

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.

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.

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VICTORIAN TERTIARY ADMISSIONS CENTRE

40 Park Street, South Melbourne, VIC 3205

Telephone: +61 3 9926 1020

www.vtac.edu.au

Facebook: facebook.com/vtacguide

Twitter: twitter.com/vtacguide

YouTube: youtube.com/user/vtacmedia