



Education

NEW ARRIVALS SURVIVAL GUIDE



EDUCATION

EDUCATION IN AUSTRALIA

In Australia, education is open to people of all ages and education levels. In the state of Victoria, all children aged between six and 17 years old must go to schools by law.

LEARNING ENGLISH

There are 4 levels of education in Australia:

- * Kindergarten, a preparatory year before primary school (for children aged 3 to 5; not compulsory)
- * Primary school – begins with a Preparatory year, followed by Years 1 to 6 (for children aged 5 to 12)
- * Secondary school – Years 7 to 12 (for people aged 12 to 18)
- * Tertiary education – also known as higher education or university (for people over 16)

English is the official language of Australia and classes are taught in English. There are many resources that help you learn and/or improve your English (and other skills), including:

- ◆ Adult Migrant Education Services (AMES): www.ames.net.au
- ◆ Skills for Education and Employment (SEE):
www.innovation.gov.au/Skills/LiteracyAndNumeracy/SEE
- ◆ Learn Local network: www.education.vic.gov.au/training/learners/learnlocal
- ◆ Workplace English Language and Literacy (WELL) accessed via Australian Government Skills Connect: www.skillsconnect.gov.au/home/the-road-to-successful-workforce-development/find-the-right-program-and-support/programs/workplace-english-language-and-literacy

COURSES TO STUDY AFTER SECONDARY SCHOOL

Completing your Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) at school will give you an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR). The ATAR is used for your university application. If you do not get the ATAR you need for your course, there are other courses you can do. Speak to a career counsellor or your teachers about this.

TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION (TAFE)

TAFE institutions are government institutions that provide courses for Certificate (I, II, III and IV), Diploma, Associate Degree and Bachelor Degree courses in different areas of study such as hospitality. For more information, see <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/victorianskillsgateway/Pages/home.aspx>

TAFE courses can take one to three years to complete. If you do not go to university, TAFE may offer you a pathway to university or the opportunity to study at another level of higher education.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (VET)

VET provides students with practical experience and real-world skills. This can help you transition into university or the workplace.

TAFE institutions, as well as private institutions and secondary schools, offer VET courses, which usually take two years to complete.

VICTORIAN CERTIFICATE OF APPLIED LEARNING (VCAL)

VCAL is an option for students in Years 11 and 12. VCAL gives you practical work-related experience. Students have the chance to improve their literacy and numeracy skills, industry specific skills, work-related skills and personal skills.

Like the VCE, VCAL is an accredited certificate obtained by secondary school students. VCAL is also offered at TAFE institutes and a number of Learn Local organisations.

APPRENTICESHIPS AND TRAINEESHIPS

Doing an apprenticeship or traineeship means you are placed in a paid job where you can develop practical, transferable skills through training by TAFE or a registered training organisation (RTO). You can start an apprenticeship or traineeship while you are still at school, or once you've finished school.

There are a few resources that help you find an apprenticeship or traineeship:

- ◆ The Australian Apprenticeship Centre: www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au
- ◆ Skills Victoria's Get an Apprenticeship or Traineeship:
www.education.vic.gov.au/training/pages/default.aspx?Redirect=1
- ◆ Victorian Training Guarantee:
www.education.vic.gov.au/training/learners/vet/pages/funding.aspx
- ◆ Youth Central: www.youthcentral.vic.gov.au

UNIVERSITY

You can enter university through successfully completing VCE, TAFE or VET.

You can also enter university through:

FOUNDATIONS STUDIES

Many universities, and vocational education and training institutions offer Foundation Studies as a pathway to higher education. Foundation Studies is like Year 12 but is only for international students. Generally, if you do Foundation Studies, you get a place in university on the condition that you get the required grades.

MATURE AGE STUDENT

You may get into a course as a mature age student if you are older than 21 or 23 years, depending on the university, or if you haven't been studying at Year 12 level or university/TAFE level for a number of years.

University can be very flexible compared to secondary or lower level education. You may choose to do a degree full-time or part-time. There is also the option of studying on campus (going to classes) or remotely/online (this means you do not have to attend lectures or tutorials on campus but you can study from home).

MORE INFORMATION

UNIVERSITY FEES

The university fees you pay depend on whether you are an international or local student. If you are an international student at university (for example, you do not have a permanent residency or citizenship), then you pay the international fees, which is higher than local fees. If you are a local student (that is, you have a permanent residency or citizenship), you pay local fees.

There are some different options of financial help that both international and local students can apply for. Scholarships and grants are available. They may have different requirements such as high academic performance, disadvantaged conditions (such as asylum seekers, financial struggle), country of origin, an area of study (such as science or commerce) or gender.

The Commonwealth Government offers a range of HELP loans for local students. There are five schemes available:

- ◆ **HECS-HELP:** assists eligible Commonwealth supported students to pay their student contribution amounts. Before 2005, this was known as 'HECS'.
- ◆ **FEE-HELP:** helps eligible fee paying students to pay their tuition fees.
- ◆ **SA-HELP:** a loan scheme that assists eligible students to pay for all or part of their student services and amenities fee.
- ◆ **OS-HELP:** assists eligible undergraduate Commonwealth supported students to pay their overseas study expenses.
- ◆ **VET FEE-HELP:** assists eligible students enrolled in higher-level vocational education and training courses at approved VET providers to pay their tuition fees

To find out which of these loans you may be eligible for, see www.studyassist.gov.au/sites/Assist/HELPpayingMyFees

MORE HELP

If you're having troubles with work and/or study, you can always talk to you teacher, or even a youth worker or career counsellor. More information can also be found in the websites below. You can also refer to our other chapter "Support Services" for more resources.

What's the resource?	What's the website?
Department of Education and Early Childhood (Victorian Government)	www.education.vic.gov.au
Assistance for financing tertiary study (Commonwealth Government)	www.studyassist.gov.au/sites/StudyAssist
Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (Victorian Government)	www.vtac.edu.au
Victorian Government Schools International Student Program (Victorian Government)	www.study.vic.gov.au
Information for international students in Australia (Commonwealth Government)	www.studyinaustralia.gov.au