

# Post-compulsory schooling

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Education in Victoria is compulsory until the age of 15. The post-compulsory years of schooling consist of Years 10–12. Post-compulsory education is focused on providing young people with effective and varied pathways. These pathways are designed to support students in securing their first formal qualification and in making a successful transition from school to further education, training, employment or a combination of these.

In Victoria, students have a choice between three senior secondary certificates – the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE), the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) or the International Baccalaureate (Diploma). Most young people complete Year 12 while at school, but a smaller number undertake senior secondary study in the TAFE and ACE sectors.

In 2006, in government and non-government schools:

- 146,828 students were enrolled in at least one unit of the VCE
- 48,451 students were eligible to complete their VCE and, of these, 97.4 per cent successfully completed
- there were 10,608 VCAL certificate enrolments

## Expanding pathways in post-compulsory schooling

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To encourage young people to stay in school and to enable them to complete a senior secondary certificate, post-compulsory pathways have been expanded and include a strong focus on vocational curriculum options.

## Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning

The VCAL is a hands-on option for Years 11 and 12 students offering practical work-related experience and learning. It is available in both government and non-government schools and also through TAFE and ACE providers. In the 2006–07 State Budget \$47.2 million was provided to assist schools and other providers to coordinate the provision of this program. This investment has underpinned further growth in enrolments and the positive study and employment outcomes the program provides.

## VET in Schools

VET in Schools programs (including school-based apprenticeships and traineeships) comprise nationally recognised VET certificates which can be undertaken by senior secondary students as part of the VCE or the VCAL. VET in Schools programs are designed to expand opportunities and pathways for senior secondary students and improve post-compulsory educational outcomes in line with the Government's goals and targets for education. They also contribute to addressing industry skill needs.

VET in Schools programs are typically delivered through partnerships between schools, industry and training providers, and increasingly provide opportunities for students to participate in workplace learning.

The number of students undertaking VET in Schools in government and non-government schools has increased from 34,477 in 2005 to 36,504 in 2006. Approximately 25 per cent of all VCE students as well as all VCAL intermediate and senior students in Victorian schools participate in VET in Schools programs.

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## School-based apprenticeships and traineeships

Apprenticeship and traineeship pathways for senior school students continued to expand. In 2006, there were 5502 students in government and non-government schools in apprenticeships or traineeships undertaken as part of a program of studies that combined the VCE or the VCAL with a nationally accredited training certificate and employment.

## Re-engagement programs

In 2007, new funding arrangements for late enrolments were introduced for government schools running approved programs designed to re-engage students who had left school. Eligible students were able to enrol and be funded in these programs until early May 2007, an extension on the standard February cut-off date. This provided schools with an extended time period for engaging students and attracting Student Resource Package funding to support these programs.

Fifty-three programs involving over 40 schools across all regions in Victoria were approved as eligible programs for 2007. More than 100 students qualified for the late enrolment funding.

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## Student support initiatives

In addition to expanding the pathways on offer to students in the post-compulsory years of schooling, the Department improved the support available to students as they navigate those pathways.

### Managed Individual Pathways

The Managed Individual Pathways (MIPs) program requires that all students 15 years and over in government schools have up-to-date individual pathway plans and associated support to enable a successful transition through the post-compulsory years of schooling to further education, training or full-time employment.

In 2006, as part of the implementation of the Good Practice Framework for MIPs, the Students at Risk Mapping Tool was developed to assist schools in identifying those students in need of support to complete schooling.

In 2007, the Mapping Tool was made available to all government schools. Regional briefings were delivered to explain the operation and implications of using the tool to better identify students at risk of leaving school early, and to plan more effective school intervention strategies. An Electronic Resource Kit and Statewide Good Practice Case Studies were made available to teachers to further support the MIPs program.

## Careers and transition resources

To support the work of careers coordinators and teachers in the area of careers and transition, the Department has developed careers and transition resources. These resources provide information and advice for teachers, careers coordinators, students, parents/carers, employers and community organisations.

An accompanying hardcopy resource kit with lesson plans for careers coordinators and teachers was developed and forwarded to all schools and key stakeholders.

## Professional learning for teachers

In order to enhance the delivery of career education in schools through the provision of quality, accurate and up-to-date career education and information, the Department implemented a number of professional development initiatives for careers coordinators and teachers in government schools.

### *Career education scholarships*

The Department provided 20 scholarships to careers coordinators in government schools to undertake the Graduate Certificate in Career Education. A further 20 scholarships will also be awarded in 2008. Scholarship recipients participate in a VET familiarisation program

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and a mentoring component as part of the program. The Department covers total course fees as well as funding for schools to replace participants when they are required to attend face-to-face sessions.

### ***Industry placements program***

In addition to the scholarships, the Department also provided funding for up to 20 careers coordinators or teachers per year over two years to undertake a three-week industry placement and develop a project to better inform young people of industry pathways.

## **Cross-sectoral initiatives**

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In Victoria, young people 15 and over are able to study and complete their initial qualification in either a school, a TAFE institute (or other registered training organisation) or an ACE provider. However, for most young people the school sector provider is the most suitable environment for the completion of Year 12 or its equivalent.

For this reason the Department plays the lead role in youth transitions, providing cross-sectoral policy leadership and managing key cross-sectoral programs.

### **Youth Transition Support initiative**

The Youth Transition Support initiative commenced in January 2007 and provides funding for 24 youth transition workers across 12 Local Learning and Employment Networks (LLENs) areas. These areas were selected on the basis of relatively low Year 12 completion rates, high rates of youth unemployment and high numbers of young people not in education, training or full-time employment.

Transition support workers provide personalised assistance to young people aged 15–19 who are not in education or training, not working full-time and do not have Year 12 or an equivalent qualification. The objective behind the assistance is to

help disengaged young people achieve a sustainable education, training or employment outcome.

The 12 LLENs areas to receive funding for the Youth Transition Support Initiative are Baw Baw Latrobe, Brimbank Melton, Frankston Mornington Peninsula, Goldfields, Goulburn Murray, Highlands, Hume Whittlesea, Inner Northern, Maribyrnong and Moonee Valley, Smart Geelong, South Eastern and WynBay.

### **On Track**

The On Track survey tracks the destination of Year 12 or equivalent completers and early leavers from all providers six months after they leave. The On Track data publication helps parents, students and schools to better understand the destinations of young people after their final year and celebrates the broad range of outcomes that providers create for students. At the time of the survey, assistance and advice is offered to those students who are not in education, training or full-time employment.

For the first time, the published 2007 survey data included the destinations of students who completed Year 12 or its educational equivalent in a number of TAFE institutes, in addition to those completing in government and non-government schools.

The 2007 On Track survey found that of the young people who completed Year 12 in 2006, 74.5 per cent were in education or training. Of those not in education or training in 2007, 13.7 per cent were employed on a full- or part-time basis, and 2.9 per cent were looking for work. Other key findings from the survey were:

- an increase in the percentage of Year 12 or equivalent completers who were enrolled in university at the time of the survey from 46.1 per cent in 2006 to 47.4 per cent in 2007
- a continued increase in the percentage of students from all schools deferring university places from 8 per cent in 2006 to 8.9 per cent in 2007

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- 88 per cent of VCAL students cited the VCAL as an important reason for staying on to complete Year 12.

## Local Learning and Employment Networks

The statewide network of LLENs has a crucial role to play in continuing progress towards the Government's Year 12 or equivalent completion target.

The LLENs initiative supports cooperation between different providers and agencies and acts to strengthen the capacity of stakeholders to support young people's transition through school to further education, training or full-time employment.

The core role of the LLENs is the creation and further development of sustainable relationships and partnerships between local education providers, industry and the community to develop initiatives that improve the education, training and employment outcomes of young people. A particular focus is placed on those students considered most at risk of leaving school early.

A number of strategies were implemented during the year as part of the framework for the continued development of the LLENs initiative.

These strategies included:

- a new three-year contract (2006–08) with each LLENs incorporating targets and performance measures agreed annually
- the development by the LLENs and the Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission, and supported by the Department, of a good practice framework for LLENs initiatives to guide the future work of the LLENs – the implementation of the framework was supported by a symposium attended by LLENs Board members and executive officers from all LLENs areas
- the development of a standardised stakeholder satisfaction survey and its adoption by all LLENs
- the development and implementation of a communication strategy to improve communications between the Department, the Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission and the LLENs.

Over the course of the 2006 calendar year, the statewide network of 31 LLENs brokered 290 new partnerships between 2150 organisational stakeholders, comprising schools, TAFE, ACE providers, industry and community organisations. LLENs positively impacted on the outcomes of 28,000 young people by working with stakeholders to develop broader education and training programs and pathways, including 2639 young people who were re-engaged with education or training.