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The key functions of the Commission are to:

- strengthen the efficiency, effectiveness and capability of the public sector in order to meet existing and emerging needs and deliver high quality services; and
- maintain and advocate for public sector professionalism and integrity.

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Currency

This is Department Guide - Aboriginal Undergraduate Cadetship Program, version 1 published in December 2017.

Subsequent versions may be published from time to time. Always check for updates at:


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www.vpsc.vic.gov.au
1. **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The VPSC acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as traditional custodians of the land and pays our respect to Elders past and present.

Throughout this document the term “Aboriginal” is used to refer to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

2. **INTRODUCTION**

The Aboriginal Undergraduate Cadetship Program supports the education and provides work experience to 2nd and 3rd year Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander university students who are undertaking their first undergraduate degree.

The Program provides cadets with:

- Support during semester;
- 12 weeks of paid work experience each year; and
- Access to a mentor, Senior Aboriginal VPS employees, the VPS Aboriginal Graduate Network and the VPSC’s Aboriginal Employment Unit.

The Program also provides a commitment to ongoing employment

- Upon successful completion of their studies, the host department may make a cadet a direct offer of employment; alternatively
- Upon successful completion of their first cadetship, cadets have the opportunity for direct entry into the interview stage of the Aboriginal Pathway to the Victorian Public Service Graduate Recruitment and Development Scheme (see “Transition to the VPS GRADS” section for more information).

Support may also be available to cadets via Abstudy (see “Commonwealth support” section).

The Program is designed to benefit both the cadet and hosting department. A major benefit to departments is that taking on a cadet and participating in the Program can be a way of supporting progress towards goals under Aboriginal Inclusion Action Plans and Aboriginal Employment Plans. Further, once the cadet has completed their studies, Departments may also receive an employee with experience of their workplace, either via the GRADS Aboriginal Pathway or a direct offer of employment.

During the Program, cadets will undertake practical work experience and be supported by a range of VPS staff. The Program also provides a valuable opportunity to establish an understanding of the VPS before taking up a specific role in a department or agency.

3. **ELIGIBILITY**

To be eligible to apply for an Aboriginal cadetship, applicants must:

- be of Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent;
- identify as an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and be accepted as such in the community in which he/she lives, or has lived;
- be enrolled for full-time study occurring on campus at a university located in Australia; and
- be enrolled for his or her first undergraduate degree course.

Cadets are also required to maintain satisfactory progress towards the successful completion of their degree whilst in the Program.
The checklist below is designed to inform you of the key requirements of the Program before you commit to recruiting a cadet:

Manager’s Checklist: agreeing to support participation in this program means that:

- I have a requirement and the budget for a 12-week work placement (0.23 FTE) at VPS Grade 1.1.4;
  - $11,157 plus overheads*(Effective 1 January 2018)
- My cadetship position is a development position;
- I can provide challenging and meaningful work for my cadet during their work placement;
- I can provide appropriate feedback and support whilst my cadet is completing their work placement and studies;
- I am prepared to:
  - Attend the welcome event and the Program completion celebration
  - Attend any other events or meetings which may occur from time to time.
- I know I can contact the AEU with any queries I have.

If you answered YES to all of the above, then the next step is to complete and submit a Request to Hire a Cadet form.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Program is run by the Aboriginal Employment Unit (AEU) within the Victorian Public Sector Commission (VPSC), who also run the Aboriginal Pathway to the GRADS and the Aboriginal Career Development Program. In broad terms, the AEU will:

- run the application and selection process;
- coordinate the Program;
- support participants, including coordinate meetings of participants; and
- support departments throughout the Program.

The tables below provide a detailed description of the roles and responsibilities of the AEU and participating Departments and Victoria Police.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cadet</th>
<th>Entry</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Employment link</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contact AEU to discuss the program</td>
<td>Attend Welcome event</td>
<td>Liaise with department to find suitable ongoing role or entry to GRADS Pathway assessment centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Complete online application and provide requested supporting documentation</td>
<td>Engage with the AEU, cadet coordinators and manager</td>
<td>Participate in program evaluation, as required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Be available to for a discussion with the AEU about their application and attend interviews and the welcome event</td>
<td>Liaise with Manager about development plan, employer’s performance and development processes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Confirm if Abstudy or ICS assistance is applicable.</td>
<td>Maintain satisfactory progress towards completion of their degree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aboriginal Employment Unit</th>
<th>Promotion</th>
<th>Administration</th>
<th>Ongoing employment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Promote VPS-wide and provide department specific</td>
<td>VPS guide for departments Relationship management</td>
<td>Work with departments and cadets to find a suitable ongoing role; or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department</td>
<td>Promotion</td>
<td>Recruitment</td>
<td>Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Promote the program via networks</td>
<td>Indicate demand for cadets via request to hire form</td>
<td>Employment contract and other paperwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Register with ICS</td>
<td>Respond to recruitment queries</td>
<td>Payroll</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Recruitment**
- Target universities and community organisations
- Collate demand from departments
- VPS-wide ad via eRecruitment
- Receive and assess applications
- Manage application and conduct process
- Award places
- Support department and cadet to register and apply for ICS if applicable

**Support**
- Arrange welcome event
- Meet with departments and cadets at the start of each semester
- Manage/support mentoring program
- Support cadets as required

**Work placement activities**
- Invite cadets to Aboriginal Graduate Network meetings / events
- Arrange networking with senior Aboriginal VPS employees
- Provide performance assessment tools to host departments (including advice regarding direct entry to GRADS Aboriginal Pathway assessment centre)

**Evaluation**
- Process evaluation after first year; outcomes evaluation after 3 years
- Manage direct entry to the GRADS Aboriginal Pathway assessment centre.

**Promotion**
- Promote the program via networks
- Register with ICS

**Recruitment**
- Indicate demand for cadets via request to hire form
- Respond to recruitment queries
- Attend interviews
- Establish ICS contract with cadet and Commonwealth (if using ICS)
5. RECRUITMENT PROCESS

The following is a summary of each of the steps of the process and the associated timelines:

**1. Application and Request to Hire period**

A Request to Hire form is completed by the hiring manager for each cadetship position. Once a completed form has been received by the AEU, a reference ID is allocated to the position and used for all communication about your cadetship position. The Request to Hire form confirms your department’s participation in the Program and allows you to indicate desired fields of study.

The application is the AEU’s first opportunity to get to know the applicant and to ascertain if they meet the eligibility criteria. The application form asks applicants to provide personal, education and any previous employment details followed by a series of motivational and behavioral questions.

**2. AEU assesses applications and prepares shortlist**

Upon receipt of an application, the AEU will assess applications and develop a shortlist for departmental consideration, based on their requests to hire. Applications for the 2018 intake will be assessed on the following criteria:
- Interest in the VPS
- Conceptual and analytical ability
- Teamwork
- Academic performance
- Flexibility
- Written and verbal communication

**3. Request to Interview form received from departments**

Based on the talent pool, recruiting managers provide a Request to Interview form to their cadetship coordinators indicating the candidates they would like to interview. The AEU will arrange department interviews based on the information provided in the Request to Interview form.

**4. Department interviews held**

Department interviews are your opportunity to get to know the candidate and evaluate them in the context of your department values. Any additional personal qualities and knowledge and skills, as nominated on your Request to Interview Form can also be evaluated at this point.

**5. Offers canvassed by AEU and placements confirmed for 2018 intake**

Following the interviews, departments prepare Offer Preference forms and submit them to the AEU. The AEU canvasses offers with the candidates in a consistent and equitable manner. To eliminate confusion for candidates and to present a consistent image, the AEU is the single point of contact during the offer process. The AEU will advise departments of outcomes and confirm cadetship places. Departments are required to provide written offers of employment once places are confirmed.
6. Welcome Event & Introduction to Mentors

The AEU hosts a morning tea welcome event where cadets meet their cadetship coordinators and managers, which keeps cadets engaged until their work placements.

7. Ongoing contact with cadets in relation to their progress and work placement

It is important for departments to remain in contact (via phone or email) with their cadets and continue to support them during semesters. The AEU facilitates catch ups during semesters, in preparation for the commencement of work placement in November.

8. Cadet completes work placement

6. TRANSITION TO THE VPS GRADS

Second year students participating in the Program in 2018 are able to complete a subsequent cadetship whilst in their third year of university in 2019. The recruitment process for the Aboriginal Pathway to the 2020 VPS GRADS will occur in approximately March / April 2019 and cadets completing subsequent cadetships will be offered direct entry into the interview stage. Please note, any offer for, and commencement in the 2020 VPS GRADS is conditional upon successful completion of studies.

Third year students completing their first cadetship in 2018 have three post-cadetship options available:

1. Cadets may apply for the Aboriginal Pathway to the 2019 VPS GRADS in March / April 2018.
2. Cadets may participate in the 2019 VPS GRADS as a department “fee for service” graduate (subject to department agreement).
3. Cadets may choose to proceed directly to the interview stage for the 2020 VPS GRADS (anticipated for May 2019), as a benefit of successful completion of the Program.

Each post-cadetship option has respective administrative timeframes and the AEU will discuss options with each cadet and their departments during the Program.
7. COMMONWEALTH ASSISTANCE

Abstudy helps with costs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians who are studying or undertaking an apprenticeship. Abstudy provides a range of financial assistance to students, based on eligibility criteria and individual circumstances, however students must not be receiving any other financial assistance (for example, another income support payment or a cadetship).

Students in receipt of Centrelink payments have an obligation to advise Centrelink immediately when they commence their cadetship so that Centrelink can determine their entitlement.

More information is available on the [Abstudy website](#).

Alternatively, a cadet may opt to complete their cadetship with no Commonwealth assistance and only receive salary payments from their host department.

Each of the support models provide different amounts of annual value to the cadet:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study support</th>
<th>Annual value to the cadet under the Abstudy model</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual allowance will vary with circumstances</td>
<td>Fortnightly payments as per ABSTUDY eligibility*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Taxable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education expenses may be available under ABSTUDY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ABSTUDY is funded and administered by the Commonwealth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work placement</td>
<td>$11,157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>VPS 1.1.4 salary for 12 weeks in 2017/18 (approx. 0.23 FTE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Taxable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Funded by host department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total value</td>
<td>$11,157 plus Abstudy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Taxable income</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work placement</th>
<th>Annual value to the cadet from salary only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$11,157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paid to the Cadet as fortnightly wage-like payments over 12 week work placement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Funded by host department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total value</td>
<td>$11,157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Taxable income</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** The information above does not take into account personal circumstances and needs of any particular person. Before making any decision you should consider your own personal circumstances.

8. CONTACT

Please contact the AEU on (03) 9651 0837 or aboriginal.employment@vpsec.vic.gov.au with any queries about the Program.