

Extracurricular Bonus Credits to Contribute to ATAR Bill 2022

A Bill for an Act to add extracurricular bonus credits to contribute to Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) for students completing the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) in Victoria. A committee of professionals and volunteers from a wide variety of backgrounds will be established to oversee the submission and bonus points of students' extracurricular activities. This Bill considers the importance of 21st century skills in current and future workplaces, providing an incentive for students to continue to participate in extracurricular activities throughout the final years of their schooling. It will ensure that pupils' non-academic strengths are valued and offer those pupils who succeed in non-academic disciplines a chance to earn ATAR credits in their own way.

This Bill will help to promote wellbeing by helping students to gain all-roundedness and reduce large amounts of academic stress. It will also help to support VCE students' mental health, which has historically been at risk – more than 1 in 7 students aged between 12 and 17 has a mental health issue. Many VCE students feel the need to discontinue extracurricular activities in order to perform better at school. This Bill aims to encourage a higher percentage of VCE students to complete extracurricular activities in their final years of school.

A Bill for an Act relating to Extracurricular Bonus Credits to Contribute to ATAR to be enacted by the YMCA Victoria Youth Parliament;

PART I—Preliminary

Clause 1 Purpose

The main purposes of this Act are—

- (a) To allow Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) students to contribute credits towards their Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) through extracurricular activities;
- (b) To encourage students in their final years of school to continue to be involved in extracurricular events;
- (c) To give Victorian students completing VCE more opportunities to broaden their further education and training opportunities;
- (d) To recognise the importance of extracurricular activities to students' wellbeing.

Clause 2 Commencement

This Bill shall commence upon receiving assent from the Youth Governor of Victoria.

Clause 3 Definitions

In this Bill—

- (a) *Extracurricular activities* means any extra activity in which a student participates that is not mandatory schoolwork;
- (b) *Selection ranking* means the order in which universities will admit a student into the university;
- (c) *Authority figure* means a person who has overseen the student's extracurricular activity, such as a teacher or a coach;
- (d) *Bonus points* means points which are added on top of a student's ATAR and which boost their selection rank;
- (e) *Cohort* means graduates in a given year.

PART II—Establishment

Clause 4 Creation of the Extracurricular Activities Evaluation Committee (EAEC)

4.1 The Extracurricular Activities Evaluation Committee (EAEC) shall be established.

4.2 The EAEC shall act as a committee of representatives responsible for the implementation and management of the extracurricular activities evaluation system.

4.3 The EAEC shall be comprised of members who;

- (a) Are professionals and volunteers with backgrounds in one or more of the following disciplines;
 - (i) Charity;
 - (ii) Grassroots organisations;
 - (iii) Sporting organisations;
 - (iv) Craft;
 - (v) Education;
 - (vi) Performance;

- (vii) Visual arts.
- (b) Have expertise in a broad range of subjects of their chosen area of specialisation;
- (c) Be paid in a part-time capacity.
- 4.2 The EAEC shall sit as a subset of the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC).
- 4.3 The EAEC shall evaluate VCE students' extracurricular activities using the criteria in Clause 5 and scale VCE students' selection ranking in accordance with Clause 6.
- 4.4 The EAEC shall set up an application process under VTAC through which VCE students can submit their extracurricular activities.

Clause 5 Criteria for Submission of Extracurricular Activities

- 5.1 The criteria for submission of extracurricular activities shall be established by the EAEC.
- 5.2 The criteria for submission of extracurricular activities shall act as a guideline outlining which extracurricular activities students are able to submit as extracurricular ATAR bonus credits.
- 5.3 The criteria for extracurricular ATAR bonus credits shall be determined after submissions of extracurricular activities close.
- 5.4 The distribution of extracurricular ATAR bonus credits shall be;
 - (a) Facilitated by the EAEC;
 - (b) Based on an overarching view of students' submissions;
 - (c) Graded as a bell curve.
- 5.5 Extracurricular activities shall be processed at a school level and mediated by the EAEC.
 - (a) Schools shall group their students into the scale-up category they believe they are to be awarded.
- 5.6 The EAEC shall reserve the power to determine at their discretion whether a student submission is lacking, in which case;
 - (a) The submission shall be returned to the student to be reviewed for resubmission;
 - (b) A submission including evidence that is deemed insufficient shall be eligible for resubmission of evidence.
- 5.7 The EAEC shall perform random mediation checks on each cohort of student submissions, wherein;
 - (a) 10% of randomly selected students shall be reviewed for accuracy;
 - (b) Students selected for accuracy reviews shall be granted resubmission privileges.
- 5.8 Students' submissions shall only be considered during their completion of the VCE.
- 5.9 The following eligibility criteria shall apply to submissions for extracurricular ATAR bonus credits;
 - (a) The student participated in the extracurricular activity during the completion of a Units 1 and 2 or Units 3 and 4 VCE;
 - (b) The student participated in the extracurricular activity during their final two years of school.

Clause 6 Evaluation of Extracurricular Activities and Their Contribution to ATAR

- 6.1 The EAEC shall create a range of guidelines for each level of bonus points.
- 6.2 Each bonus point shall be worth the equivalent of between 0.0 ATAR points and 1.0 ATAR point.

Clause 7 Establishment of Extracurricular Activity Categories of Interest (CoI)

- 7.1 Every student who submits extracurricular activities for ATAR bonus credits shall include in their submission at least one, and at most five, valid extracurricular activities.
- 7.2 Each extracurricular activity included in a student's submission shall correspond to a unique and specific Category of Interest (CoI), which shall be stipulated in their submission;
 - (a) CoIs shall be determined by the EAEC through the Digital Contract outlined in Clause 8;
 - (b) CoIs shall be reviewed each year by the EAEC, who reserve the power to establish new CoIs in alignment with the current and future needs of students.
- 7.3 Within each CoI, extracurricular activities shall be categorised under three sub-categories as determined by the EAEC.
- 7.4 Students shall only submit one extracurricular activity.
- 7.5 Students whose extracurricular activities do not fit directly into a CoI shall reserve the right to request guidance from the EAEC prior to the final submission date on whether their extracurricular activity may be approved in their submission.

Clause 8 The Process of Making Submissions

- 8.1 The EAEC shall provide a voluntary digital contract to each student who makes a submission.
- 8.2 Upon being signed by the student, the digital contract shall indicate that the process of making a submission has commenced.
- 8.3 The digital contract shall clearly and simply define the processes and parameters of the extracurricular ATAR bonus credits system as stated in Clauses 5, 6, 7 and 9.
- 8.4 The digital contract shall require students who make submissions to be enrolled at any Victorian secondary school institution.
- 8.5 The digital contract shall state that all students who meet the parameters for extracurricular ATAR bonus credits shall receive these bonus credits, unless they breach the rules.
- 8.6 The digital contract shall affirm the rights of students who indicate at any point, for any reason, that they do not wish to receive the contribution of extracurricular ATAR bonus credits.

Clause 9 Submitting Evidence

- 9.1 In their submission, students shall include evidence of adequate participation in their extracurricular activities.
- 9.2 Submissions shall require evidence verified by a relevant authority figure, subject to the specifics of the extracurricular activity.

- 9.3 Letters of verification shall require certification by a relevant authority figure to corroborate the submission.
- 9.4 The EAEC shall reserve the power to determine, at their discretion, forms of valid and acceptable evidence for any extracurricular activities which fall under the following categories;
 - (a) Sport;
 - (b) Community;
 - (c) The Arts.
- 9.4 Applications shall be immediately denied if any forgery, deception or fabrication of evidence is discovered.