

2017 VCAL Program for young refugee & asylum seeker women

The River Nile School (RNS) addresses the unique education needs of young refugee and asylum seeker women.

RNS VCAL (Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning) Programs are designed for students having difficulties with the literacy and numeracy demands of a large school setting or who have disengaged from mainstream school. Our highly experienced, EAL (English as an Additional Language) qualified teachers, combined with our small class sizes and individual learning plans, give our students every opportunity to achieve their potential. We empower our young women through relevant, engaging, purposeful education programs that provide opportunities to succeed on academic, personal and vocational pathways.

Our students are given the opportunity to achieve the VCAL, as well as build their social capacities and be empowered to achieve positive, sustainable change in their life. Students graduating from RNS have moved on to further study in areas such Children's Services, Communication, Accounting, Aged Care and/or employment supported via our partnerships with organisations such as Services Stars and Foundation House.



What is VCAL?

The Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning is a senior secondary school qualification - Years 11 and 12. It is a 'hands-on' option for people who want to learn by 'doing', including for those who have left school early. **There is a strong focus on group project work, as well as providing opportunities for students to work independently, where they will continue to develop their numeracy and reading, writing and speaking skills.** It also includes practical work-related experience.

A VCAL program can be made up of study units from VCAL, the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE), Vocational Education and Training (VET). Strands covered in VCAL include:

- Work Related Skills
- Personal Development Skills
- Literacy Skills (Reading, Writing and Oracy)
- Numeracy Skills

At RNS, VCAL is delivered using an integrated approach through the completion of collaborative projects and a focus on employability skills. Students doing VCAL also undertake a VET subject and work placement.

Entry to the RNS Program

The RNS Program is offered to young women, aged 15 and above. While there are no formal entry requirements, a student's commitment to their learning is an important consideration in selection through an interview with our teachers and coordinating staff. There are **no fees** to attend our VCAL program.

VCAL Timetable

At RNS, the VCAL program is run over two years in recognition of the complex needs of our students that may impact upon their learning. Students may commence the course at any time during the year and can expect to complete the course within two years of commencing, **provided regular attendance and commitment to the VCAL program are maintained.**

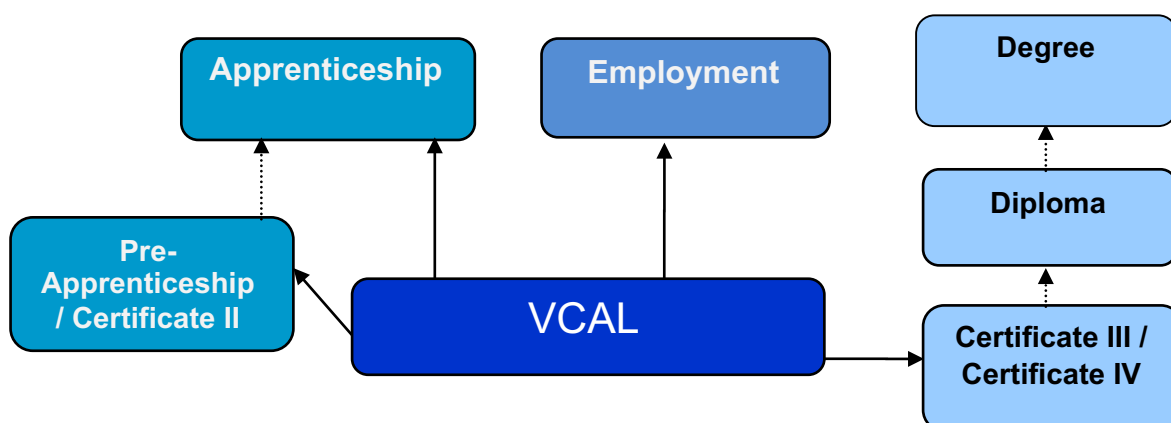
In addition, we offer co-curricular programs such as swimming, driving, women's health and craft as well as a range of excursions to support language and life skill development as well as social emotional well-being. These are embedded in our programs and offered according to student needs and interest.

Students arrive at RNS by 9.50 am each day in time for the first class which commences at **10 am**. Classes conclude at **3 pm**.

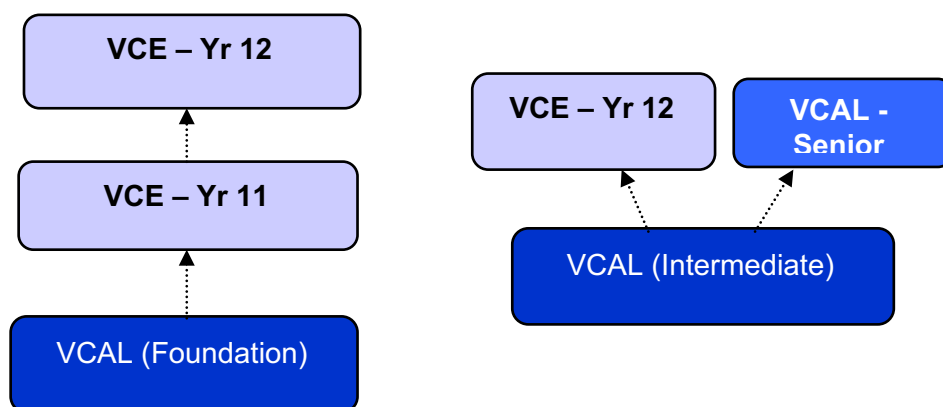


VCAL Pathways and Options

Once you complete your VCAL program, you will have a number of different pathways you can choose from.



VCAL can also be used as a pathway to VCE.



You will be offered ongoing support in your pathway planning by your teachers and our welfare director.

What Makes Us Different?

At RNS, we focus on the specific needs and interests of each student. Each student has an Individual Learning and Pathway plan prepared in consultation with the teachers, and is given a high level of support in the classroom with highly experienced professional EAL teachers. We also have the regular of volunteer tutors, many of whom are semi retired and retired education professionals.

We support students with public transport costs and basic food staples. For students who are mothers, we also provide a free childcare service during class hours, run by qualified and experienced Childcare Educators.



Further Information

For further details view our website <http://rnlc.org.au>, telephone (03) 9329 8425 or email lisa@rnlc.org.au

We are located at **Level 1, 117 Capel Street, North Melbourne 3051.**

This is one block north-west of the Queen Victoria Market and is well serviced by public transport (Flagstaff Station is the nearest and the 55 and 57 Trams stop nearby).

Visitors are welcome at our school, please phone or email to make an appointment. Late mornings on Tuesdays or Thursdays are preferred times for visits, but other times are available.

The **River Nile Learning Centre** was established in 2006 and has successfully delivered VCAL for 8 years in partnership with Mount Alexander College. It has won the Victorian Multicultural Commission Award for Excellence in Education. It was granted VRQA registration to become the **River Nile School** in December 2016. RNLc's website and email servers are being used until new sites for the River Nile School are constructed.