

# VCAL

## Frequently asked questions

### What is VCAL?

The Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) provides you with practical work-related experience, literacy and numeracy skills, and the opportunity to build personal skills you'll use every day.

Similar to the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE), VCAL is a recognised secondary qualification of equal worth to VCE when heading into the workforce.

VCAL's flexibility allows you to undertake an applied learning program matching your interests and learning needs. Fully accredited units are selected for four compulsory strands: literacy and numeracy skills, work related skills, industry specific skills, and personal development skills.

VCAL is undertaken at the Geelong Technical Education Centre (GTEC). The GTEC program is designed for students who have completed Year 10 of their secondary education and who aspire to take up a trade or start their career in a chosen field. Our integrated three-part program includes VCAL (Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning), TAFE trade training and 'real' work experience leading to work opportunities.

### How long does it take to get my VCAL?

VCAL Year 11 and 12 is usually studied over two years (one year for each level) and upon successful completion, you receive a certificate and Statement of Results detailing the areas of study completed.

### What are the entrance requirements to do my VCAL?

Prospective students must be aged between 16 and 19, and have completed Year 10 in order to undertake VCAL Intermediate (Year 11), or have completed Year 11 to undertake VCAL Senior (Year 12).

### How is VCAL at The Gordon different to a school?

You will find VCAL at The Gordon different to a school. You don't have to be at school from 9am–3.30pm every day – just when you have rostered classes during the day.

Our emphasis is on providing a hands-on learning experience that translates to real skills in a young person's chosen trade or field. That means schooling is relevant, integrated with TAFE training, and focussed on a smooth transition to employment. Work placements add the bonus of earning while learning.

It is a very supportive and inclusive environment. Teachers are approachable and want to help you succeed.

### What subjects can I do?

Your options are virtually unlimited. Whatever your interest, hobby, or job, we can design a VCAL program around it. If you want a trade, we can do that too.

We use your knowledge and skills, and build on them. You can do some work from home, with an employer, at The Gordon's City Campus, and at GTEC's facilities at The Gordon's East Geelong campus.

As a VCAL Central student, you gain all the advantages of the GTEC program which combines the compulsory strands of VCAL study with an area of interest or career choice; chosen from The Gordon's comprehensive VET in Schools program as well as other Certificate II and III programs offered by The Gordon, or any other training provider. Some VCAL Central students attend their VET training on Wednesday afternoon with other VET in Schools students at one of The Gordon's campuses. VCAL Central students may also have access to other Certificate II and III courses on offer at The Gordon, where we can accommodate these additional studies into their program.

The more excited you are about the possibilities, the more flexible we can be.

## How do I know I'm ready to study at The Gordon?

VCAL is a demanding and busy course. Ask yourself these questions:

- Am I organised and reliable?
- Am I self-motivated and ready to take responsibility for my own learning?
- Am I ready to prioritise my study? This may mean making some sacrifices eg. not going out with friends, when you have to study for an assessment task.
- Am I committed to attending all classes and completing homework?
- Do I have a clear goal and reason for completing my VCAL?

If you can honestly answer 'yes' to these questions then you are probably ready to apply.

## What are the hours at The Gordon?

The VCAL course accepts intakes in February and July. Holidays are the same as other schools.

Class time is between 22-25 hours of class time each week for 18 weeks per year.

- Vocational training is 38 hours per week for 8 weeks per year.
- On-the-job training is up to 38 hours per week for up to 20 weeks.
- Calendars will be available at enrolment, prior to the course beginning.

## How am I selected for a place at The Gordon?

You'll need to complete a skills assessment involving reading (comprehension) and show us your mathematical and problem solving skills.

Applicants will also be contacted to schedule an interview date and time.

At this interview you have the opportunity to 'sell' your skills and attributes, to help us determine if you are the right fit for the program. And if the program is the right fit for you.

## Can I do a VCAL subject at the same time as doing my VCE?

Yes, you may have a mix of VCAL and VCE units. But check with the Coordinator to ensure you can complete a full course.

## I've already completed some VCE subjects. Do they count?

Yes, they will count towards VCE or VCAL. However, there are different requirements which need to be met to complete VCE, or to complete VCAL.

## Can I use VCAL subjects that I've already completed to contribute towards my VCE?

Yes, VCAL Intermediate units or VCAL Senior sequences (pair of units) may count towards VCE. But, these will not contribute to an ATAR.

## What makes The Gordon VCAL program special?

The Gordon is Geelong's only alternative setting for VCAL.

We offer VCAL in an adult learning environment. No bells. You will only wear a uniform when you are at a workplace as part of your studies.

We offer a supportive and inclusive environment with approachable teachers who are there to help you succeed.

## How do I get to The Gordon?

The Gordon's East Geelong Campus is located ten minutes by road from the city centre via Ormond Road (Bellarine Highway). The campus is bordered by Boundary Road, St Albans Road and Olney Avenue in East Geelong.

Buses are available to the East Geelong Campus via Ormond Road, Boundary Road and St Albans Road.

## What are the fees? How are they paid?

VCAL tuition fees are set by Skills Victoria according to the level and hours in which a student enrolls. The maximum capped annual VCAL fees for students studying a traditional trade course are \$1,330 and concession is \$690\*. This includes tuition, materials, amenities and the Construction Induction Card. The maximum capped annual VCAL fees for students studying VCAL Central is \$1,200 and concession \$450\*. This includes tuition, materials and amenities.

*\* Based on 2013 fees. Student tuition fees are indicative only and subject to change given individual circumstances at enrolment. Eligibility criteria apply for various fee structures.*

GTEC students have the opportunity to apply for a scholarship through The Gordon Scholarship program which is run on an annual basis. Applications are made via an online form, and details are available from [thegordon.edu.au](http://thegordon.edu.au).

Students may also be able to access GTEC's Education Assistance Fund which, in cases of demonstrated need, may be able to assist students meet the obligations of fees or materials.