

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



Thursday, 20 April 2023

GIVING YOUNG VICTORIANS A HEAD START IN THEIR CAREERS

The Andrews Labor Government is expanding the successful Head Start school-based apprenticeship program to provide students with more pathways to start their dream job sooner, while backing in-demand industries with more job ready workers.

Head Start gives students eager to enter the workforce the opportunity to complete an apprenticeship or traineeship while finishing school, with the initiative being rolled out to all government secondary schools by the end of this year.

Completed alongside a VCE, VCE Vocational Major or Victorian Pathways Certificate, the initiative offers students paid on-the-job training while providing employers with well-matched and highly motivated young workers.

The program aligns students with employers across in-demand industries including community services, early childhood education, health, digital media and technologies, hospitality and engineering, providing students with more than 150 pathways to begin their careers.

Before their apprenticeship or traineeship formally begins, students complete a work trial to make sure they, their parents, their school, and the employer are confident the placement is well matched.

Dependent on employer and student needs, contact hours can be increased as a student progresses through school, with one day in year 10 and up to three days in year 12.

Head Start was first trialled in 2018 as part of a \$50 million Labor Government program to support students to finalise their secondary education with an apprenticeship or traineeship. Since then, more than 2,500 students have participated in the initiative delivered through 12 Head Start hubs across the state.

Since the initiative began, more than 1,500 employers have taken part in the Head Start program, with potential employers encouraged to contact their local Head Start hub for more information on how to participate.

The *Victorian Budget 2022/23* invested \$69.4 million over four years to expand Head Start to all government secondary schools in Victoria by the end of 2023 – so every student has the opportunity to kickstart their career.

Students can learn more about Head Start by talking to their school's career practitioner, with more information for students, schools and employers available at vic.gov.au/head-start-apprenticeships-and-traineeships.

Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

"We're backing students to get the skills they need for the jobs they want, providing more pathways and paid opportunities to have them job ready when they walk out the school gates for the last time."

"Through Head Start, we're strengthening partnerships with schools and some of the most in demand industries, providing students with high quality learning experiences and businesses with highly motivated skilled workers."

Quote attributable to Minister for Education Natalie Hutchins

"No matter what you want to be, in Victoria we have an educational pathway for you to achieve it and this initiative now means more students across the state can start their dream jobs sooner."

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