

Melbourne Scholars Program

University of Melbourne, Australia

Deadline date: January 25

Email all materials including transcript to: SAapplications@caltech.edu & have references emailed to: SAreferences@caltech.edu

Please read the following pages carefully as this information is essential for completing an application. You will find most of your questions answered.

Introduction and General Information

Caltech sophomores and juniors can apply to participate in the Melbourne Scholars Program. Students can only study abroad at the University of Melbourne in the Fall Term of their junior or senior year. Students must be nominated by Caltech and cannot apply directly to the University of Melbourne. The University of Melbourne has a strict 3.0 GPA requirement. As with all Caltech study abroad programs, students take courses for Caltech credit and can often find courses that fulfill option requirements.

Term dates for Fall 2026 (Semester 2) are July 20 – November 21, 2026, students arrive early for mandatory orientation. https://www.unimelb.edu.au/dates?queries_year_fquery=next_year

Caltech students are designated as Study Abroad Students at Melbourne and not as Exchange Students for the application process. The University of Melbourne website, Study Abroad and Exchange Students are referred to as SAEX Students, but when a status choice is involved, always select Study Abroad. For general information about studying abroad at Melbourne, go to the Melbourne Global Mobility website: <http://www.mobility.unimelb.edu.au/inbound>.

Students must first complete the Caltech Melbourne Scholars Program application and cannot apply directly to the University of Melbourne, as a nomination from Caltech is required.

Location, History and Student Body

The University of Melbourne is the top university in Australia and is located in a busy and exciting metropolis. Melbourne boasts great cultural activities, a beautiful landscape right on Port Phillip and is the Australian base for both Cricket and Australian football. Melbourne is a great launching point for trips deeper into Australia -- there is a one week break at the end of September that allows for travel, and the semester ends in early December, which is the start of the Australian summer. For more information on the city of Melbourne, visit: <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/Pages/home.aspx>

The City of Melbourne has several universities and is very much a "college town" with student-oriented nightlife activities, museums, restaurants and a great public transport system to get around the city. The university has an active Student Union, joined by most students. To get involved in university activities, clubs, and to get discounts around town, students can join the Student Union. Most clubs have membership fees. If there is something you have a serious interest in, this is a great way to meet people with similar interests and get involved. More info: <https://mbs.unimelb.edu.au/career/your-community/clubs-and-societies>

Melbourne is in the Australian state of Victoria on the southeastern shore of the continent. It is the biggest city in Australia with a population of around 5 million – 60,000 of whom attend the University of Melbourne. Due to it being in the southern hemisphere, the summer season is December thru February. The school year, broken into two semesters, runs from March-November.

Caltech students would attend during Semester 2 (July- November), which corresponds to Caltech's Fall Term. There are no classes in the month of December, so students could travel before coming back to Caltech for the winter term.

Non-Teaching Period: At the end of September/early October, there is a Non-Teaching Period of 1 week when there are no scheduled classes. This period is akin to a reading period and exists to allow students to do papers, reading, finalize projects, or do problems sets that students might not have had time to complete during the first 8 weeks of teaching. The purpose of this week is academic. Students may not cut classes such as review sessions or "make-up" lectures, etc. that are scheduled by professors to travel. However, students who are on pace or ahead on their work may be able to use some of this time for travel.

While studying abroad at Melbourne at any time, e.g., the reading period, it is not recommended that students return home due to the travel time and adjusting back to the time difference. After the reading period, there are 3 more weeks of teaching, then an examination period. Most exams should be completed by the beginning of December, usually by the first full week. Some students will complete exams in November.

Mandatory Orientation

There is a required orientation before the start of the term. This orientation, including the SAEX (Study Abroad and Exchange) enrollment day, typically occurs in mid/late July. Classes begin the week after that. There is an optional orientation, called the Melbourne Welcome, with tours of the city and activities before the beginning of the official orientation and term. Students stay in the residential colleges for this time.

This Welcome Program is not required of study abroad students but is an option for students to get to know the city and meet people. Students must apply for the program and pay out of pocket (about US \$500) for this service.

Room and Food

Students live at RMIT Village, a housing complex for students from the University of Melbourne and the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. RMIT Village offers a tremendous range of support services, activities, gym, computer lab, study room, lots of activities and a pool! It is about a 10-minute walk to campus. Students live in a double room with a shared bathroom and kitchenette. There is a room divider that provides privacy, as well as a balcony overlooking the courtyard. Students cook for themselves, as there is no dining hall or board plan. More information on Melbourne Long Term Housing can be found here: <https://study.unimelb.edu.au/accommodation>

Caltech students are charged standard Caltech tuition, room and food fees for their term abroad. Students are responsible for covering the cost of their visa, which is about \$1,300.

Due to higher room costs and the longer term, there is a supplemental charge to Caltech room and tuition charges. This charge varies each year based on Melbourne and Caltech fees and the exchange rate. Students on financial aid are eligible for additional funding to cover these costs depending on their individual situation. Because of the additional costs, we encourage all students to file financial aid

applications by the priority deadline.

Academic Program Overview

The Melbourne Model: The Melbourne Models comprises a 3-year undergraduate degree followed by an intensive 2-year masters degree or 3-year doctoral program. There are 6 "New Generation Undergraduate Degree" designations: Bachelor of Arts, Biomedicine, Commerce, Environments, Music and Science. There are 87 subjects within these degrees. The degrees focus on "depth" in a subject (the major) and require courses in a variety of other disciplines, creating "breadth" or what US universities often refer to as distribution requirements. The new model also encourages research, internships, and engagement with the world outside of the university. More information on the curriculum can be found here: <https://study.unimelb.edu.au/study-with-us/undergraduate-courses/the-melbourne-curriculum>.

At Melbourne, the term 'course' means course of study (Option), not specific classes. The specific classes are then called subjects.

Students can take subjects (classes) in any faculty (department) and can take classes within different faculties if they choose. Although, there are additional requirements within fine arts and music.

Students must take 50 points per semester, which is equivalent to 36 CIT units. Each 12.5-point subject (class) is equivalent to 9 CIT units; although a student could request 12 units of credit if taking a Melbourne research class and doing at least 12 hours per week of research related activities for the class. If a student is seeking credit for a required Caltech class that is 12 CIT units, then he/she can request that amount of credit, which will require permission from their option and/or the instructor of the relevant Caltech course. If a student needs to take a 12 unit Caltech course or does a 12 unit research course, it is possible to earn more than 36 CIT units for the term. Students can receive option, credit, general credit or HSS credit for Melbourne. Students are limited to one research course at Melbourne.

Melbourne allows students to take less than 50 points, Caltech does not. All Caltech students must take exactly 50 points, which equals at least 36 Caltech units. Melbourne does not allow overloads. Students are required to take 2 subjects (25 points) from the science or engineering department related to their major field of study or in an area for which they can get option elective credit or fulfill an option requirement. If a double-major, students can take one subject in each option or closely related field. The other two subjects can be in any course. When choosing humanities or social science subjects, students should only consider classes in levels 1 and 2 and be sure they have the appropriate background for such subjects.

There are 12 total teaching weeks, and each class requires about 120 hours of work, including lectures, practical's and outside work. There are exams at the end of the semester, and some classes do have midterms or other exams throughout the semester.

When applying to the Melbourne Scholars Program, students nominate 6 subjects (classes) to guarantee they are accepted into four of them. After students are selected into the Melbourne Scholars Program by Caltech and apply to the University of Melbourne, course advisors at Melbourne will then review the requested subjects and confirm that they are available and appropriate. Melbourne could request additional information such as subject outlines or syllabi from previous Caltech classes to make sure

students have the appropriate background. Students are allowed to change or drop subjects during the orientation period or first couple of weeks with the approval. Remember to choose subjects only from Semester 2.

For a complete list of the departments at Melbourne, see the List of Faculties:

<http://www.unimelb.edu.au/az/faculties.html>.

Students can view the general faculty websites to gain a broader understanding of specific courses of study at Melbourne. SAEX students are allowed to take courses from different years and at different levels. Students can search for subjects by using the **University Handbook**, as described below.

Most degrees have subjects listed as "Breadth Subjects". These are classes that students not in that major can take to satisfy their "Breadth Requirements" – classes that Melbourne requires to ensure their students have a wide breadth of knowledge. They are not always at the intro level, so be sure to make note if there are any prerequisites.

In some courses, Melbourne uses an "integrated approach" to teaching. This integrated approach means that certain courses of study (departments) do not separate the various aspects of the topic into specific subjects (classes). For example, Chemistry is taught in an integrated style – inorganic, organic and physical chemistry are combined in some courses. This means that it is necessary that students read the subject (class) description carefully and when possible, request a syllabus to review to understand what topics will be covered.

Students do not receive credit for coursework abroad until they return to Caltech, have their coursework evaluated by Caltech faculty AND their transcript from Melbourne proves they have passed their subjects.

University Handbook: When choosing courses, students should look at subjects (classes) in the Handbook (course catalog): <http://handbook.unimelb.edu.au>. The handbook gives a list of "Courses" from which students choose the most appropriate one that corresponds to their option, e.g. Sciences and Mathematics, Information Technology and Systems, etc. This will then go to a list of Undergraduate and Graduate Courses (as in, course of study which is equal to an option). If you scroll down, you will see all listed subjects in the Courses. Be sure to click "Display All" to see the full selection of subjects. Clicking on the subject will allow you to view the description, prerequisites, level, etc. Students can also use the following guide to help select classes:

https://study.unimelb.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0031/378256/UniMelb_What-Can-I-Study-Guide.pdf.

Students are not allowed to take subjects that they are not prepared for, so be sure to check the prerequisites for each subject when looking into them.

All subjects and the corresponding class codes, the first number in the sequence refers to the year or level of the subject:

Numbers 1-3 are undergraduate.

Number 4 is often the Honours year and could be UG (undergraduate) or PG (post-graduate).

Numbers 5-9 would indicate a post-graduate (graduate) level subject.

Each subject lists a Coordinator and their email address. Students are encouraged to email the coordinator to request more information on topics covered, prerequisites and a syllabus.

Students are allowed to take subjects in the Graduate Courses, if they have the appropriate background. If unsure, students should email the subject coordinator or talk with FASA. Yearlong subjects are generally not allowed, although if a required subject, students can ask the coordinator if it is possible to join the subject for just the second semester. Students are generally allowed to take honors level courses, except in BEM.

The subject names and codes must be listed in your proposed course list (e.g. GEOL30009 Advanced Field Geology). Make sure to get the new code, which begins with 4 letters followed by 5 numbers. The old 6-digit code might be listed in parenthesis but is not needed.

There are also some 2-week long intensive subjects offered in December. If interested, students should talk to the FASA office about coordinating such a subject. There would be extra fees involved, as they do not count toward the required 50-point/4 subject/36 Caltech unit minimum. Students could opt to participate in these courses but would have to pay an extra fee and the number of corresponding CIT units is not guaranteed.

Timetable: Students must check their proposed course lists, or 'nominated subjects', on the Timetable to be sure there are no time conflicts. Students are not allowed to have a schedule with any time conflicts. When looking at subjects on the Timetable, be sure to read the notes carefully. For example, lectures are listed with an "L" and practical's are listed with a "P". There are "streams", which are repeats of the same class/lecture, and students can choose which one they would like to attend.

Math Option Students: Math option students consult with the Executive Officer of Math during the application process regarding any Math Option required courses, such as Math 108a. You must bring a full description of the proposed class with you. If one is not posted online by Melbourne, contact the instructor or advisor to obtain one. This does not apply to Applied Math students.

All students can take one class by correspondence if they cannot find an equivalent class abroad that is approved for option requirement credit.

RESEARCH

Students can register for subjects titled "Research Project". These are opportunities to pursue research and receive credit. If interested, students should contact professors ahead of time to establish a relationship and discuss options for research topics. This subject culminates in a formal assessment such as a paper or presentation. It is also possible for students to volunteer in a lab. This also should be set up before the student arrives in Melbourne. Other questions about research should be discussed with the FASA office. Students are limited to taking ONE research class at Melbourne for 9 to 12 Caltech units.