INCLUSIVE EDUCATION GRANTS

GUIDELINES - *Scholarships (Semester 2, 2018)*

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# Introduction

The Department of Education and Training (the Department) has developed these guidelines to support prospective applicants to apply for a scholarship through the Inclusive Education Grants initiative.

Through this initiative, the Department will provide up to 300 scholarships for teachers in Victorian government schools and other departmental staff to undertake a postgraduate course focused on Special Education. Additionally, the Department will provide up to 60 scholarships for teachers in Victorian government schools and other departmental staff to undertake the Master of Education (Applied Behaviour Analysis) through Monash University.

## Background

The Inclusive Education Grants initiative is a $23.5 million package focused on building teacher expertise in special education and providing access to specialised equipment and assistive technologies. This will support schools to strengthen their inclusive education practices, so that all students, including those with disabilities and additional learning needs, can succeed in their learning.

Launched in late 2017 as part of the *Inclusive Education Agenda Reform – Additional Supports Program,* the initiative provides scholarship funding for teachers wishing to undertake post-graduate study in special needs education as well as access to grants for specialised equipment and assistive technology to support students with their learning.

The initiative aligns with the four essential elements of the Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO) by building *Professional Leadership* and *Excellence in Teaching and Learning*, as well as promoting *Community Engagement in Learning* and *Positive Climates for Learning*.

These Guidelines only relate to scholarships for mid-2018 entry under the Inclusive Education Grants initiative. Further information for individuals wishing to commence study in 2019 will be made available after this round is complete. Information on the equipment stream of the initiative will be available from mid-2018. To register your interest, email [inclusive.ed.grants@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:inclusive.ed.grants@edumail.vic.gov.au).

# Inclusive Education Grants Initiative

The Inclusive Education Grants initiative aims to strengthen the capacity of teachers, schools, and regions to provide high-quality inclusive education services and resources to students with disabilities and/or additional learning needs.

## What is being funded?

In this round, the Department will provide up to 180 scholarships for Victorian government school teachers and other Departmental staff to undertake one of the following postgraduate courses\*:

* Master of Specialist Inclusive Education (Deakin University)
* Master of Special Education (La Trobe University)
* Master of Disability Studies - Education: Vision Impairment (RIDBC/Renwick Centre through Macquarie University)
* Master of Education - Inclusive & Special Education (Monash University)
* Master of Learning Intervention – Stream A (University of Melbourne)
* Master of Special and Inclusive Education (University of Newcastle [online])

There are also up to 42 scholarships available for teachers in Victorian government schools to undertake the Master of Education (Applied Behaviour Analysis) through Monash University.

The scholarship will cover the tuition fees associated with completing one of the above courses.

*\*Scholarships will only be available for courses at contracted partner universities. The Department is currently finalising partnerships arrangements and reserves the right to withdraw any course from the above list.*

# Funding Criteria

## Eligibility criteria

Applicants must:

* be i) currently employed as a teacher by a Victorian government school or ii) employed by the Victorian Department of Education and Training
* meet the entry requirements for their chosen course\*
* commence their chosen course in 2018
* be willing and able to complete their chosen course, including any requirement to complete a practicum placement where applicable, within four years
* provide evidence that their principal/manager supports their application and is aware of the course requirements, including completion of practicum placement(s) where applicable
* not be the recipient of other scholarships for their chosen course.

*\*Applicants who have not received an offer for their chosen course by the closing date must submit evidence that they have applied for their chosen course with their scholarship application. Applicants who receive an offer for their chosen course after the closing date must email evidence of this offer to* [*inclusive.ed.grants@edumail.vic.gov.au*](mailto:inclusive.ed.grants@edumail.vic.gov.au)*.*

## Funding exclusions

Inclusive Education Grants will not cover the following:

* scholarships for teachers in non-government schools
* scholarships for teachers who enrolled in their chosen course before Semester 2, 2018
* additional expenses associated with completing the course, e.g. text books, stationery, travel expenses and IT equipment.

## Assessment priorities

Priority will be given to applicants who:

* are employed by mainstream Victorian government schools
* are employed by schools identified as being in greatest need, for example:
  + mainstream schools with a high proportion of students receiving support through the Program for Students with Disabilities
  + schools that currently have no, or have a limited number of, teachers with a postgraduate qualification in special education
  + schools that have historically had difficulty recruiting special education teachers
  + schools in rural or regional areas
* demonstrate that their application aligns with their school’s Annual Implementation Plan
* demonstrate a strong commitment to enhancing inclusive education in the classroom
* demonstrate how their chosen course will support them in their current role
* demonstrate how their chosen course will support them in their future career.

# How to Apply

Scholarship applications must be submitted online through the Smarty Grants system at <https://inclusiveedgrants.smartygrants.com.au>.

Applications will close at midnight on **Sunday 3 June 2018**. Applicants who receive an offer for their chosen course after this date must email evidence of this offer to [inclusive.ed.grants@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:inclusive.ed.grants@edumail.vic.gov.au)

Applications must address each of the criteria. Incomplete or late applications will not be considered.

Applicants may include additional documentation by uploading it to the online application form.

## Guidance on personal statement and statement of support

To apply for a scholarship, applicants must attach both a Personal Statement and a Statement of Support from their principal/manager. Guidance on these supporting documents is provided below.

### Personal Statement

To complete your application, you must submit a personal statement outlining why you are applying for a scholarship and how you intend to use the knowledge and skills gained through completing your chosen course. Your personal statement should include information about:

* why you wish to undertake your chosen course
* how you intend to use the knowledge and skills from your chosen course in your current role
* how you intend to use the knowledge and skills from your chosen course in your future career, including in leadership roles
* how you demonstrate commitment to enhancing inclusive education in your classroom, school and community
* how the scholarship will assist you to complete your chosen course.

### Statement of Support

To complete your application, you must submit a letter or other document, signed by your principal /manager (e.g. a letter on school letterhead), outlining the reasons why they support your application.

Your principal/manager may wish to include:

* how the qualification will address an identified need within the school and/or region
* how they intend to utilise your new knowledge and skills within the school/region
* how your scholarship application aligns with the school's Annual Implementation Plan
* why they believe you are a worthy recipient of a scholarship
* how the qualification aligns with your Performance and Development Plan
* any other information that supports your application.

# Application Assessment

The Department will conduct an initial check to confirm that each application meets the eligibility criteria (see Appendix A), and assess all eligible applications using the assessment priorities (see Appendix B).

## Successful applications

The Department will contact successful applicants by the end of June 2018.

Successful applications will be funded subject to the signing of an agreement between the Department and the scholarship recipient. Recipients will be required to comply with the terms of the agreement including informing the Department of any change in their circumstances such as switching from a full-time to part-time study load etc.

## Unsuccessful applications

Following the conclusion of the assessment process, the Department will notify unsuccessful applicants of the outcome of their application. Due to the high number of applications expected, the Department will not provide individual feedback on unsuccessful applications.

# Course selection advice

Scholarship applicants are encouraged to undertake their own research into the eligible courses in order to choose the course that best suits their individual circumstances. The following information aims to assist you in choosing the most appropriate course for your needs.

### University course information:

The Inclusive Education Grants initiative offers scholarships for special education courses with identified specialisations that have been VIT-endorsed. Refer to table on page 10 for further details. Eligible courses are as follows:

* [Master of Specialist Inclusive Education (Deakin University)](http://www.deakin.edu.au/course/master-specialist-inclusive-education)
* [Master of Special Education (La Trobe University)](https://www.latrobe.edu.au/courses/master-of-special-education)
* [Master of Disability Studies (RIDBC/Renwick Centre through Macquarie University](https://courses.mq.edu.au/2017/domestic/postgraduate/master-of-disability-studies))
* [Master of Education - Inclusive & Special Education (Monash University)](http://www.monash.edu.au/pubs/2018handbooks/courses/D6002.html)
* [Master of Learning Intervention (University of Melbourne)](https://education.unimelb.edu.au/inclusiveedugrant)
* [Master of Special and Inclusive Education (University of Newcastle [online])](https://www.newcastle.edu.au/degrees/master-special-inclusive-education)

Scholarships are also available for the following:

* [Master of Education (Applied Behaviour Analysis) (Monash University)](http://www.monash.edu.au/pubs/2018handbooks/courses/D6002.html)
  + This course provides a pathway to certification as a Board Certified Behaviour Analyst (BCBA). For more information visit: [Behaviour Analyst Certification Board](https://www.bacb.com/) (International)

## Contact details

Although the Department can provide an overview of each course, the individual universities will be in the best position to answer your specific questions. Each university has support services for prospective students and it is recommended that you take the opportunity to make contact.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Deakin University | www.deakin.edu.au | 03 5277 1359  artsed@deakin.edu.au |
| La Trobe University | www.latrobe.edu.au | 1300 135 045 |
| Macquarie University | www.mq.edu.au | 02 9850 6410 |
| Monash University | www.monash.edu.au | 1800 MONASH (1800 666 274) |
| University of Melbourne (Melbourne Graduate School of Education) | education.unimelb.edu.au | 13 MELB (13 6352) |
| University of Newcastle | www.newcastle.edu.au | 1800 882 121 |

## Courses at a glance

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Institution** | **Deakin University** | **La Trobe University** | **Macquarie University (Renwick Centre)** | **Monash University** | **University of Melbourne** | **University of Newcastle** |
| Course name | Master of Specialist Inclusive Education | Master of Special Education | Master of Disability Studies | Master of Education | Master of Learning Intervention  (Stream A) | Master of Special & Inclusive Education |
| Course code | E734 | RMSE | none | D6002 | MC-LI | 40123 |
| Eligible specialisation(s) | n/a | n/a | - Education: Vision Impairment | - Inclusive & Special Education  - Applied Behaviour Analysis | - Disability  - Specific Learning Difficulties  - Hearing Impairment | - Deaf Studies & Deaf Education  - Emotional Disturbance/Behavioural Problems  - General Special Education |
| Duration (full-time)1 | 1.5 years | 1 year | 1 years | 1 year | 1 year | 1 year |
| Study mode | Online | Online  (optional 2 day weekend intensive per unit) | Online  (with weekend/holiday intensives) | Online or Clayton campus | Parkville campus  (via weekend/holiday intensives) | Online |
| Application deadline | 1 July | July | July | 14 July | 5 July | 16 July |

\*Each course has its own specific entrance requirements. You may be eligible to apply for recognition of prior learning (RPL) which could reduce the course duration.

## Questions you might ask

Here are some questions you might like to consider asking prospective universities when choosing your course:

1. **What are the practicum requirements?**

In order to meet VIT endorsement requirements, graduates must complete a minimum number of supervised special education school experiences in a variety of settings. Each course will have slightly different practicum arrangements, including policies on recognition of prior experience, and you should ensure that you understand what these are and if you are able to complete them within the designated timeframes.

1. **Do I have to organise my own placement(s)?**

Some universities will coordinate placement opportunities and help ensure you gain broad exposure to range of settings. For other courses, you may need to organise your own.

1. **Do I need to attend classes on campus? If so, where will they be held?**

The majority of the eligible courses are offered online, however some have face-to-face elements that may be held out of general office hours or on weekends. Again, these vary between institutions and between individual course units so make sure you understand all the attendance requirements ahead of time.

1. **I live in a rural/regional area, can I get support to travel to classes?**

Some institutions may offer travel bursaries to students living in rural or regional areas to support attendance at face-to-face sessions. You may also wish to ask about remote/videoconference access to face-to-face sessions.

1. **How long will it take me to complete the course?**

All courses offer full-time and part-time options. It is important to be clear on what the expected weekly hours of study might be and what impact this will have with respect to your other commitments. If you are considering studying part-time, you may wish to consider the total length of time that you will need to complete the course, noting that you must complete your chosen course within four years to be eligible for a scholarship.

You might also like to ask if there are options to switch from part-time to full-time, or vice versa, part-way through the course.

1. **What other costs are associated with completing the course?**

Inclusive Education Grants scholarships will cover the course tuition fees only. The scholarship may not be used for other expenses such as textbooks or IT equipment. It is recommended that you clarify with the individual institution what mandatory equipment or texts are required as part of the course.

1. **What other support services are available?**

Universities will offer a range of additional support and guidance to postgraduate students including health services, study skill workshops and postgraduate associations for networking etc. It is recommended that you find out what is on offer to help support your study.

# Contact Information

## Application support

**Inclusive Education Grants**

Email: [inclusive.ed.grants@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:inclusive.ed.grants@edumail.vic.gov.au)

Inclusive Education Professional Practice Branch

## SmartyGrants support

Phone: 03 9320 6888

# Appendix A – Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must meet all of the following eligibility criteria:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Criterion | Supporting information |
| 1. The applicant has submitted a complete application | Application Form |
| 1. The applicant is employed as a teacher by a Victorian government school   or  The applicant is employed by the Department of Education and Training | Application form/Statement of Support  Confirmation of DET employee number |
| 1. The applicant is registered with the VIT (where applicable) | Confirmation of VIT registration number |
| 1. The applicant has enrolled, or applied to enrol, in an eligible postgraduate degree | Evidence of application/enrolment |
| 1. The applicant intends to complete their chosen course within four years | Application Form |
| 1. The applicant is not in receipt of any other grant or scholarship funding for their chosen course | Application Form |
| 1. The applicant has the support of their principal/manager to complete their chosen course | Statement of Support |

# Appendix B – Assessment Priorities

While all eligible applications will be considered for funding, the Department may take the following criteria into account when prioritising applications.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Criterion | Supporting information |
| 1. The applicant does not already hold a postgraduate qualification | Application Form |
| 1. The applicant is employed by a mainstream government school with an identified need for teachers with a special and/or inclusive education qualification | DET data/Statement of Support |
| 1. The applicant is employed by a mainstream government school with a high proportion of students receiving support through the Program for Students with Disabilities | DET data |
| 1. The applicant has demonstrated a strong commitment to special and/or inclusive education in their school, and to completing their chosen course | Personal Statement/ Statement of Support |
| 1. The applicant has clearly articulated how their chosen course will supports their current role and future career | Personal Statement |
| 1. The applicant has demonstrated how their application aligns with their school’s Annual Implementation Plan | Personal Statement/ Statement of Support |

# Appendix C – Frequently Asked Questions

## Eligibility

### Am I eligible to apply for a scholarship?

To check whether you are eligible to apply for a scholarship, refer to the eligibility criteria in *Appendix A*.

### Can I apply if I am on a fixed-term contract and/or work part-time?

Yes – both ongoing and fixed-term contract teachers and teachers who work part-time can apply.

### Can I apply if I am employed on a casual basis?

Teachers employed on a casual basis are not eligible to apply.

### Do I need to be working with children with disabilities or additional needs?

No. Any teacher who meets the eligibility criteria can apply for a scholarship. All applicants are required to provide a Personal Statement, outlining how they intend to use the knowledge and skills from their chosen course in their current role and future career.

### Can I apply if I live in a rural or regional area?

Yes, teachers in rural and regional areas are encouraged to apply. A number of the courses offer flexible learning options, including fully online and partially online study modes, which may be suited to teachers in rural areas.

### Can I apply if I have already started the course?

No. To apply in this round, you must commence your chosen course in Semester 2, 2018.

### Do I have to study full-time?

No. Both full-time and part-time students are eligible to apply for a scholarship.

## Applying for a scholarship

### Can I submit an application by post/email?

No. All applications must be submitted via the online ‘SmartyGrants’ system.

### Can more than one teacher at a school apply?

Yes. However, depending on the total number of applications received, the Department may decide to award only one scholarship per school.

### Why am I being asked to provide an alternative email address?

The Department has asked all applicants to provide alternative email addresses, as it may be necessary to contact you outside of school hours (e.g. during school holiday periods). Once you have submitted your application, it is recommended that you check your email regularly, as the Department may email you to request further information or update you on the progress of your application.

### What if my application is incomplete?

Incomplete applications will not be considered for funding.

### My principal is not available; can I ask someone else to complete the Statement of Support?

The Department may accept a Statement of Support by a person other than the Principal (e.g. the Assistant Principal) in some circumstances. It is recommended that you email [inclusive.ed.grants@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:inclusive.ed.grants@edumail.vic.gov.au) outlining your circumstances, before submitting a Statement of Support by a person other than the Principal.

### Do I have to submit additional documentation?

No. All applicants are welcome to provide additional documentation that they believe supports their application, however this is not mandatory. The Department may refer to this documentation during the application assessment process.

### Can I submit additional documentation after I have submitted my application?

Once you have submitted your application, you will not be able to change your application or submit any additional documentation through the online application form. If you have submitted your application and wish to provide additional documentation, please email inclusive.ed.grants@edumail.vic.gov.au (ensuring you quote your application number) at any time up until the closing date on **Sunday 3 June 2018**.

### Will you accept late applications?

No. Due to the short timeframe between the closing date for applications, and the commencement of Semester 2, 2018, it will not be possible for the Department to consider any application submitted after the closing date.

### Will you let me know if you have received my application?

All applicants will receive a confirmation email when their application has been received. This will be sent to the primary email address submitted by the applicant during the application process.

If you have submitted an application, but have not received a confirmation, please email [inclusive.ed.grants@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:inclusive.ed.grants@edumail.vic.gov.au) to check if your application has been received.

## Scholarship details

### Will the scholarship cover additional costs associated with completing the course (e.g. travel costs)?

No. Scholarship funding is provided as a contribution towards tuition fees only. The scholarship cannot to cover additional costs associated with completing the course, such as textbooks, stationery, travel costs or administration/amenity fees.

### Do I need to complete a practicum placement?

All of the eligible courses, except for the Master of Education (Applied Behavioural Analysis), include a requirement to complete a practicum placement. It is recommended that you clarify these requirements with the relevant university before you commence your chosen course. It is also recommended that you discuss these requirements with your principal/manager before you commence your chosen course, and where applicable, determine a suitable arrangement for taking leave during your practicum placements.

### Will my school receive casual relief teacher (CRT) funding if my application is successful?

The Department will provide a contribution towards CRT costs while scholarship recipients undertake practicum placements as part of their chosen course. Further information will be provided to successful applicants.

### How will successful applicants be chosen?

All eligible applications will be assessed against the assessment criteria (see *Appendix B*).

### When will I know the outcome of my application?

The Department will inform all applicants of the outcome of their application by the end of June 2018.

### Can I defer my study until after Semester 2, 2018 if I receive a scholarship?

No. To receive scholarship funding, scholarship recipients must be enrolled in their chosen course in Semester 2, 2018.