



GAA

Gemmological Association of Australia

DIPLOMA IN GEMMOLOGY



ADELAIDE
BRISBANE
HOBART
MELBOURNE
PERTH
SYDNEY

00 INTRODUCTION TO THE GAA

The Gemmological Association of Australia (GAA) is an Australia-wide, not-for-profit Association that has been passionately educating the industry, gemstone enthusiasts and consumers about gemstones since 1945. Since its inception, the GAA has been Australia's leading gemmological educator.

Gem-Ed Australia operates as the educational division within the GAA organisational framework. Its primary role is to offer support to state teaching centres while upholding the quality of education and student welfare standards.

CONTENTS

01	<i>Diploma in Gemmology</i>	2
02	<i>Course Fees & Information</i>	6
03	<i>Enrolling & Prerequisites</i>	8
04	<i>Course Content & Assessment</i>	10
05	<i>Study Options</i>	16
06	<i>Vocational Outcomes & Recognition</i>	20

01

DIPLOMA IN GEMMOLOGY

The GAA Diploma in Gemmology is the scientific study of gemstones and is internationally recognised as the Australian benchmark to become qualified in the identification and handling of gems.

You will investigate the geological and chemical processes that form gemstones, their physical properties and various methods of identification. The training combines a sound understanding of theory and practical techniques to distinguish natural gemstones from treated stones, synthetics and imitants.

WHO ARE THE TEACHERS?

Our teaching staff predominantly consists of graduates from the prestigious Diploma in Gemmology program, all of whom hold the esteemed title of Fellows within the GAA. Many of our faculty members are internationally recognised as prominent leaders within their respective areas of expertise. Many are actively involved in pivotal roles within industries that highly value their unique expertise and intimate knowledge of gem materials. Industries include jewellery design, manufacturing, lapidaries, sales, gemstone trading, mining and exploration, and various other sectors.

They bring a deep wealth of knowledge and experience to our institution while staying diligently informed about the latest advancements in the continuously evolving field of gemmology.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

The course offers a well-structured, comprehensive education in Gemmology which is both nationally and internationally recognised. Upon completion you will be equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to confidently identify and handle gemstones. These unique skills are especially valued in the gemstone and jewellery industries, and by many gem enthusiasts. The GAA's focus is on the testing of gemstones in the laboratory. Class sizes are kept small to ensure that each student receives personalised attention to reach their full potential. You will be studying with like-minded, dedicated people who are fascinated by gemstones and their origins, people who work with and handle all types of gem materials in diverse situations throughout many industries. You will have access to specialised laboratory facilities and have the chance to establish industry connections with others that may open doors to professional networks within the Gemmological field.

A Diploma in Gemmology is a prerequisite for the Diploma of Applied Gemmology (Valuation) delivered by the National Council of Jewellery Valuers (NCJV).

Other benefits include:

- Gaining the knowledge and confidence to accurately identify natural, synthetic and treated gemstones.
- Learning how to spot a 'fake' – technological advances are constantly introducing new synthetic and treated gemstones to the market, including imitants.
- Give your career a boost or enhance employment opportunities by gaining knowledge and industry contacts.
- Fuelling your passion for gemstones.
- Learning the rich and interesting stories that accompany gemstones from around the world.
- Upon successful completion, apply to become a Fellow of the GAA and use the internationally recognised postnominal FGAA.

WHO IS THIS COURSE AIMED AT?

The course appeals to individuals with a keen interest in gemstones, ranging from enthusiasts pursuing the course for personal enrichment to professionals in the jewellery, mining industries and related trades. For the latter group, the course serves as an opportunity to deepen their knowledge, thereby enhancing their career development and prospects.

Some of the people who have studied with us include:

- Jewellery manufacturers, designers, retailers and gem and diamond wholesalers.
- Dealers in estate or antique jewellery.
- Jewellery valuers and pawnbrokers.
- Museum curators and gem or mineral collectors.
- Lapidaries.
- Geologists.
- Teachers.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE?

There are two main options:

- Two years part time in-house (face-to-face). This is the recommended option.
- Two years part time Flexible mode (theory studying at home or on-line with practical classes taken in 'blocks' during the year).
- Alternatively a One year Intensive course, this is only suitable for students who are prepared to commit 20-30 hours per week and only available in NSW.

Each State's schedules vary, exact times and dates are available from the Enrolment Officer and on the GAA website.

Most states hold face-to-face classes in the evenings and weekends so people busy during the day can attend. Queensland is the exception as they have "block education". You attend a 5 to 6 blocks x 4-day format on selected dates distributed approximately between February and October.



02

COURSE FEES & INFORMATION

Flexible payment options allow you to extend the payments over time once your initial deposit to confirm your enrollment has been made.

Member of the GAA? A member discount applies. You can apply at the same time as enrolling.

Mandatory printed course materials are covered in the cost*, with further expert recommendations to enhance your learning.

**Practical Gem Kit not included*

DIPLOMA IN GEMMOLOGY COURSE FEES

Refer to our website www.gem.org.au for current course fees or email the Federal Education Officer: learn@gem.org.au.

CAN I PAY MY FEES BY INSTALMENTS?

Yes, we can offer you a payment plan. A minimum deposit of \$1500 is required to confirm your enrolment, with an option to extend the remaining balance over 4 monthly payments.

DO I GET A DISCOUNT IF I AM A GAA MEMBER?

Yes, there are Member and Non-member prices for courses and many of the events run by the GAA.

CAN I GET VET FEE HELP OR GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE?

Students applying for the Diploma in Gemmology are not eligible for VET fee help or government assistance.

IS GEM-ED A REGISTERED TRAINING ORGANISATION?

Gem-Ed Australia was formed in 2010, it functions as the education provider and administrative arm for all GAA national courses.

Gem-Ed Australia is not a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) with Australian Skills and Qualification Authority (ASQA).

ARE COURSE MATERIALS SUPPLIED?

Gem-Ed Australia will provide all tuition, electronic course notes and some student on-line learning tools. Teachers may recommend suitable texts for wider reading that are not examinable but may enhance your study experience.

In addition to the on-line course notes, you will receive the books *Gemmology*, by Peter Read and the *Gem A Practical Handbook*. We encourage wider reading, for example *The Australian Gemmologist*, *Gems & Gemology* along with other texts as recommended by teachers.

Students are required to purchase certain gemstone handling tools for their personal use during practical classes. These can be purchased through the GAA by simply ticking the box on your enrolment form or alternatively you can source these items yourself.

03

ENROLLING & PREREQUISITES

Your success in the course may hinge on your proficiency in English and your manual dexterity. If you have any doubts, our Enrolment Officer is happy to discuss this with you.

COURSE PREREQUISITES

- Fluent English language skills and the ability to understand technical scientific terminology.
- Legible hand writing in English, especially for examinations.
- Basic computer skills including proficiency in MS Word as well as access to email and Internet, along with the ability to upload digital files.
- Sufficient dexterity and eyesight for handling small stones and tools.

DO I NEED TO TAKE AN IELTS TEST BEFORE I ENROL?

Given the technical and scientific nature of the course, as well as the extensive reference and general reading materials available exclusively in the English language, a strong command of English and proficient numeracy skills are essential prerequisites. There is also a high level of discipline-specific scientific jargon that you will need to understand.

It is not just a case of being able to speak and write basic English. We do not have an IELTS entry level, however as an indication, you would need to have a level of English that would be acceptable for entry to an Australian University science course (Level 6-7).

Workbooks and examinations require comprehensive detailed analysis for their completion in a satisfactory manner.

WHEN DOES THE DIPLOMA IN GEMMOLOGY COURSE START?

The course commences early to mid February of each year.

WHEN CAN I ENROL?

Enrolments are open from 1 September and close late January.

ONCE ENROLLED, CAN I DEFER?

It is possible to defer, but conditions apply. Please discuss this with the Federal Enrolment Officer.



WILL GAA HELP ME GET A STUDY VISA?

No, GAA is not able to assist in obtaining a study visa to Australia and intention to study with GAA is not an eligible criterion for granting of a study visa by the Australian government.

I HAVE COMPLETED A DIPLOMA OR DEGREE IN GEMMOLOGY IN MY COUNTRY. IS IT RECOGNISED IN AUSTRALIA?

The GAA does not automatically or formally accept qualifications from other gemmological training bodies for recognition of prior learning or other purposes.

Contact Gem-Ed in writing with any question regarding recognition of prior learning, including details of where, what and when you studied.

IS THERE AN AGE LIMIT FOR STUDENTS?

Minimum enrolment age is 18 years. There is no maximum age.

I'M STILL NOT SURE WHETHER THIS IS RIGHT FOR ME. IS THERE SOME WAY I CAN TRY IT OUT FIRST?

Yes, indeed! The Introduction to Gemmology is a short course conducted over two days or over multiple weeknights depending on which state you are in.

It consists of theory and laboratory sessions with experts in the field. You will learn about a wide range of gemstones, their structure and chemical composition, as well as experience hands-on practice with gem testing equipment. It's a great way to get an overall grasp of the subject and whether it's the right thing for you. Contact your State Division for more information.

I LIVE OVERSEAS. CAN I STILL DO THE COURSE?

Yes, it is possible to do the course by Flexible mode. Note that this will require travel to Australia and a good command of the English language. (Please note, this course is not an eligible criterion for an Australian Student Visa).

04

COURSE CONTENT & ASSESSMENT

So many gems! Dive in and discover the world of crystals, gems, geological processes and more. Learn to use gemmological instruments to enhance your knowledge and your career.

I'VE SEEN REFERENCE TO THE BOARD OF STUDIES AND EXAMINATIONS. WHAT IS THAT?

The Board of Studies (BOS&E) is responsible for provision of course content, materials and assessment. This includes the preparation of a syllabus and reading list for each course, setting and marking of examinations, as well as promulgation of examination results.

WHICH TOPICS ARE COVERED?

First year (Gem 1)

- Physical and optical properties of gemstones.
- Methods of testing gemstones based on physical and optical properties.
- Elementary chemistry, and optics.
- Crystallography.
- Introduction to gem testing techniques using microscope, hand lens, refractometer, polariscope, dichroscope, Chelsea filter, spectroscope, ultraviolet light (short & long wave).
- Geological formation and occurrences of gemstones.

Gemstones covered include:

- Silica gems (varieties of quartz & chalcedony), feldspars (such as moonstone & labradorite), ornamental gems (such as turquoise & lapis lazuli), organic gems (such as amber, jet & coral, pearls are covered in Gem 2.)

Second year (Gem 2)

- More advanced study of physical and optical properties.
- Greater detail in the use of instruments with an emphasis on gem identification.
- Imitations and treatments.
- Synthetics - manufacture, properties and inclusions.

Gemstones covered include:

- corundum (ruby & sapphire), diamond, beryl (including emerald, morganite & aquamarine), tourmaline, garnets, spinel, jade, opal, pearls and all other mainstream gems.
- many other lesser known gems such as iolite, danburite, diaspore, sphene and enstatite.

HOW IS THE COURSE ASSESSED? ARE THERE EXAMS?

Yes, strictly controlled examinations are held annually at each teaching centre in October/early November. You are required to attend a minimum of 75% of classes and will be assessed on coursework, with the bulk of assessment based on theory and practical examinations. A minimum standard is required in first year before moving on to second year.

Students are also required to submit theory based workbooks throughout the year and in Gem 2 identify a minimum of 80 gemstones in the practical sessions.

Flexilbe Mode students will be required to attend two practical block sessions at mid year and end of year prior to undertaking exams. The Federal Enrolment Officer can provide more information.

WILL THERE BE ANY FIELD TRIPS?

From time to time, field trips are organised. Attendance on field trips is not mandatory and does not count in your final assessment. However, the experience may help gain a deeper understanding of gemstone formation and discovery, they're also a lot of fun!

As a member based organisation, the GAA hosts various activities in each state and all students are warmly welcomed to participate.

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Completing my Diploma in Gemmology has benefited me as a jeweller in more ways than I ever expected. I have always had an interest in gemstones and found the course was not only informative and challenging but immensely rewarding.

Emma Meakes FGAA

Jeweller, John Miller Design - WA

I WANT TO LEARN ABOUT DIAMONDS. DOES THE DIPLOMA IN GEMMOLOGY COVER DIAMONDS?

Diamonds are an important study within gemmology and certainly form a significant component of the Diploma. When you have completed studying gemmology, you may then choose to do further specialist training in the GAA's Diploma in Diamond Technology for which Diploma in Gemmology is a recommended prerequisite, though not required. This part-time course runs from May to October each year. To earn the qualification of the Diploma in Diamond Technology you must also complete our Practical Diamond Grading course (Units priced separately), where, over several practical sessions you will learn to professionally grade diamonds.

(The Practical Diamond Grading course may also be undertaken as a standalone course – you do not need to be studying the Diploma of Gemmology or Diploma in Diamond Technology course to enrol.)

CAN I STUDY WITH THE GAA TO LEARN JEWELLERY MAKING OR STONE FACETING?

We currently do not offer any courses which will provide you with the skills to become a qualified jeweller or lapidarist. In Australia, jeweller skills are normally developed through the apprenticeship scheme or in association with other teaching organisations. Likewise, the practical component of stone faceting is not a topic taught by the GAA. Your local lapidary club may be able to assist you with learning this skill.

Numerous GAA students pursue the skills of jewellery making or faceting through other organisations, we also have many GAA members who have expertise in these skills and are willing to provide support and guidance in these study areas.

The GAA often offers short courses or workshops in subjects outside the Diploma curriculum, some of which have a practical component. More information is available at www.gem.org.au/courses

ARE THE METAPHYSICAL PROPERTIES OF GEMSTONES COVERED IN THE COURSE?

Every GAA course is centred on the scientific study of gemstones and is therefore concerned with their physical properties. Metaphysical characteristics are not recognised or addressed.

05

STUDY OPTIONS

We all lead busy lives and sometimes it's hard to fit in everything we want to do.

With that in mind, several study options are available to help you along the way.

I MAY NOT BE ABLE TO ATTEND ONSITE CLASSES OVER THE COURSE OF TWO YEARS. ARE THERE ANY OTHER OPTIONS?

Yes, there are three modes of study:

1. **In-house** – provided at the teaching centres in Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth and Adelaide. Students in Queensland attend a 5 to 6 blocks x 4 day block format on selected dates distributed approximately between February to October.
2. **Flexible Mode (flexi)** – students complete theory components via distance learning and online (with course materials supplied). They complete their practical sessions in two one-week blocks: one in June and the other in September. In the first year, these blocks are five days long, in the second year they extend to seven days.
3. **Intensive** – one year, offered in NSW only. The content and other features of the course are the same as the two year course. The intensive course is fast tracked and allows participants to complete the work in one year. The theory component is to be completed remotely from home, while practical sessions are conducted at the teaching centre on Wednesdays in NSW lasting a full day each week.

WHAT ARE THE START DATES AND ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS?

The most common course progression is over 2 years.

- Gem 1 starts in February for In-house and Flexible learning modes and ends in October.
- Intensive (Gem1) starts February and ends in May. Intensive second year (Gem 2) starts in June and ends in October.

For Gem 1 Assessments consist of examinations which are conducted both mid year and end-of-year, they both include one theory examination of 2.5 hours and one practical examination with a duration of 3 hours. Theoretical workbooks are also required to be completed and submitted by a nominated date.

Upon achieving a successful result students can continue onto second year (Gem 2). Successful students then complete a separate enrolment form for Gem 2 and upon payment of Gem 2 fees will be eligible to continue to the second year (Gem 2) component.

Gem 2: The two year course progression (Face to Face & Flexible modes) starts in January, while Intensive starts in June.

All learning modes end in late October.

Gem 2 has two mid year examinations consist of one theory examination and one practical examination. There are a total of four end-of-year assessment sessions, this comprises two theory examinations, each with a 2 hour duration and two practical examinations, each with a duration of 3 hours. Theoretical workbooks are also required to be completed and submitted by a nominated date.

I'M INTENDING TO DO DIPLOMA IN GEMMOLOGY INTENSIVE SO THAT I CAN FINISH THE COURSE FASTER – WHAT COMMITMENT IS INVOLVED?

The Diploma in Gemmology Intensive mode runs from mid-February through to mid-October. You need to be available for one full-day (7.5 hours) laboratory study each week (NSW only).

Intensive mode is not for the faint hearted. You would be studying for the whole year at a very fast pace. We do not recommend missing any classes as you will find them difficult to make up. Moreover, as there is a requirement for a minimum 12 hours per week of revision outside class time, taking time off would seriously impact your study goals and potential success in the course. To be successful you need to treat the intensive mode as a full time commitment.

CAN I STUDY THE DIPLOMA IN GEMMOLOGY CONCURRENTLY WITH MY OTHER TERTIARY STUDIES?

No, the courses are delivered on campus on a part-time basis at the six divisional (state) teaching centres or as Flexible or Intensive as detailed above.

CAN I STUDY THE DIPLOMA IN GEMMOLOGY ONLINE?

No, the courses are delivered on campus on a part-time basis at the six divisional (state) teaching centres, or as Flexible or Intensive as detailed above.

WHAT SORT OF HELP CAN I EXPECT WHILE STUDYING?

The GAA provides the following support to its students:

- Comprehensive learning materials.
- Supportive and safe learning environment.
- Small student to teacher ratios and personalised attention.
- Training and assessment, wherever practicable to suit individual needs.
- Progress reports and feedback.
- Supplementary study materials via the online portal.
- Access to the Education Support Officer in your learning centre.

CAN I TAKE A HOLIDAY WHILE I STUDY THE COURSE?

We do not recommend missing any classes as you will find them difficult to make up. If you are planning on taking an extended time away from the course we strongly recommend discussing this with your State Education Officer or Federal Enrolment Officer prior to enrolment.

HOW MUCH TIME WILL I HAVE TO SPEND STUDYING?

For on-site (Face to Face) and Flexible we recommend twelve or more hours per week at a minimum, in addition to class time.

WILL I LEARN HOW TO VALUE GEMS FOR INSURANCE OR MARKETING PURPOSES?

The Diploma in Gemmology is focused on the scientific identification of gemstones it does not specifically teach how to value gems or jewellery, however techniques of gemstone identification are a necessary skill to have as a valuer and the Diploma of Gemmology is a prerequisite for the Diploma of applied Gemmology (Valuation courses) with the NCJV. For more information on becoming a Registered Valuer, please contact the National Council of Jewellery valuers (NCJV.com.au)

“*Behind every gemstone, there is a fascinating story waiting to delight clients around the world. Studying with GAA brings the expertise, networking and confidence to build a solid career in a multimillion-dollar industry. Joining one of the most supportive and passionate professional communities of gemmologists in Australia was one of the best decisions I ever made.*”

Gina Barreto FGAA, Dip Dt
Gemmologist and Diamond Technologist

06

VOCATIONAL OUTCOMES & RECOGNITION

The courses offered by GAA will give you skills to enhance your employment and/or promotion opportunities, your workplace performance and help in your career development.

Our graduates work in diamond grading, retail and wholesale, mining, trading, design and manufacture, education, lapidary and faceting, in laboratories and valuations, research and science, prospecting and fossicking. Our courses will enhance your knowledge of gemstones while adding depth to your passion.

WILL THE GAA HELP ME GET A JOB?

While the GAA does not offer a formal career placement service, the knowledge and industry contacts you develop during the course can greatly enhance your future career opportunities. Periodically, organisations advertise job vacancies on the GAA noticeboard and website, as they have trust in the knowledge and skills of GAA graduates. They frequently recruit staff through the assistance of GAA networks and communication forums.

IS THE DIPLOMA IN GEMMOLOGY RECOGNISED IN THE INDUSTRY AND INTERNATIONALLY?

Graduates of the GAA Diploma in Gemmology are recognised throughout the jewellery and allied trades. The GAA's prestigious reputation for high standards of education is widely acknowledged both nationally and internationally.

WHAT DO I GET AT THE END OF THE COURSE?

Upon successful completion of this course graduates are entitled to apply for GAA Fellowship (through their local State Division) enabling the use of the internationally recognised post-nominal FGAA.

Graduates also receive:

- the GAA Diploma in Gemmology Certificate.
- letter of completion stating level achieved.
- benefits of GAA membership and Fellowship (upon approval).

I'VE HEARD OF FGAA. WHAT IS IT?

Upon successfully completing the GAA Diploma in Gemmology, you will attain the status of a qualified Gemmologist. Subsequently, you may apply for Fellowship with the GAA, which is a highly esteemed achievement. Once approved for Fellowship, you are entitled to use the post nominal 'FGAA' (Fellow of the Gemmological Association of Australia). To maintain your Fellowship status, it is essential to uphold high professional standards with strong moral and ethical principles. Additionally, you must maintain an active financial membership with the GAA.

ENROL NOW!

To enrol or for further information,
please call the Enrolment Officer on
1300 436 338 or email **learn@gem.org.au**

GAA DIVISION LOCATIONS IN EACH STATE

Queensland

Suite 1A, 443 Ipswich Road, Annerley QLD 4103

South Australia

Suite 421, 4th Floor, Edments Building
38 Gawler Place, Adelaide SA 5000

New South Wales

128 Terry Street, Rozelle NSW 2039

Tasmania

Old Warden's Lodge, University of Tasmania
French Street, Sandy Bay TAS 7005

Victoria

380-382 Spencer Street, West Melbourne VIC 3003

Western Australia

Unit 14/136 Railway Street, Cottesloe WA 6011

www.gem.org.au



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TO SUBMIT YOUR
EXPRESSION OF
INTEREST DIRECTLY
ON OUR WEBSITE**

*Passionately educating
the industry, gem enthusiasts
and consumers about gemstones*