



Australian
National
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ANU Burmese Language Program



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#1

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*QS World University Rankings by Subject 2025

Why study Burmese?

Myanmar borders Bangladesh, India, China, Laos and Thailand. This geostrategic location, coupled with its recent movements towards democratisation and prospective economic growth are increasingly attracting international attention. While being a Buddhist country, Myanmar embraces many ethnic groups and a diversity of cultures.

Burmese is the official language of Myanmar, which has a population of 51.3 million, around 65 percent of who are native speakers of the language. Burmese is also the main common language in the country as well as in Burmese communities worldwide. Burmese also has a long history of use in literary works and music, and now the language is increasingly widely used on the internet. The Burmese script is visually distinctive and historically rooted in the Mon-Burmese script lineage, offering linguistic insights into the region's religious and literary traditions. As the primary language used in government, education, and media in Myanmar, learning Burmese enables deeper engagement with the country's social and political realities. In Australia, Burmese language skills are increasingly valuable for humanitarian organisations, academic research, migration services, and Australia's regional foreign policy. Burmese is also spoken within diverse diaspora communities across Australia, particularly among Karen, Chin, and Rohingya populations.

"There is no better insight into Myanmar than through learning one of its key languages."

— HANNA ADAM, BACHELOR OF ARTS

