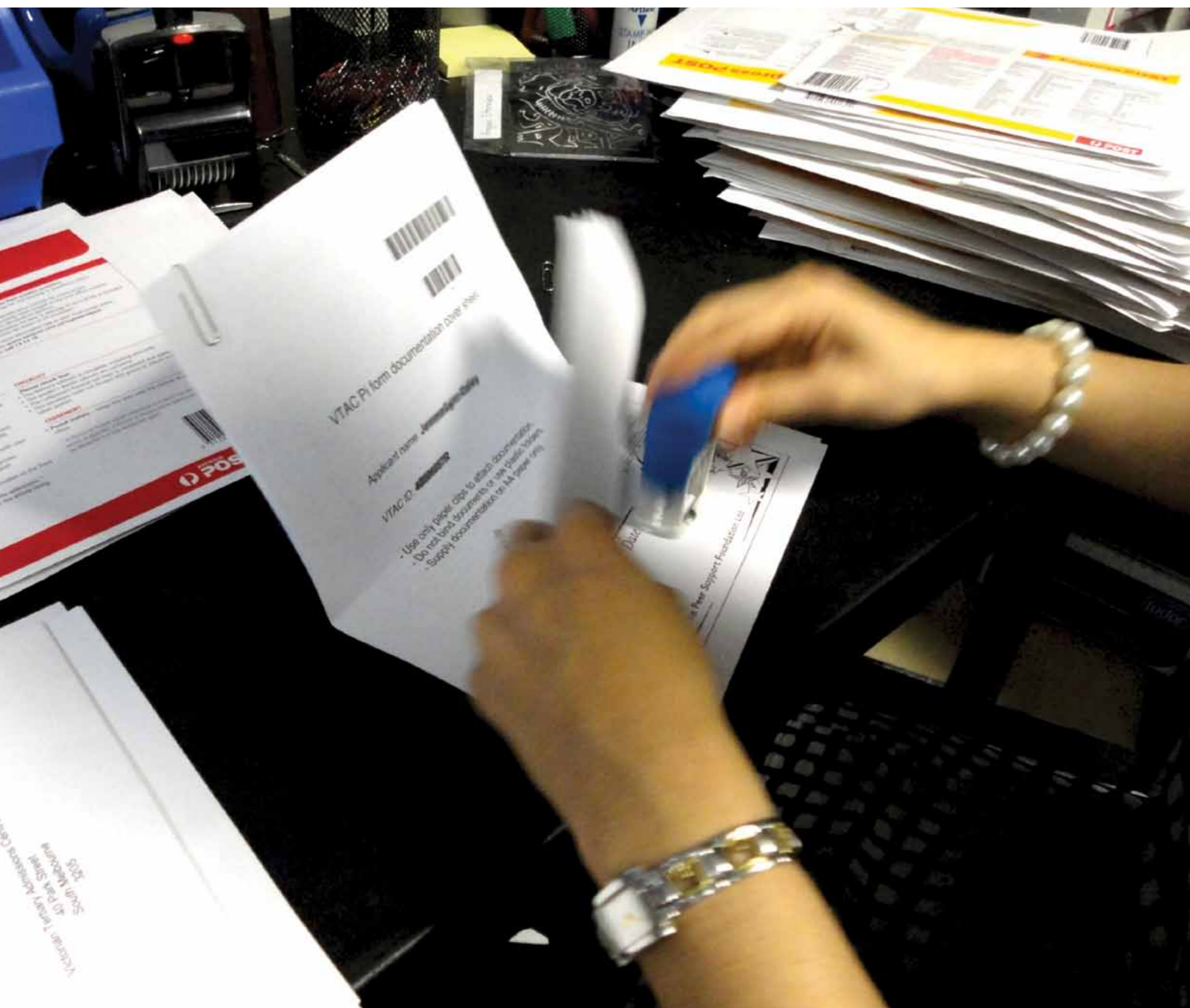




**Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC)
Annual Report 2011-2012**



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About this report

This report gives an overview of the operations of the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre for the period 1 August 2011 to 31 July 2012.

Foreword from the Chair



I am pleased to present this report on behalf of VTAC.

The last year saw further progress on the strategic reforms and initiatives to provide increased flexibility for institutions and a greater range of services for applicants.

The Board of Trustees reviewed VTAC's operating model as an unincorporated association based on cooperation and collaboration between institutions and sectors and supported the continuation of its current structure and governance arrangements.

VTAC introduced a third form of participation for private providers as Associate Institutions. These institutions publish their courses with VTAC but process their own applications and offers. Thirteen Associate Institutions were approved for 2012 of which eight were VTAC institutions in 2011.

For 2013 selection, VTAC is trialing a model for institutions to accept and process direct applications for VTAC courses. The model is for courses which require more applicants than are available from the VTAC pool. The model is based on protocols set and agreed by all participating institutions to provide parity of treatment of direct applicants and VTAC applicants.

I would like to thank the members of the VTAC Management Committee for their leadership and commitment. On behalf of the Management Committee I also extend my thanks to those who work for and with VTAC to ensure its success.

VTAC is looking forward the future challenges and opportunities presented by the changing higher education landscape and we continue to strive to provide high quality admission and selection services to its tertiary institutions and to applicants seeking entry to courses in our institutions.

Ian Marshman

Chair, VTAC Management Committee

Director's message

VTAC has had another busy year of growth in nearly all areas of our operations. In 2011 we processed over 87,000 applications for tertiary courses and issued around 75,000 offers for over 2000 courses, including mid-year entry.

This year we reviewed our participation arrangements for institutions, reviewed and updated our system rules and procedures for institutional selection requirements and continued to calibrate our IT systems to provide more flexible products and services for applicants and institutions.

VTAC is recognised nationally for its information provision program with links to all Victorian secondary schools, community groups and counselling services. This has further been broadened by the introduction of a social media campaign. In our first year, information posted on our Facebook page reached approximately 5,000 readers.

VTAC success is based on the dedication of its staff and their strong relationships with our institutions and I would like to thank you all for your continued effort and support.

Elaine Wenn
VTAC Director



Achievements in 2011-2012



Enhanced services for applicants

The past year saw increased sharing of information between applications and the extension of self-service functions including changes to admissions tests bookings and online access to download confirmation letters and related documents.

Streamlined supplementary offer system

Selection officers were provided greater flexibility and control with the ability to generate their own supplementary worklists containing all applicants who listed a course at their institution and did not receive any offers from November to January.

Increased access to offers

Three additional undergraduate offer rounds were run after round 2. International students were eligible for all offer rounds including irregular offers. Unpaid applicants were able to pay after Round 1 offers to apply for irregular offers and all eligible applicants were able to apply for an irregular offer in a graduate-entry teaching course.

Communications

Successful implementation of first year of social media including Facebook, Twitter and two VTAC blogs. Research into usability of the VTAC website resulting in new design and information architecture and a shift in focus from print to online.

Vision, Mission and Guiding Principles



Vision

To be recognised as an innovative, high quality, flexible, responsive and service-oriented organisation committed to best practice processes at all levels.

Mission

VTAC's mission is to provide high quality admission and selection services to Victorian tertiary institutions and to applicants seeking entry to their courses. In doing so, VTAC aims to promote and encourage participation in tertiary education.

VTAC supports institutional diversity, flexibility and autonomy in selection through the provision of a cooperative and open selection system. The system is supported by range of services benchmarked against Australian and international best practice.

VTAC supports applicants for tertiary courses by providing them with accurate and relevant information about courses and access to efficient and equitable application and selection procedures.

Guiding Principles

In pursuit of its vision, VTAC is guided by a set of principles that support and promote:

- institutional diversity
- institutional autonomy for selection
- a tertiary selection framework based on fairness, transparency, explicitness and ease of comprehension for applicants
- comprehensive information and application services to assist applicants applying for courses and to receive offers without unnecessary delay.

About VTAC

VTAC is an unincorporated agency established by its member institutions to co-ordinate the tertiary selection process in Victoria, that is, to receive applications and make offers on behalf of institutions.

VTAC's functions are set out in its Constitution, with its primary functions being to act as an agent for its Members to:

- Approve, on behalf of Victorian Vice-Chancellors' Committee and Skills Victoria any major changes in policy or administration of selection processes;
- Devise selection policies for the joint selection system and establish and administer admission procedures for participating institutions without derogation from the rights of each institution to determine for itself the principles for the selection of new students or the prescription of prerequisites for courses;
- Publicise and disseminate information about the admissions procedures of VTAC's institutions;
- Promote, enhance and facilitate interest in tertiary education in Victoria;
- Promote and sustain a co-operative and open selection system in Victoria;
- Be mindful of the respective interests of the sectors and the members of VTAC;
- Collaborate with other educational organisations;
- Undertake other educational, promotional or commercial activities necessary, expedient or advantageous to carrying out its functions.

Institutions have established an agreed set of rules and guidelines to ensure effective operation of a system that is based on co-operation and goodwill. VTAC plays a coordinating and facilitating role to achieve agreed outcomes and maintain system coherence through consensus and negotiation.

VTAC is not a selection authority. It does not determine the selection criteria used by institutions and does not decide who will receive an offer. All decisions about which applicants are offered a place are made by the course selection authorities at institutions.

After selection decisions have been made by the course authorities at institutions, VTAC sends offer letters to successful applicants on the institutions' behalf.

VTAC also:

- calculates and issues the ATAR for VCE students;
- co-ordinates sittings for Special Tertiary Admissions Test (STAT) and Australian Law Schools Entrance Test (ALSET);
- provides telephone and online information and enquiry services for applicants;
- provides a range of published information, information sessions and advisory services for applicants, secondary schools and the general public.

As the second largest tertiary admission centre in Australia, in terms of the size of its operations (with NSW being the largest), VTAC services the largest number of institutions and offers the largest number of courses. Of the 58 member institutions there are 11 universities, 18 TAFE providers and 29 private colleges. At 30 June 2011 VTAC had 2086 courses available.



Participating institutions

VTAC has two levels of participation: VTAC institutions and Associate institutions. VTAC institutions are those universities, institutes and private colleges that participate in the application, selection and offer processes for courses, special entry access schemes and scholarships.

VTAC institutions

The following list of institutions participated in the 2011/12 application, selection and offer service:

- Academy of Interactive Entertainment
- Australian Academy of Design
- Australian Catholic University
- Australian College of Applied Psychology
- Australian College of Sports Therapy
- Australian Maritime College
- Bendigo TAFE
- Blue Mountains International Hotel Management School
- Box Hill Institute
- Carrick Institute of Education
- Charles Sturt University
- Chisholm Institute
- Deakin University
- East Gippsland TAFE
- Elly Lukas Beauty Therapy College
- Footscray City Films
- GippsTAFE – Central Gippsland Institute of TAFE
- Gordon (The)
- Goulburn Ovens Institute of TAFE
- Grenadi School of Design
- Holmes Institute
- Holmesglen
- Kangan Institute
- La Trobe University
- Max Therapy Institute
- Melbourne Institute of Business and Technology
- Melbourne Institute of Technology
- Monash College
- Monash University
- Moorabbin Flying Services
- Navitas College of Public Safety
- Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE
- Oceania Polytechnic Institute of Education
- Ozford College of Business
- Photographic Imaging College – PIC
- Photography Studies College
- Qantm College
- RMIT University
- SAE Institute
- South West Institute of TAFE
- Southern School of Natural Therapies
- Sunraysia Institute of TAFE
- Swinburne University of Technology
- University of Ballarat
- University of Melbourne (The)
- Victoria University
- Victorian Institute of Technology
- William Angliss Institute of TAFE
- Wodonga Institute of TAFE

Associate institutions 2011/12

Associate institutions list their courses with VTAC, but self manage their own application and offer process. Associate institutions will begin operation in July 2012.

In the first year nine smaller participating institutions shifted their participation level across to the Associate level for 2012/13. Four new institutions signed on.

These institutions will be listing their courses with VTAC and managing their own application and offer processes:

- Academia International
- Australian College of the Arts (NEW)
- Australian Guild of Music Education
- Australian Institute of Fitness
- Billy Blue College of Design (NEW)
- Endeavour College of Natural Health
- Gurkhas Institute of Technology (NEW)
- Health Skills Australia (NEW)
- International College of Hotel Management
- JMC Academy
- LaTrobe College of Art and Design
- Sage Massage
- Stott's Colleges

Governance

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- **Chair**; Chair of the Victorian Vice Chancellors Committee (VVCC)
- **Vice-Chancellor nominated by VVCC**, as having VTAC liaison responsibility
- Senior TAFE representative nominated by Skills Victoria, as having VTAC liaison responsibility
- Chair of the Management Committee; appointed annually by members of the Board of Trustees.
- Deputy Chair of the Management Committee; appointed annually by members of the Board of Trustees.

THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

- **Chair**; appointed annually by the Board of Trustees.
- **Deputy Chair**; appointed annually by the Board of Trustees.
- **One (1) person nominated by each University** for a period of two years, who may be re-nominated
- **Three (3) persons nominated by Skills Victoria** for a period of two years, who may be re-nominated
- **One (1) person nominated by Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET)**, as long as ACPET remains the representative body of the majority of participating independent tertiary colleges
- **Chair of the Scaling Committee**, if not already nominated

THE EXECUTIVE OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

- Chair of the Management Committee
- Deputy Chair of the Management Committee
- Chair of the Scaling Committee
- VTAC Director

Committee members

Board of Trustees

- **CHAIR OF THE VVCC**
Professor Peter Dawkins
Vice-Chancellor, Victoria University
CHAIR
- **CHAIR, VTAC MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**
Mr Ian Marshman
Senior Vice Principal, The University of Melbourne
- **DEPUTY CHAIR, VTAC MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**
Mr John Maddock
Chief Executive Officer, Box Hill Institute
- **VVCC MEMBER RESPONSIBLE FOR VTAC LIAISON**
Professor John Dewar
Vice-Chancellor and President, La Trobe University
- **SKILLS VICTORIA – DIIRD**
Ms Kym Peake
Deputy Secretary, Skills Victoria

VTAC Management Committee

- **AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY**
Ms Joy Magee
- **BOX HILL INSTITUTE**
Mr John Maddock
DEPUTY CHAIR
- **CHISHOLM INSTITUTE**
Mr Peter Harrison
- **DEAKIN UNIVERSITY**
Ms Robin Buckham
- **LA TROBE UNIVERSITY**
Professor John Rosenberg
- **MONASH UNIVERSITY**
Professor Merran Evans
- **RMIT UNIVERSITY**
Dr Maddy McMaster

- **SWINBURNE UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY**
Mr Tony Reed
- **UNIVERSITY OF BALLARAT**
Professor Todd Walker
- **UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE (THE)**
Mr Ian Marshman
CHAIR
- **VICTORIA UNIVERSITY**
Ms Lyn Bayly
- **WILLIAM ANGLISS INSTITUTE OF TAFE**
Mr Nicholas Hunt
- **AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR PRIVATE EDUCATION AND TRAINING (ACPET)**
Ms Sandra Boyd
- **CHAIR OF THE SCALING COMMITTEE**
Professor Sue Willis

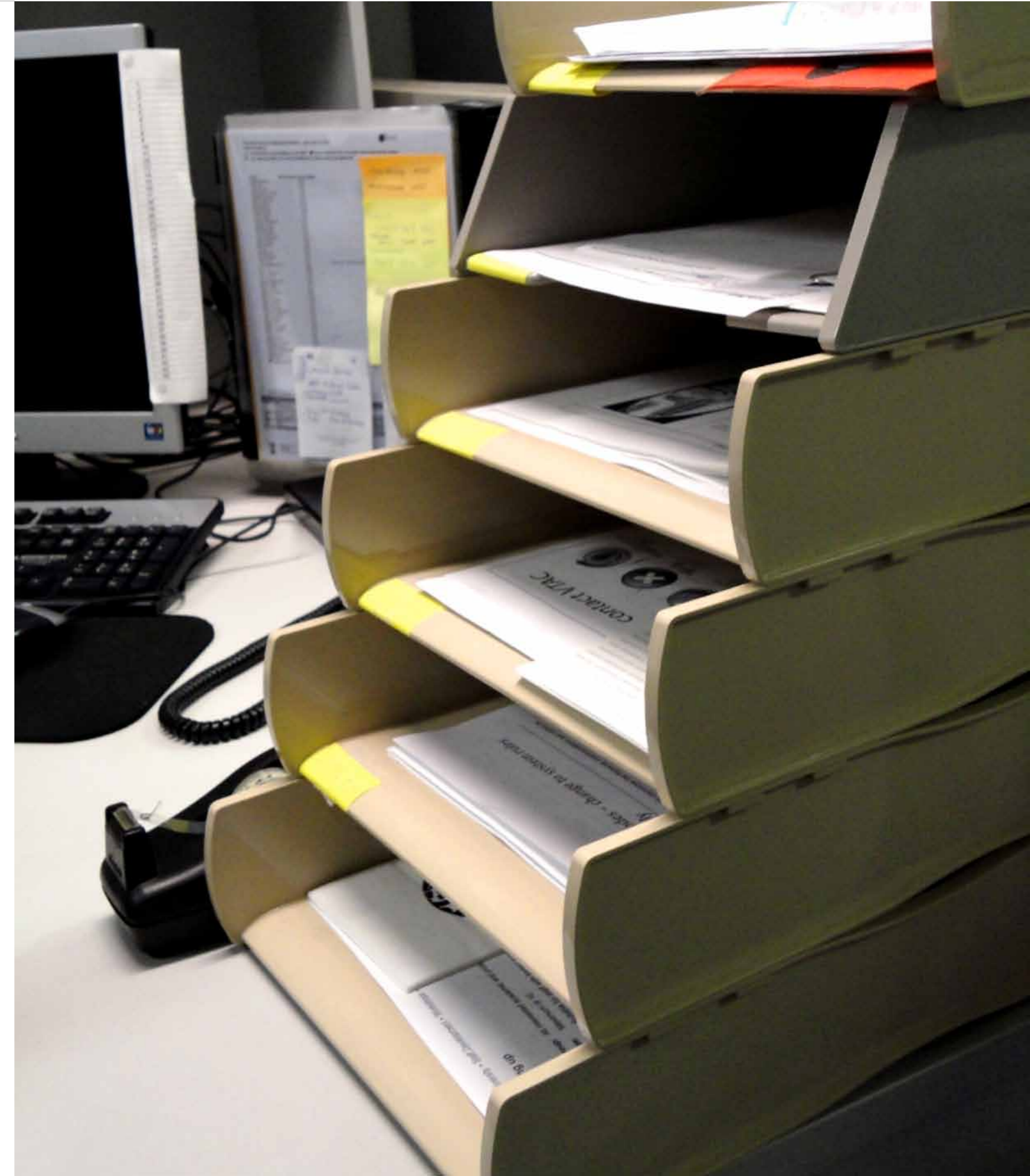
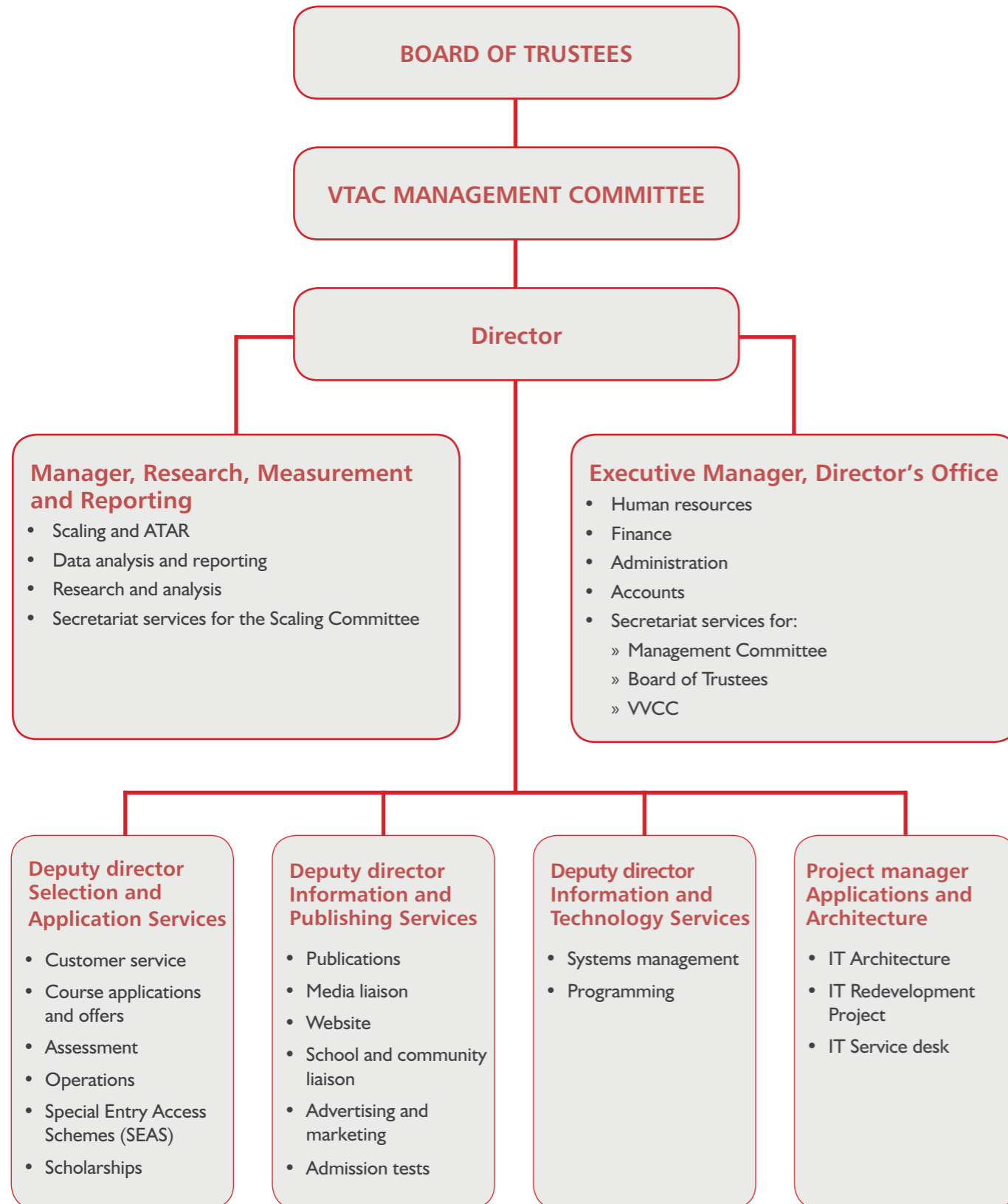
Scaling Committee

Advisory committee established by the Board of Trustees

- **THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE**
Professor Sue Willis
CHAIR
- **THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE**
Dr Sue Finch
- **MONASH UNIVERSITY**
Prof Rob Hyndman
- **VCAA**
Mr David Philips
- **VTAC DIRECTOR**
Ms Elaine Wenn
- **VTAC MANAGER, RESEARCH, MEASUREMENT AND REPORTING,**
Mr Paul Livingstone
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Organisational structure

The VTAC staff contingent consists of 28 permanent, 17 contract and 13 casual staff with the majority of contract/casual staff employed seasonally to assist during the peak application period.



The year in review



Facts and Figures

Course Applications

There were 85,810 applications in 2011, for courses in 2012. This was down 0.5% from the previous year. Of these:

- 78,801 were for domestic undergraduate courses, down 0.4%,
- 2,597 were for international undergraduate courses, down 1.2%, and
- 4,412 were for graduate entry teaching courses, up 1.1%.

Offers

In total, 74,584 applicants received at least one offer. This was up by 2.1% from the previous year. Of these:

- 68,755 were for domestic undergraduate courses, up 2.0%,
- 2,141 were for international undergraduate courses, down 3.0%, and
- 3,688 were for graduate entry teaching courses, up 8.6%.

Offer Rate

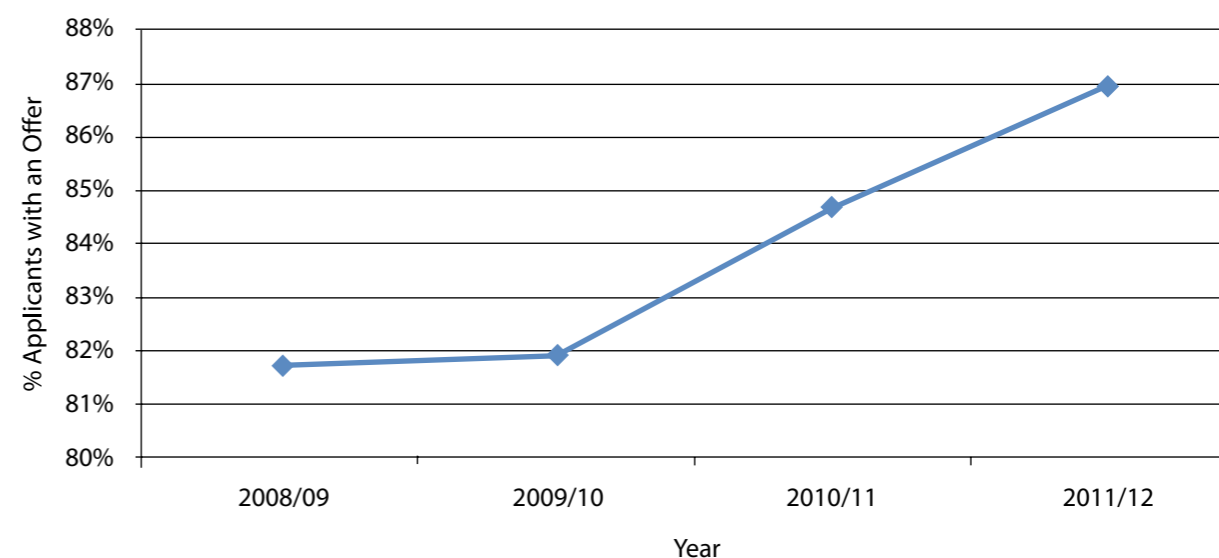
The applications and offers above produced an overall offer rate of 87%, up 2.2 percentage points from the previous year. This means that for every 8 applicants, 7 received an offer.

For domestic undergraduate courses, the increase was 2.1 percentage points, to 87.3%.

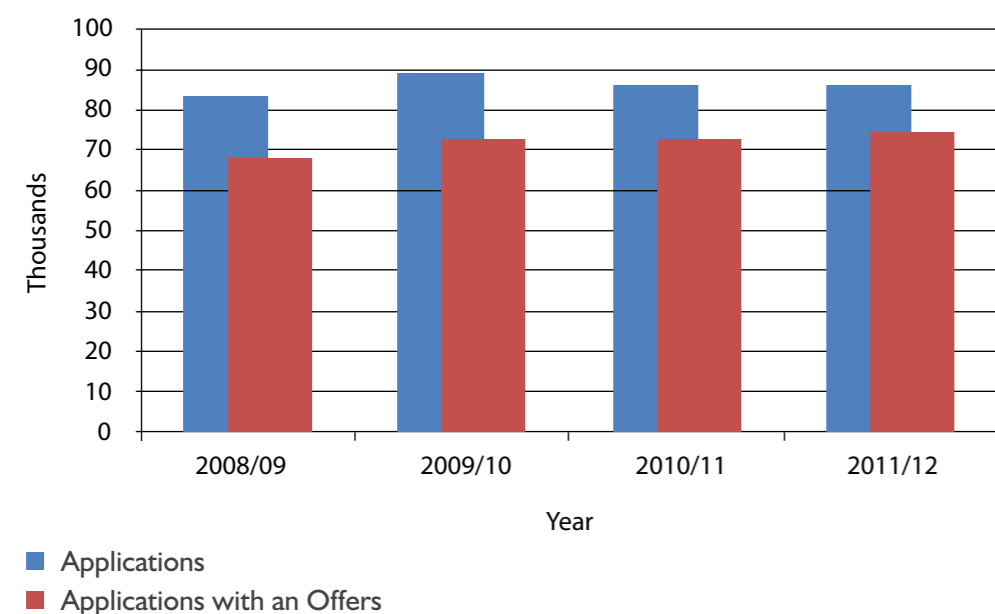
Offer Rate by Year

In 2008-2009 and again in 2009-10, the overall offer rate was 82%. Since then, it has increased by approximately 2 ½ percentage points each year, to 84.7% in 2010-11 and 87% in 2011-12.

Institutions appear to be making more offers through VTAC in response to the higher participation targets set by the Commonwealth Government following the 2008 Bradley Review of Australian Higher Education.

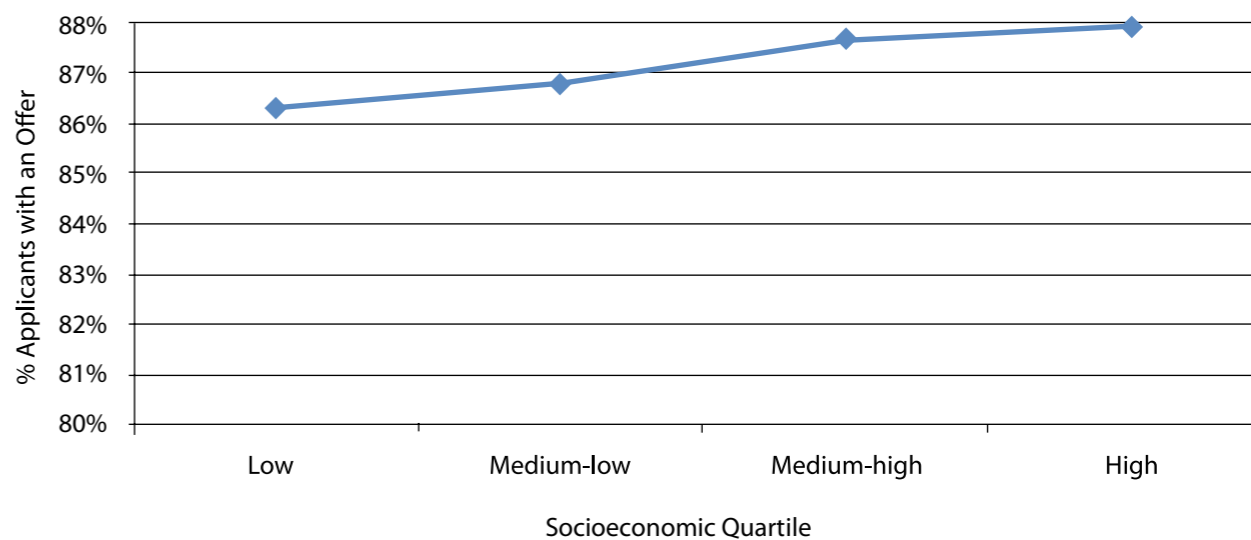


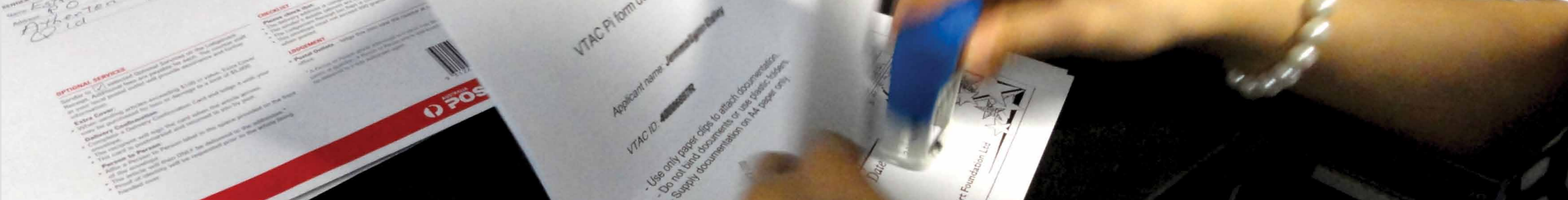
Total Applications and Offers



Offer Rate by SES

One of the specific targets to come out of the Bradley review was that for low socioeconomic enrolments. Even though low socioeconomic applicants are underrepresented among other applicants, once they apply, they achieve an offer rate very similar to other socioeconomic groups.





Applications and Offers by Year

COURSE APPLICANTS*	2010/11	2011/12	Change 10/11-11/12	2011/12
Domestic undergraduate	79,135	78,801	-334	-0.4%
International undergraduate	2,628	2,597	-31	-1.2%
Graduate entry teaching	4,364	4,412	48	1.1%
Total undergraduate	81,763	81,398	-365	-0.4%
TOTALS	86,231	85,810	-421	-0.5%

APPLICANTS OFFERED*	2010/11	2011/12	Change 10/11-11/12	2011/12
Domestic undergraduate	67,415	68,755	1,340	2%
International undergraduate	2,208	2,141	-67	-3%
Graduate entry teaching	3,397	3,688	291	9%
Total undergraduate	69,623	70,896	1,273	2%
TOTALS	73,020	74,584	1,564	2%

Applicants and offers exclude midyear. Offers exclude supplementary offers.

Courses

There were 2,265 courses offered through the VTAC system, up 8.6% from the previous year. This included 713 new entries and 138 with applications direct to institutions.

Other Application Services

Scholarships

VTAC administers a centralised application and assessment process for some institutional scholarship. VTAC received 1,912 scholarship applications in 2011, up 7% from the previous year.

Special Entry Access Scheme

VTAC administers the Special Entry Access Scheme (SEAS), the umbrella program for institutional access and equity schemes. SEAS provides a centralised application and assessment process for applicants to tertiary courses who have experienced educational disadvantage. VTAC received 26,190 SEAS applications in 2011, up 15% from the previous year.

STAT and DULSAT (ALSET)

Approximately twelve per cent of courses offered through VTAC required some non-year 12 applicant to sit the Special Tertiary Admissions Test (STAT). The Deakin University Law Schools Admission Test (DULSAT) was a requirement of nine courses at Deakin University.

The number of applicants who sat the STAT in 2011 was 2,982, a drop of 14%. The number who sat the DULSAT was 367, a drop of 13%.

Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR)

VTAC calculates the ATAR for all Victorian Year 12 students. In 2011, VTAC calculated an ATAR for 47,627 students, down 0.4% from the previous year.

In the scaling population, there were 24,463 unique combinations of scaled studies, of which 19,901 combinations were taken by only one student. This means that over 40 per cent of students chose a unique combination of scaled studies that no one else in the state chose.

Students were able to access their ATAR on the web and via SMS prior to receiving their printed statement in the mail. 28,180 students received their results by SMS. 58,378 students received their results via the website. The resultsandatar.vic.edu.au site was visited from 1055 cities in 107 countries using multiple different platforms and devices: Mobile devices: 27387; Non-mobile devices: 106130.

Mid-year Applications and Offers

2012 was the third year of VTAC's mid-year application and offer service. Seventeen institutions participated.

- There were 1,648 applicants, up 24% from the previous year.
- Of these, 902 received an offer, up 30% from the previous year.
- This represents an offer rate of 55%, which is up slightly from the previous year.

Assessment of Applications and Document Processing

The processing of an application involves a series of checks to confirm study claims and previous academic results and assessments of overseas qualifications to ensure they meet Australian entrance requirements according to National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR) guidelines.

While all applications are available online, applicants are able to submit printed documentation to support their application. These are validated, scanned and verified. This information is circulated electronically to selection officers for consideration.

- VTAC processed over 1.7m checks and assessment tasks, and
- scanned over 188,000 documents.

Communications

VTAC employs ten customer service contractors and last year they handled over five thousand email enquiries and over eighty thousand phone calls from prospective and existing applicants.

Career practitioner seminars

Each year VTAC conducts a series of programs for both new and experienced careers teachers and careers practitioners. The sessions are held across all major Victorian regions, Canberra and across the border in South Australia.

In 2011 a total of 997 careers practitioners from Victorian and interstate secondary schools and TAFE institutes attended.

Parents of VCE students

With parents being a significant influence on Year 12 students, VTAC dedicates resources to running information sessions specifically for parents. The sessions are a cooperative between groups of schools across Melbourne and regional Victoria. Precedence is given to sessions in regional Victoria. In 2011 it is estimated that VTAC presentations have reached over 5000 current Year 12 students and their parents.

Post-Results and ATAR Service (PRAS)

Run in conjunction with the VCAA, the Post-Results and ATAR Service provides support for Year 12 students with questions about their results. Over the five-day period following the release of results, 1506 calls were answered. The number of telephone calls is generally decreasing with each year. After the first day of service, most of the calls were from students expecting or requesting upgraded results.

Social media

VTAC blogs

In mid-2011, VTAC established two blogs – one for applicants and the other for careers advisors. Articles and information posted to the blog were cross-posted on Twitter and Facebook.

Nearly 500 people subscribed to the blog email service in 2011-12. There were 44,719 views of the VTAC blog for applicants and 11,520 views of the VTAC blog for careers teachers by the end of August 2012.

Facebook

Facebook was the most used social platform to contact and engage with VTAC, with nearly 2,500 'likes' on the page and a 'reach' of around 5,000 readers by the end of August 2012.

Twitter

Although not as widely-used as Facebook, VTAC's Twitter account was also used to link to blog posts, to answer questions, and to address misconceptions or issues in a timely manner. @vtacguide had 580 followers at the end of August 2012.

Video tutorials and podcasts

A VTAC YouTube channel was created, and five tutorial videos were produced and uploaded to the channel to demonstrate the re-designed and re-developed CourseLink for careers advisors.

Podcasts

Two audio podcasts were produced in conjunction with online forums run in the first weeks of September 2011. The podcasts and forums covered the topics of 'Adults returning to study' and 'Getting the best out of your VTAC application'. These podcasts were available on the iTunes Store, or for download as audio files from the VTAC website.

CourseLink

CourseLink was updated in 2011 to modernize the screens, improve navigation and functionality.



Publications

Each year VTAC produces a range of printed publications to promote tertiary education, the application process, and calculation of the ATAR.

As the demand for online VTAC resources increases the demand for printed VTAC publications has decreased. Overall printing quantities were reduced by over 70,000 copies resulting in significant cost savings and waste reduction.

The VTAC Guide: The annual guide to applications, scholarships, courses and institutions

Reference copies are provided free of charge to Victorian and border secondary schools, libraries, tertiary institutions and adult education and training providers.

80,000 copies of the VTAC Guide were printed; 13,270 reference copies (17%) were distributed free of charge to Victorian and border secondary schools, libraries and participating institutions; and, 39, 220 copies (49%) were sold through Victorian and interstate newsagents.

ABC of Applying: Getting it Right

Important information for current Year 12 students applying for courses through VTAC. It is provided free of charge to Year 12 students in Victorian and border secondary schools

ABC of Scaling: Scaling and the ATAR

A pamphlet explaining scaling of VCE results and the calculation of the ATAR. VTAC scales VCE study scores and then calculates the ATAR.

ABC of Offers

A pamphlet explaining the VTAC offering system, applicant obligations and requirements. It is mailed to all applicants with the release of offers.

VICTER: Victorian Tertiary Entrance Requirements

A guide for Year 10 students that outlines the VCE studies required for entry into tertiary courses in two years time.

CHOICE: VCE studies and the ATAR

A companion booklet to VICTER for Year 10 students about choosing VCE subjects. Copies are provided free of charge to Year 10 students in Victorian and border secondary schools.

