

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### APPLICATION AND SELECTION QUESTIONS:

**Q: How do I apply?**

**A:** Applicants must apply through VTAC – Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre - [www.vtac.edu.au/](http://www.vtac.edu.au/). Applicants must complete and submit a VTAC Pi (Personal information) form if they wish other information to be considered during the selection process. Please note that successful applicants who have not completed a degree in medicine, biomedical science, science (with studies in anatomy and/or physiology), dentistry, nursing, allied health, or health sciences should undertake a short, online [bridging course](http://www.latrobe.edu.au/courses/anatomy-and-physiology/short-courses) (www.latrobe.edu.au/courses/anatomy-and-physiology/short-courses), as a foundation for further studies. Students will be notified at the time of offer. This course provides an understanding of the function and structure of the human body. The Department of Health Information Management also supports incoming Master degree students by providing a bridging course (online materials supported by a small number of tutorials) for all successful applicants at the start of the course, in basic health information science and health informatics. The tutorials are timetabled in addition to the core subjects.

Closing dates are available on the VTAC website. We do not accept Direct Applications.

**Q: What are the prerequisites for 2012?**

**A:** Any approved Bachelor's degree, or subsequent postgraduate study. Applicants are expected to have obtained a grade point average of at least H2A (70% or above) in their most recently completed university undergraduate degree. Applicants will be selected on academic merit. Professional experience in related fields will be considered. English language requirements apply.

### ABOUT THE COURSE:

**Q: How many places are available each year?**

**A:** Approx. 25 domestic and 12 international students are offered places but this is variable and interested applicants should apply.

**Q: How many years is the course?**

**A:** The Master of Health Information Management is a 2 year (240 credit points) full-time course.

**Q: Is the course offered part-time?**

**A:** Part-time options are available.

**Q: Is the course a Commonwealth Supported Place?**

**A:** Both Commonwealth Supported and full fee places are available

Fee amount: Indicative (2012): \$24,380 per 120 credit points. This is yet to be confirmed.

**Q: Can I apply for mid-year entry into the course?**

**A:** No.

**Q: How many contact hours is the course?**

**A:** These are variable across the two years of the course. There are approximately 14-16 contact hours per week, each semester. Efforts are made to contain the on-campus class timetable to 2-3 days per week in both years of the course. The exceptions are when students are required to attend Professional Practice (Clinical) placements on 4-5 days per week.

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**Q: Does the course cover industry experience?**

**A:** Students undertake Professional Practice (Clinical) placements in a range of areas including hospitals, government health departments, health research and screening centres, and community care/public health environments. You will complete placements in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Year (3 weeks) and 4<sup>th</sup> Year (9 weeks full-time or 11 weeks at 4-days per week). Each placement has formal learning outcomes and some associated theoretical components. We provide agency/hospital supervisors with guidelines on activities and experiences for students.

**Q: Are there requirements for going on placements?**

**A:** Police Checks and Working with Children Checks are required for the professional experience placements in clinical and community settings in this course. All students will be required to obtain and pay for a Police Check prior to undertaking their placements. International students obtain an Australian National Police Check. For important information about clinical placements, visit [www.latrobe.edu.au/health/study/placements](http://www.latrobe.edu.au/health/study/placements)

**Q: Are there any additional costs?**

**A:** Each student should allow approximately A\$395 for clinical coding books, purchased every two years, and A\$30-60 for a memory stick (purchased from any supplier). These remain your personal property. Prior to commencing placement, students must obtain a Police Check, at a cost of approximately A\$15.50, and a Working with Children check, at a cost of approximately A\$77. Accommodation costs for clinical placement vary according to the venue. There is a limited number of Scholarships available (from the professional association – the Health Information Management Association of Australia) to support placement accommodation; these are awarded on a competitive application basis.

**Q: Which campuses of La Trobe offer the course?**

**A:** The course is offered only at the Melbourne (Bundoora) campus.

**Q: Can I take intermission during the course?**

**A:** Yes.

**ACCREDITATION OF THE COURSE****Q: Is the course accredited?**

**A:** The course is fully accredited with the peak professional body, the Health Information Management Association of Australia. All of our graduates therefore are eligible for membership of the professional Association.

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**CAREER OPPORTUNITIES****Q: What Career Opportunities do I have?**

**A: There is a huge shortage of qualified Health Information Managers, throughout Victoria and around Australia.**  
There are also shortages internationally.

Health Information Managers are in great demand throughout the healthcare sector. They typically work in a wide range of interesting and responsible positions. For example, in hospitals they work: in the management of Health Information Services; general and clinical administration; clinical governance/risk management; as the Hospital Privacy Officer; as clinical database managers; as health data and casemix analysts; and as specialist Clinical Coders and Coding Auditors. Health Information Managers also work in: government health departments; health computing/software development firms; health information technology and electronic health record projects; health research centres (eg state Cancer Council); health screening programs (eg BreastScreen); clinical trials; the pharmaceutical industry; and the National Coroners Information System.

**Q: What are the likely opportunities in the future?**

**A:** The Commonwealth Government's policy of Activity-Based Funding in all states means that the current shortage of Health Information Managers will increase further in the foreseeable future. Similarly, the Commonwealth Government's e-Health agenda means that Health Information Managers' skills and knowledge will be in even greater demand. This is reflected in the states (eg Victoria) where the state government's e-Health programs employ many Health Information Managers in hospitals around the state and in the state Department of Health. The pay is good. The demand for Health Information Managers is so great that it will be impossible to fill all the available positions. This presents wonderful opportunities for our graduate Health Information Managers.

**Q: Why should I do Health Information Management?**

**A:** Put your first degree to use by studying to join a practical and meaningful profession.

Or, if you are looking for a new direction, take a leap and make an exciting career change!

- This is an interesting and varied course.
  - It is a relatively small and very supportive profession.
  - There are many, many jobs available for graduates.
  - There are flexible working hours (no shift work).
  - The pay is good.
  - Unlike many 'clinically'-focused occupations, Health Information Managers have a very wide range of career directions and opportunities available, throughout healthcare. Health Information Managers are not restricted to working within a section of healthcare or within a particular medical/health specialty area.
  - Health Information Managers make a big, big difference working behind-the-scenes. Their work is essential:
    - for hospitals to function,
    - for Victoria and Australia to have good quality information about the health status of Australians,
    - for patients' information to be kept private and confidential, and for the future planning of healthcare services.
  - Take a risk – do a great Master degree and join a dynamic profession.
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