

VTAC and the application process

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What does VTAC do?

The Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC) coordinates tertiary applications for:

- university undergraduate courses ('Bachelor degrees') and selected graduate-entry courses
- selected TAFE courses, and
- selected independent tertiary college courses.

VTAC also manages:

- scholarships applications
- special consideration through the Special Entry Access Scheme (SEAS), and
- some admissions tests (e.g. the Special Tertiary Admissions Test 'STAT').

How do I find out about courses?

You can thoroughly research courses you are interested in, to make sure that they will meet your goals, by:

- looking up courses in CourseSearch on the VTAC website. This will provide course details including selection criteria and information about applying to the course
- searching institutions' websites for more detailed course information
- attending open days at institutions that interest you. Open days are usually held between July and August each year, dates will be listed on institutions' websites and on the VTAC website, and
- contacting the institution directly if you have any further questions.

Who can apply for courses through VTAC?

You can apply for courses through VTAC if you are:

- an Australian citizen
- an Australian permanent resident
- a New Zealand citizen
- a temporary resident or someone planning to obtain a student visa who is currently studying an Australian Year 12 (in Australia or overseas), for example: VCE, VCAL, HSC, NTCE, QLD Senior Certificate, SACE, TCE, WACE or International Baccalaureate in Australia or New Zealand
- an international student currently enrolled at The University of Melbourne applying to transfer to another course at The University of Melbourne, or
- a temporary resident or someone who is planning to obtain a student visa who is currently studying or has finished the NCEA in New Zealand with no tertiary studies applying to Monash University.

Regardless of your age, if you meet these eligibility criteria you can apply for courses through VTAC.

If you don't meet the citizenship/residency requirements above you must apply directly to institutions—not through VTAC.

What is the advantage of applying for courses through VTAC?

VTAC is the central office that administers the application processes for tertiary institutions. You only need to submit one application for up to eight different courses at the same or different institutions. This saves you from having to complete eight separate applications.

VTAC does not decide which courses you are eligible for or which ones will accept you. VTAC forwards your application to the course selection officers at the institutions you apply to and they make the decisions.

Which courses require me to apply directly to the institution?

VTAC does not manage applications for the following:

- apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships
- many lower-level certificate courses
- some courses at independent tertiary colleges, and
- many postgraduate courses.

If a course isn't listed in CourseSearch or it is badged 'Direct' then you will need to apply directly to that institution, not through VTAC.

How are VTAC applicants identified?

You need to know what kind of applicant you are because a course's selection criteria can depend upon which type of applicant you are.

You are a Year 12 (Y12) applicant if:	you are currently enrolled in an Australian or overseas Year 12 program (including the IB), with no post-secondary studies, or you have previously attempted or completed an Australian or overseas Year 12 (including the IB) with no post-secondary studies, or you have previously attempted or completed an Australian or overseas Year 12 (including the IB) with post-secondary studies of Certificate I, Certificate II, Certificate III but NOT Certificate IV or above.
You are a non-Year 12 (NY12) applicant if:	you have previously attempted or completed post-secondary study at Certificate IV or above, or you are currently enrolled in an Australian or overseas Year 12 study program (including the IB) and have post-secondary studies at Certificate IV or above, or you don't have Australian or overseas secondary studies or post-secondary studies at Certificate IV or above.

If you have an overseas Year 12 qualification, it will be assessed by VTAC to make sure it is equivalent to Victorian qualifications and meets minimum tertiary entrance requirements in Victoria. You will be asked to provide evidence if you have completed an overseas Year 12 qualification.

Are mature-age applicants different?

"Mature-age" can have different definitions across tertiary institutions. Some institutions have mature-age entry programs which require those eligible to submit a Special Entry Access Scheme (SEAS) application (Category 1: Personal information and location).

However, regardless of whether you apply for mature-age entry, you are still considered as either a Year 12 or non-Year 12 applicant (see above).

The VTAC website has detailed information on mature-age entry and SEAS.

How do I apply for courses through VTAC?

1. Research the selection criteria for the courses you want to apply for. These are listed in CourseSearch, on the VTAC website. Make sure you can meet the selection criteria for each course you apply to.
2. Create a VTAC account. This is through the VTAC website and there is no cost to register. You will receive a VTAC ID and will be asked to select a PIN.
3. Log in to your VTAC account to:
 - submit course applications
 - pay the processing fee
 - apply for scholarships
 - apply for special consideration, including mature-age entry, via the Special Entry Access Scheme (SEAS)
 - book to sit the Special Tertiary Admissions Test (STAT) (only if it is a selection requirement), and
 - submit a Personal Statement (only if it is a selection requirement).
4. After applying for courses, you may need to:
 - provide copies of documents to VTAC (e.g. results from previous study), or
 - provide supporting information for SEAS or scholarships application.

Documents can be scanned in colour and uploaded through your VTAC account. If you need to post documents to VTAC, ensure that you print cover sheets from your VTAC account to accompany them. Please note: if you need to supply a copy of the same document for more than one purpose (e.g. a scholarship and a SEAS application) you will need to provide a separate copy of the document and coversheet for each.

What are selection criteria?

Many courses have selection criteria you need to meet to be considered for a place in the course. Examples of selection criteria include: prerequisite studies and selection requirements such as interviews, portfolios and auditions. Selection criteria are listed in CourseSearch on the VTAC website and are compulsory.

Prerequisites

Prerequisites are Year 12 subjects, or equivalent prior study, that must be completed to be considered for a place in the course. Prerequisites are specified in the course entries on the VTAC website.

If you haven't completed prerequisite Year 12 subjects, you may be able to demonstrate the required competence if you have acquired equivalent knowledge and skills in an overseas Year 12 or from TAFE or university study in Australia or overseas.

If you don't meet prerequisites for a course, you may be able to study a similar course, through which you can develop the equivalent knowledge and skills to the prerequisite. This may then act as a pathway into the course you want. Talk to the institution offering the course you want to ultimately study for advice on pathways.

Selection requirements

Selection requirements can include submitting a personal statement, attending an interview, sitting an admissions test, submitting a portfolio, and submitting a course-specific supplementary form. It is important to check selection requirements carefully, because failure to complete a course's selection requirements will mean you can't be considered for a course.

Selection requirements are listed in the course entries on CourseSearch on the VTAC website.

Other selection considerations

Other selection considerations are factors that the institution may consider as a part of your application. They are not compulsory, but may contribute to you being considered.

Other information

Other information details activities or legal requirements an applicant may need to complete if they are successful in obtaining a position in the course. They do not need to be completed before applying for the course.

What if I don't meet the selection criteria or don't have a strong academic record?

If you haven't completed Year 12 or prerequisite studies, or your ATAR is not competitive enough for you to be selected for the course you want to study, you should investigate pathways. A pathway course could be a course that offers an equivalent subject to a prerequisite you don't meet, or it could be a course with similar subjects to the course you ultimately want to enter, but it is less competitive to gain entry to and enables you to demonstrate your academic capacity in that field. Pathways also include tertiary preparation, foundation and bridging courses. For information about suitable pathway courses for your circumstances, speak to the admissions department of the tertiary institution you intend to ultimately apply to.

What if I have completed my education overseas?

Your overseas education will be considered by course selection officers. The 'Am I eligible' section of the VTAC website details the documentation you need to provide.

What is the VTAC Personal Statement?

Some applicants are required to complete a VTAC Personal Statement as a selection requirement. This provides an opportunity to let course selection officers know more about you and your suitability for the courses you are applying to. It can include your motivation for study, relevant work experience and achievements, comments on your prior academic performance, or other languages you might have.

You can complete a VTAC Personal Statement through your user account and you can edit it right up to the deadline. The VTAC Personal Statement usually requires some thought, so don't leave it to the last minute!

For some tips, see the 'Making an application' section of the VTAC website.

Hint: Check the selection requirements and additional considerations to find out whether you need to complete a VTAC personal statement.

What are admissions tests?

Admissions tests may be part of the selection criteria used to determine your suitability for a course. Examples of tests include the STAT, CASPer, UMAT, ISAT, VETASSESS and others (see the 'Admissions tests' section of the VTAC website).

These tests may include an additional cost and have early closing dates.

If you are required to sit an admissions test, it will be listed under the selection requirements of the course entry.

You can book the STAT through your VTAC user account. Other tests must be booked with the test provider.

What is an ATAR?

The ATAR is the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank. It is a rank calculated from an individual's VCE or IB results. In the past, it has been known as the ENTER or TER. The ATAR is used to rank students studying Year 12 to assist institutions make selection for courses.

In most cases, someone who has recently achieved an ATAR (but is not currently studying Year 12) will have their ATAR considered by selection officers when applying for a course. However, if you have completed or partially completed post-secondary studies at Certificate IV or higher, your GPA (grade point average) will also be considered for selection into a course.

How can I apply for scholarships?

Scholarships can be applied for through your VTAC account. Once you have completed your registration, scholarships can be accessed and submitted up until the closing date of Friday 13 October 2017.

Supporting documentation needs to reach VTAC or be uploaded to your VTAC account by that closing date for you to be considered.

Many scholarships are applied for through VTAC, however others are available directly through institutions, or are offered by community organisations. Search online for more information.

How can I obtain special consideration?

The Special Entry Access Scheme (SEAS) is for applicants who have experienced educational disadvantage. Many institutions participate and there are four categories of consideration.

You can submit a SEAS application through your VTAC account, once you have registered and applied for courses.

Some SEAS categories require you to submit supporting documentation. SEAS applications close on Tuesday 10 October 2017 and all supporting documentation must reach VTAC or be uploaded to your VTAC account by this date.

What are the application closing dates? How much does it cost?

VTAC applications for 2018 courses open on Monday 7 August 2017.

Timely applications are \$35.00 (if you are currently enrolled in the VCE or IB) and \$53.00 for all other applicants. Timely applications close on Thursday 28 September 2017.

Late applications are \$103.00 and close on Friday 3 November 2017.

Very Late applications are \$134.00 and close on Friday 8 December 2017.

If you have paid your application processing fee, you can still make changes to undergraduate preferences right up until Wednesday 20 December 2017.

Admissions tests and some courses may have additional fees. Some courses don't accept late applications.

Can I make changes to my application?

Some parts of the application can be changed throughout the application period and between selection rounds. This includes your personal details, course preferences and the personal statement. Most things can be changed until the final closing date. However, some courses have early closing dates and cannot be added after the date specified in the course entry.

VTAC also allows applicants to make changes during designated change of preference periods. These allow applicants to add, remove or reorder courses on their preference list after ATARs/academic grades are released and after each offer round. All change of preference dates are listed under 'Dates and fees' on the VTAC website.

See the 'Making an application' section of the VTAC website for more information about making changes.

When will I know if I have been made an offer for a course?

The majority of course offers are made in January 2018. These are called Round 1 offers. Subsequent rounds of offers are made in February, however significantly fewer places are available in these later rounds.

Early offers may be made for a limited number of courses and to applicants who are not currently enrolled in VCE, Interstate Year 12 or the IB. These offers are only made if the applicant has registered, applied and paid their timely application processing fees. Early offers are made in November 2017.

How can I get further assistance with my VTAC application?

Answers to most questions can be found on the VTAC website. You can also join in the conversation on Facebook and Twitter. If you still can't find the answer, you can call VTAC and speak to a staff member, contact us through your VTAC account or visit the VTAC office in South Melbourne. Please be aware there may be a waiting time around closing dates.

This fact sheet was developed in conjunction with the TAFE Careers Practitioner's Network (TCPN) which represents TAFE and VET Careers Practitioners within Victoria.

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