to encourage the reception and social, health, cultural and sporting support of students and to bolster the preventive and health education initiatives aimed at them' (article L. 841-5 of the Education Code). The annual amount of 103€ is to be paid on the site:

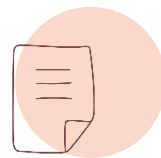
[Cvec.etudiant.gouv.fr](https://cvec.etudiant.gouv.fr)

The CVEC must be paid before enrolling in the university.



ENROLMENT

Official enrolment in university



There are two parts to the registration process at university:

Administrative

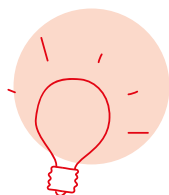
This registration formality results in the issue of a student card. This is when you pay your tuition fees.

Pedagogical

This directly concerns teaching and exams: this is where you choose your options and organise your year of study.

At other higher education institutions:

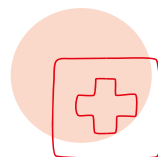
Other higher education institutions set their own enrolment procedures, which they communicate to the students concerned before they leave. It will be similar to the model above.



Before you leave: Make sure you have all your documents with you, originals and copies are often required for administrative procedures in France.

HEALTH

Health Insurance



In France, the social security system reimburses an average of 70% of healthcare costs. Supplementary health insurance (*mutuelles*) can top up this amount.

If you are enrolling in French higher education for the first time, you must apply for French social security cover when you arrive in France, once you have enrolled at the establishment. *Your university should help you sign up for this once you arrive. For this you will need a copy of your birth certificate. In most cases birth certificates written in English don't need to be translated to French.*

You must sign up for your free social security account here:

etudiant-etranger.ameli.fr

Private Health Insurance

- Subscribing to a supplementary health insurance (*mutuelle*) is not mandatory but recommended.
- The mutual system allows for the best possible reimbursement of specialist and hospitalization expenses.
- The mutual may be offered by a student mutual, a bank, or an insurance company



HEALTH

Health Information

Important numbers

- **112** - The European emergency number
- **15** - The SAMU (*Service d'Aide Médicale Urgente* - Emergency Medical Service)
- **17** - The police
- **18** - The Fire Brigade (emergency services)
- **3624** - House-call doctor if you are too ill to travel, available 24/7

Find contact information for a private doctor and make an appointment online on the [doctolib](#) website, or reach out to your university health department.

If you have questions about **sexuality, sexual relations, love or contraception**, contact the **Family Planning** association that offers **free and confidential check-ups**, and [has branches everywhere in France](#).

Solutions adapted for students with disabilities

In France, there are a number of support and assistance structures to help students with disabilities study and succeed professionally under the best conditions. Find out more here:

<https://www.australie.campusfrance.org/being-a-student-with-a-disability-in-france>

Mental Health Support

CNAé – Free and discreet phone line for mental health and reporting services

Santé Psy Etudiant – Free psychology appointments and support



WELCOME SERVICES

Student Services Welcome Desk



A shared desk brings together in one simple place all the services that a foreign student must contact in the first weeks after arrival in France: CROUS, Bank, Préfecture, CAF, Mutuelles, etc



Consult the interactive map on the home page of the website (campusfrance.org). This tool makes it possible to discover the reception services existing in the main university cities of France:

- **Welcome structure**
- **Type of services offered**
- **Dates and times**
- **Addresses and contacts**
- **Dedicated website and staff**



International Mentor Program

What is the « Buddy System »?

- A mentoring system between international and French students;
- A web platform developed by volunteers from the IxESN network (ErasmusStudent Network France), the network of associations that support youth mobility.



The mentor may also:

- **Welcome** the student upon arrival and reply to any questions;
- **Organise** a visit to the city / campus / training institution
- **Accompany** through administrative procedures;
- **Discover** local student life events.

There are many sponsorship networks. The institutions' international relations departments can provide the necessary information.

University Services



- **School service:** organizes and regulates all administrative aspects at the university.
- **International Relations Department:** organizes and manages student and research mobility.
- **SUMPPS (university service of preventative medicine and health promotion):** medical service provided by doctors, nurses, psychologists, social workers, etc.
- **SUAPS (university service for physical and sports activities):** offers many activities, mostly free, and organizes sporting events during the year.
- **BU (university library):** open to all students, with flexible opening hours and accessible resources.
- **SCUIO (university joint information and guidance service):** accompanies those who wish to learn about further studies and professions or to prepare a possible change in study path.
- **BAIP (Desk for career development services advice):** responsible for sharing internship offers and jobs and assisting students in their efforts.

FRANCE ALUMNI NETWORK

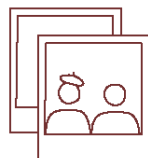


Register on the France Alumni platform: the network of former students of French higher education, with over 370,000 members in more than 100 countries. This network will enable you to:

- **Keep in touch** with students thanks to the France Alumni directory;
- Multiply **professional opportunities**;
- **Exchange ideas** in themed discussion groups;
- Stay in touch with France through **news and cultural events**.

Sign up for free here:

<https://australie.francealumni.fr/fr/>



RECAP

Resources to plan your departure

FAQ:

- The answers to your most frequently asked questions about studying in France: <https://www.australie.campusfrance.org/frequently-asked-questions-about-studying-in-france>

Our website:

- Tips for preparing for departure and arrival in France: <https://www.australie.campusfrance.org/all-you-need-to-think-about>
- “Life in France” section: articles on your [budget](#) / [housing](#) / [health](#) and more...
- Fact sheets on 50 university cities: <https://www.campusfrance.org/en/recherche/categorie/student-cities-933>
 - practical information on reception services and student life in each city

Reach out to us:

- Email : education.canberra-amba@diplomatie.gouv.fr



CHECK LIST

*Print me out and
keep me for ease
of mind !*

- ☐ Get your visa
- ☐ Accommodation + Guarantor
- ☐ Payment of the student life and campus contribution (CVEC)
- ☐ Registration in your higher education institution
- ☐ Opening a bank account
- ☐ Registering for social security
- ☐ Validation of long-stay visa VLS-TS

Student notes section