

Investing in People – From Diploma to Bachelor in Local Government Areas in Victoria

A Victoria University initiative to support the upskilling of early childhood educators

This program is VU's response to the State government's request for innovation in Early Childhood Education, with the aim of increasing the number of ECE graduates at Bachelor Level. This is to build Victoria's supply of teachers qualified to teach in 3- and 4-year-old kindergarten, as funded Three-Year-Old Kindergarten rolls out across the state.

The VU program accepts diploma-qualified early childhood educators, who then study with others from their Local Government Area (LGA) to complete the Bachelor of Early Childhood Education in as little as two years. (This is a three-year degree, into which the Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care gives one year of advanced standing.)

Advantages to studying in this program:

FEES

- All Australian residents and permanent residents living in Victoria are eligible for a **state government scholarship worth \$25,000** (this covers fees and more).

STUDYING AND WORKING

- This program is designed with educators in mind. The VU staff know students will be working at the same time as studying. Classes are held twice a week in the evening, via remote learning (zoom classes), plus one Saturday per month, at a site in the students' LGA.
- VU operates on the block model. Students study one unit at a time, for a four-week period. This leads to deeper understanding of content, more time to explore ideas in specific units, and only one set of assessments to manage at a time. The block model is very supportive of students working and studying. There are eight blocks in a year (that is, eight units of study/subjects).
- There are regular breaks in the course structure, so students and teachers don't become fatigued. As a general rule, students will study blocks 1 and 2 (eight weeks in total), then have a week's break; then study blocks 3 and 4. Between blocks 4 and 5 there is a 4-week break. Students then study blocks 5 and 6, have a week's break, and then study blocks 7 and 8. This can vary, depending on the student's start date in the course. VU recognises all public

holidays (other than Labour Day in March), and has a 5 day break over Easter.

- Students in this program don't need to travel to university to study – in person classes will be held at a site in the students' LGA, or be conducted as excursions.
- Assessment is designed to develop students' learning, but not to be an onerous task while they are working (assessment tasks include arts-based activities, presentations, documentation, reports, mindmaps, designing and setting up provocations in the student's workplace).

PLACEMENTS

- Students can do their placement, with the exception of their final graduate placement, in their workplace, and be paid for their work as normal.
- Students will have the support of a university-appointed mentor during their placements, as well as the early childhood teacher mentor at their site.
- Centre mentors will be invited to participate in VU's Early Childhood mentor network.

DATES

- This program is currently running at Hume City, and is opening up to students from other areas during first and second semester, 2022. Our aim is to involve 10 – 12 areas from across Victoria, and to begin most students in semester 1, block 3 (commencing April 26). There will be a further intake for semester 2, block 1 (Commencing August 1).
- Students who commence in April 2022 will graduate in May, 2024 (presuming they continue in sequence through the course). Students who commence in August 2022 will graduate June 2024 (presuming they continue in sequence through the course).

ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS

- VU provides additional assistance to students in this program, to help them navigate university enrolment and systems
- All VU supports and services are available to students in this program. These include: libraries, the Learning Hub (bespoke academic support), LinkedIn Learning, student counselling, financial counselling and guidance, sports teams, gyms at the student rate, clubs and societies, and opportunities to volunteer.
- Classes are an opportunity for students to network with others working in the early childhood sector in their local area.

- students will participate in a pop-up play space in their local area, designed through a playwork lens, and using loose parts.

GETTING MORE INFORMATION

Information sessions will be held via zoom. Please register via eventbrite for one of the following dates (the information at each session will be the same):

June 9, 2022: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/upskilling-from-diploma-to-bachelor-at-victoria-university-info-session-tickets-317435998617>

June 23, 2022: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/upskilling-from-diploma-to-bachelor-at-victoria-university-info-session-tickets-343709272687>

July 7, 2022: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/upskilling-from-diploma-to-bachelor-at-victoria-university-info-session-tickets-343729503197>

July 12, 2022: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/upskilling-from-diploma-to-bachelor-at-victoria-university-info-session-tickets-343748911247>

July 19, 2022: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/upskilling-from-diploma-to-bachelor-at-victoria-university-info-session-tickets-343760997397>

July 21, 2022: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/upskilling-from-diploma-to-bachelor-at-victoria-university-info-session-tickets-343771799707>

For any further information about this program, please email: iip@vu.edu.au

LOOKING FORWARD TO MEETING YOU

We are excited to invite you to be part of this program, which builds capacity in local government areas, and ensures that young children in those areas are taught by highly qualified, confident teachers.

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