

# Admissions Policy

## Section 1 - Summary

(1) This policy provides a clear set of principles to guide Victoria University (VU) in the admission of students to all courses of study, to ensure processes are transparent and decisions are consistent and fair.

## Section 2 - Accountability

### Key decision-making power under the Policy

(Delegated) Power	Role
Approval of unique cases as per clause 49 of the Admissions - English Language Procedure	Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer (Limitation on delegation: advice of Director of Studies, VU English and Director, Academic Quality and Standards)

## Section 3 - HESF/ASQA/ESOS Alignment

(2) HESF: 1.1 Admission

(3) ESOS Act - National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018: Standard 1 Marketing Information and Practices; Standard 2 Recruitment of an Overseas Student.

(4) [Standards for Registered Training Organisations \(RTOs\) 2015 \(Cth\)](#): Standard 4 and 5.

## Section 4 - Scope

(5) This policy applies to the Admission of applicants to the following awards;

- a. Award coursework study in higher education (HE) and vocational education (VET) including domestic and international, onshore and offshore;
- b. Postgraduate research;
- c. Apprenticeships and trade-based study; and
- d. Non-award units or courses of study including industry-based courses.

(6) Throughout this Policy, VU refers to Victoria University Higher Education and TAFE. VU is a dual-sector institution.

## Section 5 - Definitions

(7) Admission

(8) Advanced Standing

- (9) Authorised Agent
- (10) Deferral
- (11) Direct Applications
- (12) Domestic Pathway
- (13) General Admission Criteria
- (14) Offer
- (15) Selection
- (16) Selection Methodology
- (17) Selection Tasks

## Section 6 - Policy Statement

(18) VU believes in equal access to educational opportunities by people of all backgrounds, experiences, and abilities. In the case of international onshore students, VU abides by current state and federal government requirements, e.g. assessing an applicant as being a genuine student.

(19) VU actively seeks to engage with and serve the community, especially the residents of the western region of Melbourne.

(20) VU is committed to the principles of admissions transparency as outlined by the Higher Education Standards Panel and Higher Education Standards Framework as administered by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA).

(21) As per the [Student Retention and Success Policy](#) and [Guideline](#), VU is committed to supporting the success of all its students and proactively working to retain and enrich their experiences during their studies.

(22) For these reasons, it is the VU's goal, where possible, to be able to offer every applicant a place, whether in the course or program to which they apply, or in another suitable course. This may include the offer of a pathway course or enabling course to address particular learning needs of the student (e.g. an English language intensive course as a precursor to an award course).

(23) In order to be eligible for selection an applicant must satisfy VU admission criteria, course admission criteria, and any selection tasks.

(24) Satisfaction of these requirements permits an applicant to be considered for a place, but does not guarantee an offer of a place.

### Part A - Basis for Admission

(25) Admission offers are made to applicants who are assessed to have the background and abilities to have a reasonable expectation of success in the course they're offered, or substitute course if identified.

(26) Admission offers are made on merit based on demonstrated achievement comparable to Australian standards. VU assesses merit and suitability of candidates against our admission criteria for each course, considering one or a combination of:

- a. Academic attainment;
- b. Professional experience and expertise;
- c. Other life experience with a demonstrable relevance to the field of study.

(27) VU acknowledges that some people may have circumstances that mean that their ability to demonstrate their capacity via typical means will be limited. VU will consider admission for such people on a case-by-case basis, as detailed in the Admissions Procedure and varied from time to time.

(28) VU uses multiple modes of entry in admitting students, including but not limited to:

- a. Direct applications;
- b. VTAC applications;
- c. VET, Foundation and admission pathways;
- d. Industry-based group entry to specific courses; and
- e. Trade-based admission to apprenticeship courses.

(29) VU assesses applications based on the following categories:

- a. Group A - Higher Education Study: applicants whose highest level of study enrolment since leaving secondary education is a higher education course.
- b. Group B - Vocational Education and Training (VET) study: Applicants whose highest level of study enrolment since leaving secondary education is a VET course.
- c. Group C - Work and Life Experience: applicants who left secondary education more than two years previously (i.e. who are not classified as recent secondary education applicants) and have not undertaken VET or higher education study since then.
- d. Group D - Recent Secondary Education: Applicants whose admission is based mostly on secondary education undertaken at school, TAFE or other VET or higher education provider (Australian or overseas equivalent) that was (or will be) completed either in the current year or within the previous two years.

(30) VU acknowledges the importance of recognising an applicant's prior learning and study wherever possible and appropriate. VU will:

- a. Provide Advanced Standing to applicants in line with the principles of the AQF Qualifications Pathways Policy; and
- b. Provide clear, transparent, consistent and timely advice to applicants, and communicates decisions in a transparent and timely manner.

(31) VU will not offer places in specific courses in excess of what the VU reasonably believes it can service.

- a. In particular, applicants for higher degree by research places will be assessed for suitability against the available pool of expert supervisors to ensure that VU can properly acquit its responsibility to the applicant.

(32) In conjunction with Moondani Balluk, VU will give specific consideration to the recruitment, admission, participation, and completion of Aboriginal people.

## **Part B - General requirements for admission**

(33) VU reserves the right to not make an offer to an otherwise qualified applicant in a course which still has available space if that applicant:

- a. Has previously been excluded from VU for any reason;
- b. Is currently indebted to VU;
- c. Has been excluded or had their enrolment cancelled at any other Australian institution;
- d. Is under 15 years of age; or
- e. Is deemed not to be a genuine student.

(34) In the case of an applicant with one or more of the attributes described in (33) above, VU may still choose to make an offer after consideration of all the circumstances.

(35) VU requires all applicants for admission to be able to provide evidence of:

- a. Their identity;
- b. Their age;
- c. If under 16 years of age, their parent or guardian's consent;
- d. Their citizenship status;
- e. Their visa status if an international onshore student;
- f. Their "genuineness" against specific risk criteria to comply with Streamlined Visa Processing Provider requirements (for international onshore applicants);
- g. Their English language competency level; and
- h. Their educational, employment and other relevant background as detailed in their application.

(36) Details of the methods that are accepted for verification of the items in (35) above are provided in the Admissions Procedure as varied from time to time.

(37) VU will adhere to the ESOS legislative framework, including but not limited to the [National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 \(National Code\)](#) and the [Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 \(ESOS Act\)](#) in regards to Admissions.

## **Part C - Specific requirements for admission**

(38) VU will publish the course admission criteria to be applied in each course of study.

(39) Admission criteria and selection methodology for all coursework courses will be established by the College/s responsible for teaching the course, and will be applied consistently to all applicants.

(40) Admission criteria for higher degrees by research will be as established under the [Higher Degrees by Research Policy](#) and its associated procedures.

(41) VU Global will establish equivalence of Admission requirements to individual countries and/or states and will publish these requirements for VU's major markets online.

(42) Admission criteria will:

- a. Be congruent at all times with the requirements of the Australian Qualification and Higher Education Standards Frameworks;
- b. Clearly identify any minimum academic criteria, prior knowledge, expertise or experience that is expected of successful applicants prior to commencing study;
- c. Not unduly restrict access to courses on grounds that are not demonstrably connected with a person's capacity to successfully undertake the course or VU's capacity to discharge its obligations in delivering it.

(43) Every course must have documented course admission criteria, selection tasks (if applicable) and

selection/ranking methodology (where a course is competitive).

(44) Course admission criteria are approved as part of the course approvals process.

(45) Selection methodology and any selection tasks are approved by the relevant College.

(46) Amendments to course admission criteria, selection tasks (if applicable) may be made by the relevant committee. Changes to admission criteria cannot be made in the middle of an admissions intake for domestic students, or after an admission process has commenced for international students.

(47) All applicants must satisfy the minimum VU and course admission criteria. Where the course is competitive, applicants may need to satisfy a standard higher than the minimum course admission criteria to be offered a place.

(48) The process by which admission criteria are made and applied is detailed in the [Admissions Procedure](#) and may vary from time to time.

(49) The requirement for satisfactory police checks and/or working with children checks for industry experience is not a University requirement and therefore shall not be utilised as an entry criterion for any Victoria University course.

### **Internal applicants**

(50) Domestic students currently enrolled in another VU course at any level, may make an application for another VU course.

(51) International onshore students are encouraged to contact VU Global for advice on applying for other VU courses.

(52) Internal applicants must satisfy the same admission criteria as other applicants for the course. VU has discretion to give preference to an internal applicant if in accordance with the selection methodology for that course.

## **Part D - Waiver of requirements**

(53) VU entry requirements and course entry requirements may be waived in exceptional circumstances. For further information, see the [Admissions Procedure](#).

## **Part E - Delegations and responsibilities**

(54) The Director, Student Administration is responsible for the coordination and issuing of all domestic offers for admission.

(55) The International Admissions Manager, VU Global is responsible for the coordination and issuing of all international offers for onshore admission.

(56) VU's offshore partners or the VU College involved are responsible for the coordination and issuing of all international offers for offshore admission. If the offers are made by VU partner institutions, agreed quality standards are applied.

(57) The Executive Deans of Colleges are responsible for approving the course-specific admission criteria and selection methodology to be used to determine which applicants will receive offers of admission.

(58) The Dean of Graduate Research is responsible for establishing and overseeing VU-wide criteria and guidance for higher degrees by research places.

(59) Admissions determinations are made by applying the approved admission criteria by:

- a. Admissions selection staff for domestic applications;
- b. VU Global for onshore international applications;
- c. Partner institutions applying agreed quality standards or the VU College involved for offshore international applications;
- d. College-based academic staff where academic judgment is required;
- e. Directors of Research within Colleges, on behalf of the Executive Deans, for applicants for higher degree by research places; and
- f. VU College for group applications for industry tailored courses.

## **Conflicts of interest**

(60) All staff involved in selection must disclose where there may be a conflict of interest by completing and submitting a Declaration of Potential or Actual Conflict of Interest Form to Managers of Admissions (Domestic) and VU Global.

(61) The staff member must also withdraw themselves immediately from the situation giving rise to the conflict, pending advice from the manager to whom the disclosure was made.

## **Part F - Reviews**

(62) Applicants may seek a review of an Admission decision by the Director, Student Administration (Domestic) or the Senior Manager, International Admissions (International). The review is final and cannot be appealed within VU.

## **Part G - Readmission**

(63) Students of VU whose enrolment lapses may reapply for admission to their course and will be subject to the same requirements as all other applicants at the time of applying.

(64) Applicants who fail to accept their offer by enrolling by the relevant enrolment deadline may reapply for admission to the course and will be subject to the same requirements as all other applicants at the time of applying.

## **Section 7 - Procedures**

(65) [Admissions Procedure](#)

(66) [Admissions - English Language Admission Requirements Procedure](#)

(67) [Admissions - Course Admissions and Pre-Training Review Procedure \(VET\)](#)

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Current
<b>Effective Date</b>	14th February 2020
<b>Review Date</b>	14th February 2025
<b>Approval Authority</b>	Vice-Chancellor
<b>Approval Date</b>	14th February 2020
<b>Expiry Date</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Accountable Officer</b>	Lisa Line Deputy Vice-Chancellor Enterprise and Digital Lisa.Line@vu.edu.au
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## Glossary Terms and Definitions

**"Advanced Standing"** - Refer to Credit definition. Advanced Standing term is being phased out and referred to as Credit.

**"Admission"** - The act of admitting an applicant into a course of the University, following a successful application and acceptance of the offer of a place in a course.

**"General Admission Criteria"** - The University-wide entry requirements that applicants must satisfy to be eligible for selection to each level of course offered by the University.

**"Selection"** - The process of assessing applicants for a course and deciding which applicants can be made an offer of a place in the course.

**"Selection Methodology"** - The methodology employed to decide whom amongst the eligible applicants will be selected to be made an offer of a place in the course for which they applied. Selection methodology is usually used in cases where a course is competitive (more applications than places available) and applicants are ranked. Selection methodology includes ranking methodology.

**"Selection Tasks"** - Activities an applicant must undertake as part of the selection process, such as providing a folio, attending an interview or completing and submitting a supplementary form. These tasks need to be met in order to be eligible for an offer into a course.

**"Offer"** - A document stating what course the University is prepared to admit a person into, with any relevant conditions that must be satisfied before enrolment can take place. The University may make unconditional or conditional offers as appropriate.

**"Authorised Agent"** - An organisation or individual which has a current signed contract with the University to recruit onshore international students to the University on behalf of the University.

**"Domestic Pathway"** - Pathways delivered in Australia and related to students who are Australian Citizens or Permanent Residents. Domestic pathways can be internal or external pathways.

**"Aboriginal"** - The use of the word Aboriginal throughout VU Policy and Procedure refers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people connected to and/or residing in South East Australia.

**"Deferment"** - An agreement to allow an applicant to defer taking up the place they have been offered until a later time.

**"Direct Applications"** - The process of admitting a student via direct application to the University rather than via VTAC or other externally managed batch processes. Direct applications also include offers made by one of the University's authorised agents.