Visa Application:
- Quite simple - it is handled by VFS Global (http://www.vfs-in-au.net/). You will need to lodge an online application for a student visa. You will be asked for references both in Australia and in India. Just be aware of one thing: if your visa is issued for a duration longer than 180 days you will be required to register with the Police in Ahmedabad, which is an extremely time consuming process. You will also need to unregister with the Police when you leave India. Also note that the duration of your visa starts from the day it is issued.

Enrolment procedure and recommended subjects:
- About a month before the exchange starts you will receive a package from the PGP (Post-Graduate Program) Exchange Coordinator containing the description of all subjects available to exchange students (both in PGP, the 2-year MBA program and in PGP-X, the 1-year executive MBA program), as well as a form to indicate your choice of subjects. Most of the subjects have quite large quotas, so it shouldn’t be a problem to get in. Only a few subjects have limited seats available, and in that case it is on a first-come, first-serve basis. I also recommend taking classes in PGP-X, as the students are older, have more work experience and are more mature than the ones in PGP.

- Recommended subjects: 1). CINE: “Understanding Creativity, Innovation, Knowledge, Networks and Entrepreneurship” is a popular course given by Prof. Anil Gupta, who is a prominent figure of the IIM-A, as well as in India. The course focuses on innovation in the context of India, and more specifically on grassroots innovation (e.g. innovation at the Bottom Of the Pyramid). The great part is that it introduces you to a very different way of approaching innovation and managing it, with many examples. The downside is that it is based on a lot of student presentations, which may become overlapping after a while. 2). LVMR: “Leadership, Vision, Meaning and Reality” is a course where leadership concepts and dilemmas are introduced and discussed through literature readings. The good part of the course is its approach, where literature serves to trigger class discussions and where students exchange / defend their point of view regarding their role as future leaders. The downside is that each class is heavily dependent on student participation, which makes lectures uneven, depending on students’ interests. If you take that course, don’t miss Tejdeep Kaur Menon’s intervention, she’s an assistant Director General of Police, and her life experiences and insights are breathtaking. 3). EIE: “Enterprise and Innovation in Education” is a course which discusses education from an innovation and business perspective. I believe it is a very useful course if your plan to get into the education business, especially in emerging economies, but not only.

- Other subjects recommended include: “Business-to-Business Marketing”; “Good Governance and People Living in Poverty”; “Managerial Communication”; and “Managing Customer Value and Delivery”.

Workload at exchange school:
- Workload is less than at AGSM, but this is to some extent due to the fact that 3 courses are required on exchange, instead of 4 in each of the three first sessions at AGSM. I believe this allows for more personal readings and work, especially given the fact that the perspective here in India is very different (e.g. with a focus on grassroots innovation, social enterprise, poverty challenges, etc.) and challenges the “western” student.

Accommodation options:
- IIM-A requires all of its students to live on campus.

- If you are married, you can request an MSH (Married Student Housing) accommodation on the New Campus. The good thing is that you will be living in a very comfortable 60m2 flat, including washing machine and gas stove, with cleaning services provided. The area is also significantly calmer than the Old Campus. The downside is that you will be further away from social activities, as well as from classrooms, which are mostly on the Old Campus.

- They single rooms have a common kitchen and showers. Every shower is shared by 10 students.
Campus Facilities and Careers Services:

- There is an on-campus canteen and 3 restaurants. All the other basic facilities such as study rooms, libraries, gym, jogging track etc are available on campus:

  - Recommended food outlets: The café Joos make good juices and sandwiches. The mess is the local canteen, where you can pay by the meal, or monthly. But remember there are plenty of restaurants that deliver on campus, including: McDonald’s, Pizza Hut, Punjab King, Curries. Curries and a Subway are also walking distance from campus (10 min). If you are able to cook, people come every day on campus (both Old and New), selling delicious organic fresh fruits and vegetables. Finally, tasty street food and chai are available outside the main gate (Old Campus).

  - A small, but functional gym, accessible for a subscription of approx. 300 rupees per month. Yoga classes are also available every night next to the gym. Exchange students are not allowed to sit for placements with the IIM-A students.

  - As an exchange student at IIM-A, you have the opportunity to become part of the Alumni.

  - Career Services events include Lateral Placements (for students with professional experience) and Placements (for all students). This is the major focus of most of the Indian PGP students while you will be on exchange. Career Services does not allow exchange students to take part in these events, and attendance to company power-point presentations is discouraged.

Student life:

- There are plenty of opportunities to meet Indian students and socialize with them through the dorms, but also in class or through field trips. A major event on campus is Chaos, which takes place in mid-January, and lasts several days. Also, exchange students tend to socialize together, as we share information, discover the city, try new restaurants and organize trips.

- Ahmedabad is a very cultural city. Alcohol is banned in the state of Gujarat but if you are a foreign national you can get a license to purchase it. There are some great tourist destinations but life in Ahmedabad is quite different from that in Sydney.

Things AGSM MBA students should consider/be aware of when applying to this school for exchange:

- Life in Ahmedabad exposes you to extreme poverty and inequality. Children live barefoot on the streets on the other side of IIM-A’s main gate. But if your goal is to experience first-hand the growth of a fascinating country, with its strengths and weaknesses, to shift your view regarding what it means to do business, as well as to work along India’s business leaders of tomorrow, then I don’t think there is a better exchange available. Here are my top, more concrete, tips:
  
  a). Try to avoid getting a visa for more than 180 days if possible. You will save a lot of time. But if you want to discover the inner workings of Indian bureaucracy, get a visa for more than 180 days!
  b). You cannot expect the same maturity in class participation and discussion as at AGSM, as students are younger with less work experience.
  c). Lectures tend to be less structured and concept-oriented than at AGSM, but rely heavily on concrete and detailed examples.
  d). You should make an appointment with a Doctor at the UNSW Health Services and check for vaccinations, medicines, etc. at least enough in advance before you go. One tip to avoid stomach problems is to take yeast; there is a medicine called “Travel Bug” in Australia (http://www.innerhealth.com.au/content/product/ethical-nutrients-travel-bug) and you can find the same thing in India, it’s called “Econorm”. But the best thing to prevent stomach problems, is to be careful (e.g. eat where it is clean, wash your hands, etc.), at least the first few weeks, before your body adjusts.

Highlight:

- The campus is very famous because it was designed by Louis Kahn.
- The city is very safe.
- People are very helpful and weather is pleasant at this time of the year.