Application Guidelines for the Graduate Certificate in Education (Learning Difficulties) Program

Application Round 3 – course commencing Semester 2 2024

Contents

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) is a significant investment in individuals, schools, and the State system. The objective of the program is to deepen the disciplinary knowledge and pedagogical practice of teachers and regional workforces, so they have the skills, expertise, and confidence to meet the needs of students with learning difficulties.

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

These guidelines are for Round 3 of the program, commencing in Semester 2, 2024.

To be eligible for the program, you must be currently teaching in a Victorian government school or working in a regional role directly supporting students with learning difficulties (see Eligibility on page 11 for more information).

Applicants from diverse backgrounds, and with diverse orientations and abilities, are encouraged to apply.

> **Important**
>
> In return for the benefit of receiving sponsorship for postgraduate study, you must continue your employment at the Department of Education (the department) for 2 years after completion of the course and actively work in an eligible role (see Eligibility on page 11).
>
> In the event you become ineligible or breach your sponsorship obligations, you will be required to repay the course fees (or part of) immediately to the department (see the Debt Recovery policy on pages 14-15).

Background

The Victorian government introduced the program in 2022 to support schools to enhance their inclusive education practices.

In 2020-21, $1.6 billion of new Disability Inclusion (DI) reforms were introduced, to ensure every student gets the support they need to learn and thrive.

To build a culture of continuous learning for teachers and regional workforces, the DI Initiative is committed to delivering professional learning that is ongoing and sustainable using theory, modelling, practice and coaching to substantially increase the transfer of new knowledge into classroom practice.

Through participation in targeted postgraduate study, you can strengthen your skills and capability to better meet the educational needs and aspirations of students with disability and additional

learning needs and improve the way the system as a whole supports every student to realise their full potential.

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

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.

Inclusive Education Scholarships Unit

The program is administered by the Inclusive Education Scholarships Unit (the IESU) in the department. The IESU is located in the Inclusive Education Division, School Education Programs and Support, which coordinates the reforms sitting under the DI umbrella.

The IESU manages the start to end process of annual application rounds, and provides support to recipients during their study journey, including post completion. The IESU is required to regularly report on the program (which include recipients) to ensure objectives of the program are being met for system wide impact.

Definitions

- 'Applicant' – a teacher who is applying for a placement in the program
- 'Recipient/you' – a teacher whose application has been successful
- 'Placement' – your confirmed place within the program
- 'Course' – the Graduate Certificate in Education (Learning Difficulties).

Meeting Victoria's needs

The 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 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.

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 (the VTLM). FISO 2.0 and the VTLM work together to ensure that classroom practices contribute to a school's core vision and strategies, and vice versa.

Through participating in the initiative, recipients 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. Course and tuition fees

The course is delivered online by the university's Faculty of Education. The department and the university have co-designed the course to address the Victorian educational context, and literacy and numeracy strategy.

The course will develop your understanding of learning difficulties and of interactions between different types of learning difficulties, including dyslexia and dyscalculia. Relevant for those in school-based and regional roles, the course combines existing and new resources to enhance how Victorian educators support excellence and equity in literacy and numeracy outcomes for all students.

Course structure

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

Table 1: Subjects

Subject code	Subject name	Semester offered	Credit points
EDUC91191	[Learning Foundations](#)	Semester 2	12.5
EDUC90195	[Learning Difficulties in Literacy](#)	Semester 1	12.5
EDUC90194	[Learning Difficulties in Numeracy](#)	Semester 2	12.5
EDUC91192 (Capstone subject)	[Guiding Change for Inclusive Practice](#)	Semester 1	12.5

Important

This course has **no** practicum/placement requirements so no casual relief teacher (CRT) replacement is necessary to cover recipients for this purpose.

You are encouraged to participate in the **Community of Practice (CoP)** offered as part of the course as it becomes available to you. 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.

School-based assessment tasks

In keeping with the course's theory-to-practice approach, school-based assessments allow you to demonstrate your learning through authentic performance tasks that draw on individual teaching

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[1] Details are indicative and may be subject to change.

contexts. Your principal and school leaders can help you identify problems of practice at your school and support developing viable solutions.

Tuition fees

The department has made a significant financial investment in capability-building for schools and regional workforces to build the skills and knowledge of inclusive education to better support the needs of all students. Financial obligations for successful applicants are clearly outlined on the program webpage, in the guidelines and the application form.

If you are unable to meet the program employment and financial obligations, you will be required to repay to the department the course fees associated with the course/subjects taken, regardless of whether you have passed or failed (see the Debt Recovery policy on pages 14-15).

The cost of this course for those commencing in Semester 2, 2024 is **$12,320 ($3,080 per subject**). Please take note of the cost associated with this course as you will be required to repay the course fees if you are unable to adhere to the program obligations.

Study workload and time commitment

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

The department and the university strongly recommend taking one subject per semester to ensure a healthy work-life balance and successful completion of the course. It may be possible to enrol in up to 2 subjects' semester (after taking into account your teaching workload and personal commitments) but be aware that you must first discuss this with the IESU and the graduate certificate course coordinator at the university.

The department and the university encourage you to carefully consider your capacity to complete the course before applying. You should assess your work and personal commitments and plan realistically how these will fit in with your additional study workload.

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 is generally 170 hours, which requires a commitment of approximately 14 hours per week over the semester.

This calculation includes your online contact hours (teaching days) and self-directed study in the form of reading, workshop and class preparation, private study, and completing assessment tasks. You 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.

You should be aware that a 75% attendance hurdle requirement for each subject offered through the university. There are 4 synchronous online teaching days per subject, scheduled on weekends, either Saturday or Sunday from 9:00 am-4:00 pm. These provide you an opportunity to interact and learn online with other recipients. You are expected to plan ahead in order to attend **all** teaching days but where an absence is unavoidable, you should discuss this in advance with the relevant subject coordinators. Contact details will be available in the Canvas LMS subject site.

Supplementary office hours are also offered in the evening across the semester, and you are encouraged to take up these additional opportunities to engage with teaching teams about subject content and preparing your assessment tasks.

Supporting your transition to postgraduate study

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

The session will provide you with detailed information about accessing academic skills, library and study support, and connects you with staff from student support and academic skills units. It is also an opportunity for you to meet the academic teams who teach the course.

The IESU will also host its own induction webinar on Arc (Access. Resource. Collaborate) for new provisionally accepted recipients. This webinar will provide more information about study workload and unpack the important obligations associated with taking up an inclusive education scholarship through the department. The webinar date will be shared in the Letter of Provisional Acceptance issued in April 2024.

Pathway into the Master of Learning Intervention course (Stream A)

The course has been designed to articulate with university's Master of Learning Intervention (Stream A), a VIT-endorsed special education degree offered through the Master of Inclusive Education Program.

After completing the graduate certificate award, you will be eligible for 50 credit points of advanced standing towards the Learning Difficulties specialisation (Stream A non-research pathway) in the Master of Learning Intervention (MLI) course. On receiving this recognition of prior learning, you will need to complete another 50 credit points to be awarded the MLI degree.

The department will continue to fund placements in the Master of Inclusive Education program for recipients who have completed the graduate certificate award and wish to apply for an additional MLI scholarship.

You can decide whether to continue into the MLI without a break, or pause your study. If you do not wish to continue into the MLI course, you will simply retain your graduate certificate award.

Please note that scholarships funded by the Department of Education are for the MLI Stream A pathway only. Stream B is not currently funded by the department.

3. Support and expectations

Principal or manager support

The program aims to deepen disciplinary knowledge and pedagogical practice of teachers and regional workforces, so they have the skills, expertise, and confidence to meet the needs of all students, through contemporary, evidence-based strategies and fidelity of practice.

Once you complete the program, you will be well-prepared to help champion, plan and implement inclusive practices and support students with diverse learning needs.

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

If you are successful in receiving a scholarship, the support agreement that your principal or manager signed as part of your application will become active for the duration of your study and beyond. This outlines the department's expectation that participating principals or managers will support recipients to study and then use what they learn to maximise their impact at their school.

It is expected that your principal or manager will:

- incorporate teachers study plans in school Annual Implementation Plans (AIPs)

- support recipients to include their study in their Professional Development Plan (PDP)

- identify a link between your study and school priorities

- give you opportunities to lead your peers in practice change

- support the program's school-based assessment requirements

- monitor your progress through regular engagement and discussion

- ensure you have the resources and materials needed to support implementation of your learning in your classroom or teaching environment.

- be aware of the Debt Recovery policy requiring recipients to stay employed by the department and in a role that supports students with learning difficulties for 2 years post completion of study. You will be required to repay the funds associated with your study (course) if you fail to meet your employment obligations (see the Debt Recovery policy on pages 14-15).

Benefits for schools and regional workforces

It is expected that you will use your 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 your 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 building collaborative professional networks within and between schools.

In supporting you as a program recipient, your principal or manager will:

- assist you to develop the skills and experience to support students with learning difficulties, including dyslexia and dyscalculia

- collaborate to strengthen whole-school inclusive education practices

- enhance school preparedness for DI reform and consolidate implementation of system-wide initiatives.

4. Criteria

Eligibility

To be eligible to apply for Round 3 of the program, you must:

- be an Australian citizen or permanent resident, or eligible to work indefinitely in Australia

- be either:

  - **a qualified practising teacher with full registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT)** and actively working in an eligible role in a Victorian government school supporting students with learning difficulties, including dyslexia and dyscalculia

  OR

  - **currently employed and actively working as a regional workforce employee*** in a role that supports DI reform, supporting students with learning difficulties, and/or providing intervention supports to create a more inclusive learning environment in schools.

    > ***Important**
    >
    > As the course has a high degree of educational pedagogy and practice in its content and assessment tasks, regional workforce applicants **must** also meet the eligibility requirements for having an approved initial teacher education (ITE) qualification from an accredited tertiary institution, and full VIT registration.

- be currently employed by the department (not directly by a school) in a part-time or full-time capacity

- acknowledge and agree that you must continue your employment with the department for the duration of the course and for 2 years post completion of your course. If this cannot be met, financial implications and the Debt Recovery policy will apply (see the Debt Recovery policy on pages 14-15).

- start your course in Semester 2, 2024 (unless you are already engaged in the course and are transferring to the program. The department will cover the cost from Semester 2, 2024 onwards)

- be willing and able to complete your course within 2 years of enrolling

- not be a prior recipient of the Master of Inclusive Education Program

- understand and adhere to the financial obligations of the program (see **Error! Reference source not found.** on pages 15-17)

- meet the criteria of the university (find the University of Melbourne contact information on page 24).

Important

- **Not eligible for the program:** teachers working in non-government schools, CRTs, Education Support staff or those with other categories of VIT registration (provisional registration, non-practising registration or permission to teach).

- **To remain eligible for the program** while studying, you must be working directly with students with learning difficulties or diverse learning needs, or in a role that supports DI reform. In addition, changes to your role may render you ineligible to continue with the program. You will no longer be eligible if you transition to CRT or Education Support while studying or within 2 years post completion **and you will be required to repay the course fees (or part of) to the department** (see the Debt Recovery policy on pages 14-15).

- 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.

1. Employment

You must repay course fees as per the agreement if you:

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

OR

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

2. Failed subjects

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

3. Enrolment

At the end of each semester, you will need to ensure you have enrolled for the next semester subject/s. You should be aware that failure to enrol on time may result in the university withdrawing you from the course.

4. Withdrawal

If you withdraw from a subject of study post-census date, you will be liable to repay costs associated with re-enrolment in the subject.

You **must** contact the IESU immediately if you withdraw from the course entirely. On withdrawing, you will be liable for the repayment of costs associated with subjects already engaged (whether passed or failed). All requests 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, you must meet the expense of completing the course.

You 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 each individual university handbook.

The university will arrange for you to re-enrol in any failed subjects at your own cost.

5. Making the best study decision for you and your school

Changing courses due to a course not meeting your expectations, is not supported by the program. Financial impacts and the Debt Recovery policy will apply.

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

General program obligations

6. Deferral and leave of absence

You cannot defer your first semester study. You may request a leave of absence after you have successfully completed one subject of study in the first semester of the course.

You must seek approval from the IESU for any intermission, deferral or leave of absence. If approved, you can take leave of absence for a **maximum of 12 months** (unless exceptional circumstances apply, such as illness, natural disaster, or other circumstances beyond your control). If approved, you should then contact the university for specific guidelines regarding intermission, deferral or leave of absence.

However, you are encouraged to take no more than 6 months' intermission, as this will provide a 'buffer' should you fail any subject of study (and need to re-take that subject).

Regardless of any approved periods of absence, recipients commencing in Semester 2, 2024 (Round 3) are expected to complete their graduate certificate before 30 June 2026. With approval, this date may be extended by the department. This policy ensures that all recipients can become qualified as soon as possible to help bring inclusive practices into the classroom.

Table 2 lists the earliest and latest completion dates for the upcoming intake rounds. (Note that you are expected to complete within a maximum of 4 semesters from commencement.)

Table 2: Potential completion dates

Intake	Course commencement	Earliest completion	Latest completion deadline
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

7. Changes to your professional circumstances

As a government-funded program, the IESU actively monitors and reports on recipients, including graduates, to evaluate the effectiveness, quality, return on investment and impact for system-wide change.

If you change school, role, or have a change of principal or manager while studying or post-completion of your course, it is your responsibility to contact the IESU to obtain another Support Agreement form for endorsement by your principal or manager.

The Support Agreement emphasises the importance for schools and regions to prioritise improvement in provision for students with disability and additional learning needs and expand the culture of inclusion in their school communities and regional networks.

8.   Disability Inclusion reform activities

As a recipient or graduate, you are required to provide feedback to help the department monitor and evaluate the effectiveness, quality and impact of the program.

The department, university or a third-party evaluation team appointed by the department will request your participation in evaluations or surveys. These requests will be timely and reasonable, and participation will not be onerous. The department may also contact you to discuss how the course has enhanced your teaching practice, including how you have used your course learning and role to strengthen inclusive practices.

The department may also contact you to participate in communities of practice or written/video case studies.

9.   Post completion

As a government-funded program, the IESU is required to continue actively monitoring and reporting on graduates to evaluate the effectiveness, quality, return on investment and impact for system-wide change.

As such, graduates are required to inform the IESU of any changes to their employment details (such as location and role information) until you cease employment with the department.

The IESU may contact you to confirm your employment details based on information noted in EduPay. Please note, if you do not inform the IESU of your new details, this can impact future applicants as the program is not able to report on up-to-date data.

5. How to apply

Please apply to the IESU using the online form hosted by SmartyGrants, an online grants application system. The application form will be live and accessible from 9:00 am on Monday 5 February 2024 via a link posted on the program webpage.

Applications open at 9:00 am on Monday, 5 February 2024
Applications close at 11:59 pm on Sunday, 17 March 2024

Application advice

Note that the IESU coordinates all aspects of the program in conjunction with the university, from assisting you with the application process through to supporting you to complete the course.

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 Support Agreement from your principal or manager?
☐ Submitted your application before 11:59 pm on Sunday 17 March?

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 you submit it.

The IESU will not consider incomplete or late applications.

To avoid disappointment, please contact the IESU to ensure your school is eligible for a scholarship in Round 3 as your school may already have a recipient from the program.

Selection criteria

Your application 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.

Your responses to the Selection Criteria 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 writing 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.

Important

You will need to provide your completed selection criteria responses to your principal or manager **before** submitting your application.

Support Agreement

You will be required to submit a signed Support Agreement from your principal or manager, available in the application form.

In signing this, your principal or manager will confirm that they endorse your suitability and acknowledge the expectations for supporting you during your study, should you be successful.

Endorsement from your principal or manager is a prerequisite for teachers and regional workforce employees to be considered for sponsorship.

Principals applying for sponsorship require the endorsement of their regional leadership.

Application assessment

The IESU will conduct an initial check to confirm your application meets the eligibility criteria.

The IESU will then assess your application against the selection criteria listed above (**18-26 March 2024**). Members of the selection panel may phone you, your principal or your manager to discuss your application.

You may also be contacted after the closing date to clarify information.

Application Outcomes

All applicants will receive a SmartyGrants notification of the application outcome by **Friday, 19 April 2024**.

Successful applicants will be contacted by a member of the IESU week beginning 22 April 2024 to confirm they have received their induction pack and understand employment and financial obligations.

The IESU will notify successful and unsuccessful applicants as part of this outcomes process. Those seeking feedback on unsuccessful applications are encouraged to contact the IESU.

Unsuccessful applications

The IESU will notify unsuccessful applicants at the end of the assessment process. For unsuccessful applicants seeking further feedback, please contact the IESU.

To avoid disappointment, please contact the IESU to ensure your school is eligible for a scholarship in Round 3 as your school may already have a recipient or graduate from the program.

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

Figure 1: Key dates in Application Round 3

Round 3 opens at **9:00 am** on **MONDAY 5 FEBRUARY 2024** → Round 3 closes at **11:59 pm** on **SUNDAY 17 MARCH** → Applications assessed: **MONDAY 18 MARCH** to **TUESDAY 26 MARCH** → Applicants notified of outcomes on **FRIDAY 19 APRIL** → Successful recipients commence study in **SEMESTER 2, 2024**

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 the university
> Step 3: Return completed documents to the IESU

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

Step 1: Read through your induction pack

If your application is successful, you will be emailed an induction information pack via SmartyGrants that includes:

- a letter of provisional acceptance

- a Sponsorship Agreement

- a Recurring Expense Fringe Benefits Declaration (including FAQs about tax implications and the Expense Payment Declaration)

- a copy of these Round 3 Graduate Certificate in Education (Learning Difficulties) program guidelines.

You should read the induction pack documents carefully, noting which forms will need to be signed and returned.

Step 2: Apply to the university

Once you have received and read your induction pack, you will need to apply for the course through the university (course code GC-EDLD).

1. Once your application has been approved by the relevant university, you will receive a formal Letter of Offer; at this point, please accept and enrol in your first subject.

2. Enrol into the minimum number of subjects required for the course.

3. 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.

Documentation required to support applying to the university

If successful, you 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 eQuals 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.

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 the university 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).

If you are interested in academic credit, you should read the university's information on advanced standing and submit an application. As part of this process, you may be asked to provide further information and detail about the studies you have completed to help the university assess your application. Advanced standing is awarded at the university's discretion.

Step 3: Return completed documents to the IESU

The following documents must be returned to the IESU by no later than close of business, **Monday, 3 June 2024:**

1. Signed Sponsorship Agreement (sign on page 3 and return **all** pages)

2. Signed Recurring Expense Payment Fringe Benefit Declaration (return page 1 only).

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

Figure 2 summarises the key actions and dates* once you have accepted your offer of a placement in the program.

Figure 2: Summary of key actions for successful recipients

APPLY directly to the university as soon as you receive your **letter of provisional acceptance** from the IESU

Course code: **GC-EDLD** (commencing Semester 2, 2024)

1. ACCEPT your offer by following the steps in the letter

2. ENROL in your subject/s for Semester 2, 2024

RETURN your signed Induction Pack documents and university Letter of Offer to the IESU by close of business on **Monday 3 June**

Get ready for study commencing on Monday 22 July 2024: check your study plan timetable, set up your student email, and attend the July Induction session for all recipients

COMPLETE your Semester 2 study and **re-enrol for Semester 1, 2025:** you must check your university student email for the re-enrolment date deadline and ensure you re-enrol on time

*Dates are indicative and many be subject to change.

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.

7. Contact information

Department of Education

For help with:	Contact
Applying to the program	**The IESU** Phone: (03) 9084 8496 Email: inclusive.ed.scholarships@education.vic.gov.au
Managing leave requests and approvals	**HR regional teams** Phone: 1800 641 943 (select option for region) or email: • Schools HR – NEVR (schools.hr.nev@education.vic.gov.au) • Schools HR – NWVR (schools.hr.nwv@education.vic.gov.au) • Schools HR – SEVR (schools.hr.sev@education.vic.gov.au) • Schools HR – SWVR (schools.hr.swv@education.vic.gov.au)

The University of Melbourne | Faculty of Education

For new recipients:	Contact/information
Course and entry requirements, and the application process	Contact or phone STOP 1 phone 13 MELB (13 6352) Access Graduate Certificate in Education (Learning Difficulties) : How to apply - The University of Melbourne (unimelb.edu.au)
Your student portal	Access https://my.unimelb.edu.au/
Your timetable (dates for teaching days)	Access Create your class timetable : The University of Melbourne (unimelb.edu.au)

For enrolled recipients:	Contact/information
General student administrative queries	Contact or phone STOP 1 phone 13 MELB (13 6352) Ask FAQs: https://ask.unimelb.edu.au/ Access your student portal: https://my.unimelb.edu.au/
Help with study skills	Email the Academic Skills Unit at academic-skills@unimelb.edu.au For resources and guides, visit the Academic Skills Unit site
Academic queries and issues	Email the Course Coordinator, Dr Anne Bellert: mgse-gceld@unimelb.edu.au

Appendix A: Frequently asked questions

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, or eligible to work indefinitely in Australia to be eligible for the program. New Zealand citizens are eligible to apply.

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

Yes, applicants on a fixed-term contract and/or who work part-time can apply. Please be aware that you must secure continuous eligible employment if your fixed term contract is expiring otherwise you will be required to repay funds associated with subjects engaged, whether passed or failed.

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

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.

Can I apply for extended leave, such as long service leave or parental absence and continue my studies?

Yes, as long as you are still employed by department.

Can I change schools while I am studying?

You may change employment from one school to another during the application process and post receiving a scholarship, as long as you remain employed by the department.

In this case, you are required to seek the endorsement of the principal of the new school to which you have been appointed. Contact the IESU for the relevant paperwork.

The course

Can I take a Leave of Absence (deferral) from study once I've passed the first semester?

Note that Round 3 recipients commencing study in Semester 2, 2024 are expected to complete their course by June 2026.

Please contact the IESU as soon as possible to discuss any plans to take a Leave of Absence from study so that you are aware of the impact on your agreement and course sequence. The IESU will extend the end date on your Sponsorship Agreement as required if your Leave of

What are the teaching days 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. All subjects in the course have a 75% attendance hurdle requirement set by the university and it is expected that you attend all teaching days. To ensure you can attend, you should obtain the dates for the teaching days from the timetable when enrolling.

Each teaching day runs from around 9:00 am to approximately 4:00 pm and is made up of lecture and seminar blocks. You will be asked to complete self-directed online tasks and readings before and after the teaching day.

As the course is run online, the teaching days are designed specifically to provide opportunities for you to actively interact with your peers and apply your learning and insights from the readings and online tasks leading up to each teaching day.

Financial

How does the Debt Recovery process work if I am required to repay course fees to the department?

- You will receive an invoice for the total amount owing.

- You can negotiate a periodic payment plan with the department or you can pay the invoice in full.

It is important to factor in how you would manage repayment of fees should you breach the program obligations. The course cost is provided on page 7.

What happens if I receive an invoice from the university?

The department and the university have agreed that invoices for course fees will be sent to the IESU once the census date has passed. If you receive an invoice from the university, please forward it to the IESU.

Support

Will the university support me if I register that I have a disability or condition that may impact my study?

Yes, the university is committed to providing support and reasonable study adjustments for all students who register they have a disability or a condition that may impact their study – read more at Student Equity and Disability Support (unimelb.edu.au).

The IESU encourages all recipients to explore the university's Disability services : Current students : The University of Melbourne (unimelb.edu.au) 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:

- Multi-Tiered Systems of Support and the [School-wide Positive Behaviour Support Framework](#)

- the department's [information guides and resources about learning difficulties](#)

- [Literacy Teaching Toolkit](#) and [Mathematics Teaching Toolkit](#)

- [the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](#) developed by the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL).

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

Yes, as a principal class employee, you are encouraged to apply for a placement in the program.

As a principal, how can I use Disability Inclusion Tier 2 school-level funding to support program uptake at my school?

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)

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.scholarships@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.

Please note: As the initiative is government-funded, the IESU actively monitors recipients and graduates to evaluate the effectiveness, quality, return on investment and impact of the program for system-wide change.

You are required to inform the department of any changes relating to your employment (location and role information). If you do not inform the IESU of your new school details, this can impact future applicants as the program is not reporting on up-to-date data.