

VICTORIAN SCHOOL OF LANGUAGES

FAMILY & STAFF BULLETIN

ISSUE 3 / SEPTEMBER 2024





WELCOME

Dear Parents, carers and staff,

During Term 3 Assistant Principal, Joe Tasic, and I have visited many of our centres and connected with our host school principals who support our work. We have been warmly received by our schools, and their willingness to continue to provide us with facilities in which we can operate is a critical piece in our success.

This term the 2024 VCE Premier's Awards were held at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre, and 19 students from the VSL were recognised for their outstanding achievement in languages. It was a day of celebration for the students and parents, as well as recognition for our hard-working teachers. Later in this bulletin you will hear what the students are doing this year, and some reflections on their time at the VSL.

The end of the school year will quickly come upon us, with our CCAFL examinations beginning early in Term 4. As we say farewell to our Year 12 students, we wish them well in their exams and look forward to hearing of their success. In the meantime, our classes for students in Years F-11 continue.

The end of Term 3 is already upon us and our planning for 2025 has begun. Our enrolment process for 2024 will commence in Term 4. Current students will be given the opportunity to enrol into classes **prior to them being opened to the general public**. With the pressure

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JUDI BENNEY, EXECUTIVE PRINCIPAL

of places in many of our centres, I encourage you to enrol as soon as you are able to ensure your child can get the class of their choice.

This year we anticipate our enrolments will undertake a new format, as we propose to enrol through Compass. This will mean that your experience will be different, and it will be important that you watch for announcements on our website. Should you have any concerns or queries about the enrolment process, or need support to complete the enrolment, you should contact your centre supervisor or area manager in the first instance.

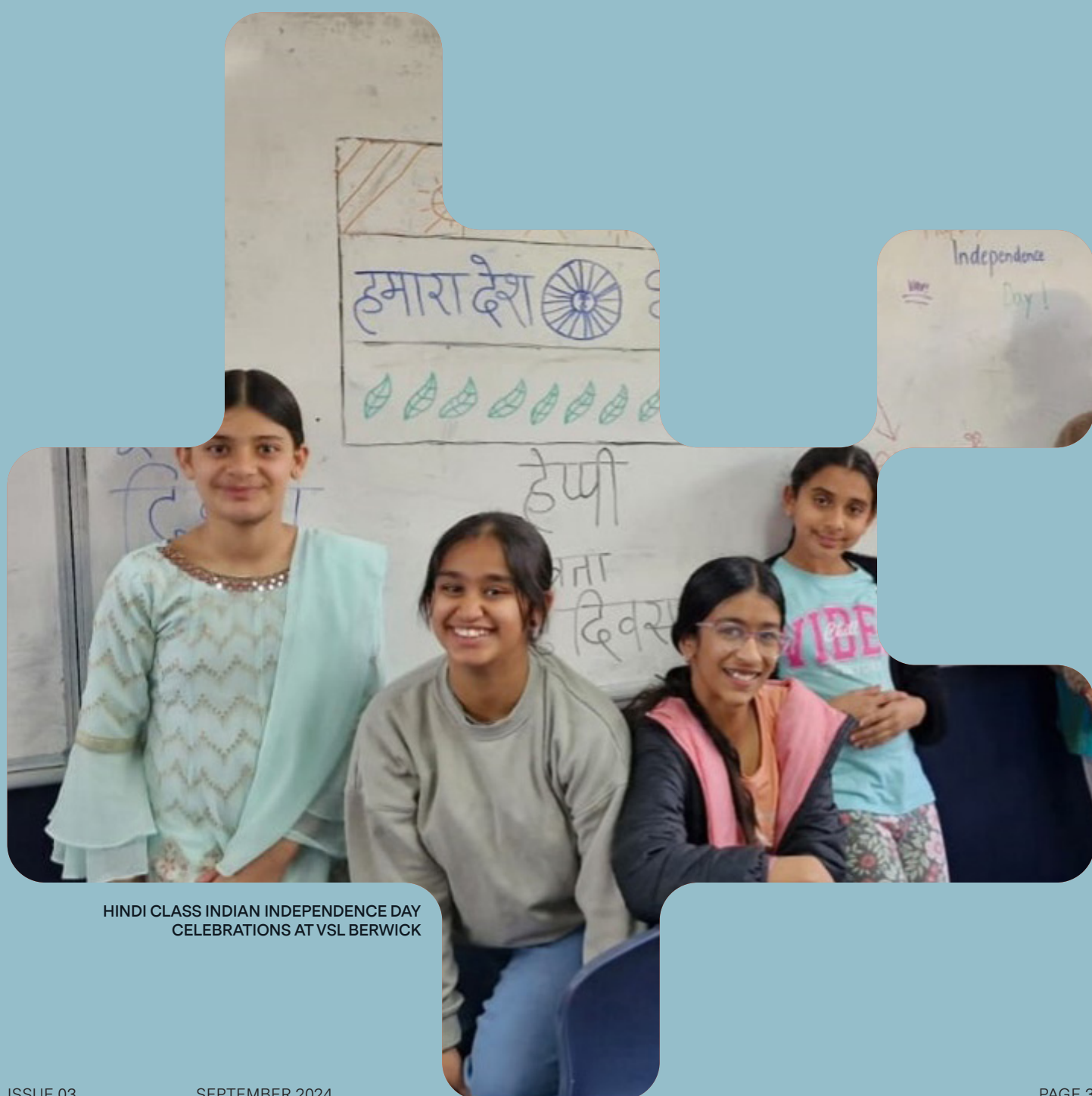
Thank you as always for your support.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Judi Benney'.

JUDI BENNEY, EXECUTIVE PRINCIPAL



AREA ACTIVITIES



HINDI CLASS INDIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATIONS AT VSL BERWICK



NAIDOC WEEK AT VSL ROXBURGH PARK

On Saturday the 27th of July in VSL's Roxburgh Park Centre, we celebrated NAIDOC Week.

Students took part in NAIDOC Week activities, watched informative videos, read relevant stories, made personalised NAIDOC-themed T-shirts, and used natural materials for arts and craft. Our students enjoyed the creative experience for themselves and gained insight into Indigenous Australian culture as part of our NAIDOC Week celebrations.

The NAIDOC week theme for 2024 was 'Keep the Fire Burning - Black, Loud and Proud'.

Our students gained insight into Indigenous Australian culture as part of our NAIDOC Week celebrations.

UZMA AKHLAQ, URDU 2-4 TEACHER - VSL ROXBURGH PARK





CELEBRATING THE OLYMPICS AT HAMPTON PARK

To celebrate the Olympics, Arabic students at Hampton Park designed and created medals for the Olympic Games using their Arabic languages.

Their teacher, Ninette Bebawi, works with a multi-level class, including both primary and secondary students, and we thank her for her imaginative activities and creative approach to the Olympic Games experience.

HEATHER RAE, AREA MANAGER - SOUTH EAST



VCE INDONESIAN EXCURSION

On Saturday August 17 the VCE Indonesian students and teachers made a visit to the Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia in Melbourne.

Our students had an enriching experience engaging with native speakers, which gave them the confidence to practice speaking with strangers—a crucial step in preparing for their oral exams in one month. The lively conversations and cultural exchanges brought the language to life, and the students thoroughly enjoyed this real-world practice. To top it all off, they savored a hearty serving of hot meatball soup, adding a warm and flavorful touch to the memorable day.

Thanks to Indonesian co-ordinator Sophia Teo, and teachers Michael Boss and Minarni Tirta for organising and attending the excursion, and to admin staff Tom Lee for accompaniment.





INDIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATIONS AT VSL DANDENONG

Like every year, Dandenong Hindi celebrated Independence Day on 17th August with great joy and pomp. On that day, the sense of happiness and pride could be clearly seen on the faces of all the students and teachers.

The program started with reciting the National Song of India, Vande Mataram by Hindi teachers. Students sang patriotic songs. Activities also included a quiz, poems, patriotic a PowerPoint presentation, skit, poem recitations, classical dance, violin and Bollywood dance performances. Students dressed up in cultural dress and fancy dress with their teachers, Saloni Surawala, Upma Mittal, Manju Agarwal, Anjali Gupta and Shally Khanna.

At the conclusion, everyone sang the national anthem.

Heather Rae (Area Manager VSL (South East / Dandenong) and Alan Feher (Supervisor) thanked and expressed their appreciation to the Hindi teachers and students for the successful event and their effort.



Independence Day is celebrated on August 15th to commemorate the independence of India. It is an important day in Indian history as it marks the end of British rule in 1947 and the establishment of a free and independent Indian nation. It is also known as the birthday of new and free India. Independence Day reminds Indians to be grateful, humble, and respectful to all the people who were behind this free India. It is also important as it helps keep the love for the country alive in the hearts of our young children. Independence Day has great significance as it fills Indian hearts with pride and patriotism and infuses them with the zeal and determination to do something for their nation. It also reminds us to remain grounded and not forget our roots.

SHALLY KHANNA, HINDI COORDINATOR - DANDENONG





TELUGU CLASS INDIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATIONS AT VSL WERRIBEE

All three classes from the Telugu faculty participated in the Indian Independence Day celebrations on Saturday, August 10, 2024. The students learned a song in class and grasped its lyrics and meaning. They sang both the Indian national anthem and the Australian anthem with pride and enthusiasm. Additionally, the students watched a film to gain insights into India's history and culture.

VAIJAYANTHI YARRAVAJHALA





INDONESIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATIONS AT VSL GLEN WAVERLEY

CLARE BRADBURY, YEAR 9 INDONESIAN TEACHER

On Saturday 17 August VSL students in Years 7-9 enjoyed a fun, interactive morning of cultural games and activities. The 17th August is Indonesian Independence Day. Our games reflected those that would be played in Indonesia at this time of year and students also wore the colours of the Indonesian flag (red and white) or traditional batik pattern.

We enjoyed craft, Indonesian card games, traditional 'congklak', marble and spoon races and the exciting 'krupuk-eating' competition!

To finish off the morning the Year 10 classes also joined us and we all ate an Indonesian lunch together. Students enjoyed 'nasi kuning' (yellow rice) with sides of chicken, beef rendang, vegetables and crackers.

Selamat Hari Kemerdekaan! Happy Independence Day!



AFGHANISTAN INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATIONS AT VSL DANDENONG

On August 24, the Pashto class at Dandenong celebrated Afghanistan Independence Day.

Special thanks to the Pashto teacher, Bahanita Danish, for organising activities for the class to celebrate this important cultural event for the Pashto and Afghan community.

HEATHER RAE, AREA MANAGER – SOUTH EAST





MALAYALAM ONAM CELEBRATIONS AT VSL EPPING

SILVIA MITREVSKI

On Saturday 7th September, the Malayalam Faculty at Epping hosted their vibrant annual Onam Celebration, featuring a lively array of traditional festivities. Highlights included a special tribute to the inaugural graduating class of VET Malayalam, whose achievements were marked with a trophy presentation. The event's memorable moments are captured below, including a standout shot of the proud graduates.



MALAYALAM ONAM CELEBRATIONS AT VSL CROYDON

Our Malayalam classes at VSL Croydon celebrated Indian Independence Day. Students were taught about the significance of Independence Day and freedom fighters such as Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and many others. All students wore dresses in Indian

flag colors which are saffron, white and green and the Ashok chakra in the middle which is blue. They drew and coloured the Indian flag and wrote an explanation of what the colours on the flag signifies. Students were keen to compare how Independence Day is celebrated in schools in India such as by flag raising ceremonies, singing the Indian national anthem and various cultural programs. Overall, it was an enjoyable fun filled class and parents were happy to see the children learning about Indian culture and heritage.





PREMIER'S VCE AWARDS



VSL STUDENTS WIN TOP HONOURS

Congratulations to 19 of our students who have been recognised with a Premier's VCE Award for their outstanding academic results in 2023.

The annual Premier's VCE Awards recognises the top-performing students in the state. This year, 310 students were recognised at the prestigious award ceremony, including three international students and six students who completed the VCE Vocational Major program with distinction, and 23 Top All-Round VCE High Achievers who achieved study scores of 46 or higher out of 50 in at least five VCE subjects.

Victoria's top performing VCE students received their Premier's VCE Awards during a special ceremony on the 17th July.

The entire VSL community would like to congratulate the students on being the recipients of such a prestigious award. We wish them every success.

To view the full Honour Roll and to read more about the Premier's VCE Awards, visit: <https://www.vic.gov.au/premiers-vce-awards>



THE VSL STUDENTS WHO RECEIVED THE PREMIER'S AWARDS ARE:

- | | |
|-------------|--------------------------|
| Arabic | Celina Safwan, |
| Chin Hakha | Rose Mary Lynn Sawmhal |
| Croatian | Malik Cosic |
| German | Rhea Werner |
| Greek | Evangelia Plakidas |
| Hindi | Sonakshi Verma |
| Hungarian | Borbala Kovacs |
| Hungarian | Flora Bacskai |
| Italian | Greta Guerrini |
| Italian | Asia Orsini |
| Japanese SL | Sawako Fujiie |
| Persian | Sina Ghadaksaz Zadeh |
| Persian | Nooshin Khaleghi Sohi |
| Persian | Paniz Mashatar |
| Polish | Natalia Hordejuk |
| Punjabi | Livanureet Brar |
| Spanish | Camila Echevarria Burnie |
| Spanish | Alisson Tellez Pedraza |
| Turkish | Elif Dicle |



ADDITIONAL PREMIER'S VCE AWARDS WINNERS

The selection of the VCE Awards winners is managed by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority. The number of Awards in each study is calculated using the enrolment base in that study. Hence there are more awards in larger studies.

Five of the Award winners were previously profiled in the Term 1 edition of the Family & Staff Bulletin. Here, two of our Premier's Award winners, Rhea Werner (German) and Asia Orsini (Italian), tell us a bit about their time at the VSL.



RHEA WERNER, GERMAN

Studying at the VSL was a perfect choice for me, as I wanted to reconnect with German after not having the chance to formally study or practice it for six years in Australia. My school didn't offer

German, so VSL's incredible teachers, resources, and flexible online mode were ideal. I particularly enjoyed the engaging oral lessons with Katja, who consistently helped me improve my language skills, and I looked forward to the in-person seminars where I could connect with classmates and learn from experienced teachers like Rukmani. The biggest challenge was managing my time between eight VCE subjects, VSL Chinese,

and rowing training, but setting aside Friday afternoons for work and additional prep helped me stay on track. Studying languages opens up fantastic global opportunities and fosters cultural understanding, which is essential in our interconnected world. My advice to younger students is to make the most of in-person opportunities and leverage the expertise of VSL's dedicated teaching staff. In the future, I hope to study Economics and Philosophy in the US and use my German skills in roles like working at a German investment bank or bridging global healthcare sectors.



ASIA ORSINI, ITALIAN

I chose to study at VSL because my school didn't offer Italian as a subject. The most enjoyable part of the experience was the independence it allowed—I could progress at my own

pace without being held back by less motivated classmates. One challenge was that answers to questions weren't always immediate, unlike in a traditional classroom setting. Despite this, studying a language is incredibly valuable; it's essential in today's world and enhances cultural understanding, especially useful when traveling. My advice to younger students is to stay consistent with your studies, whether that means reviewing vocabulary, watching films, or listening to music in the target language. Looking ahead, as I study astrophysics at university, my Italian skills will be a significant asset in finding work in Europe.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AT AREA NORTHWEST

Teachers from the area northwest came together for a dynamic Professional Development workshop. The session was an opportunity for our teachers to collaborate, share insights, and refine their skills to better support student learning.





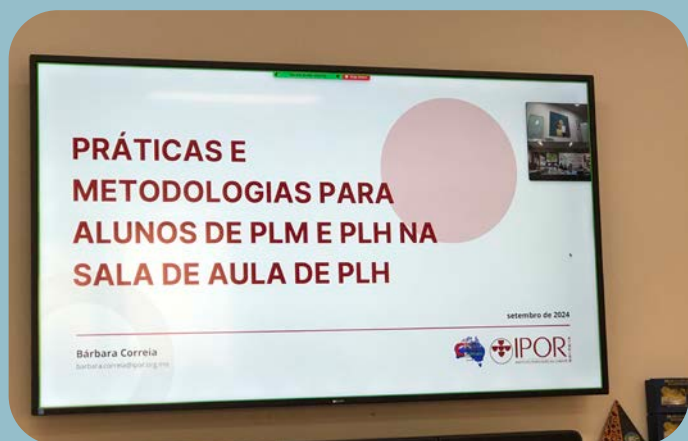
COLLINGWOOD TEACHER TRAINING SESSION- PORTUGUESE PRACTICES AND METHODOLOGIES

SUSANA TEIXEIRA-PINTO
CO-ORDINATOR FOR THE PORTUGUESE LANGUAGE PROGRAM
AND EDUCATION AFFAIRS IN AUSTRALIA.

As part of the Teacher Training Plan by the Coordination of Portuguese Teaching in Australia (CEPE-AU), and in collaboration with the Portuguese Institute of the Orient (IPOR) and with the support of Camões, I.P., the educator, Dr. Bárbara Correio conducted a training session both in-person and online in the state of Victoria.

The session, titled “Practices and Methodologies for PLM and PLH Students in the PLH Classroom,” took place on September 7, at the Victorian School of Languages in Collingwood. Susana Teixeira Pinto, the coordinator of CEPE-AU, was present to accompany the training session.

The Co-ordinator of Portuguese Teaching and Area Manager Vanda Matruglio, would like to thank all the teachers from Victoria and NSW for their interest and participation in this annual activity.





DISTANCE EDUCATION

In many ways, Term 3 is one of the busiest for our VCE students and teachers as they consolidate course work, complete SACs and start getting ready for their end of year oral exam. As always, our seminars at the Melbourne Multicultural Hub have been well attended by Year 11 and 12 students for their whole-day face-to-face seminars. Many students even make the long trip from places like Inverloch, the Surf Coast and Horsham to attend the sessions and connect with their peers who love learning and practising language. Seminars have been a vital point of connection for many of our students across their VCE pathway, and no doubt many friendships have been forged that will last well beyond students' time learning with us.

Our webinars have been equally well attended and are a good option for students not able to come to the face-to-face sessions. To encourage connection between students, many of our faculties have run Student Collaboration projects through the worksets in Semester 2. Many of these projects have been facilitated through webinars, and these have allowed our students to work together, take on roles of responsibility and be more prepared for the activities in the following seminars.



Earlier in Term 3, the French Faculty ran an excursion as part of the Art topic and students visited the National Gallery of Victoria, where they viewed and interpreted Impressionist artworks, giving them an insight into history, culture and practice that is critical to the development of their macro skill Viewing. In August, staff from the German Faculty accompanied 20 Years 9, 10 and Accelerated 2 students to the Melbourne International Film Festival to see the movie *Winners*, a story about Syrian teenagers living in Berlin. The students completed pre-viewing, whilst-viewing and post-viewing tasks and combined the excursion with an all-day face-to-face seminar.

VSL Distance Education was also ably represented by two groups of students at the Model United Nations Conferences for German and Indonesian. While our German team represented Mexico on the topic of protecting the world's oceans, the Indonesian group represented the UK and Northern Ireland on AI and sustainable development. Year 12 Indonesian student, Cameron, said that the team "were able to alleviate our nerves towards the end of the caucus, and it made the day so much more fun. I really recommend MUN, even if you're afraid of public speaking, because you're bound to have an amazing outing."

On the teaching and learning front, our team of teachers continues to work collaboratively with a focus on improving practice through reflection and action research. The focus in Term 3 has been the High Impact Teaching Strategy Effective Questioning and the effect it can have in keeping students engaged in lessons and enjoying their learning.

PATRICIA HERR – LEARNING SPECIALIST





FREE WI-FI AT HOME FOR SCHOOL AGE STUDENTS



SCHOOL STUDENT BROADBAND INITIATIVE

The School Student Broadband Initiative is an Australian Government program that offers free home internet to families and carers who look after school age children and are struggling to pay the bills.

To qualify for this offer:

- You must be caring for a school age student at your home.
- Must not have an active nbn connection at your home now or in the past 14 days. (Having a mobile internet service does not affect eligibility).
- Must live in property that can access the nbn network through a standard connection.

Apply by 31 December 2024 to get free home internet until the end of December 2025

Contact the National Referral Centre to apply on **1800 954 610 Monday - Friday, 10am - 6pm (AEDT)** or visit <https://www.anglicarevic.org.au/student-internet/>

What's included?

- Free home internet until December 2025
- Free WI-FI router (you can keep it)
- Unlimited data
- 50 / 20 plan (this is a typical household plan)
- No lock in contracts
- Choice of participating internet providers
- Ongoing support from the National Referral Centre to apply – callback, webchat, and interpreting services available

DO YOU QUALIFY FOR FREE HOME INTERNET?

If there is a school age student at your home and you don't have an nbn connection, you could qualify for free home internet until the end of 2025.

FREE HOME INTERNET FOR SCHOOL STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

This is an Australian Government program that offers free home internet to families and carers who look after school age children and are struggling to pay the bills.

To apply, follow the four steps below:

- 1 Contact the National Referral Centre on **1800 954 610** Monday - Friday, 10am - 6pm (AEDT) or visit [anglicarevic.org.au/student-internet](https://www.anglicarevic.org.au/student-internet)
- 2 They'll ask you some questions to see if this offer is right for you.
- 3 If you qualify, you'll get a voucher.
- 4 Use the voucher to connect through your chosen participating internet provider before 31 December 2024.

Scan QR Code to learn more.

THE BEST PART IS

- Free home internet until 31 December 2025
- The Wi-Fi router is free and you can keep it
- There is no lock-in contract
- Assistance provided by the National Referral Centre
- Callback, webchat and interpreting are available

KEY DATES

TERM 3/4 2024

SEPTEMBER 14	Centres - last session for Term 3, F-10
SEPTEMBER 21	Centres - last session for Term 3, VCE
OCTOBER 12	Centres - start of Term 4

