



We can help you learn English

Adult Migrant English Program

Why should I learn English?

Now that you are in Australia it is important for you to learn English.

English is Australia's national language. People in Australia speak many languages, but to take part fully in Australian life you will need to speak and understand English. Without English, you will find it difficult to get a job and become independent. English is also needed if you wish to become an Australian citizen.

What is the Adult Migrant English Program?

The program, also known as AMEP, provides basic tuition in the English language to help eligible adult migrants and refugees settle successfully in Australia.

The AMEP will teach you more than just English. You will also learn about Australian society, culture and customs. You will meet other new arrivals, who may have similar experiences and goals, and you will probably make many new friends.

The AMEP is an Australian Government funded program.

Am I eligible for the program?

You may be eligible if you are a migrant or refugee settling in Australia and have been granted a permanent visa and you speak little or no English. Some migrants with provisional visas may also be eligible to join the program and some youth between the ages of 15 and 17 years of age may also be able to join the program.

You need to register with one of the AMEP service providers within six months of arriving in Australia or gaining permanent residence. You should begin English classes within one year.

You can study English with the AMEP for up to 510 hours of English courses for five years from their visa commencement date or the number of hours it takes to reach functional English (whichever comes first).

You may be eligible for additional tuition if you have special needs because of difficult pre-migration experiences (for example torture and trauma) or limited schooling.

In addition, additional tuition is available to AMEP clients through the Settlement Language Pathways to Employment and Training (SLPET) program. SLPET offers clients an employment focused course to assist them to learn vocational-specific English while gaining familiarity with Australian workplace culture and practices.

What will the program cost?

There is no charge for eligible migrants and refugees to study through the program.

Who will teach me?

Local organisations, called service providers, offer AMEP tuition. These service providers employ teachers who are trained in teaching English to speakers of other languages.

Your local service provider will tell you whether you are eligible for the program. They can recommend the best way for you to learn English.

They can seek approval for you to defer the start of your classes if you need to for family or work reasons.

Your service provider will advise you which course will best fit your needs. They will do this based on your work and family circumstances and your current level of English. They can also help you plan for further study.

Who will look after my children while I am learning English?

Your AMEP service provider can arrange free childcare for your children while you attend class. Free childcare is only offered for children who are under school age and only during the time you attend class.

For more information ask your AMEP centre for the childcare fact sheet.

Where will I learn?

Service providers offer full-time and part-time courses at different times (days, evenings and weekends) and in different venues including schools, colleges and community centres such as churches and mosques.

Service providers offer courses in rural and regional areas as well as in the major cities.

What if I am unable to attend classes?

Distance learning

The AMEP has a distance learning program. Your AMEP service provider can give you more information and advice on this course.

The program is delivered either online or through a package of sequenced texts and audiovisual material and includes the use of books and audiovisual materials. You will also have regular contact over the phone with a qualified teacher. You will need to spend at least five hours a week on the course.

Exercises and activities include listening to the radio, reading newspapers and advertisements, talking about yourself, asking for information, filling in forms and writing letters.

Home Tutor Scheme

If you are eligible for the AMEP and are unable to attend classes, you may be able to work with a tutor at home.

The tutor can discuss with you the best way for you to learn English and help you understand daily life in Australia.

Your AMEP service provider can give you more information and advice on this scheme.

Before beginning AMEP classes

Before beginning AMEP classes you will need to make an appointment with your AMEP centre to:

- assess your level of English
- agree on the number of hours you will study each week and the type of class you will attend
- discuss childcare needs and what the AMEP centre can do to help you
- develop an individual pathway guide which will set out your educational and career goals and what you will need to do and learn to achieve these. Your progress towards achieving your goals will be recorded on your plan as you learn more English.

More information

For more information, you can call the Department of Immigration and Citizenship enquiry line on 131 881 (for the cost of a local call from anywhere in Australia).

Information about the AMEP, including your closest service provider, can be found at www.immi.gov.au/amep

If you need interpreting help, contact the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) National on 131 450 (local call cost from anywhere in Australia). They provide translating and interpreting services 24 hours a day, seven days a week.