

Make a choice. Make a difference. Nursing in Victoria.

health

Factsheet 3

Starting your nursing course

There are lots of ways to enter nursing or midwifery and lots of options for further training.

Deciding which path to take to get into nursing and midwifery can be confusing, but this information will help.

There are nine higher education providers, including universities in Victoria, providing accredited pre-registration nursing courses at bachelor-degree level (Division 1) (which take about three years to complete) and more than 30 registered training organisations and TAFEs offering the Certificate IV (Enrolled Nursing) in nursing (taking about 12 months).

There are full-time and part-time courses available all over metropolitan Melbourne, as well as throughout regional and rural Victoria.

School leavers

To find out about what nursing or midwifery degrees or certificate courses are available you can:

- check out accredited training providers at the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia website
- use the VTAC guide to find out if courses are currently available and how to apply for them.

Each course may have different requirements and different ENTER scores so you need to check the ones you are interested in. Nursing courses cover topics such as anatomy and physiology, pharmacology, research, legal and ethics.

Subjects such as maths, biology and health and human development are often prerequisites for nursing courses. Other subjects that may be useful are psychology, physical education and physics.



Mature-age entry

It's never too late to get into nursing!

If you are a mature-age or adult applicant or a Enrolled nurse who wants to progress to a degree qualification to be a Registered nurse, you need to follow the same steps to identify a course and then find out about the training providers. There are often different processes relating to recognition of prior learning (credit), and there may be different dates for applications as well, depending on the university or TAFE.

Graduate entry

Graduate entry nursing courses are available if you already have another degree and are looking for a new career direction. These courses can generally be completed in two years instead of three.

You can always cross over from Division 1 training to Enrolled nursing and vice versa if your circumstances change.

What else you should know

- Course content can vary slightly between universities. Many universities and TAFEs have course information sessions and open days that provide great opportunities to find out more about specific courses.
- All nursing and midwifery courses include a mandatory unpaid clinical practice component (students in traineeships for Enrolled nursing are paid an agreed training wage).
- To undertake clinical practice, students must have a police check, some immunisations, may be required to have a first-aid certificate or purchase a uniform.

What does it cost?

At the moment, students in Bachelor of Nursing courses in a Commonwealth-supported place pay the minimum student contribution (HECS) for subjects in the nursing cluster.

Generally, Certificate IV students in government-funded training in the VET sector pay a small fee.

Working while you study

Sometimes, forgoing work to study can make it hard to make ends meet. But there are ways you can make it easier.

Working in a health or aged care organisation as a health care assistant while you study can help you gain confidence in areas such as communication and understanding of health care generally, while also enabling you to earn an income.

Some organisations, such as the Royal College of Nursing, have details of undergraduate nursing scholarships that are available.

Want to know more?

Refer to Fact sheets 1 and 2.

For more information about more about nursing in Victoria, visit

www.health.vic.gov.au/nursing

The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia provides information about approved providers of nursing courses at

www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au

The Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC) provides an up-to-date list of tertiary courses offered in Victoria at

www.vtac.edu.au/publications

Find TAFE institutions that offer Enrolled nursing courses (Certificate) at

www.tafe.vic.gov.au/tafecourses