

# Graduate Certificate in Education (Learning Difficulties) Program

## Application Guidelines

Round 2 – Course commencing Semester 2, 2023



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# 1. Introduction

Inclusive education ensures students with disability and additional learning needs achieve their full potential, at school and in life. Research shows that strong inclusive education practices benefit all students, academically and socially, and can be transformative for many.

The Graduate Certificate in Education (Learning Difficulties) Program (the program) aims to enhance how teachers meet and champion the needs of students with learning difficulties, including dyslexia and dyscalculia, in Victorian government schools.

The program covers tuition fees for eligible teachers to undertake the Graduate Certificate in Education (Learning Difficulties) offered by the University of Melbourne (the university).

These guidelines are for Round 2 of the program, commencing in Semester 2, 2023.

To be eligible for the program, you must be currently teaching in a Victorian government school and working directly with students with learning difficulties. (See Eligibility on page 10 for more information.) Eligible teachers from diverse backgrounds, or with diverse orientations and abilities, are encouraged to apply.

## Inclusive Education Scholarships Unit

The program is administered by the Inclusive Education Scholarships Unit (the IESU) in the Department of Education (the department).

The IESU manages the program applications and supports recipients to manage and complete their course.

For enquiries or help with your application, phone the IESU on (03) 9084 8496 or email [Inclusive.Ed.GradCert.LearningDifficulties@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:Inclusive.Ed.GradCert.LearningDifficulties@education.vic.gov.au)

### Definitions

- 'Applicant' – a teacher who is applying for a place in the program
- 'Recipient' – a teacher whose application has been successful
- 'Placement' – a recipient's confirmed place within the program.

## Background

In 2020-21, the Victorian Government introduced [\\$1.6 billion of Disability Inclusion](#) reforms, to ensure every student gets the support they need to learn and thrive.

Under these reforms, the Program for Students with Disabilities will progressively be replaced with a funding and support model that focuses on strengths and functional needs.

In addition, the Disability Inclusion reforms will increase schools' access to specialist expertise, coaching, professional development, and evidence-based guidance and resources, and create additional scholarships for teachers.

The Graduate Certificate in Education (Learning Difficulties) Program is among the reforms. It complements the department's existing [Master of Inclusive Education Program](#), which covers tuition fees for eligible teachers undertaking one of several relevant master's courses.

The Review of the Program for Students with Disabilities (2016) and the Parliamentary Inquiry into Services for People with Autism Spectrum Disorder (2017) identified a gap in mainstream teachers' skills and capability to meet the educational needs and aspirations of students with learning difficulties, including dyslexia and dyscalculia.

The program seeks to close this gap, by improving learning outcomes and the way the system as a whole supports every student to realise their full potential.

## Meeting Victoria's needs

The program aligns with the essential elements of the [Framework for Improving Student Outcomes 2.0](#) (FISO 2.0) and the [Victorian Teaching and Learning Model](#) (VTLM). FISO 2.0 and VTLM work together to ensure that classroom practices contribute to a school's core vision and strategies, and vice versa. Victorian government teachers are supported to develop strong, contemporary, evidence-based inclusive practices to improve learning for all students, including those with learning difficulties.

The program also contributes to meeting [Education State targets](#) by helping to build professional leadership, encourage excellence in teaching and learning, develop positive climates for learning and 'break the link' between disadvantage and student outcomes.



## 2. The course

The course develops teachers' understanding of learning difficulties and of interactions between different types of learning difficulties, including dyslexia and dyscalculia.

It aims to deepen teachers' disciplinary knowledge and pedagogical practice, so they have the skills, expertise, and confidence to meet the needs of all students, including those with learning difficulties, through contemporary, evidence-based strategies and fidelity of practice.

The course is delivered online by the university's Melbourne Graduate School of Education (MGSE). The department and the university have co-designed the course to address the Victorian context, and literacy and numeracy strategy.

Relevant for teachers at primary and secondary levels, the course combines existing and new resources to enhance how teachers support excellence and equity in literacy and numeracy outcomes for all students.

Those who complete the course will be well-prepared to help champion, plan and implement inclusive practices and support for students with learning difficulties.

They will also be primed to drive cultural change and help embed the attitudes and values needed for high-impact, contemporary inclusive teaching.

### Structure

The course is a 50-credit-point postgraduate online course comprising 4 compulsory subjects.<sup>1</sup> Studying on a part-time basis, recipients will be able to complete the award (the graduate certificate) in 12 to 24 months. (Table 1 lists the 4 subjects and their sequence.)

The IESU recommends recipients undertake 1 subject per semester and encourages recipients planning to study 2 subjects to call the IESU to discuss their circumstances.

**Table 1: Subjects**

| Subject code | Name  | Semester offered | Credit points |
|--------------|---|------------------|---------------|
| EDUC91191    | <a href="#">Learning Foundations</a>                  | Semester 2       | 12.5          |
| EDUC90195    | <a href="#">Learning Difficulties in Literacy</a>     | Semester 1       | 12.5          |
| EDUC90194    | <a href="#">Learning Difficulties in Numeracy</a>     | Semester 2       | 12.5          |
| EDUC91192    | <a href="#">Guiding Change for Inclusive Practice</a> | Semester 1       | 12.5          |

Recipients are encouraged to participate in the **Community of Practice (CoP)** offered as part of the course. This is a collaborative network for continuous learning that seeks to promote evidence-based inclusive practice in teaching and learning, and to foster collaborative networks within and between schools.

<sup>1</sup> Details are indicative and may be subject to change.

## Study workload

The course is offered on a part-time basis only, as it is aimed at postgraduate recipients who are also working.

The department and the university encourage applicants to carefully consider their capacity to complete the course before applying. This includes factoring in work and personal commitments.

### Time commitment

There are 4 synchronous online teaching days per subject. These are scheduled on weekends, either Saturday or Sunday, to allow recipients an opportunity to interact and learn together online.

A 75% attendance hurdle requirement exists for each subject. Where possible, any absence from classes should be discussed in advance with the relevant subject coordinators. Contact details will be available in the Canvas LMS subject site.

The university's [Courses, Subjects, Awards and Programs Policy](#) (Items 4.164-4.166) estimates that a 12.5-point subject in a 12-week standard semester requires a commitment of approximately 14 hours per week, or 170 hours in total over the semester.

This calculation includes online contact hours (teaching days) and self-directed study in the form of reading, workshop and class preparation, private study, and completing assessment tasks. Students may also be required to complete preparatory reading and other tasks before a subject formally starts. Visit the [university's course page](#) for more information.

Supplementary office hours (additional opportunities to engage with the subject content), is also offered in the evening across the semester.

### Important

No casual relief teacher (CRT) replacement is required for recipients as there is no placement (practicum) component to the course.

### School-based assessment tasks

In keeping with the course's theory-to-practice approach, school-based assessments allow recipients to demonstrate their learning through authentic performance tasks that draw from individual teaching contexts. Principals and school leaders will help recipients identify problems of practice and support them to develop possible solutions.

### Transition to postgraduate study

As part of its pre-semester orientation, the university runs a compulsory online Induction session each July to facilitate recipients making a successful transition to postgraduate study.

The session provides recipients with detailed information about accessing academic skills, library and study support, and connects them with staff from [student support](#) and [academic skills](#) units. It is also an opportunity for recipients to meet the academic teams who teach the course.

In February 2023, the IESU will also host a Q&A webinar with MGSE on [Arc \(Access. Resource. Collaborate\)](#) to provide prospective applicants with more information about the course and program.

## 3. Funding and support

### Tuition fees

The department is funding 75 graduate certificate course places each year from 2022 to 2025.

For successful applicants, the program covers tuition fees associated with an Australian full fee-paying place at the university.

**When applying, recipients should select the following option: ‘(domestic) full fee-paying place’.**

Commonwealth Supported Places are not available for this course.

### Principal support

Principals are engaged with a formal principal agreement. This outlines the department’s expectation that principals will support recipients to study and then use what they learn to maximise their impact at their school.

It is expected that participating principals will:

- identify a link between the recipient’s study and school priorities
- give recipients opportunities to lead their peers in practice change
- support the program’s school-based assessment requirements
- monitor recipients’ progress through regular engagement and discussion
- ensure recipients have the resources and materials needed to support implementation of their learning in classrooms.

#### System-wide change

This program complements other DI reform initiatives, including the Diverse Learners Hub, Inclusion Outreach Coaching, Inclusive Education Professional Learning, and the Master of Inclusive Education Program, all of which aim to facilitate widespread pedagogical and cultural change. As such, recipients and school leaders should be prepared to collaborate with peers, critically examine current practice, and adopt contemporary, evidence-based approaches to inclusive teaching and learning practice.

### Benefits for schools

Teachers can use their learning from the program to:

- meet the educational needs and improve the wellbeing of all students through contemporary, evidence-based teaching and learning interventions
- design, implement and evaluate pedagogical interventions to improve learning outcomes



- engage, collaborate with, and lead peers to design effective inclusive teaching and learning practices
- develop and apply strategic improvements at whole-school and system levels to support inclusive education targets and initiatives
- influence and champion inclusive education change through collaborative professional networks within and between schools.

In supporting program recipients, principals will:

- help to develop teachers with the skills and experience to support students with learning difficulties, including dyslexia and dyscalculia
- collaborate to strengthen whole-school inclusive education practices
- enhance their preparedness for DI reform and consolidate implementation of system initiatives.

## **Inclusive Classrooms professional learning program**

Prospective applicants and recipients of the program are encouraged to complete a relevant course from the Inclusive Classrooms professional learning program. This is preferred, but not mandatory.

Relevant modules include:

- [Supporting Students with Learning Difficulties including Dyslexia](#)
- [Supporting Students with Learning Difficulties including Dyscalculia](#)
- [Supporting Student Behaviour](#)
- [Inclusive Education Planning Professional Learning](#)

## 4. Criteria

### Eligibility

To be eligible to apply for Round 2 of the program, you must:

- be an Australian citizen or permanent resident
- be currently employed by the department (not directly by a school) in a part-time or full-time capacity and actively working in an eligible role (as a learning specialist, leading teacher or classroom teacher) in a Victorian government mainstream primary, secondary or support inclusion school or in a nominated DI workforce role
- work directly with students with learning difficulties, including dyslexia and dyscalculia or in a role that supports Disability Inclusion reform
- be a qualified practising teacher with full registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT)
- continue your employment with the department for the duration of the course and for 2 years after completing your course
- start your course in Semester 2, 2023
- be willing and able to complete your course within 2 years of enrolling
- not be the recipient of a departmental bursary for this course, or a prior recipient of the Master of Inclusive Education Program
- understand and adhere to the financial obligations of the program (see Obligations on pages 13-14).

### Important

Teachers working in non-government schools are not eligible for the program, nor are CRTs or those with other categories of VIT registration (provisional registration, non-practising registration or permission to teach).

To remain eligible for the program and whilst studying, recipients must be working directly with students with disability and additional learning needs, or in a role that supports Disability Inclusion reform. In addition, role changes including transitioning to CRT while studying means that recipients are ineligible to continue to be funded under the program..

As outlined in the eligibility requirements, recipients must be employed directly by the department and not by a school when applying for the program, while undertaking their study, and when meeting post-completion obligations for the program.

Recipients on expiring fixed term contracts must secure alternative employment immediately to remain eligible for the program, otherwise they will be required to repay funds associated with units engaged, whether passed or failed.

Applicants must also meet the criteria of the university. Find the University of Melbourne contact information on page 19.

## Exclusions

The program does not cover:

- additional expenses associated with completing the course (for example, textbooks, stationery, travel expenses, accommodation, and equipment)
- any re-enrolment costs incurred in relation to failed subjects
- any costs incurred from withdrawing from the course before completion
- any costs incurred by withdrawing from a subject after the census date (the last day you can withdraw from a subject without being financially liable)
- any subject costs associated with a recipient withdrawing from the course entirely, regardless of whether the recipient passed or failed completed subjects
- any course costs incurred after 2 years from the commencement of study.

## Prioritised applications

Eligible applications from school-based staff will be prioritised according to the groups listed in Table 2.

**Table 2: Priority groups**

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| <b>Priority 1</b> | <b>Teachers* in mainstream schools in which <u>no</u> employee has received a program placement in previous rounds</b><br>(*Learning specialists, leading teachers and classroom teachers working directly with students with learning difficulties, including dyslexia and dyscalculia) |
| <b>Priority 2</b> | <b>Principal-class* employees with a teaching load</b><br>(*Principals should contact the IESU to confirm their eligibility before applying)   |
| <b>Priority 3</b> | <b>Additional placements*</b><br>*Teachers from schools with an existing program recipient will only be considered for a placement after the other priority groups have been allocated   |

A selection panel reviews and assesses all applications against detailed assessment criteria. In all cases, funding is awarded at the department's discretion.

Program places will also be made available for the following applicant groups:

1. **Disability Inclusion workforce** from the department's Diverse Learners and Inclusion Outreach teams: eligible Education Improvement Leaders – Diverse Learners (EILs – DL) and Inclusion Outreach Coaches (IOCs) will be nominated by School Inclusive Practice Branch (SIPB) managers, with their consent. SIPB managers will apply selection criteria similar to that for other Round 2 applicants to nominate applicants.
2. **Teachers working in Supported Inclusion Schools (SIS):** 2 places per school will be available for applicants based in SIS settings. These schools aim to exemplify inclusive teaching practices, which aligns explicitly with the objectives of both the program and Disability Inclusion.

If the program is oversubscribed in Round 2, the department will seek to ensure that final placement allocations are proportionate across regions, primary and secondary settings and rural/metropolitan locations to the extent possible. This helps to ensure that as many schools as possible can benefit from a program-qualified teacher, and that the program has maximum system-wide impact.

### Applications from teachers at the same school

If multiple applications are received from teachers at a single school, the IESU may contact the applicants' principal for additional information about their suitability.

This information will be considered in addition to the application provided by the applicant. In all cases, funding is awarded at the department's discretion.

## University eligibility criteria

Program applicants should ensure they also meet the university's minimum entry requirement for the course.

This is either:

- a 4-year education degree, or equivalent

OR

- a 3-year undergraduate qualification and a 4-year level education qualification.

Applicants should contact the university for information about equivalent qualification.

## Obligations

Recipients must sign a sponsorship agreement that sets out their financial and other obligations, including the timeframe for completion and employment obligations.

### Deferral and leave of absence

**Recipients cannot defer their first semester of study.** They may request a leave of absence after they have successfully completed at least one subject in the first semester of the course.

Recipients must seek approval from the IESU for any leave of absence. If approved, they should then contact the university and submit a [Leave of Absence](#) request as per its guidelines.

Regardless of any approved periods of absence, recipients commencing in Semester 2, 2023 (Round 2) **must** successfully complete their graduate certificate before 30 June 2025.

This policy ensures that all recipients can become qualified as soon as possible to bring inclusive practices into the classroom. As a limited number of places is available, the department seeks committed applicants who will complete their studies promptly.

Recipients may undertake up to 2 subjects a semester (after taking into account their teaching workload and personal commitments).

Table 3 lists the earliest and latest completion dates for the 4 intake rounds. (Note that the course must be completed within a maximum of 4 semesters from commencement.)

**Table 3: Potential completion dates**

| Intake  | Course commencement     | Earliest completion     | Latest completion deadline |
|---------|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Round 2 | Semester 2, (July) 2023 | Semester 1, (June) 2024 | Semester 1, (June) 2025    |
| Round 3 | Semester 2, (July) 2024 | Semester 1, (June) 2025 | Semester 1, (June) 2026    |
| Round 4 | Semester 2, (July) 2025 | Semester 1, (June) 2026 | Semester 1, (June) 2027    |

### Failed subjects

The department will only fund 50 credit points of study. A recipient who fails or is otherwise required to repeat a subject will be responsible for any associated costs and fees. This includes, but is not limited to, the costs and fees for re-enrolment.

### Withdrawal

A recipient who withdraws from a subject post-census date will be liable for costs associated with re-enrolment in the subject.

A recipient who withdraws from the course entirely **must** contact the IESU immediately and will be liable for the reimbursement of costs associated with subjects already engaged (whether passed or failed). The request to withdraw will be managed on a case-by-case basis.

### **Important**

Withdrawing from a subject after the university census date means a 'fail' grade is recorded for that subject. In this event, the recipient must meet the expense of completing the course.

Recipients should pay close attention to university census dates each semester and ensure any subject withdrawals are processed before this date to avoid incurring failed subjects and personal expenses. Census dates can be found in the subject listings in the university handbook. The university will arrange for students to re-enrol in failed subjects at their own cost.

### **Selecting the right course for you and your school**

Switching courses, or withdrawing due to a course not meeting your expectations, is not supported by the program. Financial impacts for withdrawing will apply in this situation.

To ensure you choose the right course for you and your school, the IESU can facilitate discussions between recipients and universities.

### **Employment obligations**

Recipients must reimburse course fees as per the agreement if they:

- leave the department voluntarily within 2 years after completion of study

**OR**

- while studying, voluntarily move into a role that does not directly support students with learning difficulties.

### **Changing schools**

If a recipient changes schools or has a change of principal while completing their course, it is the recipient's responsibility to contact the IESU to obtain another 'Principal Agreement' form. This will need to be endorsed by the new principal confirming their support for the recipient's continued participation in the program.

### **Evaluation**

Recipients are required to provide feedback to help the department monitor and evaluate the effectiveness, quality and impact of the program.

The department, the university or a third-party evaluation team appointed by the department will request participation in evaluations or surveys. These requests will be timely and reasonable, and participation will not be onerous.



## 5. How to apply

Please apply to the IESU via SmartyGrants, an online grants application system. The application form is accessible via a link posted on the [program webpage](#).

Note that the IESU coordinates all aspects of the program in conjunction with the university, from assisting applicants with the application process through to guiding recipients on managing and completing their course.

**Application Round 2 opens at 9:00 am on Monday 30 January 2023.**

**Applications close at 11:59 pm on Tuesday 28 March 2023.**

### Application advice

Use the checklist below to make sure your application is complete. Each item is explained in further detail below.

#### Application checklist

Have you:

- ☐ Addressed all selection criteria in the application form?
- ☐ Provided well-considered responses to the selection criteria questions?
- ☐ Included a signed 'Endorsement Form' from your principal/manager?
- ☐ Submitted your application before 11:59 pm on Tuesday 28 March 2023?

Note that you will be able to save your application draft progressively in SmartyGrants prior to submitting however, you cannot change or make additions to your application once it is submitted.

Incomplete or late applications will not be considered.

### Selection criteria

Applicants will be assessed against the following selection criteria:

1. Experience addressing needs of students with learning difficulties
2. Commitment to improve practice
3. Capability to influence and foster change
4. Alignment of program with school priorities.

### Selection criteria questions

Your responses to application questions based on the selection criteria allows you to explain why you are applying for the program, and how you intend to use the knowledge and skills gained by completing the course. Well-considered responses are key to a strong application.

You will be asked to explain why you are applying and to:

- describe a recent experience you have had teaching a student/s with learning difficulties
- explain how professional learning has impacted your capability to address the needs of students
- explain a change to teaching and learning you have been involved in at the cohort or whole-school level
- describe how your participation in the program aligns with your school's priorities.

### Endorsement Form

You must also submit a signed Endorsement Form from your principal/manager, available in the [online application form](#). In signing this, your principal/manager will confirm that they endorse your suitability and acknowledge the expectations for supporting you during your study, should you be successful.

If accepted to the program, the expectations outlined in the Endorsement Form will be formalised in a Principal/Manager Agreement (this can be viewed in the Endorsement Form).

### Assessment

The IESU will conduct an initial check to confirm your application meets the eligibility criteria. A selection panel will then assess your application against the selection criteria listed above.

You may be contacted after the closing date to clarify or add information. Members of the selection panel may also phone you or your principal to discuss your application (**3-6 April 2023**).

All applicants will receive a SmartyGrants notification of the outcome by **Friday, 21 April 2023**.

Study for Semester 2 will commence on **Monday 24 July 2023**.

Figure 1 below is an overview of key dates in the application, assessment and selection phase.

**Figure 1: Key dates in Application Round 2**



### Unsuccessful applications

The IESU will notify any unsuccessful applicants at the end of the assessment process. Those seeking feedback on an unsuccessful application are encouraged to [contact the IESU](#).

## Academic credit

Academic credit acknowledges comparable study based on previous study or work experience. It is also known as Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), 'credit for prior learning' or 'advanced standing'.

Program recipients may be eligible for advanced standing through MGSE for up to 50% of the program based on:

- prior studies undertaken as part of a complete or incomplete university-level award course
- studies undertaken in non-award and non-accredited programs at the university (such as Melbourne MicroCerts in Learning Difficulties).

Applicants may be asked to provide further information and detail about the studies they have completed to help with this assessment.

Applicants interested in advanced standing should read the university's [information on advanced standing](#) and apply through the university. Advanced standing is awarded at the university's discretion.

### Course articulation with Master of Learning Intervention course

The course articulates with MGSE's Master of Learning Intervention (MLI), a VIT-endorsed special education degree (Stream A non-research pathway).

Recipients who complete the course are eligible for 50 points of credit towards the MLI award. On receiving this credit, graduates will need to complete another 50 credit points to be awarded the MLI degree.

## 6. Finalising your placement

This section explains how to finalise your placement should your application be successful.

### There are 3 key steps:

- Step 1: Read through your induction pack
- Step 2: Apply to enrol at the university
- Step 3: Return completed documents to the IESU

Your acceptance into the program is 'provisional' until all 3 steps have been completed.

### Step One: Read through your induction pack

Successful applicants will be emailed an induction information pack via SmartyGrants that includes:

- a letter of provisional acceptance
- a Recipient Sponsorship Agreement
- Principal Agreement
- A Recurring Expense Payment Benefit Declaration (including FAQs about tax implications and the Expense Payment Declaration)
- a copy of these Round 2 Graduate Certificate in Education (Learning Difficulties) Program guidelines.

Read through the induction pack carefully, noting which forms will need to be signed (by you and your principal).

### Step Two: Apply to the university

Once you've received and read your induction pack, you will need to apply for the course through the university (course code GC-EDLD). The university will then send you a formal Letter of Offer. You must then accept this offer and enrol in your subject/s, as per the instructions in the Letter of Offer. As part of your preparation for study, you should ensure you have set up your student email and checked your timetable, so you are aware of teaching days and assignment deadlines.

### Step Three: Return completed documents to the IESU

The following documents must be returned to the IESU by no later than close of business, **Friday, 2 June 2023**:

1. Your letter of offer from the university
2. Signed Recipient Sponsorship Agreement (sign on page 3 and return **all** pages)
3. Signed Principal Agreement (complete signatories section on page 2 and return **all** pages)
4. Signed Recurring Expense Payment Benefit Declaration (return page 1 only).

The IESU will confirm by email that it has received your documents and they will be stored in your SmartyGrants profile.

## Documentation required to support applying to the university

Successful applicants will need to submit [supporting documentation to the university](#) as part of the application process so you should check that you have ready access to this documentation. It can be time-consuming to obtain official documentation so the IESU advises starting this process as soon as you have submitted your application. Failure to upload relevant supporting documentation may significantly delay your application.

Supporting documentation includes:

- **Official academic transcripts:** if you have studied previously at university, you will need to provide transcripts for all attempted prior tertiary study. [My eEquals Australia](#) is a good place to start locating and accessing your previous transcripts.
- **Proof of identity documentation:** you may need to verify your identity if your name has changed since you last enrolled at university.

You will also need to provide your **Unique Student Identifier (USI)** to the university. Your USI is your lifelong education number. You can check via the [USI website](#) whether you already have a USI or whether you need to get one. You should also check what [kind of identification](#) you need to supply to create your USI.

## Re-enrolment

At the end of each semester, you will need to ensure you have re-enrolled for the next semester's subject/s.

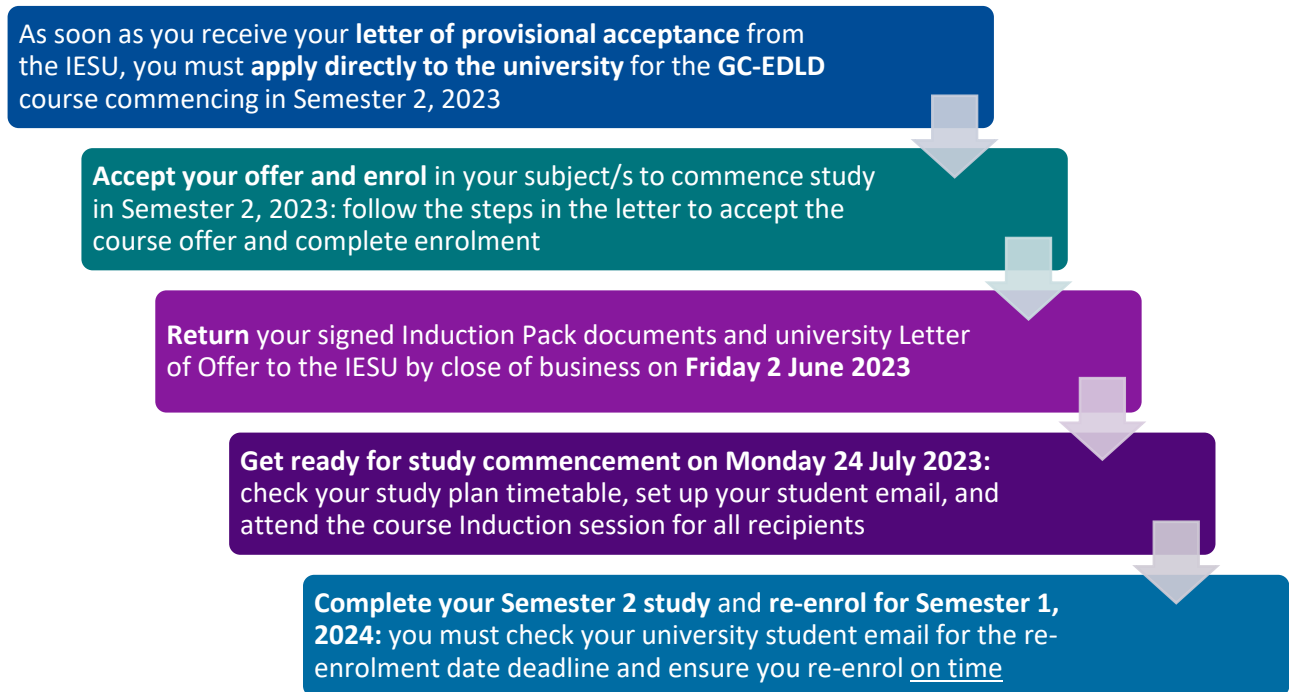
You should be aware that failure to re-enrol on time may result in the university withdrawing you from the course.

This can be avoided very simply by logging into your [Student Portal](#) at the end of each semester, checking your student email for the deadline, and ensuring you complete re-enrolment by the set date.

Figure 2 summarises the key actions and dates\* once you have been accepted into the program.

\*Dates are indicative and subject to final notification in early 2023.

**Figure 2: Summary of key actions for successful recipients**





## 7. Contact information

### Department of Education

| For help with:                        | Contact  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Applying to the program               | <b>Inclusive Education Scholarships Unit (IESU)</b><br>Phone: (03) 9084 8496<br>Email: <a href="mailto:Inclusive.Ed.GradCert.LearningDifficulties@education.vic.gov.au">Inclusive.Ed.GradCert.LearningDifficulties@education.vic.gov.au</a>  |
| Managing leave requests and approvals | <b>HR regional team</b><br>Phone: 1800 641 943 (select option for region) or email: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="mailto:schools.hr.nev@education.vic.gov.au">Schools HR – North Eastern Region</a> (schools.hr.nev@education.vic.gov.au)</li> <li>• <a href="mailto:schools.hr.nwv@education.vic.gov.au">Schools HR – North Western Region</a> (schools.hr.nwv@education.vic.gov.au)</li> <li>• <a href="mailto:schools.hr.sev@education.vic.gov.au">Schools HR – South Eastern Region</a> (schools.hr.sev@education.vic.gov.au)</li> <li>• <a href="mailto:schools.hr.swv@education.vic.gov.au">Schools HR – South Western Region</a> (schools.hr.swv@education.vic.gov.au)</li> </ul> |

### The University of Melbourne

| New recipients   | Contact  |
|--|--|
| For course and entry requirements, and the application process | Contact or phone <a href="tel:136352">STOP 1 phone 13 MELB (13 6352)</a><br>Access <a href="https://unimelb.edu.au/graduate/certificate-in-education-learning-difficulties/how-to-apply">Graduate Certificate in Education (Learning Difficulties) : How to apply - The University of Melbourne (unimelb.edu.au)</a> |
| Your student portal  | Access <a href="https://my.unimelb.edu.au/">https://my.unimelb.edu.au/</a>   |
| Your timetable (dates for teaching days)                       | Access <a href="https://unimelb.edu.au/create-your-class-timetable">Create your class timetable : The University of Melbourne (unimelb.edu.au)</a>   |
| Enrolled recipients  | Contact  |
| For general student administrative queries                     | Contact or phone <a href="tel:136352">STOP 1 phone 13 MELB (13 6352)</a><br>Ask FAQs: <a href="https://ask.unimelb.edu.au/">https://ask.unimelb.edu.au/</a>  |
| For help with study skills and resources                       | Email the Academic Skills Unit <a href="mailto:academic-skills@unimelb.edu.au">academic-skills@unimelb.edu.au</a><br>Visit the <a href="https://unimelb.edu.au/academic-skills">Academic Skills site</a>   |
| For academic queries   | Email the Course Coordinator, Dr Anne Bellert at <a href="mailto:mgse-gceld@unimelb.edu.au">mgse-gceld@unimelb.edu.au</a>  |

## Appendix A: Frequently asked questions

### The course

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

The course is only available for part-time study, which involves enrolling in one or 2 subjects per semester. The IESU and MGSE have stipulated a part-time online study mode so applicants can effectively balance their study, work and personal commitments.

Note that Round 2 recipients commencing study in Semester 2, 2023 **must** complete their course by June 2025.

#### What do the teaching days involve and do I have to attend all of them?

Each subject has 4 online teaching days scheduled throughout the semester on a Saturday or Sunday. You will be asked to complete self-directed online tasks and readings before and after the teaching day.

Each teaching day runs from around 9:00 am to 4:00 pm and is made up of lecture and seminar blocks. The teaching days are designed specifically to provide opportunities for recipients to interact with peers and apply their learning from the readings and online tasks leading up to the day. Recipients can obtain the dates for the teaching days from the timetable when enrolling to ensure they are available to attend and participate in all teaching days.

Note that all subjects in the course have a 75% attendance hurdle requirement set by MGSE. If you think you may not be able to meet an attendance hurdle, the IESU encourages you to contact your relevant Subject Coordinator(s) via email or phone, or the MGSE Student Wellbeing Officer at [mgse-studentsupport@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:mgse-studentsupport@unimelb.edu.au) to discuss your options.

#### Will the university provide support and reasonable study adjustments if I register a disability or condition that may impact my study?

Yes, the university is committed to providing support and adjustments for students who register they have a disability or condition that may impact their study – read more at [Student Equity and Disability Support \(unimelb.edu.au\)](https://www.unimelb.edu.au/student-equity-and-disability-support).

The IESU encourages recipients to explore the university's [Disability services : Current students : The University of Melbourne \(unimelb.edu.au\)](https://www.unimelb.edu.au/disability-services) webpages for more detail about the types of support available, including developing an Academic Adjustment Plan and setting up individual study adjustments.

#### Will the course align with resources I currently use in my teaching?

The program has been explicitly designed to align with the Victorian educational context and integrates the following key departmental frameworks, models and teaching practice principles:

- all dimensions and essential elements in the department's [FISO 2.0](#) supporting the central goals of student achievement, engagement and wellbeing, and integrated with the [VTLM](#)
- the 4 components of the VTLM: Vision for Learning, the Practice Principles for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, the Pedagogical Model and the [High Impact Teaching Strategies \(HITS\)](#)

- [the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](#), developed by the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership
- the department's [information guides and resources about learning difficulties](#)
- the [Mathematics Teaching Toolkit](#) and [Literacy Teaching Toolkit](#)

## Eligibility

### Can I take study leave while undertaking the course?

Applications for study leave, paid or unpaid, may be approved as required and in accordance with the department's [study leave policies](#). It is expected that a principal or manager will allow the recipient a reasonable number of paid study leave days over the 2-year study period, plus an additional day (or part there-of) to attend an award ceremony at the end of the course.

### Do I need to be a permanent resident or citizen to apply?

Yes, you must be an Australian citizen or permanent resident to be eligible for the program.

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

Yes, teachers in rural and regional areas are encouraged to apply.

Note that the course is delivered online, and that travel, accommodation, and equipment expenses are not covered by the program.

### Can I apply if I am currently on extended leave, such as long service leave or parental absence?

As you must be actively working in your role as a teacher when you apply, applications cannot be accepted from those on extended leave, such as long service leave or parental absence.

### If my principal or manager is not available, can I ask someone else to sign my Endorsement Form?

Any approved delegate acting in the principal/manager position at the time of application may sign the Endorsement Form, although approval by your principal/manager is preferable. Ensure your principal/manager is regularly updated about the application process.

## Principals

### Can I apply for the program if I am a principal class employee?

Yes, you may apply for a place in the program but you must contact the IESU to discuss your circumstances before beginning an application in SmartyGrants.

You must have a teaching load that relates directly to supporting students with learning difficulties, including dyslexia and dyscalculia, and access to a classroom.

Principal class eligibility is at the department's discretion, in accordance with the selection criteria and program objectives, and after allocation to priority groups has been exhausted.

**As a principal, can I use Disability Inclusion Tier 2 school-level funding to pay for a second teacher at my school to undertake the program?**

Participating in the program builds school capacity and capability to support inclusive education. The IESU seeks to award one program placement per school per application round. This helps to ensure that the program has the broadest possible system-wide impact.

Schools can also use Tier 2 school-level funding to cover teacher replacement if a program participant takes study leave to support their completion of the course and/or assessment requirements.

Schools can also use Tier 2 school-level funding to purchase an additional program placement or placements for teachers to strengthen the delivery of contemporary, evidence-based inclusive practice that supports all learners.

Schools should consider the needs of the student-with-disability population and their strategic planning for supporting and strengthening whole-school inclusion when deciding whether to use Tier 2 funding for these purposes.

## Appendix B: Privacy

The department values and is committed to protecting your privacy.

The department protects your personal information in accordance with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Vic) (PDP Act), the *Health Records Act 2001* (Vic) (the HR Act) and the *Public Records Act 1973* (Vic).

The IESU will need to collect personal information, which is a necessary function of running the program. This includes information collected via online forms through SmartyGrants, phone and email correspondence.

SmartyGrants is a hosted grants management application that allows the program to receive and manage applications. In order to effectively manage and monitor the provision of funding for the program, SmartyGrants will also collect your personal information. Please refer to SmartyGrants' [terms of service and privacy policy](#) for further information

For further information about the way the department collects and handles personal information, including access, correction, and complaints, go to:

[Privacy policy \(education.vic.gov.au\)](http://education.vic.gov.au/privacy-policy)

### Collection notice

The department collects your personal information through SmartyGrants and email correspondence to register you as an applicant for the program, contact you, if necessary, in relation to the program, and for reporting purposes.

We will not disclose your personal information without your consent, except where required to do so by law. If you do not wish to provide your personal information you will be unable to submit an application for the program.

You may contact us to discuss your application, to request access to your personal information, or for other concerns about the privacy of your personal information.

Access to systems, applications, and the information that we collect is limited to authorised staff, including the IESU.

The department will collect the academic outcomes for each recipient as they progress through the course to obtain their qualification. This information will be used to assess if further support from the educational institution is required for a scholarship recipient to successfully complete their course. The information may also be used by the department to produce publicly available reports that evaluate the program. However, all information will be de-identified and aggregated.

We may contact you to help us understand how the program has enhanced your teaching practice, including whether it has assisted you in improving student outcomes. This information will also help to inform future workforce policies and programs. Your information will also be used to administer the program, including to discuss financial arrangements.

As you gain new insights and skills by completing this qualification, you may be approached by the university, or the department to participate in communities of practice. However, participation is optional. You may be contacted to participate in an interview, but this is optional. You may also be approached to participate in a video interview, which would be published online. Again, participation is optional.

The information will be stored in SmartyGrants on Amazon Web Services in Australia.

## Updating professional and personal details

You have the right to seek access to, or correction of your own personal information. You can request access and correction of your information by contacting the IESU on (03) 9084 8496 or [Inclusive.Ed.GradCert.LearningDifficulties@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:Inclusive.Ed.GradCert.LearningDifficulties@education.vic.gov.au)

To ensure that our records are current and assist with the efficacy of the program, the department will also regularly contact sponsorship recipients to update their contact and employment details.