

Introduction

The SATAC Bulletin is published for the information of school staff and others who provide advice to prospective tertiary students.

It provides information and updates on SATAC services, courses available through SATAC, and the admissions process.

We know that many of you will have contact with your students in the lead-up to Christmas and beyond into the New Year. The information in this Bulletin should help you to provide appropriate advice about SATAC applications.

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Offer rounds and change of preference deadlines

With exams out of the way many students will be looking to fine-tune their choice of preferences. The change of preference date is timed to allow students a last opportunity to make changes after their SACE/NTCET results are known.

Changes of preference for a **TAFE SA** application can be made until midnight **Friday 2 January 2015**. If the initial application was made by the equal consideration date of Sunday 30 November 2014 the changed preferences will be guaranteed equal consideration with other on-time preferences.

Changes of preference for a **university** application can be made until midnight **Monday 5 January 2015**. If the initial application was made by the equal consideration date of Monday 1 December 2014 the changed preferences will be guaranteed equal consideration with other on-time preferences.

Applicants who applied after the equal consideration dates can still change their preferences by the above dates, but their preferences will continue to not be guaranteed equal consideration with those of on-time applicants.

Note that the effect of not being 'guaranteed' equal consideration is dependent on how competitive a course is. For many courses, where competition is low, the preference will actually receive equal consideration. For highly competitive courses, even a highly ranked applicant might miss out on a place as there will be sufficient on-time preferences for the course to fill the available places.

Some university and TAFE SA courses have early closing dates and do not accept late applications.

Main January 2015 offer round for university applications

The main January offer release is an exceptionally busy day for us and results in a significant spike in demand on both our online systems and our information staff.

This year we are introducing a number of changes that will streamline the way offers are made and reduce the need for applicants to log on to our servers or contact us about routine matters. It is anticipated that this will speed up the process for most applicants while freeing up resources so that we can better meet the needs of those who require individual assistance.



Most importantly, advice of university offers will initially be made by email, with SATAC automatically accepting offers to first preferences on behalf of applicants. This means that applicants receiving a first preference offer who simply wish to accept that offer will not need to access SATAC services after the offer round. Their only follow-up action will be to enrol in their course with the university.

Applicants receiving an offer to a lower preference, or who wish to respond to a first preference offer in some way other than a simple acceptance (e.g. deferring, rejecting or changing preferences), will still need to return to their application using the 'My Application' service on SATAC's website. Applicants needing to return to their application will not be able to do so on the Thursday of the offer round but will be able to do so from Friday 16 January.

The process in summary:

- the main round of offers will be emailed to successful applicants no later than 5pm on Thursday 15 January 2015
- applicants will not be able to access the 'My Application' section of SATAC's website on this day
- an online 'Express Service' will be available after 5pm on Thursday 15 January. This service will confirm whether or not an offer has been made.
- the full 'My Application' service will resume on Friday 16 January
- SATAC will automatically accept first preference offers on behalf of applicants. If they are satisfied with this outcome they will not be required to take any further action with SATAC.

Applicants who:

- receive an offer to a lower preference
- receive an offer to their first preference but still wish to change their preference(s), or
- wish to reject their offer

will need to log onto the 'My Application' section of SATAC's website from Friday 16 January. From this date applicants will be able to:

- defer or reject their offer
- change their preferences, or
- indicate that they still wish to be considered for higher preferences

Applicants should follow the enrolment instructions provided by the university included in the offer email.

Communicating with applicants

With offers being emailed to applicants this year, it is essential that your students have provided SATAC with an up-to-date email address that they can access throughout the offer period. A school-based email address that ceases to be available after the school year will not serve their needs.

We would appreciate your support in encouraging students to review the contact details they have provided in their applications and update if necessary to ensure that SATAC will be able to contact them through the remainder of 2014 and through to at least March 2015.

Cutoffs and Selection Ranks

Around the time of the release of SACE results and distribution of the Tertiary Entrance Statement (TES) there is often heightened interest in the cutoffs applicable to university courses. In reality, few students are selected solely on the basis of their Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR). With most students eligible for equity or subject-based bonuses, the rank on which students are actually selected is known as the Selection Rank. The final Selection Rank can be significantly higher than their underlying ATAR.

The mechanics of the calculation are explained in the Tertiary Entrance booklet distributed to all years 10, 11 and 12 students. Suffice to say, the cutoffs quoted in SATAC publications and in the media following the offer rounds reflect the lowest Selection Rank by which an applicant, using a Year 12 qualification, gained entry to that course in the previous year. Similarly, the guaranteed thresholds used by the universities for their various guaranteed entry schemes also reflect the Selection Rank required, not the ATAR.

Christmas/New Year office opening hours

SATAC is open from 9am to 5pm on all days except weekends and public holidays.

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Key dates for courses starting in semester 1 2015

TAFE SA	
30/11/14	Equal consideration closing date for competitive course preferences.
19/12/14	Last date to undertake the TAFE SA Assessment of Basic Skills (TABS) for consideration in the main January offer round.
02/01/15	Change of preference deadline.
05/01/15 to 12/01/15	Main offer processing period. Some services will be unavailable for short periods.
12/01/15	Main January offer round. Offers available online.
23/01/15	Late January offer round.
06/02/15	Further offers made each Friday from this date.
University Undergraduate	
01/12/14	Equal consideration closing date for most undergraduate courses.
05/01/15	Change of preference deadline.
05/01/15	Fee deadline (for applicants who applied by 01/12/14).
15/01/15	Main January offer round for semester 1 2015.
29/01/15	Further offer round for semester 1 2015.
03/02/15	Further offer round for semester 1 2015.
05/02/15	Further offer round for semester 1 2015.