VTAC GUIDE

How to Apply
Courses, SEAS and scholarships

TAC

Applying in 2021

This fact sheet covers the application process for Year 12 students applying in 2021 for courses commencing in 2022. Current Year 12 students can start their course applications from 2 August 2021. The deadline for timely applications is 5pm 30 September 2021.

Eligibility

Most current Australian Year 12 students who are successfully completing the VCE, VCAL (Senior) or equvalents are eligible to apply through VTAC for courses. You must also meet citizenship and residency requirements (http://www.vtac.edu.au/who/who-vtac.html)

The types of courses you can apply for depends upon the qualification you complete- VCE or VCAL(Senior). Check the minimum tertiary entrance requirements (http://www.vtac.edu.au/who/entry-req.html) to understand which courses you are eligiible for.

Application deadlines and processing fees

VTAC opens for applications at 9am on 2 August 2021.

The cost of the application processing fee depends on when you submit your application. While you need to apply by these deadlines, you don't have to pay your fee straight away—see vtac.edu.au/dates for more information.

There are no additional fees for submitting a SEAS or scholarships application, or for changing your preferences.

Timely applications

Fee $42 for current Year 12 students
Deadline 30 September 2021 (5.00 pm)

Late applications
Fee $122
Deadline 5 November 2021
Very late applications
Fee $159
Deadline 3 December 2021

Post main-round applications

Applications for a limited range of courses will be accepted after the main round of selection has been completed. For more information check the VTAC website in early January 2022

Refund policy

VTAC does not issue refunds on course application processing fees (except as required by law). You remain liable for the fee even if you withdraw your course application.

VTAC's role

VTAC is the central hub for tertiary course applications in Victoria. We represent all Victorian universities, most TAFEs and some independent tertiary colleges, which means we process applications for over 1,700 different courses.

When you submit your course application to VTAC you can list up to eight course preferences. Once submitted, VTAC processes your application and does a whole range of checks to help you maximise your chances of getting an offer. This includes advising you of any missing results, reminding you to submit any additional documentation, or drawing your attention to other services such as special consideration (SEAS) or additional admissions tests.

After applications close and VTAC has received all of your results, VTAC processes and forwards your application onto the tertiary institutions you have applied to. It's at that point VTAC advises institutions as to whether you've met the prerequisite requirements, or have submitted any additional forms such as the VTAC Personal Statement or SEAS. VTAC doesn't decide who gets into a course—that's the institutions' job. We just make the process a lot easier for you and them.

Once institutions have looked at all your information, they advise VTAC whether or not they want to make you an offer to enrol in a course. We look at all the offers you've received and send you the one that's highest on your preference list—that's why it's so important to always list your course preferences in the order you most want to study them.

The order of your preferences is never used as part of the selection process. Institutions can't disadvantage you for putting their course at a low preference level.

Preparing your course application is not all VTAC does. In addition VTAC processes SEAS and scholarship applications, and VTAC is also responsible for calculating the ATAR at the end of the year.

If you're a bit worried about the application process, don't be. It's VTAC's job to make it easier for everyone, so if you've got a question, check out our Facebook page or Twitter, or if you just want to talk to someone, give us a call.

Applying interstate and overseas

If you are applying interstate you will need to apply through the relevant tertiary admissions centre—there is one in most states and your ATAR is treated the same way across Australia. Visit Course Seeker (www.courseseeker.edu.au) for a list of courses available across Australia.

If you're interested in applying to study overseas visit www.studyoverseas.gov.au for a wealth of information.

- » **ACT/NSW:** Universities Admissions Centre (UAC) (www.uac.edu.au)
- » **NT:** To apply for undergraduate and postgraduate courses at Charles Darwin University, you must apply through South Australian Tertiary Admissions Centre (SATAC) (www.satac.edu.au)
- » **QLD:** Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC) (www.qtac.edu.au)
- » **SA:** South Australian Tertiary Admissions Centre (SATAC) (www.satac.edu.au)
- » **TAS:** University of Tasmania (www.utas.edu.au)
- » **WA:** Tertiary Institutions Service Centre (TISC) (www.tisc.edu.au)

Taking a gap year

If you're thinking of taking a gap year, you might want to consider applying for a course and deferring your start for a year. That way you've already got a place and you can apply for a different course the following year should you change your mind. To find out what the deferment policies are for the courses you're interested in, check out 'deferment' under 'courses and institutions' on the VTAC website.

Understand the VTAC process

Research courses
Use CourseSearch to browse through over 1,700 courses to help you find those that suit you best. Make sure you check prerequisites and other essential requirements and admission criteria.

Learn the application process
Read up on the process: who can apply, eligibility requirements, special consideration, scholarships and the steps to apply.

Create an account
Ready to apply? You'll need to create an account on the VTAC website. Once you've done that you can use the same account to apply for courses, special consideration (SEAS) and scholarships.

Apply for scholarships
There are lots of different scholarships and they are not all for academic achievement. You might be eligible for more than you think.

Apply for special consideration (SEAS)
If your education has been affected by circumstances outside your control, you can apply for special consideration through SEAS.

Apply for courses
You can apply for up to eight courses by listing them in preference order. Don't worry if you change your mind—you can change them throughout the application period.

Complete the essential requirements and admission criteria
Each course has its own essential requirements and admission criteria. Make sure you meet these for each course you apply to and complete any tasks listed.

Get your ATAR
VTAC will use your VCE results to calculate your Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR). You can access your VCE Results and ATAR online or via the app.

Make final changes
Log in to your VTAC account to change your preferences or update your personal information.

Connect with VTAC

Stay updated on:
New and cancelled courses
Important dates
Helpful advice and tips.
Like us on Facebook: facebook.com/vtacguide
Follow us on Twitter: @vtacguide
Visit our website: vtac.edu.au

Find out about offers
Offers are sent to your email and released via your VTAC account on specific dates (known as offer rounds).

Create your VTAC account

You use your VTAC account to apply for courses, the special entry access scheme (SEAS) and scholarships.

Setting up your VTAC account

Before you can apply for courses, you need to set up a VTAC account.

Setting up your VTAC account takes a few more steps than the average online account, but once you're in, you can use it to:

- » apply for courses, SEAS and scholarships, and change your course preferences
- » upload documents required for your applications
- » check your messages from VTAC
- » submit a VTAC personal statement
- » manage your contact details and PIN, and
- » view your ATAR and course offers when they come out

Before you start

Read VTAC's privacy policy. It will tell you who can access your information: vtac.edu.au/privacy

What you will need

To register for a VTAC account, you will need to provide:

- » your full name, date of birth and contact details
- » any previous names you have used
- » your visa details (if you are not an Australian or New Zealand citizen),
- » your passport number (if you are not an Australian citizen, New Zealand citizen or don't hold an Australian permanent residency visa),
- » your Unique Student Identifier (USI), and
- » your student number, if you are currently studying an Australian Year 12 or the International Baccalaureate (IB)

Other names

Provide your name and any other names you've used. This is so we can find any previous results, and we can ensure all your applications for courses, SEAS and scholarships are linked to you.

Check your date of birth

Make sure your date of birth is registered correctly with your school. If it isn't, ask your school to correct it and contact VTAC to have it changed.

If it's wrong at your school, it may mean you can't create an account and your results won't be matched to your application.

Contact details

Don't use your school email address as they are often closed after the school year ends. Use an email address you intend to use after finishing school, so you don't miss out on important messages, like offers, in December, January and February.

Citizenship and residency details

Born here? One of your parents is a citizen or permanent resident? You're a citizen. Have residency? Is it permanent or temporary?

If you are in Australia on a visa, make sure you have your visa details on hand.

Change in citizenship, residency or visa status

The type of course codes you can add to your application depends on your citizenship or visa status as indicated when you created your VTAC account. If your citizenship, residency or visa status change during the VTAC application period, please contact VTAC immediately for advice on updating your information and any preferences you have entered as part of your course application.

Your USI

If you're in Australia, you need a Unique Student Identifier (USI) to apply through VTAC. The USI is issued by the Australian Government. If you don't have a USI, you can apply for one (or retrieve details of your existing USI) at https://www.usi.gov.au/.

Your student number

VTAC uses the details you enter into your account, including your student number, to identify you in the list of current Year 12 students provided by the VCAA. If any of the details you enter don't match those records, you will receive a message. If this happens, check that you have entered everything correctly. If there is still a problem, don't choose to apply as another category of applicant—if you do you won't receive an offer. Instead, check that your full name and date of birth have been recorded correctly at your school. If you still have problems, contact VTAC.

Account security

As part of setting up your account you will be asked to choose a four-digit PIN and two security questions that only you know the answer to. VTAC will ask for your PIN to identify you if you make any enquiries over the phone, so make sure you keep it secure.

Keep your login details safe and don't share your PIN or questions with anyone. If you need someone else, such as a parent or guardian, to be able to make enquiries to VTAC on your behalf, you can add them as an authorised nominee at the application stage.

Apply for courses

Once you have a VTAC account you can start applying for courses. Creating a course application can take up to 30 minutes. The best way to minimise that time is to be prepared.

What you need

To complete your course application, you will need:

» details of your secondary studies including your Year 12 number

» up to eight course preferences

» contact details and date of birth of your authorised nominee, if you wish to use one.

How to apply

1. Read and agree to terms and conditions

You will need to read, understand and accept the terms and conditions for submitting a VTAC course application. You should also review the VTAC privacy policy again (which you would have seen when setting up your VTAC account).

2. Complete your educational history

In this section, you will enter details of your senior secondary schooling (for example VCE, VCAL (senior) or IB).

You will be asked:

» Where you completed your senior secondary schooling

» Your student number

» If you completed any VCAL study

» If your year 12 study was the IB (and if so you will be asked some questions about this)

» If your secondary qualification is considered "non-standard" (e.g. you were home schooled)

» If you also completed studies from any other senior secondary curriculum, for example, you completed some International Baccalaureate subjects in addition to your VCE subjects, you will need to enter the details of these studies.

Because VTAC takes applications from non-Year 12 students, you will also be asked if you have attempted or completed any post-secondary (tertiary) study or admissions tests such as the STAT. Most of these questions will not be relevant to current Year 12 students.

You will then be asked to confirm a summary of all educational history claims you have entered. If there is something wrong or missing, simply use the back button to return to the relevant section and enter the correct information.

3. List course preferences

You can list a minimum of one and maximum of eight course preferences by using the institution, qualification and course drop down menus. Once you find the course you are looking for press 'Add to course preference list'.

It's important to note that this is a preference list. You can only receive a single offer in each round of offers, and this will be to the highest preference that selects you. This is why you must make sure you put the course you most want at the top, the course you second most want in second place, and so on. Use the arrow buttons to rearrange courses on your preference list.

You must ensure you meet prerequisites and complete all relevant requirements for the courses you apply for. For details, see the course information in CourseSearch on the VTAC website. Also, look closely at the course code to ensure you've selected the right course.

You don't have to complete or finalise your preference list in one go, you can make changes until the application deadline. See the next article for more information on preferences.

4. Fee summary

After you've completed your preference list, you'll be given a summary of the application processing fee you will need to pay.

5. Authorised nominee

You'll then be asked if you'd like to nominate someone to act on your behalf on matters pertaining to your course application.

An authorised nominee has your permission to enquire about your application, on your behalf. You will only need an authorised nominee if you are going to be unable to make enquiries yourself.

Authorisation is not an access-all-areas pass, so details about your results, medical information and ATAR will never be discussed with anyone except you.

A lot of Year 12 students think they must put their mum, dad or guardian down as the authorised nominee. NOT SO! Your course application, VTAC ID and PIN are owned by you. It's up to you to decide if you authorise a nominee or not.

6. Additional information

Finally, you will be asked some questions for statistical purposes. In the first instance, this information is not connected to your course application and does not affect selection in any way. It is provided in an aggregated format to institutions and the Department of Education and Training (DET).

However, if you complete a SEAS application you can give VTAC permission to access this information to assess your eligibility for access and equity SEAS consideration.

7. Submission and payment

Check the summary of your preferences, nominee and statistical information. If this is correct, tick the checkbox and press the submit button.

You will see a summary, with a receipt number, confirming the information you have entered on your application. You can print or save this summary, but you will also receive a copy by email and in the 'Message Centre' in your VTAC account.

Once the application is submitted, you will be asked to pay the processing fee. You can pay this straight away, or pay it later using the payment function in your VTAC account. If you don't pay by the deadline, your application will not be forwarded to institutions.

Payment can be made via PayPal with VISA or MasterCard credit/debit cards.

Understand the preference system

Understanding the preference system is crucial if you want to get the best offer available to you.

VTAC allows you to select up to eight course preferences. You must list each course in order of preference, with the one you most want at the top of your list.

You can only receive one offer in each round and that will be the highest listed course you are selected for. This is why you must list your courses **in order of preference**.

Here are some tips on how to list your preferences:

» Only list courses you meet the essential requirements and admission criteria for.

» Only list courses you would be happy to study.

» Always list the course you most want to do at the top.

» Include some 'pathway courses' in your list too.

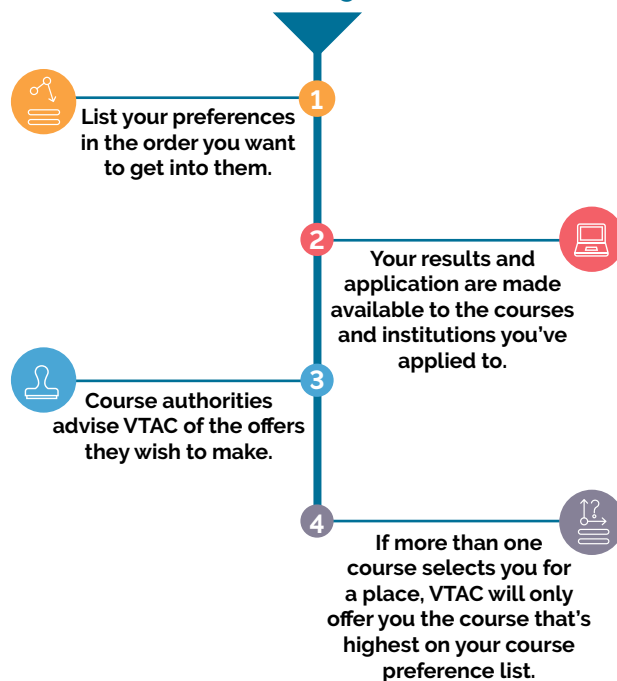| List your courses in the order you want to get into them. For example:		
Preference 1	1234567881	*My ideal course*
Preference 2	1234567781	*My second best course*
Preference 3	1234567681	*A 'pathway course' with similar subjects to my ideal course, which could give me credit if I transfer into my ideal course at a later date (although I would be happy to complete it if that doesn't happen).*
Preference 4	1234567891	*Another 'pathway course' like preference 3 but with fewer opportunities to gain credit.*
Preference 5	1234567651	*A course in a similar field to my first and second preference, but without credit options.*
Preference 6	1234567641	*A course in a similar field to my first and second preference, but without credit options and traditionally less competitive than my higher preferences.*
Preference 7	1234567541	*A course in a similar field to my first and second preference, but without credit options and traditionally less competitive than my higher preferences.*
Preference 8	1234567341	*A broad course which provides me with a good foundation through which to apply for further study later on.*

The following scenarios could occur, with the preference list above:

Scenario 1: You receive an offer for your ideal course. Congratulations!

Scenario 2: You receive an offer for your second best course, and are still automatically eligible for a higher offer (your ideal course) if there are vacancies in later rounds.

Scenario 3: You receive an offer for a 'pathway course'. You will still be eligible for an offer for your ideal course if there are vacancies in later rounds.

How the offer system works

1 — List your preferences in the order you want to get into them.

2 — Your results and application are made available to the courses and institutions you've applied to.

3 — Course authorities advise VTAC of the offers they wish to make.

4 — If more than one course selects you for a place, VTAC will only offer you the course that's highest on your course preference list.

What if I can't decide between two courses?

If you can't decide between two courses then look deeper, visit the campus and talk to students. Check out the elective subjects offered by each of the courses.

What if my ATAR isn't good enough?

Still list your ideal courses! Remember, the lowest selection rank from last year may not be the same this year. Also, most courses consider a range of factors in addition to the ATAR. These factors can include subject or SEAS adjustments.

What if I change my mind?

If you change your mind, change your preferences. Change of preference is open for most of August until December, in early January and, for emergencies, in between offer rounds until the end of February.

Will institutions ignore my application if I don't put them first?

Preference listings are only used by VTAC to determine which course you want the most. Course authorities don't make selection decisions based on where you've listed the course on your preference list. They want applicants who have listed them, will succeed, and want to do their courses.

Why can't I receive an offer from all my preferences?

You will only receive an offer for the highest course that wishes to make an offer. You won't find out about any lower preferences, because those places have already been offered to someone else. This is why it is important to list your preferences in the order you most want to do the courses.

Apply for special consideration (SEAS)

If there have been circumstance that have made it hard for you to do your best at study, it's worth putting in an application for special consideration via VTAC's Special Entry Access Scheme (SEAS). SEAS also allows institutions to identify applicants from under-represented groups when making selection decisions.

What is SEAS?

The Special Entry Access Scheme (SEAS) is designed to make sure institutions get a sense of your full potential if you have experienced difficulty during your education. It enables institutions to consider these circumstances and their impact when ranking eligible applicants for a course before making offers.

However, SEAS is not just about life's difficulties—there's a whole category that looks at under-represented demographics in courses, and to apply for this category you simply tick a box.

SEAS does not change your educational results or qualifications. And if you are granted special consideration it does not guarantee you an offer. If you apply for SEAS, you still need to meet the 'essential requirements' and 'admission criteria' for a course, including prerequisite studies.

Does every institution use SEAS?

Not all institutions use SEAS, and different institutions recognise different categories. Also, some institutions offer special consideration outside of SEAS. For information about other programs see the VTAC website: **vtac.edu.au/SEAS**

How to apply for SEAS

1. Make sure you've lodged a course application—SEAS is only available after a course application has been lodged.
2. Log in to your VTAC account using your VTAC ID and PIN.
3. Select 'Special consideration (SEAS) application' in your VTAC account. Click the SEAS application link at the top of the page.
4. Fill in the SEAS application. There are four categories that make up SEAS. You only need to fill out the sections that are relevant to your circumstances.
5. Click on 'Submit'. You will be sent an email acknowledging that your application has been submitted, including a receipt showing the contents of your application. You can also access your receipt through your VTAC account.
6. Check if further evidence is required. You will be advised if you are required to submit any further evidence to support your application such as a supporting statement from a 'responsible person'.

Providing evidence

Most SEAS categories require you to provide evidence. Including:

- » a written statements that you complete
- » a statement of support from a 'responsible person' who has specific knowledge of your circumstances, and/or
- » financial documentation:

What is considered under SEAS?

There are four categories in SEAS. You can apply for all the categories that are relevant to your situation, so long as you apply to each category for a different reason.

Category 1: Personal information and location

This category covers a range of under-represented groups, so institutions can ensure that their students come from a wide range of backgrounds. All of these details can be drawn from your course application so all you need to do to apply is tick a box. However, you should also check the VTAC website to see if individual institutions require any further evidence. Subcategories include:

- » Age—this mainly applies to mature age students.
- » Gender—for applicants who are applying for a course that has historically been dominated by applicants from the opposite gender.
- » Living or school location—for applicants who live or study in a rural or isolated area.
- » Non-English-speaking background —for applicants who were born outside of Australia in a non-English speaking country, who speak a language other than English at home or who arrived in Australia on, or after, 1 January 2011.
- » Under-represented school—institutions determine which schools are under-represented amongst their students. This may change from year to year.
- » First in family to attend university—for applicants whose parents did not attend university.

Category 2: Disadvantaged financial background

For applicants who have been prevented from reaching their educational potential because of financial disadvantage.

Category 3: Disability or medical condition

For applicants who have experienced educational disadvantage as a result of any learning, physical, sensory or psychiatric medical condition, illness or disability.

Category 4: Difficult circumstances

For applicants who have been prevented from reaching their educational potential due to difficult circumstances other than those described above, for example, problems at home, a death in the family or other life circumstances.

Find out more

More information on the SEAS categories is available on the VTAC website: **vtac.edu.au/SEAS**

SEAS applications open on 2 August 2021 and close 5:00 pm 8 October 2021

You can practise a SEAS application at **vtac.edu.au/applying/demos.** Just remember that the information you enter in a demo is not submitted to VTAC, and is not considered a valid application.

Am I eligible for a **scholarship?**

Scholarships can be a great help with the cost of tertiary study and can be awarded for many reasons. These include scholarships for academic achievement, Indigenous Australians, community service, financial disadvantage and for other equity and access groups.

Complete the questions below to see if you are in with a chance to be one of the thousands of applicants awarded a scholarship each year.

About you

At the end of 2021, my highest level of education will be:

- ☐ Year 12
- ☐ Certificate III
- ☐ Certificate IV
- ☐ Diploma
- ☐ Advanced Diploma
- ☐ Associate degree
- ☐ Bachelor degree
- ☐ Higher than a Bachelor degree
- ☐ No qualifications

My immediate family didn't go to university

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

I am an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

I have community and leadership experience

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

I come from a non-English speaking background

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

I will have to move away from home to study next year

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

I will would like to live on campus next year

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Some pretty personal stuff

I have spent time as a ward of the state, or in foster care

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

I am, or have been a refugee

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

I have a disability which has affected my educational outcomes

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

I have experienced difficult circumstances that have affected my education

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

I personally receive a Centrelink benefit

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

My parent or guardian receives a Centrelink benefit

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

I have or had a medical condition which has affected my educational outcomes

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

I or my family are not receiving a Centrelink benefit but struggle financially

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If you answered yes to any of the questions above, there may be a scholarship to suit your circumstances. We encourage all applicants to apply for scholarships, so submit your scholarship application now and let VTAC and institutions see what's right for you.

Apply for scholarships

Scholarships help with the cost of study and are awarded for many different reasons: community involvement, academic achievement and where you live are just some of them.

Why apply for a scholarship?

Why wouldn't you apply for a scholarship? You have nothing to lose and a lot to gain. While the value of each scholarship varies, it can help you pay for books, study materials, moving expenses, course fees or other costs associated with tertiary study.

What kinds of scholarships are there?

There are lots of scholarships you can apply for through VTAC. Others require you to apply to tertiary institutions or the organisation sponsoring them. It's worth spending an afternoon online, searching for scholarship opportunities. For example, a local community group might offer one that would be ideal for you.

Scholarships through VTAC

The scholarships VTAC takes applications for are generally awarded under three categories:

» Access and equity scholarships
» Merit scholarships
» Indigenous Commonwealth scholarships

Access and equity scholarships

Access and equity scholarships are most often awarded for access and equity reasons, including financial disadvantage, relocating from regional and rural areas or being part of an access equity group.

Merit scholarships

Merit scholarships are awarded for achievement. This may be assessed by a range of criteria, not only your ATAR.

Indigenous Commonwealth scholarships

Commonwealth scholarships are awarded to Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander applicants across a variety of categories.

When do I apply?

Applications open on 2 August 2021. The scholarship application – and all supporting evidence – must be submitted by 5:00 pm 8 October 2021.

What are my chances?

Your chances firstly depend on whether you apply or not.

Then it depends on how many scholarships in a category are available, your eligibility and how you are assessed compared to other eligible applicants. For example, Commonwealth scholarships are based on an income assessment – if you meet the criteria, you will get a scholarship. For other scholarships, chances vary more widely. Many of the scholarships through VTAC are based on equity and access, leadership abilities and community experience, so don't be deterred if you're not a straight A student.

How do I apply?

Applying for scholarships offered through VTAC is straightforward. You just need to complete one application and you'll be matched with all the scholarships you are eligible for.

The scholarship application is within your VTAC account. It's simply a matter of following the prompts and entering any relevant details.

Most questions require concise written responses. These have strict character limits so it can be a good idea to write a draft first.

As part of your scholarship application you may also be asked to provide:

» details of your financial circumstances
» your Centrelink Reference Number (CRN) and/or your parent or guardian's details, if you don't receive payments directly into your bank account
» other income details

You may also be required to provide supporting evidence such as an impact statement, statement of support or Centrelink documentation to complete your scholarship application. There is detailed information on the VTAC website for how to provide this information **(vtac.edu.au/scholarships)**

The scholarship application has similar questions to the SEAS application...

Which is why every person submitting a Special Entry Access Scheme (SEAS) application should also submit a scholarship application. You can even use the same supporting evidence, just make sure you submit each item twice: once in the SEAS application and again in the scholarships application.

Find out more

You can practise a scholarship application at vtac.edu.au/applying/demos. Just remember that the information you enter in a demo is not submitted to VTAC, and is not considered a valid application.

More information on the scholarship categories is available on the VTAC website: vtac.edu.au/scholarships. This includes a list detailing the institutional scholarships available, including who's offering it, the scholarship type, the criteria and approximate value.

Provide evidence for SEAS and scholarships

SEAS and scholarship applications may require that you provide additional evidence of your circumstances. Quality, not quantity, is the key to providing good and useful evidence.

When completing your SEAS or scholarship application you may be required to provide evidence. If you don't your application will not be considered. Evidence requested may include:

» your description of your circumstances

» your explanation of the impact of the circumstances on your education (or everyday life for scholarships awarded for financial disadvantage), and/or

» a statement of support from a 'responsible person'.

There are strict character limits (including spaces) for written content, so it can be a good idea to draft what you write before you submit it.

Providing your own statement

Write it yourself

Write the application yourself, in your own words. This is your story, not somebody else's interpretation. Also, it is not an English test! Just write clearly and honestly.

Description of circumstances

Keep it short and to the point. Summarise what happened and when. You can write this as a timeline of dates and events, or you can present it in another way that clearly details your circumstances and when they occurred.

Impact statement

Your impact statement is an essential and significant part of your application. It provides assessors with the information required to understand the impact the disadvantage has had on your educational performance (or everyday life for scholarships awarded for financial disadvantage),

Focus on **how** your circumstances have affected you and prevented you from meeting your potential. It is important to describe the educational impact of the circumstances, not just the situation or condition.

Evidence is about quality not quantity.

Providing a statement of support

You may be required to submit a statement of support from a responsible person who has specific knowledge of your circumstances and is able to describe them. Choose a responsible person who knows about your circumstances and can comment knowledgeably about your situation.

Statements of support may be submitted electronically or mailed to VTAC. If a statement of support is required but not submitted, your application for SEAS or the relevant scholarships will not be considered.

Make sure your 'responsible person' understands what they need to include in the statement and that their understanding matches your own. The key element is that they detail how your circumstances have affected you and prevented you from meeting your potential.

A good supporting statement is written by a responsible person who can:

» provide a brief overview of your medical condition, disability or circumstances

» provide a time line of the duration of the circumstances, and

» provide current information on how your circumstances have affected your ability to reach your potential.

VTAC produces a 'Providing a statement of support' fact sheet, which you can forward to your responsible person. This fact sheet explains the purpose of the statement and gives tips on what to include.

Definition of 'a responsible person'

A responsible person is:

» an Australian citizen or permanent resident who is 21 years of age or older

» has known you for at least 12 months or for the entire duration of the circumstance(s), whichever is shorter

» is not related to you by birth, marriage, or de facto relationship, and

» does not live with you.

For SEAS Category 3: Disability or medical condition, and for any questions related to medical conditions on the scholarship application, a responsible person is defined as a health practitioner who also meets the criteria outlined above. Example health practitioners include general practitioners (GPs), psychologists, counsellors, school nurses and physiotherapists.

Providing financial evidence

Financial disadvantage is most often demonstrated with documentation from Centrelink. If you receive payments directly into your account, and you give VTAC permission, VTAC can access your Centrelink records electronically. However, if the payments are paid to your parent or guardian, you must provide VTAC with hard copy or uploaded copies of Centrelink documents.

If you need to provide other financial documents such as payslips, you will need to provide these to VTAC.

Receive your results and ATAR

You will be able to access your VCE results and ATAR from 7.00 am on 13 December 2021

Accessing your results

When do I receive my results?

You will be able to access your VCE results and ATAR via web, app and mail. Results will be available via web and app from 7.00 am on Monday 13 December 2021. The paper documents should arrive in the mail within ten business days.

How do I access my results online?

You can access your results via the VCE Results and ATAR Service website or the Results and ATAR app. The app is available from Google Play or the App Store.

You will need to register prior to results being released via https://resultsandatar.vic.edu.au or by using the app. Registration opens on Monday 2 August. You will need your VCAA student number and personal details to register. You will select a secure password when registering, which you will use to access your results on Monday 13 December. You only need to register once. The password you create can then be used for both the internet service and mobile app.

You are encouraged to complete registration by 5.00 pm Sunday 12 December to ensure the fastest access to your VCE Results and ATAR at 7.00 am when they are released.

If you have created a VTAC account, please note that this is separate from your registration for the VCE Results and ATAR Service.

Can I speak to someone about my results?

Absolutely. VTAC and VCAA run a joint Post-Results and ATAR Service (PRAS) every year. In 2021, the services will operate at the following times:

- » 7.00 am – 5.00 pm Monday 13 December
- » 9.00 am – 5.00 pm Tuesday 14 December
- » 9.00 am – 5.00 pm Wednesday 15 December
- » 9.00am - 5.00pm Thursday 16 December
- » 9.00am - 5.00pm Friday 17 December

You can contact the service by:

- » visiting pras.resultsandatar.vic.edu.au
- » phoning (03) 9032 1717 or the toll-free number 1800 653 080
- » emailing pras@edumail.vic.gov.au

Understanding the ATAR

The ATAR stands for Australian Tertiary Admission Rank. It is important to note that the ATAR is a rank and not a score. It is represented as a number between 0 and 99.95 in intervals of 0.05 and 99.95 being the highest rank.

Because the ATAR is a rank, there is no pass or fail ATAR. Everyone who receives an ATAR has successfully passed the VCE. The ATAR simply demonstrates each student's achievement in relation to all other students in the Year 12 age group. Someone receiving an ATAR of 55, for example, has performed better than 55 per cent of the Year 12 age group that year.

How is the ATAR used?

It is a tool used for tertiary selection, a way for institutions to distinguish between applicants where there are more people applying than there are places in the course.

Once the ATAR has been used for its purpose, entrance into your chosen course, it becomes irrelevant. No one's going to ask for you ATAR once you're already studying, and future employers will be far more interested in your skills and experience than any of your high school results.

Why do you scale subjects?

Subjects aren't scaled because of how 'hard' or how 'easy' we think they are. In reality, every subject is scaled in the same way: based on the strength of the competition in a particular year.

VCE Study Scores are standardised rankings, or relative positions, reported on a scale between 0 and 50, with a middle ranking of 30. So, a student with a Study Score of 30 has performed better than half the students in that subject for that year. Scaling is applied to determine the difficulty in achieving the middle ranking - the median study score of 30 – in each subject. The issue here is VCE Study Scores are not standardised against other VCE subjects, they only measure the achievement relative to other students in the same subject.

The competition to achieve the median study score varies between individual studies – in some subjects it is harder to get a 30 because of the cohort of students undertaking it – not because of any inherent difficulty of the subject. So to be fair to all students, no matter what subjects they choose, we scale all subjects against each other to produce a result as though all Year 12 students had taken the same subjects.

I was hoping for a higher ATAR

Remember, the ATAR is only a tool used for tertiary selection, it does not define you as a person, nor does it determine your capabilities.

If your ATAR isn't high enough to get you into your dream course, it's worthwhile contacting the institution to discuss alternative pathways. More often than not, there will be another pathway into the course you want to study. You do have options.

Change of preference will remain open for a time after the results release, so you will have time to make calls, do your research and add in any 'pathway courses' in time for offers.

Learn more about the ATAR

For detailed information on the ATAR and scaling, see the VTAC ATAR and Scaling Guide 2021, https://vtac.edu.au/files/pdf/publications/VTAC_ATAR_Scaling_Guide_2021.pdf

Change of preference

If you change your mind about the course you want to study or get different Year 12 results to what you were expecting, don't worry—you can change your course preferences.

What is change of preference?

During specified periods you can add, remove or re-order the course preferences in your VTAC course application.

You may want to change your preferences if you have changed your mind about which course you most want to study, if a new course has become available and you would like to add it to your preference list, or if a course you had applied for has been cancelled and you want to replace it on your preferences list.

There is no cost involved in changing your preferences. As long as you have paid your course application processing fee, you can change your preferences as many times as you like within the specified periods.

How to change your course preferences

To change your course preferences, log in to your VTAC account and follow the prompts. You can add, delete or re-order your preferences using the up and down arrows.

Some courses do not accept new course applications after a certain date, so check the course description and selection criteria carefully for any new courses you want to add.

You will also need to make sure you meet the requirements for any new courses you add. If you have missed a selection requirement deadline contact the institution to see if you can still apply.

Find step-by-step instructions for changing your course preferences at: vtac.edu.au/applying/courses/cop

All change of preference dates are listed at: vtac.edu.au/dates

When can I change my preference?

Straight away	After your ATAR is released	After offers come out
Once you've applied, you can keep doing this as many times as you like, free of charge, until the closing date.	After you get your ATAR, you will have a short amount of time to change your preferences. Finalise your preferences at this point to maximise your chance to receive the offer you want.	You can also change your preferences between offer rounds, but some courses may already have filled all their places.

Offers and enrolment

Most offers will be made in December and January .

How are offers released?

Most offers will be made on 20 December and 14 January 2022. Emails will be sent from the morning right through until 2 pm, at which point you will be able to log into your VTAC account and view your offer in the 'Course offers' section. Because of the volume of offers going out on that day, VTAC will stagger the email roll out throughout the morning and early afternoon, so don't stress if it's 12 noon and you haven't received an email but your friend has.

Your offer email is a notification of an offer being made. The institution will contact you separately with instructions and deadlines for enrolling—usually within two business days. If you do not receive these instructions, you need to contact the institution and not VTAC. Remember, you must enrol by the deadline set by the institution—make sure that you don't miss out.

All offer round dates are listed at: vtac.edu.au/dates.

Accept an offer by enrolling

To accept an offer you must enrol in the course. Enrolment procedures will be outlined in the offer email sent by the institution. These instructions differ across each institution, in some cases you may be required to attend in person at a specific date and time, others might require you to enrol online.

Most enrolment deadlines are within a short period from when the offer is made. If you are unable to complete the enrolment procedure during this period, you should check with the institution about what other arrangements are available. Don't leave this too late, as you may be required to organise documentation and someone to act on your behalf.

All offers are provisional

Any offer you receive is subject to you:

» meeting eligibility requirements

» having provided full and correct information on your VTAC application, and

» attending enrolment at the time and date specified in your offer message.

If you don't meet these requirements, your offer may lapse or be withdrawn.

Thinking of deferring to take a gap year?

Gap years can be a great way to take a break from studying to do some travel or some work experience. If you're applying for courses with the intention to defer the place, make sure that you check the institutional and course policies on deferment, as not all courses will allow it.

If the institution agrees to defer your place, make sure to get an agreement from them in writing. If you eventually decide not to take up the deferred place, you must inform the institution so that they can offer the place to another applicant.

Have mixed feelings about the course or interested in something else?

You can accept your December Round offer and still be eligible for offers from higher preferences in future rounds. Just make sure that whichever course you're hoping to get an offer from is listed higher on your preferences than what you've been offered. So, if

you received an offer from your third preference, you'll be eligible for offers from preferences one and two.

Change of preference opens between the offer rounds, so you can move the offered preference down your list to open up your eligibility for more courses—these could be courses that were previously lower on your list or new ones you add. Should you receive a preferred offer in a future round, you can accept that and withdraw from the previous one.

VTAC recommends that you accept your December Round offer as it will lapse before the release of the January Round. You will not be able to accept an offer after it has lapsed. By accepting your December Round offer, you will at least have that course to fall back on if no further offers are made. If you don't accept the offer because you want to see what happens on future dates, you run the risk of not receiving any offers at all.

No longer interested in the course you've been offered?

Accepting an offer for a course is your choice. If you have absolutely no desire to enrol in that course, then simply ignore the offer. The offer will lapse and the place will go to somebody else. Just be sure about any decision to not accept a course offer—offers cannot be accepted once they have lapsed.

Didn't get an offer?

If you didn't receive an offer in the December or January Round, you may still be eligible for an offer in the February Round 1. However it's important to know most offers are made in the December or January Round . So while you might wait in hope for a February Round 1 offer it's also a good idea to do some strategic research.

You can change your preferences between offer rounds and institutions are available to talk to you about pathway courses and to help you identify other courses you might want to add to your preference list before change of preference closes.

Also, make sure you give permission for institutions to give you supplementary offers.

Supplementary offers

Some institutions may make supplementary offers after February Round 1 if they have places available.

You may receive supplementary offers if you have:

» not received an offer listed on your course preferences, and

» given VTAC permission to release your application to all courses with vacancies.

You give this permission either at the time of applying, or later in your VTAC account. Supplementary offers will be processed weekly after February Round 1.