Higher Education Loan Program (HELP): A loan program available to Australian citizens or the holders of Australian permanent humanitarian visas to enable them to pay their student contributions or tuition fees, or for one or two study periods overseas. Loans are repaid later through the taxation system once income has reached a certain level of income. There are three types of HELP loans – FEE-HELP, HECS-HELP and OS-HELP.

Honours: Many degrees can be completed ‘with honours’. This traditionally indicated that the graduates who did this were better than students who only took an ‘ordinary’ degree. In the case of three-year bachelor degrees, students who achieve excellent marks are invited to undertake a fourth year.

Industry-based learning/work integrated education/practical/industrial experience: Supervised practice takes place in an approved work place and helps develop skills relevant to the study. It may be undertaken during a semester or in semester breaks and can vary from regular one day placements to block periods of several weeks. Costs may be involved, such as instruments, uniform, accommodation or travel. Check with the relevant institution.

The Melbourne Model (University of Melbourne): The Melbourne Model requires students to enrol in one of a small number of broad undergraduate qualifications (such as a Bachelor of Commerce), before being eligible to enrol in professional graduate courses (such Law or Business).

Middle-band selection: The group of applicants who are below the ‘clearly-in’ and above the ‘clearly-out’ ATAR. If you are in the middle-band, additional factors are taken into consideration for course offers.

Open Days: A tertiary institution will open their doors to the public on Open Day in order to ‘show off’ their facilities and services.

Preparation courses: These are courses offered by most institutions, including TAFE colleges, as a preparation for further study. They are usually undertaken by students with insufficient formal entry qualifications, or for those who have not participated in formral education for some time.

Prerequisites: A prerequisite is a subject you need to complete in order to be eligible for the course/program. Having the appropriate prerequisites will ensure that you have the knowledge to study particular subjects at tertiary level. All universities and TAFE institutions and the VTAC Guide identify the prerequisite studies. Course prerequisites: Some courses require you to have achieved a specified standard in the final year of school or equivalent before you will be offered a place in the course. If you do not have the required course prerequisite/s you usually cannot be selected for the institution's course even though you may have met the other admission requirements.

SEAS (Special Entry Access Scheme): If your studies are affected by disadvantage during secondary schooling you may be eligible for special entry.

Special requirements: These are compulsory requirements, in addition to admission requirements, which you must satisfy to be considered for selection into the course. Examples of additional selection criteria include interviews, auditions, portfolios, supporting statements, questionnaires and tests.

TAFE (Technical and Further Education): TAFE programs are practical and include Apprenticeships, Traineeships. Certificates, Diplomas and Advanced Diplomas. These qualifications provide the skills for employment at paraprofessional and professional levels.

Tertiary study: Studies undertaken at a higher level than secondary schooling.

Undergraduate: Undergraduates are people studying for a diploma or bachelor degree. These courses are known as undergraduate qualifications.

VCE: Victorian Certificate of Education

VET: Vocational Education and Training

VTAC (Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre): VTAC acts on behalf of participating universities and TAFE institutions facilitating the entry of new students into programs in Victoria.

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What does it mean?

Quickly come to grips with the vocabulary used by your son or daughter in conversations about VCE and higher education with these easy to understand definitions.
**What does it mean?**

**Associate degree:** The associate degree is generally a two-year qualification that is made up of two-thirds of a bachelor degree. Associate degrees may be offered by both TAFEs and universities.

**Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR):** The ATAR is a measure of academic achievement in Year 12 that assists institutions with ranking applicants for selection to tertiary education courses.

**Bachelor degree:** Bachelor degrees are the traditional starting point of university education. A bachelor degree takes three or four years of full-time study to complete. An extra year may be required to complete the degree with honours. Diplomas or associate degrees may count towards part of a bachelor degree.

**Bridging courses:** Some universities offer bridging or introductory courses to enable students to achieve the required level of assumed knowledge for their course. It is important to note that the inclusion of one or more of these bridging course subjects in the first-year program, however, could prevent you from completing your course in the minimum time.

**Clearly-in:** A rank indicating the previous year’s lowest entry rank required for entry to a course for the current academic year. This may also be referred to as clearly-in.

**Deferring:** Delaying starting a course, usually for one year.

**Degree (Higher Education):** Degree programs are also called bachelor or undergraduate programs. They generally involve study for a minimum of three years and provide a professional qualification.

**Department:** A department is a grouping that sits within a faculty. For example, a Faculty of Science might have a Department of Chemistry, Department of Biology and a Department of Physics.

**Diploma:** A diploma is typically a one-year qualification. A diploma can be offered by TAFEs and universities. An undergraduate award usually places more emphasis on practical skills than on theoretical content. Also, could be a postgraduate award requiring one year of full-time, or equivalent part-time, postgraduate study.

**Commonwealth-supported place (CSP):** A place in a course to which the Australian Government contributes towards the cost. Formerly called HECS.

**Commonwealth-supported students:** Students for whom the Australian Government contributes towards their study costs. These students pay student contributions.

**Course:** A course might either mean a subject (e.g. ‘After lunch I have the course introduction to Anatomy’) or a series of subjects that make up a qualification (e.g. ‘The medical course takes five years’).

**Cut-off:** A rank indicating the previous year's lowest entry rank required for entry to a course for the current academic year. This may also be referred to as clearly-in.

**Deferring:** Delaying starting a course, usually for one year.

**Degree (Higher Education):** Degree programs are also called bachelor or undergraduate programs. They generally involve study for a minimum of three years and provide a professional qualification.

**Department:** A department is a grouping that sits within a faculty. For example, a Faculty of Science might have a Department of Chemistry, Department of Biology and a Department of Physics.

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**Extra requirements:** When applying for a specific course/program the Extra Requirements are tasks that need to be completed in addition to the VTAC application. For example, interview, audition or fill in an additional form. Extra requirements are mandatory and are identified by institutions and VTAC Guide.

**Extension studies:** Extension studies allow high achieving Year 12 students to undertake one or two first-year university subjects as part of their final year school studies. This provides students with a deeper understanding of an area of interest, allows them to experience university and is included in the student'sATAR. In addition, the completed university subjects are counted towards the student's university degree.

**Fee-paying students:** Students who meet the entire amount of their study costs. These students pay tuition fees. These can be domestic or international students.

**Graduate:** A person who has received a degree or diploma.

**HELP:** A loan for eligible fee-paying students to pay their tuition fees, up to $86,422 or $108,029 (for medicine, dentistry and veterinary science). HELP is subject to a 20 per cent loan fee.

**Faculty:** In Australia the term ‘faculty’ refers to a large grouping within a university. A university might have a Faculty of Business, a Faculty of Arts, a Faculty of Science, a Faculty of Medicine and so on. Each Faculty (which may also be called a ‘school’), is headed by a Dean.

**Fee-paying students:** Students who meet the entire amount of their study costs. These students pay tuition fees. These can be domestic or international students.

**Graduate:** A person who has received a degree or diploma.

**HECS:** A loan for eligible Commonwealth-supported students to pay their student contributions.