

Candidate Guide

2019 Victorian Public Service Graduate
Recruitment and Development Scheme



Contents

1.	INTRODUCTION	3
2.	ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS	4
3.	GRADUATE TESTIMONIALS	6
4.	RECRUITMENT PROCESS AND TIMELINES.....	7
5.	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	9
6.	SELECTION CRITERIA ASSESSED AT EACH STAGE OF THE PROCESS.....	10
7.	ONLINE APPLICATION	11
8.	ONLINE REASONING ASSESSMENTS	13
9.	ASSESSMENT CENTRE	14
10.	ACTIVITIES AT THE ASSESSMENT CENTRE.....	16
11.	GRADS TALENT POOL.....	18
12.	DEPARTMENT AND AGENCY INTERVIEWS	18
13.	VERBAL OFFER PROCESS	20
14.	VERBAL FEEDBACK	20
15.	VERBAL FEEDBACK TIMELINES.....	21
16.	CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT.....	22
17.	CONTACT.....	22
	APPENDIX A - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS.....	23
	APPENDIX B - SAMPLE ASSESSMENT CENTRE ACTIVITIES	27

1. Introduction

The Victorian Public Service (VPS) Graduate Recruitment and Development Scheme (GRADS) recruits high potential tertiary graduates to the VPS. The VPS GRADS offers a perfect start to a career serving Victorian communities. The Victorian Public Sector Commission (VPSC) manages the scheme, including the recruitment process which is administered by HOBAN Recruitment.

The VPS GRADS provides graduates a great opportunity to establish a solid understanding of the VPS before taking up a specific ongoing role in their second year of employment. The VPS GRADS is a 12 month development scheme where graduates have the opportunity to learn about the public service and contribute to a variety of initiatives. Most graduates rotate through three Departments/Agencies during their VPS GRADS year, starting with the Department/Agency in which the graduate is permanently employed, referred to as their home Department /Agency.

The VPS GRADS year involves a comprehensive range of formal learning and development modules. Graduates will have an opportunity to devote specific time to their own professional development in addition to working on Department/Agency projects and initiatives.

The scheme also has specialist streams along with the generalist VPS GRADS and enables graduates to develop further expertise in their chosen field. The specialist streams include accounting and finance and economics.


We recruit graduates from diverse backgrounds that reflect the community we serve.

Each year the VPS GRADS selection criteria is reviewed to ensure selection is in line with the purpose of the scheme and of individual recruiting managers from different Departments/Agencies.


2. Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for the VPS GRADS you must submit a completed application form prior to the close date and time and meet the required criteria below:

1. Australian working rights – you are required to be an Australian or New Zealand citizen or permanent resident at the time of application.

 Anticipation of citizenship or permanent residence before the start of the scheme is insufficient and you cannot be considered for the VPS GRADS 2019 Intake.

2. If you have received a redundancy from the VPS in the last three years you are not eligible to apply or be considered for the scheme.
3. A minimum of a three-year undergraduate degree completed by the end of January 2019 (diplomas or other non-tertiary courses of study are insufficient).

 You must upload your undergraduate transcript as part of your application.

4. To participate, you are required to consent to undergo a police criminal records check on your application form. A police criminal records check may be mandatory prior to a formal offer of employment.

Transcripts

In order to prove your eligibility for the VPS GRADS you must provide transcripts of your undergraduate degree.

1. Your undergraduate transcript must contain:
 - your name
 - qualification name
 - university logo or name
 - majoring subjects (if applicable)

While an online course record that includes university insignia is acceptable, a word processing document or spread sheet of your grades typed would be considered insufficient evidence of your qualifications. You must provide your undergraduate transcript.

2. Overseas transcripts and qualifications – recognition from the Australian Government Department of Education and Training (DET) or a State or Territory Overseas Qualification Recognition Policy Unit, is required as evidence of eligibility for the VPS GRADS. This can take up to three months so candidates should commence this process early. For candidates who have not received required recognition at the time of submitting an online application, evidence is required that the process is underway (e.g. DET letter of receipt of request). Please note that DET governs the implementation of the Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Agreement from Australia.
3. If you have completed your undergraduate degree overseas and have subsequently studied a postgraduate qualification in Australia (or New Zealand) this will suffice as overseas recognition. In this instance, you must upload your undergraduate transcript and postgraduate transcript as one document.
4. New Zealand transcripts – undergraduate academic transcripts from New Zealand meet the eligibility requirement for all streams.

To be eligible for the VPS GRADS 2019 Cohort you must meet the specified requirements outlined above. In addition to the VPS GRADS eligibility, the table below highlights the stream specific eligibility requirements

Stream	Eligibility Requirements
Generalist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Generalist stream recruits graduates from all disciplines
Accounting & Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graduates majoring in Accounting and/or Finance Studied at least six Accounting and/or Finance modules in your undergraduate degree or have a dedicated Accounting and/or Finance postgraduate qualification*
Economist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graduates majoring in Economics or Econometrics Studied at least six Economics and/or Econometrics modules in your undergraduate degree or have a dedicated Economics postgraduate qualification*

**If you have not studied six subjects as part of an Economics and/or Accounting and Finance major but have an interest in these stream(s), you can indicate your interest on the application form. You may be considered for a technical stream should your studies appropriately align to the technical requirements for the VPS GRADS positions.*

Additional Support

You may be able to receive support through the reasonable adjustments policy or the Aboriginal Pathway to the VPS GRADS. You will be able to indicate your eligibility and your interest in receiving this support on your application form. A member of the VPS GRADS recruitment team will contact those who have indicated interest in the first instance.

If you have disability and would like assistance with your application and the recruitment process, please contact HOBAN Recruitment. Contact details are available at www.graduates.vic.gov.au.

Aboriginal Pathway

The GRADS Aboriginal pathway provides culturally appropriate guidance and support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants through the recruitment and selection process for the VPS GRADS. You'll be supported by Aboriginal staff and experienced professionals during the recruitment process and your VPS Career. For further information contact the Aboriginal Pathway Manager via phone (03) 9651 0837 or email aboriginal.employment@vpsc.vic.gov.au.

3. Graduate Testimonials

"The Graduate program is both challenging and extremely rewarding. In each rotation, you will be exposed to a different Government agency, a different team and a variety of different and exciting work. For example, during my Graduate year I had rotations in the Department of Health and Human Services, the Essential Services Commission and the Department of Justice and Regulation. Through the year you will also take part in a comprehensive and informative training program. I found this training to be very helpful throughout the year, particularly the training on Writing for Government and Policy Skills. The Graduate Program also allows you to build a network of professional relationships across different areas of the Public Sector. In my experience, this is the real strength of the program. I feel very lucky to not only have a strong professional network following the completion of the program, but also a number of wonderful friends who share my passion for policy and working to make Victoria a better place to live. "

– Kate, Department of Health and Human Services

"The VPS grads...has been a whirlwind of new experiences. I had three fantastic rotations during which I evaluated criminal justice processes, wrote policy for vulnerable Victorian Children and helped to manage a tourism fund for regional Victoria. The grads...helps you to make connections across government and to have a range of experiences to help you to understand where you want to take your career. "

– Stephanie, Department of Justice and Regulation

"At the beginning it can seem overwhelming as there is so much you don't know. It's a steep learning curve but you'll adapt quickly because you work in different areas and get great insights into the structure of Government and all its machinations. The reality of the grad program is that it's a yearlong opportunity to ask as many questions as you want. The vast majority of people are friendly, easy-going and really willing to help you. Show that you're interested and willing to go the extra mile and people will challenge you. The benefit is that you're being challenged in an environment where people are open to you making mistakes. My own experience was that you get out of it what you put in."

– Andrew, Department of Education and Training

"My previous occupation involved me working at an individual level. I wanted to make a change at a higher level. Changing careers and being a part of the 2016 GRAD program gave me the opportunity to work for government and achieve this goal. I was excited to be a part of a program that offered strong support and training opportunities. The three rotations provided me with the opportunity to work on different projects and skills, taught me about different government processes, and allowed me to make lasting networks across multiple Departments. "

– Hilaire, Department of Health and Human Services

"I think the best thing about the GRADS is the rotations. Not only do you get to experience a variety of workplaces, management styles and subject matter, you also get taken out of your comfort zone in roles you might not have anticipated, which drastically improves your ability to adapt and learn on the job. I found myself working in roles that I otherwise would not have sought out, which really broadened my horizons, and I found myself enjoying the work much more than I anticipated! "

– Aiden

"I was fortunate to land in the Applicant Attraction Team where I worked with colleagues to better understand attractors and barriers to people looking to join Victoria Police. I was able to draw on my studies in sociology but also had the opportunity to learn more about effective messaging and strategy in recruitment. "

– Thomas, Victoria Police

"After finishing degrees in Arts and Law, I was still unsure of what I wanted to do for my career. I knew I wanted to work with the community and I loved the idea of working on issues that impact Victorians. My rotations were amazing opportunities to try diverse work areas across the VPS. My placements all did very different work and exposed me to so many incredible people, tasks and challenges. Being a GRAD is a fantastic opportunity to meet new and exciting people. Everyone is always willing to help you out, answer questions and take you along to meetings. I was lucky enough to meet departmental Secretaries, assist in the launch of a high-profile report and watch a Bill I had worked on be debated in Parliament. Lastly, the graduate excursions allow you to see first-hand the diverse work that the VPS undertakes, as well as the mechanics of our parliamentary system. "

– Erin, Department of Premier and Cabinet

"Coming from regional Victoria I was extremely conscious of how local and state government decisions can impact on regional areas, which attracted me to the program. We also did lots of tours which were incredibly interesting... You'll also never get bored - as a new department there is always something happening that's never been done before"

– Chelsea, Department of Economic Development, Job, Transport and Resources

"Whenever I tell someone about the VPS GRADS, I say I was lucky to land that position. The fact is that luck had very little to do with it. I worked hard at university and was a good fit for the team that hired me. I was recruited into the VPS GRADS in 2014 after completing my Bachelor of Environmental Science at Deakin University. My home team at the Department of Environment and Primary Industries (now DELWP) was a perfect fit. After spending the first four months figuring out what government was all about and getting to grips with full-time work, I moved to the Department of Health (DoH), then Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV). The areas I worked in at DoH and CAV were not at all related to what I had studied and completely foreign to me. It was character-building, to say the least. What I valued most about my experience in VPS GRADS was landing in new workplaces and having to adapt to new processes, cultures and management styles. Three times in 12 months. It taught me a lot about myself and improved my ability to solve problems and build relationships. I also learnt heaps of acronyms. Three years on, I'm still in the public service and have no intention of leaving. Even though I know it wasn't luck that got me here, I feel lucky to have a career in the VPS. "

– Stephanie, Department of Environment and Primary Industries (now DELWP)

4. Recruitment Process and Timelines

Round one timelines

Recruitment Step	Round one timelines	Recruitment process
Online Application	Fri 02 March - Sun 08 April (11.59pm AEST)	Online applications received (public holiday 12 March, 30 March, 31 March, 01 April, 02 April)
	By Mon 30 April	Unsuccessful and less competitive candidates at application stage are advised
Online Reasoning Assessment	Fri 20 April - Tues 24 April (11.59pm AEST)	Online reasoning assessments conducted NB: All online assessments must be completed within 48 hours upon receipt of the invitation
	Mon 21 May - Fri 08 June	Feedback provided to candidates who did not progress to online assessment (if requested)
Assessment Centre	Fri 04 May - Wed 09 May	Assessment centres booked
	By Wed 16 May	Unsuccessful and less competitive candidates at online assessments are advised
	Wed 09 May - Fri 18 May	Half-day assessment centres
Talent Pool	By Wed 30 May	Candidates successful to the talent pool are advised Unsuccessful candidates at the assessment centre stage are advised
Department/ Agency Interviews	Mon 18 June - Fri 22 June	Department/Agency interviews scheduled
	By Thurs 28 June	Candidates who progressed to the talent pool but did not receive a round one interview advised
	Tues 26 June - Fri 13 July	Round one interviews
Feedback	Between Fri 25 June - Fri 06 July	Feedback provided to candidates who did not progress to the assessment centre and candidates who did not progress to the talent pool (if requested)
Offers	Wed 19 July - Wed 25 July	Round one offer period
<p>If you have not heard from the relevant Department/Agency within two weeks of advising the HOBAN Recruitment that you intend to accept a written offer of employment, please contact the HOBAN Recruitment on 1300 662 930.</p>		

Round two timelines

Recruitment Step	Round two timelines	Recruitment process
Department Interviews	Thurs 24 Aug - Wed 30 Aug	Department/Agency interviews scheduled
	Tues 05 Sept - Fri 15 Sept	Round two interviews
Offers	Thurs 20 Sept - Thurs 27 Sept	Round two offer period
Feedback	Mon 01 Oct - Tues 02 Oct	Feedback provided to candidates who progressed to the talent pool but did not attend a Department/Agency interview (if requested)
	Mon 15 Oct - Fri 19 Oct	Feedback provided to candidates who attended a Department/Agency interview but were not offered a role (if requested)

If you have not heard from the relevant Department/Agency within two weeks of advising the HOBAN Recruitment that you intend to accept a written offer of employment, please contact the HOBAN Recruitment on 1300 662 930.

Additional recruitment cycle timelines

Additional recruitment cycles	
October through to the end of January 2019	Additional Recruitment as required by Departments/Agencies
January 2019	Feedback provided to interviewed candidates who were not offered positions and have not previously received Department/Agency interview feedback from round one or two

5. Assessment Criteria

Abstract Ability

- Deals with concepts and complexity comfortably
- Uses analytical and conceptual skills to reason through problems
- Has creative ideas and projects how these could link to innovations

Teamwork

- Cooperates and works well with others in the pursuit of team goals
- Collaborates and shares information
- Shows consideration and concern and respect for others' feelings
- Accommodates and works well with others' different working styles
- Encourages resolution of conflict in a group

Written Communication

- Uses clear, concise and grammatically correct language
- Organises information in a logical sequence
- Ensures written communication contains necessary information to achieve its purpose
- Uses appropriate style and format

Verbal Communication

- Clearly explains information and listens to feedback
- Uses a polite and considerate manner when dealing with others
- Confidently conveys ideas and information in a clear and interesting way
- Understands and meets the needs of the target audience
- Sees things from others' points of view and confirms understanding

Initiative and Accountability

- Proactive and self-starting
- Seizes opportunities and acts on them
- Takes responsibility for own actions

Flexibility

- Has strategies and mechanisms for adapting to change and stress
- Is open to new ideas
- Accepts changed priorities without undue discomfort
- Recognises the merits of different options and acts accordingly

Values

- Integrity
- Responsiveness
- Impartiality
- Accountability
- Respect
- Leadership
- Human Rights

6. Selection Criteria Assessed at Each Stage of the Process

	Online		Assessment Centre				Department /Agency process
	Application form	Online Reasoning Assessment	Work Sample	Group Exercise	Behavioural interview	Technical questions (Eco and A&F)	Department/ Agency interview
VPS Values	X				X		
Analytical / conceptual ability		X	X				
Teamwork				X	X		
Initiative and accountability	X			X			
Flexibility	X				X		
Verbal communication				X	X		
Written communication	X		X				
Education							X
Technical skills						X	X
Department/Agency values							X
Additional personal qualities							X
Additional skills or knowledge							X

7. Online Application

The online application is your first opportunity to demonstrate your ability to meet the selection criteria. Not all candidates will progress past this stage so it's important to tailor your application for the VPS GRADS. We use an online application form as the first step in the process to ensure each candidate is fairly and objectively assessed. The online application is primarily a questionnaire and the questions relate to the selection criteria outlined above. Please keep in mind when submitting your application, that the responses on your application form will be assessed.

At this stage, you will be asked to indicate your stream preferences. Your application will be considered in line with your first stream preference only up until the assessment centre stage. You will also be asked to provide up to three Department/Agency preferences you may have. You are not required to have a Department/Agency preference.

Acknowledgement of Application

Once you have successfully submitted your online application, you will receive an email confirming receipt. We recommend that you check all spam filters on your email account as emails sent from an unknown address may automatically move to your spam folder. HOBAN Recruitment will later send you an email which will require you to log-in and create individual log-in details for the HOBAN system. You will be required to use these log-in details for the duration of the process to ensure that your personal details are kept up to date.

Transcripts

When you are e-mailed by HOBAN Recruitment, you will also be required to login and upload the transcript or qualification for your undergraduate degree for the streams you have applied for. You must provide your undergraduates degree as part of your application. Your undergraduate transcript must contain:

- your name
- qualification name
- university logo or name
- majoring subjects (if applicable)

While an online course record that includes university insignia is acceptable, a word processing document or spread sheet with your grades typed would be considered insufficient evidence of your qualifications. You must provide your undergraduate transcript.

Postgraduate Qualifications

If you wish to provide postgraduate qualifications you will need to scan your transcripts and upload them as one document. We will not be able to process your application if you only provide postgraduate qualifications. If your postgraduate qualifications relate to your stream preference you will be required to upload these transcripts at the application stage.

We will collect other documentation, such as transcripts for further qualifications (e.g. postgraduate qualifications), updated resumes and proof of eligibility, at the assessment centre if you progress to this stage.

Overseas Qualification Recognition

If you have an overseas qualification you will be required to provide Overseas Qualification Recognition for your undergraduate degree at the application stage or proof that you are undergoing the process. If you have studied a postgraduate qualification in Australia (or New Zealand) that will suffice as overseas recognition. You will need to scan your transcripts and upload them as one document. We will not be able to process your application if you solely provide postgraduate qualifications.

Online Application Tips

The following are some tips to help you do your best:

- Start your online application as early as possible, well before the deadline. If you have questions or technology issues on the due date, you may not be able to resolve these quickly enough to lodge your application on time. Please note that online applications close at 11.59pm AEST on Sunday 08 April 2018). Applications submitted after the deadline will not be considered.
- Ensure you read and correctly answer the eligibility questions. If you answer these incorrectly your application may not be considered.
- Set aside at least 1.5 hours to complete your application. Take note of character limits as information you provide beyond these limits will not be considered. Remember to be concise.
- You can save your application at any point and return to it.
- We recommend that you prepare your responses in a word processing document and then copy and paste them into your online application form. If you experience technical issues on the site, you may lose the information and need to start again.
- Proof read your application. Your writing skills are assessed along with the content in your responses.

Selection criteria assessed with the online application form are:

VPS Values

Written Communication

Initiative & Accountability

Flexibility

8. Online Reasoning Assessments

If your application progresses to the next stage, you will be invited to complete an online reasoning assessment. This assessment comprises verbal, numeric and abstract reasoning. Most people are better at reasoning with some types of data than with others and an assessment like this allows everyone to demonstrate their area(s) of strength. In other words, do not worry if you find some items more challenging than others.

All of the information you require is contained within the assessment. There is nothing you can do to prepare, other than reviewing some sample questions, to ensure you are comfortable upon commencing the assessment and selecting an appropriate testing environment.

Once you begin the assessment, the timer cannot be stopped, and you will not be able to re-sit the assessment if you feel you didn't complete it under appropriate testing conditions. If you prefer, you may complete the assessments in HOBAN Recruitment offices.

These assessments help the VPS predict how quickly you will learn new information during the graduate scheme and how effectively you will use information, sometimes in ambiguous situations, to solve problems. The assessments have been used with thousands of other graduate candidates in Australia, allowing us to compare your performance to that of your peers. As such, we are able to set benchmarks for these assessments in line with the capability required in these areas on the VPS GRADS.

Online assessments are not designed to be completed by people with visual impairments (which are not corrected with corrective lenses). If you are in this situation and you did not indicate this on your application form, please contact HOBAN Recruitment to make suitable arrangements. Similarly, if you are unable to undertake online reasoning tests for a reason other than visual impairment and did not advise us of this on your application form, please contact the HOBAN Recruitment to make suitable arrangements.

Once you have commenced this assessment your results will be considered as part of this process.

The most competitive candidates at the online reasoning assessment are progressed through to the assessment centre, based on their first stream preference.

Online Reasoning Assessment Tips

- When selecting the best time and place to complete the assessment, please keep in mind that the testing environment can have a significant impact on your performance. You will want to be somewhere quiet.
- Ensure you have high-speed internet connection where you can be assured of at least 30 minutes of uninterrupted time.
- Once you are sent the online reasoning assessment you will have 48 hours to complete.
- While the assessment itself only requires 20 minutes to complete, you will want to allow some additional time for logging in, reading instructions, completing sample items, etc.
- While the assessment is timed, it is more important to respond accurately than to answer every question. If you find that you are struggling with a question, you may choose to move on to the next one and return to the challenging item if time remains. Points will not be deducted for incorrect answers.
- Most people will not complete all 51 questions in the time allowed. This is by design and means that you should not become worried if you think that you will not finish the entire assessment.

Selection criteria assessed with the online aptitude assessments are:

9. Assessment Centre

If your application progresses from online assessment, you will be invited to attend a half-day session at an assessment centre.

What is an assessment centre?

GRADS assessment centres use three different activities to assess your capability against the selection criteria. We understand that each individual has unique strengths, so our process is designed to provide you with an opportunity to demonstrate your capability. We want to see the best of you during the assessment centre and as such we have outlined what the assessment centre day will look like and some hints and tips that will help you along the way.

You will be asked to complete the following assessment activities:

- a group exercise
- a work sample exercise
- a behavioural interview (incorporating technical questions for Economics stream candidates)
- a technical activity for Accounting & Finance candidates Only

In the downtime in between activities at the assessment centre you will have the opportunity to meet with the VPS staff and past graduates and ask questions about the scheme. This is a great opportunity to find out more about specific Departments/Agencies, the projects graduates have worked on and the benefits of the VPS GRADS. This is referred to as “Department and Agency Q&A”.

During the assessment centre you will provide your official transcript and where applicable, overseas recognition qualification. We will also confirm your stream preference and eligibility. We will also reconfirm your availability over the recruitment period. Should you be unavailable during the interview period for round one or round two, your application will not be considered for that particular recruitment round.

The dress code on the day is professional, corporate attire.

Assessment Centre Tips

- The assessment centre is not designed to catch you out. Try to relax, be yourself and enjoy the activities.
- Listen carefully to the instructions you are given. If you are unsure what to do, ask for clarification.
- Be enthusiastic. Plan to have a good night's sleep the night before so your energy level is high.
- Address all the issues and questions outlined in each activity.
- Know the time limit for each activity. These will be provided at the commencement of each activity.
- Consider the selection criteria when framing your answers.
- Gather information about assessment centres: visit websites, read printed material, talk to previous candidates or career advisers. Your career adviser will be a great source of information for how to prepare for an assessment centre.
- Be punctual. Ensure you arrive at least 10 minutes early.
- Familiarise yourself with the location and things like parking, public transport.
- Ensure you have the right start time and date.
- Take the contact number in case of emergency.
- If something goes wrong, call the HOBAN Recruitment to let them know.
- Be yourself and enjoy the day!

10. Activities at the Assessment Centre

Group Exercise

What happens?

The group exercise is a work-based scenario where you will be asked to participate as part of a larger group of graduates who are also attending the assessment centre day. The HOBAN assessors will observe how you work in a team to solve problems. Please see Appendix B for a sample group exercise.

Selection criteria assessed in the group exercise are:

Group Exercise Tips

- Make sure you read and listen to all instructions carefully and keep in mind which selection criteria are being assessed.
- Speak in a clear and concise manner.
- Ensure you actively participate but also listen to others contributions.
- Take your role seriously and do your best to behave as you would if the situation were real.

Teamwork

Verbal Communication

Initiative and Accountability

Work Sample Exercise

What happens?

During the work sample exercise, you will be asked to prepare a short written document on a computer or laptop. Please see **Appendix B** for a sample work sample exercise.

Accounting and Finance Technical Work Sample

Accounting and Finance graduates will complete a technical work sample where they will be asked two or three additional technical questions. Please see **Appendix B** for a sample accounting and finance question.

Work Sample Tips

- Read the information provided carefully and make sure you know what it is asking you to do.
- Keep your response concise.
- Pay attention to your spelling and grammar.

Selection criteria assessed with the work sample are:

Analytical and Conceptual Ability

Written Communication

Behavioural Interview

What happens?

Your behavioural interview will be with a HOBAN Recruitment interviewer. You will be asked motivational and behavioural based questions. We are seeking specific motivations as to why you want to work for the VPS. This is where you can demonstrate your knowledge and interest in Departments/Agencies and the VPS GRADS.

The behavioural questions will require you to respond to questions by describing previous situations you have been involved in related to the selection criteria. In responding to these questions, draw on examples from all aspects of your life, including work, volunteer and community work and university. Please see **Appendix B** for a sample interview question.

Economics Technical Interview

Economics candidates will have two or three additional interviewers present for technical questions. You will be asked a microeconomics question, macroeconomics question and an applied economics question. Please see **Appendix B** for a sample economist question. Candidates for the economics stream should refresh themselves on key economic principles and practice, applying these to topical issues affecting Victoria.

Behavioural Interview Tips

- The interviewer wants you to do your best. During the interview you may be asked probing questions to help clarify your responses.
- Choose examples that highlight your strengths and focus on your own involvement in various situations (use 'I' rather than 'we'). Use the most recent examples possible.
- Before you attend the assessment centre, consider past experiences where you have demonstrated the selection criteria to make it easier to provide an example.
- Practice can be of real benefit. Engage in mock interviews with friends, colleagues, career advisers – anyone who is prepared to help.
- Walk the interviewer through your response in a logical, sequential fashion. Structure your responses according to the STAR approach outlined below.

Using the STAR approach

Situation: A brief outline of the situation or setting, who was involved and what was your role?

Task: What did you do?

Action: How did you do it?

Result: What was the outcome and what feedback did you receive?

Selection criteria assessed with the behavioural interview are:

VPS values

Teamwork

Flexibility

Verbal Communication

Remember, the assessors want you to do well. They have spent considerable time screening applicants and have identified you as a potential employee. They will be looking for confirmation that you have the skills and values to be successful in their Department/Agency. Be enthusiastic and energised.

Departments/Agencies will also conduct behavioural interviews should your application progress to this stage.

Department and Agency Question and Answers (Department and Agency Q&A)

During the downtime in between activities you will have the opportunity to meet with VPS representatives and previous VPS graduates. The Department/Agency question and answer time provides an excellent opportunity for you to find out more about the VPS GRADS. Be sure to come along with any questions you may have about the VPS GRADS.

11. GRADS Talent Pool

If you are assessed as meeting all of the GRADS selection criteria benchmarks after participating in an assessment centre, you will be placed in the GRADS talent pool. Candidates in this talent pool will be considered for Department/Agency interviews for the VPS GRADS. Candidates can remain in the talent pool up until January 2019 and will be considered by Departments/Agencies for positions in round one, round two and any additional recruitment cycle rounds.

There are a number of different factors to take into consideration when shortlisting candidates through to the Department/Agency interview stage. Your overall assessment scores will be taken into consideration in line with your stream preferences and areas of study. A Department/Agency will review each application and decide on the candidates they wish to invite to an interview based on their role requirements.

If your application progresses to the GRADS talent pool and you no longer wish to be considered for the VPS GRADS, please inform the HOBAN Recruitment immediately. This will ensure we are not contacting you unnecessarily and Departments/Agencies are not considering your application when you are no longer available.

12. Department and Agency Interviews

Department/Agency interviews are the final face-to-face step in the process and the point at which Departments/Agencies select candidates.

You may be invited to attend one or more interviews with individual Departments/Agencies. All Department/Agency interviews will be held in Melbourne or surrounding areas. Departments/Agencies select the graduates they wish to interview based on your demonstration against the VPS GRADS selection criteria. Along with alignment to the essential skill requirements of the roles, these will be sought through your completed studies as outlined on the completed application form and submitted transcripts.

Round one: Department/Agency interviews will be held between Tuesday 26 June 2018 – Friday 13 July 2018.

Some positions are not recruited until later in the year, hence round two. The positions recruited in round two are not predetermined and vary each year.

Round two: Department/Agency interviews for round two will be held between Tuesday 05 September 2018 - Friday 15 September 2018.

Department/Agency Interview Tips

- Always consider the selection criteria when framing your responses.
- Re-read the questions and your responses from your application before attending an interview. Familiarise yourself with the position description. Position descriptions will be provided prior to interview and will detail the role information.
- Make sure you have examples of previous experiences and activities that demonstrate your capability against each criterion.
- Make notes and bring them with you to jog your memory.
- Find out as much as you can about the Department/Agency, including its role and responsibilities. A good place to start is the Department/Agency website. Media archives are also an excellent source of information.
- Use the STAR approach to answer questions: describe the situation (outline), the task (what you did), the action (how) and the result (the outcome).
- Ensure you consider your mode of transport and the travel time.
- Arrive at least ten minutes before your scheduled interview time.
- Allow time to sign in, if specified.

The duration of interviews can vary; generally interviews are between 30-60 minutes. Before each behavioural interview you will be contacted by a member of the HOBAN Recruitment and provided with the details of the position, including the criteria being assessed, expected duration, location and any other particulars. You will then be provided with a position description for the ongoing role to which the Department/Agency is recruiting, together with an interview confirmation email. Please note some position descriptions may be somewhat generic however further information will be supplied during the Department/Agency interview. The Department/Agency may allocate specific projects and tasks depending on the successful applicant.

13. Verbal Offer Process

If more than one Department/Agency wishes to offer you a place on the VPS GRADS, you will be provided with all offers for that round in one telephone call from the HOBAN Recruitment. Where possible, you will have up to 24 hours to indicate your intention to accept a written offer of employment.

If successful, you will be employed by that particular Department/Agency. You will begin the VPS GRADS with this home Department/Agency before rotating to placements in two other Departments/Agencies. The Department/Agency rotations are selected on a randomised basis with the aim of providing graduates with a breadth of experience to expand and develop their knowledge and skills. You will return to this home Department/Agency to an ongoing role on completion of the 12-month scheme.

14. Verbal Feedback

If you do not receive an offer of employment for the 2019 VPS GRADS, you are able to receive phone based feedback around the selection criteria regardless of which stage of the process your application was unsuccessful.

There is no pass or fail in the VPS GRADS recruitment process. The process is designed to help us select applicants who best meet the requirements of the VPS GRADS. Should you not meet all of the selection criteria, you may be better suited to other areas of the VPS where specialised skills are considered with a greater weighting than the general skills assessed for the VPS GRADS.

It is important to note that feedback will only be scheduled for candidates who provide Australian based landline or mobile phone numbers. If you are unable to meet the feedback timelines please contact HOBAN Recruitment and we will consider each candidate on a case by case basis.

If you do not receive an offer of employment for 2019 VPS GRADS you will be notified via e-mail. The e-mail will contain instructions inviting you to log a feedback request. Verbal feedback will be provided by HOBAN Recruitment or a Department/Agency representative depending on the stage of your application.

15. Verbal Feedback Timelines

Recruitment stages – feedback type	Feedback Schedule
1. Your application does not progress to the online assessments, you will receive an e-mail notification by: Thursday 26 April	Monday 21 May - Friday 08 June
2. Your application does not progress to the assessment centre, you will receive an e-mail notification by: Wednesday 30 May	Monday 25 June - Friday 06 July
3. Your application does not progress to the talent pool, you will receive an e-mail notification by: Wednesday 30 May	Monday 25 June - Friday 06 July
4. Your application progresses to the talent pool and you do not complete a Department/Agency interview (once all offers for positions from rounds one and two have been finalised), you will receive an e-mail notification by: Thursday 28 June	Monday 30 July - Friday 03 August
5. You attend a Department/Agency interview in round one and do not receive an offer of a position, you will receive an e-mail notification by: Tuesday 31 July	Monday 15 October - Friday 19 October
The Department/Agency representative will contact you to provide you with feedback. Please note that feedback is only provided where you have not been offered a role. If you request feedback and are subsequently offered a role before feedback is provided, then feedback will no longer be arranged.	
6. You are successful to the talent pool but you did not receive a Department/Agency interview in round one or round two by: Tuesday 11 September	Monday 01 October - Tuesday 02 October
7. You attend a Department/Agency interview in round two and do not receive an offer of a position, you will receive an e-mail notification by: Tuesday 02 October	Monday 15 October - Friday 19 October
The Department/Agency representatives will contact you to provide you with feedback. Please note that feedback is only provided where you have not been offered a role. If you request feedback and are subsequently offered a role before feedback is provided, then feedback will no longer be arranged.	
8. You attend Department/Agency interviews during additional recruitment rounds and do not receive an offer of a position	2-4 weeks after the interview
If you attend an additional Department/Agency interview and are not offered a position, you will be sent an email advising you of this and we will invite you to log a feedback request. Feedback requests for this process will only be conducted if you have not received Department/Agency feedback after rounds one and two. Feedback requests from additional recruitment cycles will be provided once all additional recruitment rounds are completed which will be between December 2018 and January 2019.	

(Please note the above dates may vary slightly.)

16. Continuous Improvement

Your feedback is important to us. Surveys will be distributed throughout the recruitment process. The feedback provided in your response to this survey will inform our process for the following year. The VPS GRADS also participates in the annual graduate survey conducted by the Australian Association of Graduate Employers (AAGE). The AAGE surveys graduates who obtain positions on graduate programs. A link to this online survey is sent via email by HOBAN Recruitment in the second half of the year.

17. Contact

Please contact the HOBAN Recruitment with any enquiries:

Phone: 1300 662 930

Email: vpsgrads@hoban.com.au

Please note that when calling the 1300 number you may need to leave a message for the team and your call will be returned within 24 hours (during business days).

Queries that are not related to the standard process will be referred to the Graduate Program Manager and will require a longer response time.

Appendix A - Frequently Asked Questions

Eligibility

Q1. What are the eligibility requirements for the VPS GRADS 2019 Cohort?

1. You are required to be an Australian or New Zealand citizen or permanent resident at the time of application (anticipation of citizenship or permanent residence before the start of the scheme is insufficient)
2. You must not have received a redundancy from the VPS in the last three years
3. You must consent to undertake a police check
4. Obtain a minimum of a three-year undergraduate degree, to be completed by the end of January 2019. Proof of undergoing a postgraduate qualification is insufficient; you must provide your undergraduate qualification.

Q2. I completed my degree in 2000; can I apply for the VPS GRADS 2019 Cohort?

For the VPS GRADS, you must hold a three-year undergraduate degree to be completed by the end of January 2019. There is no restriction of when you completed your degree providing it is completed prior to 28 January 2019.

Q3. What are the eligibility requirements for each stream of the VPS GRADS 2019 Cohort?

Please refer to page four and five of the candidate guide for stream specific eligibility requirements.

Q4. How many stream preferences can I have?

There is no limit on the number of stream preferences you can select; however you must meet the eligibility requirements for each stream (in addition to the eligibility for the VPS GRADS).

Q5. Do I need to complete a police check prior to applying for the VPS GRADS?

You are not required to conduct a police check prior to applying for the VPS GRADS. You will be required to consent to undergo a police check when you apply. You may be required to complete a police check prior to a formal offer of employment.

Transcripts

Q6. What kind of academic transcript will be accepted with my application?

Your academic transcript must prove your eligibility for the VPS GRADS. Your transcript must contain your name, qualification name, university logo or name and majoring subjects if applicable. For example, if you have a preference for the Economist stream, a major in Economics or Econometrics is required. You must have studied a minimum of eight Economics and/or Econometrics modules in your undergraduate degree or postgraduate qualification. If you have a preference for Accounting and Finance a major in Accounting and/or Finance is required. You must have studied a minimum of eight Accounting and/or Finance modules in your undergraduate degree or postgraduate qualification.

While an online course record that includes university insignia is acceptable, a word processing document or spread sheet with your grades typed in is not. You must provide your undergraduate transcript.

Q7. I have not yet completed my degree, what transcript should I provide?

If you have not yet completed your degree, please submit your most recent undergraduate transcript, containing your name, qualification name, university logo or name and majoring subjects if applicable. Please refer to question five.

Q8. I do not have an academic transcript. What should I do?

Your application is unable to be assessed until you provide HOBAN recruitment with an undergraduate academic transcript. Please contact your University to obtain your academic undergraduate transcript if you do not currently possess one. Please refer to question six for further information regarding transcripts.

Q9. There is a cost associated with obtaining a copy of my academic transcript. Who pays for this?

Any cost associated with obtaining an academic transcript is the responsibility of the candidate with no reimbursements available.

Overseas Qualifications

Q10. I have an overseas qualification. What should I do?

You should provide your Department of Education and Training overseas qualification recognition at the application stage. If you have studied your undergraduate degree overseas but subsequently you have studied a postgraduate qualification in Australia (or New Zealand), your postgraduate qualification will suffice as overseas recognition. In this instance you must provide your overseas undergraduate transcript and your Australian ((or New Zealand) postgraduate transcript.

Please refer to page four in the candidate guide.

Q11. My undergraduate degree is from New Zealand. Do I need to obtain overseas qualification recognition?

If you have obtained your undergraduate degree from an Australian or New Zealand university you are not required to obtain overseas qualification recognition.

Q12. I am submitting my application and I do not have Department of Education overseas qualification recognition. What should I do?

If you do not have your overseas qualification recognition at the time of application you must submit proof that you are undergoing the process. It can take up to three months to obtain overseas qualification recognition. A receipt of submission is acceptable proof that you are undergoing the process at application stage. A receipt of payment must be provided at the assessment centre stage.

If you have studied your undergraduate degree overseas but subsequently you have studied a postgraduate qualification in Australia (or New Zealand), your postgraduate qualification will suffice as overseas recognition. In this instance you must provide your overseas undergraduate transcript and your Australian (or New Zealand) postgraduate transcript.

Q13. My undergraduate degree is from an Australian (or New Zealand) university; however I studied a semester overseas. Do I need to obtain overseas qualification recognition?

Providing your undergraduate degree is issued by an Australian or New Zealand university you are not required to obtain overseas qualification recognition.

Q14. I completed my undergraduate degree overseas. I am studying a master's degree in Australia (or New Zealand). Do I need to obtain overseas qualification recognition?

If you have obtained a master's degree or are currently undergoing a master's degree in Australia (or New Zealand) you are not required to obtain overseas qualification recognition. Your entry into an Australian (or New Zealand) master's is recognition of your overseas undergraduate degree.

Q15. There is a cost associated with obtaining overseas qualification recognition. Who pays for this?

Any cost associated with obtaining overseas qualification recognition is the responsibility of the candidate with no reimbursements available.

General Queries

Q16. What is the starting salary for a VPS Graduate?

VPS Officer Grade 2.1.6 or a salary equivalent of \$56,967.00 plus super (as of 1 January 2019) and on successful completion of the scheme, graduates will be promoted to a VPS Grade 3 position on a salary of \$67,866.00 (as of 1 January 2019).

Q17. What Departments/Agencies recruit for the VPS GRADS?

Department of Education and Training; Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources; Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning; Department of Health and Human Services; Department of Justice and Regulation; Department of Premier and Cabinet; Department of Treasury and Finance and Agencies such as Victoria Police, Essential Services Commission and Environment Protection Authority.

Q18. How many roles are recruited for annually?

Historically, approximately 80-100 roles are recruited annually.

Q19. What streams will you most likely recruit for this year?

The streams you can select a preference for are outlined on page five on the candidate guide. Your application will be considered in line with your stream preferences and your eligibility for each stream. As roles are not predetermined, if you are selected for a Department/Agency interview(s), you will be advised of the stream at this stage.

Q20. What roles are on offer?

There are various roles recruited throughout multiple Department/Agencies. Positions for the VPS GRADS become available at the Department/Agency interview stage. If you are successful in obtaining a Department/Agency interview you will be advised of the position(s) you have been selected for. Historically roles recruited include but are not limited to; data analyst, policy officer, project officer, budget analyst, policy adviser, planning officer.

Q21. I have an updated resume to provide. Who should I provide this to?

If you are successful through to the assessment centre stage you will have the opportunity to provide your most recent resume. This is the finalised resume placed on your file. If you wish to provide an updated resume prior to a Department/Agency interview you must bring this along with you on the day(s) of your interview(s).

Q22. If successful into a position how many rotations will I have?

The VPS GRADS is a 12 month graduate scheme. Successful graduates participate in three rotations of four months in duration.

Q23. How is my application assessed?

As this is a graduate scheme there is no requirement to have prior work experience. Your application will be assessed based on the capabilities required. Please refer to page nine on the candidate guide.

Q24. I have postgraduate qualifications. Will these qualifications be reviewed as part of my application?

As an eligibility requirement for the VPS GRADS is a minimum of a three-year undergraduate degree, this is what is considered for your application. There is no requirement for postgraduate qualifications. You can provide your postgraduate qualifications at the assessment centre stage should you wish to do so.

Q25. I am not available for the assessment centre dates; can my application still be considered?

If your application progresses to the assessment centre stage you must be available to attend on the date invited. Unfortunately, your application will not be progressed if you are unable to attend this stage.

Q26. I am not available for the round one Department/Agency interviews; can my application still be considered?

If you are successful through the assessment centre stage but are unavailable for round one Department/Agency interviews, we will consider your application for round two Department/Agency interviews.

Q27. Will I be placed in a permanent role after the graduate scheme?

The VPS GRADS is a 12 month graduate scheme with an ongoing opportunity once the scheme is completed.

Q28. Do I get training as part of the graduate scheme?

Successful graduates partake in formal training programs throughout the year as part of their Learning & Development.

Assessment Processes

Q29. When will I know the outcome of my application?

Please refer to page seven and eight of the candidate guide for an outline of the timelines at each stage of the process.

Q30. What happens if I already completed the online Revelian reasoning assessment within the last 12 months?

If your application progresses to this stage and you have completed the Revelian online reasoning assessment within the last 12 months you will have the option to release your results. You will receive instructions on how to do so should you progress to this stage.

Feedback

Q31. Will I receive feedback on my application?

If your application is deemed unsuccessful or less competitive you are eligible to request and receive feedback on your application. All feedback is provided over the phone. Please refer to page 22 on the candidate guide for the feedback timelines.

Q32. I am overseas during the feedback stages. What should I do?

If you are overseas during the feedback period, HOBAN are more than willing to call you on an international number. Please provide any alternative contact number to HOBAN recruitment as soon as possible. Feedback will be provided between the hours of 08:30 – 17:30 AEST.

Appendix B - Sample Assessment Centre Activities

Sample Group Exercise

Task

You have been appointed by your Department/Agency to an interdepartmental advisory committee. The role of the committee is to provide advice to the Premier.

As a group you have 30 minutes to be used as follows:

- A maximum of 10 minutes to divide into Departments/Agencies and prepare in your department.
- 15–20 minutes for group discussion, including preparation of a presentation about the issues and advice to the Premier on how he might proceed.
- Five minutes to present to the Premier.

Your Role

Your role is to represent the needs and interests of a VPS Department/Agency. There will be two representatives from each Department/Agency.

Background Information

The Victorian Public Service has identified a number of issues facing Victoria over the next five years.

These are:

- Managing the diversity of the Victorian population
- Improving delivery of health services in Victoria
- Delivering quality education to rural and regional Victoria
- Supporting Victorian communities to build safer environments.

The Premier has asked the VPS to consider these issues in relation to the public sector workforce and to provide a briefing that discusses the relative priorities of these issues and recommends the most appropriate way to address them during the current term.

The VPS has set up an advisory committee to:

- Discuss and evaluate the issues
- Recommend relative priorities for the current term.

Sample Work Sample Exercise

The case study:

Task

You have 25 minutes to prepare a one page written brief for the Premier.

Topic

Child protection in the Department of Health & Human Services focuses on the health, safety, development, learning and wellbeing of children, young people and families in Victoria.

Child Protection Services is asking for additional funding to address the issues they face retaining child protection workers who are leaving the job at a rate of up to 50 per cent.

The Premier has asked for a briefing summarising the following:

- Current workforce retention issues surrounding the state of child protection services in Victoria
- Risks to government of not providing the funding to address these workforce issues
- How government will know if the additional funding has addressed the issues.

In preparing your response to this case study, in-depth knowledge of the child protection area is not required.

Sample Interview Question

Initiative and Accountability

Tell me about a time you saw an opportunity and drove it forward.

- How did you spot the opportunity?
- How did you decide whether to pursue the opportunity or not?
- What was the outcome?

Sample Economist Interview Question

Sample technical question for candidates applying to the economist stream

- The issue of tax reform to support economic growth has recently been a subject of significant public commentary. What makes particular taxes good or bad? What options might there be for reform?

Sample Accounting and Finance Question

Sample technical question for candidates applying to the accounting and finance stream

- Financial statements represent a record of the financial activities of an entity. Please explain what the major financial statements are and how they relate to each other.