

Citizenship document requirements when applying for a VET Student Loan

Please Note: documents provided to support your eligibility for Victorian Government subsidised training may not necessarily be suitable to support your application for a VET Student Loan. Please check the following information carefully as you will be required to provide this evidence before you will be eligible to access a VET Student Loan.

Am I eligible for a VET Student Loan?

VET Student Loans (VSL) is an Australian Government loan scheme for the Vocational Education and Training sector.

You may eligible for VSL if you are:

- an Australian citizen OR
- a permanent humanitarian visa holder who is usually resident in Australia OR
- a pacific engagement visa holder who is usually resident in Australia OR
- a qualifying New Zealand Citizen

AND you also:

- are seeking to enrol in a VSL eligible course
- are assessed as academically suited to undertake the eligible course
- have not already accessed 100% of your lifetime HELP balance
- have not already accessed 100% of your course's VSL cap
- are 18 years of age or older, OR have a parental consent form signed by a responsible guardian, OR have received youth allowance on the basis that you are independent
- meet the Tax File Number (TFN) requirements
- have a Unique Student Identifier (USI).

Please note that Australian permanent residents or other permanent visa holders ARE NOT eligible for VET Student Loans.

What evidence do I need to provide if I am an Australian Citizen?

A current Australian Passport is suitable evidence of Australian citizenship. Otherwise, the evidence required to demonstrate that an applicant is an Australian citizen may differ depending on whether the applicant was:

- born overseas
- born in Australia before 20 August 1986
- born in Australia on or after 20 August 1986.

Applicants born overseas and acquired Australian citizenship by application

Applicants will need to provide one of the following documents as evidence of their Australian citizenship:

- a current Australian passport OR
- an Australian citizenship certificate or extract of citizenship certificate OR
- a Citizenship by Descent extract.

If an applicant does not have one of the above citizenship documents, they will need to apply for evidence of Australian citizenship by lodging **Form 119 Application for evidence of Australian citizenship** with certified copies of the required documents and the application fee with the Department of Home Affairs (Home Affairs).

Applicants born in Australia before 20 August 1986

Applicants will need to provide one of the following documents as evidence of their Australian citizenship:

- a current Australian passport OR
- a full Australian birth certificate (not an extract or commemorative copy).

An exception to this is where the applicant's parents were in Australia as diplomats or consular officers at the time of the applicant's birth. In these circumstances, the applicant will need to provide a citizenship certificate or extract of citizenship certificate as evidence they are an Australian citizen.

If the applicant does not have a citizenship certificate or extract of citizenship certificate they will need to lodge **Form 119 Application for evidence of Australian citizenship** with certified copies of the required documents and the application fee with Home Affairs.

Applicant was born in Australia on or after 20 August 1986

Applicants will need to provide one of the following documents as evidence of their Australian citizenship:

When at least one parent was an Australian citizen at the time of the applicant's birth and parent was born before 20 August 1986:

- a current Australian passport OR
- a full Australian birth certificate (not an extract or commemorative copy).

When at least one parent was an Australian citizen at the time of the applicant's birth and parent was born on or after 20 August 1986:

- a current Australian passport OR
- a full Australian birth certificate (not an extract or commemorative copy) AND one parent's full Australian birth certificate (not an extract or commemorative copy) or parent's citizenship certificate, or extract of citizenship certificate.

When at least one parent was a permanent resident of Australia at the time of the applicant's birth:

- a current Australian passport OR
- an Australian citizenship certificate, or extract of citizenship certificate.

When neither parent was an Australian citizen nor an Australian permanent resident but the applicant spent the first 10 years of their life in Australia:

- a current Australian passport OR
- an Australian citizenship certificate, or extract of citizenship certificate.

If the applicant cannot provide this they should apply for their own evidence of Australian citizenship by lodging **Form 119 Application for evidence of Australian citizenship** with certified copies of the required documents and the application fee with Home Affairs.

The following documents are not acceptable as proof of a parent's permanent residency for VET Student Loan applications:

- parent's foreign passport with a visa label
- Visa Entitlement Verification Online (VEVO) printout
- visa grant notification letter
- Certificate of Evidence of Resident Status (CERS)
- Certificate of Status for New Zealand Citizens in Australia (CSNZCA)
- ImmiCard
- Freedom of Information (FOI) letter from the Department of Home Affairs.

These documents only provide proof of a person's visa status on the day they are issued / printed and are not sufficient proof of a parent's resident status at the time the applicant was born.

Becoming an Australian citizen

If a student acquires Australian citizenship part way through their course, they may be eligible for a VET Student Loan for parts of a course not yet completed, for which the census dates have not passed.

First Nations applicants not registered and birth by the relevant State/Territory authority

Applicants may provide their current Australian Passport or submit a Statutory Declaration as provided by The Gordon via the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR).

Statutory Declarations are not acceptable forms of proof of Australian citizenship for any applicants other than First Nations people whose birth was not registered by the relevant State/Territory authority.

Applicant or their parent was born in Papua New Guinea prior to 16 Sep 1975

Papua New Guinea became a sovereign nation on 16 September 1975 (PNG Independence Day). Assessing Australian citizenship status of people born in PNG prior to 16 September 1975 can be complex. Home Affairs is aware that in the past this cohort of people has been incorrectly issued with an Australian passport based on an incorrect assessment of their citizenship status. As such, the citizenship status of some applicants born in PNG prior to 16 September 1975 must be checked and verified with Home Affairs.

The applicant should be referred to Home Affairs to obtain evidence of Australian citizenship by lodging **Form 119 Application for evidence of Australian citizenship** if:

- evidence of citizenship was issued before 1 January 2009 and the applicant was born in PNG prior to 16 September 1975; or
- citizenship was acquired by descent before 1 January 2009 where the parent(s) was born in PNG before 16 September 1975.

A citizenship certificate or extract of citizenship certificate can be accepted as evidence that the applicant is an Australian citizen if the evidence of citizenship was issued on or after 1 January 2009 regardless of the acquisition date or date of birth.

Applicants need to take Home Affairs' application processing times into account before applying for a VET Student Loan.

What evidence do I need to provide if I am a holder of a permanent humanitarian visa or pacific engagement visa?

We will be in touch with you if you have not already supplied your visa as a part of your course application process.

What evidence do I need to provide if I am a New Zealand citizen?

Eligible New Zealand Special Category Visa (SCV) holders who meet the requisite criteria will be able to access Vet Student Loans.

To be eligible, you will have:

- to be a New Zealand citizen who holds a Special Category Visa (SCV); and
- first entered Australia as a dependent minor aged under 18 years; and
- been residing in Australia for the previous 10 years (that is, you have been present in Australia for at least 8 out of the past 10 years) at the time of application for the loan; and
- been residing in Australia for the past 18 months out of the last 2 years at the time of application for the loan.

You will be required to provide the following documents as part of your application:

- Copy of your current New Zealand passport which must include a digital link to your SCV
- An up-to-date copy of your international movement records (that includes details during the last two years) from the Department of Home Affairs.

If you require any further information in relation to citizenship requirements for VET Student Loans, please email fees@gordontafe.edu.au or contact Customer Service on 03 5225 0800.