# VET MATERIALS FEES

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

When updates are required, these will be uploaded in the first week of each month.

Last Update: 02/05/2022

## General information

From the start of the 2022 school year, the Department will reimburse VET materials fees to government schools to address the cost barrier for families.

VET materials are items and activities required for the provision of a VET program. Items are necessarily consumed or transformed by students as part of training or assessment. Activities must be undertaken for, and contribute to, training and assessment. These items must align with the inclusions and exclusions document.

VET materials reimbursement funding will ensure government schools can support VET selection based on a student’s strengths and interests, without the barrier of financial constraints.

### How do I apply and what is the process?

The application form for VET materials reimbursement is available here: [Application Form for Reimbursement of VET Materials Fees (Excel)](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edrms/website/PAL/vet-materials-reimbursement-application-form.xlsm). The form has also been distributed to the Jobs, Skills and Pathways Managers who are available should schools need advice or support in completing the form. The application process is summarised here: [VET materials fee application and reimbursement process](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edrms/website/PAL/vet-materials-fee-application-reimbursement-process.pptx). When the application is approved, an invoice for VET materials, that have been purchased and paid for, can be submitted. In order to be reimbursed the cost of materials fees, schools must follow the process for reimbursement outlined in the [Schools Targeted Funding Governance Portal](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edrms/keyprocess/stfg/Pages/default.aspx).

### When can I apply?

Applications can be submitted throughout the year, but it is recommended to submit an application once your school has a firm idea of the cost of materials.

### Are all school sectors eligible for VET materials reimbursement?

VET materials fee reimbursement is only available to Victorian Government schools.

### Can I submit more than one application in a school year?

Yes, applications can be made throughout the year. Note, that each successful application will trigger another Initiative Agreement between the school and DET. Where possible, single applications including multiple materials fees requests are deemed more efficient to avoid multiple Initiative Agreements. When the application is approved, an invoice for VET materials that have been purchased and paid for, can be submitted against the Initiative Agreement.

### Is there a cap on materials fees?

A set amount of funding has been secured. Applications from schools will be reviewed to compare costing information from previous years and against current market rates. Excessive claims will be reviewed and possibly capped.

### What level of VET certificate is eligible for reimbursement of materials fees?

Eligible materials in Certificate levels II to IV that contribute to the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) and the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) will be reimbursed. The application form is pre-populated with certificates, accredited courses, and skill sets. Note that eligible materials associated with the Construction Industry Card (CIC), that is the actual 'white card' issued by WorkSafe, and First Aid, and Responsible Service of Alcohol will be reimbursed. Refer to**:** [VET material funding inclusion and exclusions table](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/PAL/vet-materials-fees-inclusions-exclusions.docx).

### Which qualifications and courses are not included in the VET materials funding?

Reimbursement of VET materials fees is not available for enrolment in the following:

* Certificate I qualifications
* Certificates in General Education for Adults
* Generalist programs such as Certificate II in EAL (Employment) and Certificate II in EAL (Access)
* Diploma level qualifications. Schools wishing to provide Diplomas may fund this delivery from the core SRP allocation
* Standalone short courses

A student who is enrolled in a school, either full-time or part-time and enrolled independently of their school in a VET program at a TAFE or Registered Training Organisation (RTO), is not eligible to have their VET materials fees reimbursed. Traineeships undertaken by students outside of school, such as in a part-time employment arrangement, are not claimable.

### Are materials fees for School Based Apprentices and Trainees (SBATs) and the Head Start program eligible?

Yes, materials fees for SBATs and Head Start participants are claimable as long as the program is part of the senior secondary certificate (VCE or VCAL) and a training plan is in place that is authorised and signed by the school. For schools to claim reimbursement of VET materials fees for a student, who would normally be invoiced by the RTO, the school should request the RTO to invoice the school directly for the cost of the associated materials (that the student does not retain), rather than invoice the student. The school will pay the materials fees to the RTO and then follow the process for reimbursement of these fees from the Department.

### Can the VET material reimbursement be accessed by disadvantaged students?

Yes, the reimbursement of VET materials is for all government secondary school students undertaking eligible VET qualifications at Certificate II – IV level within their VCE or VCAL including SBATs and Head Start participants.

### Should schools ensure students have free access to all items on a one-to-one basis?

Schools must ensure students have free access to all items, activities and services that are used by the school to deliver the Curriculum. Schools are not required to ensure students have free access to items on a one-to-one basis, however, schools must determine a reasonable level of resourcing to ensure students have access to the relevant items for the duration they are required. Schools also need to consider the most appropriate arrangements to facilitate student access to required items.

### Does free instruction apply to VET in the VCE and VCAL?

Free instruction applies to VET studied within the senior secondary certificates (VCE and VCAL) as it is part of the standard curriculum program. Schools cannot charge for costs that could be considered supports, resources, administration, or school facilities required to deliver instruction in the standard curriculum.

### Is it mandatory for RTOs to itemise their materials fees?

The regulator has advised that the National Standards require RTOs to be transparent in what items are included in the fees prior to enrolment occurring. Refer to Attachment 3 for guidance on the level of detail required from the RTOs when invoicing. A table of materials fees, from RMIT, has been sourced from the Internet and provides clear descriptions of materials fees: [2021 materials and excursion fees](https://www.rmit.edu.au/content/dam/rmit/documents/staff-site/servicesandtools/finance/2021-materials-fees-web.pdf).

1. **What VET materials fees can RTOs charge?**

Schools should be aware that RTOs are free to set fees. Prior to engaging an RTO, schools are encouraged to negotiate which services/materials are included in the RTO fee structure to ensure they are only paying for services/materials students use. For example, student amenities fees are not VET materials. Schools should ask RTOs to clearly identify what amenities are included as part of this fee as school students may not be using the RTO’s library, student services or cafeteria, and therefore this fee may not be applicable.

1. **How do I communicate with our RTO(s) about obtaining an itemised list and costings for VET materials?**

Schools should be checking and communicating with RTO(s) about the fees being charged, prior to entering into the contract. The Department has provided a [template letter](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edrms/website/PAL/vet-materials-fees-template-email-rtos%20.docx) that schools may use, or adapt, to send to the RTO(s) requesting an itemised invoice for VET materials, so that the school can claim reimbursement for these costs. Attachment 1 shows the detail required from RTOs and the level of detail that should be included in the application form.

### What mandatory equipment and resources should an RTO provide?

[Training.gov.au](https://training.gov.au/) (also known as TGA) is the authoritative source of information on nationally recognised training components and provides details of all RTOs and which qualifications they offer. Companion guides for many VET qualifications, often list mandatory equipment and resources that the RTO must provide to deliver a particular VET qualification. Also, each unit of competency includes a list of equipment/learning supports required for assessment. Generally, these items form part of the RTO’s enrolment fee. That is why qualifications with significant equipment and learning supports are more expensive than others. For example, the cost of ovens for hospitality, lathes for furniture making, and cameras for photography would be reflected in a higher enrolment fee.

1. **Are specialised facilities required for training and assessment eligible for materials fee reimbursement?**

Facilities required for instructing in the standard curriculum program are not eligible for VET materials funding as these facilities (including the hire of specialised facilities) are part of free instruction.

### What can be included in materials fees?

Materials fees are defined as items and activities required for the provision of a course for training or assessment. Items are necessarily consumed or transformed by students as part of training or assessment. Activities must be undertaken for and contribute to training and assessment. These items must align with the inclusions and exclusions document. Refer to**:** [VET material funding inclusion and exclusions table](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/PAL/vet-materials-fees-inclusions-exclusions.docx).

### Will a class set of materials be reimbursed?

Class sets will be reimbursed for government school RTOs only and must remain the property of the government school RTO.

### Are facilities and items such as cameras, musical instruments, and surfboards eligible for VET materials reimbursement?

Facilities, including the items listed above, are not eligible for VET materials reimbursement. The RTO must provide facilities, whether physical or virtual, and equipment that would be required in an operational workplace relevant to the VET qualification it has on its scope. These associated costs should be reflected in the RTO’s enrolment fee. Higher cost VET qualifications attract higher enrolment fees, and lower cost VET qualifications requiring standard facilities and minimal equipment such as in Business Studies qualifications would attract lower enrolment fees.

### When is Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) claimable?

PPE is claimable if:

* PPE is provided as a class set and retained by the government school RTO, e.g. safety glasses and aprons.
* PPE cannot be reused or shared, for practicality and hygiene purposes, e.g. masks and hairnets.

### When is Personal Protective Equipment not claimable?

PPE worn and retained by the student e.g. safety boots, may be purchased by the student, in which case the school should not claim reimbursement for the PPE item.

### Are parents permitted to purchase essential learning materials for their child?

Parents may choose to purchase additional items or items beyond those supplied by the school. For example, if a parent chooses to purchase a more expensive brand or additional items intended to be kept by the student. If a parent does not provide or purchase their child’s own educational items, the school must ensure the student has free access to what is needed at school to access the school’s delivery of the Curriculum.

### Under what circumstances can contributions be requested from parents?

Where the student is retaining possession of an item, a contribution may be sought from parents.

### Are excursions/camps eligible for VET materials reimbursement?

Since the release of the VET material fees initiative, there have been many concerns from schools regarding the exclusion of excursions/camps as VET materials. After consideration of the feedback provided and the timing of the release of this initiative, the Department has agreed to implement a transitional arrangement for the 2022 school calendar year. This means that schools will be reimbursed for costs associated with an excursion/camp that is an essential component of a VET program and without which completion of the program is compromised. During this transitional period, schools may include essential excursions/camps in their application for VET material fees reimbursement. Excursion/camp costs that will be reimbursed include entry fees, transport hire/petrol costs, and accommodation. Please note that staffing and catering costs are not reimbursable.

### What evidence is required to claim VET materials reimbursement?

The school must provide an itemised invoice from the RTO or supplier, shown as paid, and signed to certify receipt of goods. The invoice/s must be within or equal to the total amount approved in the application process. The school invoice amount must be exclusive of GST. Refer to the [GST Exclusive](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edrms/keyprocess/stfg/Lists/FAQs%20school/DispForm.aspx?ID=9&ContentTypeId=0x01000097083BA8B990499B7BEFA302D9A0F2), from the STFGPs Frequently Asked Questions, for an explanation. A sample supplier invoice is shown in Attachment 4.

### What happens if the RTO or supplier invoice includes items which are not VET materials?

The school must strikethrough items on the RTO/supplier invoice that cannot be claimed as VET materials. The total of the school invoice should match the total of the amended RTO/supplier invoice.

### What happens if the invoice from a supplier covers multiple schools?

If an invoice from a supplier covers materials for students from multiple schools, the government school RTO should apportion the invoice amount, and issue separate invoices to the participating schools. The government school RTO should invoice DET for only the proportion of the invoice applicable to its students and provide the original supplier invoice.

### How will claims be audited?

Claims are primarily verified against the invoice. A secondary check can also be made against VET VASS enrolments, and apprenticeship/traineeship registration on Epsilon, and comparison with previous year costs. School finances are also subject to DET audit requirements.

### Do schools need to refund the VET materials reimbursed if a student withdraws?

If the cost of VET materials has been incurred a refund is not required.

1. **Can schools claim for VET materials reimbursement for Year 10 students undertaking VET courses?**

Schools will be able to claim for VET materials reimbursement for Year 10 students who are studying VET within their senior secondary certificate.

### Can a school be reimbursed if a student enrols late or in a mid-year intake?

Applications can be made throughout the year. Note, that each successful application will trigger another Initiative Agreement between the school and DET.

### For students undertaking VET programs outside of their home school, which school applies for VET materials reimbursement?

If students attend another school to undertake a VET program, as part of their VET/VCAL certificate, only the ‘home’ school should apply for reimbursement of eligible VET materials fees. The home school is the school which holds the student’s enrolment. The ‘host’ school delivering the VET program, must not apply for VET materials funding for students undertaking a VET program at their school where the ‘home’ enrolment is at another school. A government school RTO can claim only for its own students.

### Previously, our school has included a knife kit as a material that students retain and pay for, as part of our Kitchen Operations classes. At what point do parents decide if they want their child to keep the kit?

This information should be made clear in the information provided to students at the time they are required to make their VET selections. For example, in the VET handbook, so that they are aware of any items that they may want to purchase and retain for their personal use.

1. **Will VET materials fees reimbursement affect the VET funding currently available?**

VET materials fees reimbursement is additional to the funding provided in the core SRP, targeted VET funding, and TAFE supplement.

### If a student does not want to buy an item of clothing or PPE, that is a requirement to ensure they are dressed safely and appropriately for the activity, role, and workplace expectation of a VET program, such as safety boots, do schools have to supply them?

If the item is a requirement and the student does not purchase the item, the school must ensure that the student has access to the item for the duration of the course. This does not mean the student should retain the item upon completion. Schools are only required to provide the student with access to an item during the time it is needed for learning.

1. **What is Targeted VET funding and why does it not include Certificate I and general education programs?**

Targeted VET funding is provided to government schools in recognition of the additional costs associated with VET provision which are not able to be resourced through the regular school funding envelope. Targeted VET funding is provided to encourage provision and participation in VET programs that are deemed to be at an equivalent level to the senior secondary certificate, and of specific occupational or vocational relevance. Certificate I courses are introductory and preparatory and are not considered equivalent to a senior secondary certificate. There are also a small range of general education programs that are not vocationally specific, but designed mainly to assist students with basic literacy, numeracy, and communication skills. Schools should include these skills as part of general education programs, and if offered and delivered, these should be resourced through the core SRP component.

1. **As a government school RTO, what happens if we order and pay for materials this year in preparation for courses that will commence next year?**

Eligible materials costs required for the delivery of VET programs next year will be reimbursed even if they were incurred in the preceding year.

1. **Can a government school RTO that has purchased equipment to run a VET program, claim reimbursement for maintenance of the equipment?**

Maintenance of equipment and facilities is not a VET material, and costs for maintenance will not be reimbursed. The purchase and maintenance of mandatory equipment should be factored into the enrolment fee for the relevant certificate.

### If an item is ineligible for reimbursement, can parents be asked to pay?

Schools cannot pass any VET program costs to parents. Schools, however, can seek a general voluntary contribution (Curriculum or Other Contribution) from parents. This cannot be tied to any individual student's participation in a VET program, and no student can be disadvantaged if their parent chooses not to contribute.

### How will a school know if it will receive the full amount for which they are seeking reimbursement?

Schools must submit an application form specifying the VET materials for reimbursement including the cost of these materials. If the application is approved, this will be the maximum amount the school will be reimbursed. If there is an issue with the application the school will be contacted, and an amended application form may need to be submitted. Refer to Attachment 2 for a sample of an application form that would be approved.

### What is the time frame for reimbursement once an application has been submitted?

Once the application has been approved, and a reimbursement request, has been submitted through the STFGP, DET will review the request within seven days and process payment to the school within 30 days of receiving the valid reimbursement request.

1. **What action can be taken by schools to dispute/escalate a claim?**

If schools are unhappy with the outcome of advice from the VET Unit, an email should be sent directly to Carly Kling, Project Director at [carly.kling@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:carly.kling@education.vic.gov.au) Carly will work with the VET team and liaise with Scott Widmer, Assistant Deputy Secretary, regarding the outcome.

### Is there a list of inclusions/exclusions for reimbursement of VET materials?

The relevant information is located here: [VET Materials Fees – Inclusions and exclusions](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/PAL/vet-materials-fees-inclusions-exclusions.docx).

1. **We are having difficulty adding the principal’s signature to the application form. What do we do in this situation?**

Please refer to Attachment 5 at the end of this document for instructions on how to insert an electronic signature. Once the signature has been inserted do not save the document again. The document, with the signature will automatically save when the signature has been inserted and the file is closed. Please note, do not save the file as a pdf document for submission. A valid application form will need to remain as a .xlsm file.

1. **As a host school, we are required to invoice other government schools for the VET materials costs for their students. Due to the character restrictions in CASES21 we are unable to provide the level of detail required in the invoice to ensure home schools will be reimbursed. How can we overcome this issue?**

The host school should provide all home schools with a CASES21 invoice showing the total amount being invoiced for VET materials fees for their students. Together with this invoice, they can supply home schools with an additional document that includes an itemised list of the VET materials and the associated costs which must be signed by the Principal of the host school.

In this situation, to claim for reimbursement through the STFGP, the home school must submit their own CASES21 invoice for the amount they wish to claim. Supporting evidence must also be submitted which includes the host school invoice, stating the amount invoiced and paid, and the additional itemised and Principal signed document from the host school.

## Related policies

* [Parent Payments: Guidance](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/parent-payment/guidance)
* [Financial Help for Families: Policy](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/financial-help-families/policy)
* [Personal Devices – Access Policy](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/personal-devices/policy)
* [Student Dress Code: Policy](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/student-dress-code/policy)
* [Interpreting and Translation Services: Policy](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/interpreting-and-translation-services/policy)
* [Finance Manual — Financial Management for Schools Policy](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/finance-manual/policy)
* [Students with Disability Policy](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/students-disability/policy)

## Relevant legislation

* *Education Training and Reform Act 2006*
* Schools must act compatibly with and consider rights under the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities* *Act 2006* when making decisions about payments.

**ATTACHMENT 1: Itemised VET materials and fees, per student.**

***This table is an example of the detail required, from the RTO, for a successful VET materials reimbursement application.***

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Certificate** | **Year of Program** | **Total Cost per student (ex GST)** | **Breakdown of materials** | | | | | | | | | | | | **School not to be reimbursed if student purchases and retains** |
| **Consumables (Itemised)** | **Unit Cost  (ex GST)** | **Cons**  **Cost (ex GST)** | **PPE (itemised)** | **Unit Cost  (ex GST)** | **PPE**  **Cost (ex GST)** | **Resources (itemised)** | **Unit Cost (ex GST)** | **Res's**  **Cost  (ex GST)** | **Excursion (itemised)** | **Unit cost  (ex GST)** | **Exc’n**  **Cost (ex GST)** |
| 22338VIC - Certificate II in Building and Construction Pre-apprenticeship | 1 | $75 | Nails | $18 | $50 | nil | $ - | $ - | Workbook | $25 | $25 | nil | $ - | $ - | Safety boots, ear plugs, safety glasses, toolkit, stationery, required clothing |  |
| Glue | $5 |  |
| Screws | $12 |  |
| Sandpaper | $15 |  |
| SIT20416 - Certificate II in Kitchen Operations | 2 | $60 | nil | $ - | $ - | Disposable gloves | $5 | $10 | Workbook | $30 | $50 | nil | $ - | $ - | Safety boots, knife kit |  |
| Hair nets | $5 | Printing | $20 |  |
| BSB20120 - Certificate II in Workplace Skills | 1 | $50 | nil | $ - | $ - | nil | $ - | $ - | Workbook | $30 | $50 | nil | $ - | $ - | nil |  |
| Handouts | $20 |  |
| HLT33015 - Certificate III in Allied Health Assistance | 1 | $50 | nil | $ - | $ - | nil | $ - | $ - | Workbook | $30 | $50 | nil | $ - | $ - | Polo shirt |  |
| Photocopying | $20 |  |
| CHC30121 - Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care | 2 | $80 | Craft materials (non-reusable) | $30 | $30 | nil | $ - | $ - | Work placement booklet | $35 | $50 | nil | $ - | $ - | nil |  |
| Printing | $15 |  |
| SHB30416 - Certificate III in Hairdressing | 1 | $320 | Hair colouring products | $230 | $310 | Disposable gloves | $5 | $10 | nil | $ - | $ - | nil | $ - | $ - | Hairdressing kit |  |
| Foil | $80 | Masks | $5 |  |
| SIS30115 - Certificate III in Sport and Recreation | 1 | $140 | nil | $ - | $ - | nil | $ - | $ - | Handouts | $20 | $80 | Fitness centre excursions |  | $60 | Polo shirt, sport clothing and footwear |  |
| Workbook | $60 | Bus Hire | $20 |  |
| Entry fees | $40 |  |

***Please note, the VET materials and costs listed are examples only and do not represent the actual materials and fees for these certificate***

**ATTACHMENT 2: Sample application form**

Graphical user interface, text, application, email

Description automatically generated***This is an example of the Materials Details tab of an application form that would be approved.***

**ATTACHMENT 3:**

# Guidelines for RTO or Supplier VET Materials Invoices

***These guidelines describe the detail required on an invoice from an RTO or supplier, which must be submitted by schools as evidence for a Reimbursement Request.***

1. All invoices for a Reimbursement Request must be submitted through the Schools Targeted Funding Governance Portal against the relevant approved Initiative Agreement.
2. An RTO or supplier invoice should contain at least the following information:

* Date of invoice
* School supplied (the customer)
* Supplier details
* Item
* Quantity
* Cost per item
* Total Cost (ex. GST)

**Example: Certificate II in Building and Construction (Pre-Apprenticeship)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Item** | **Quantity** | **Cost per item** | **Total Cost (ex. GST)** |
| Safety glasses | 20 | $12 | $240 |
| Nails Pack | 700 Pack x 10 | $29 | $290 |
| Screws | 500 Pack x 10 | $18 | $180 |
| Adhesive | 320g x 80 | $4 | $320 |
|  |  |  | **$1 030** |

**ATTACHMENT 4: Sample Supplier Invoice**

Diagram

Description automatically generated

**ATTACHMENT 5:**

**Instructions for inserting the principal’s signature in the vet materials fees reimbursement application form**

1. Save the Excel spreadsheet before populating it. Include the school in the file name.
2. Text

   Description automatically generated with low confidenceOnce all the data has been entered, press the button but to ensure the form is ready for the principal’s signature.
3. Adding the signature should be the last thing that is done.

**To add the signature:**

* Double click where the signature is supposed to go.
* The following pop-up box should appear.

Graphical user interface, text, application, email

Description automatically generated

* Click ‘Select Image’ and insert the signature.
* Click ‘Sign’
* The following pop-up box will appear. Select Yes.

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* The pop-up box below will appear.

Graphical user interface, text, application

Description automatically generated

* Click OK
* Once the signature has been added simply close the file.
* Do not click on ‘Save’ again. If you click on ‘Save’ or ‘Save As’, a message will appear stating that to do will remove the signature.
* To save the file in another location use the Copy and Paste function instead of Save As.

**Trouble shooting**

* If a pop-up box with the message “Get a Digital ID” appears, the set-up of your school’s computer may be preventing the signature from being added. Try the process above on a non-school computer to see if the problem is resolved. If the problem is not resolved contact the Vocational Education team at [VET.secondary@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:VET.secondary@education.vic.gov.au) for further advice.

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