

# The ATAR profile explained

## Overview

VTAC publishes an ATAR profile for every course that considers the ATAR, wholly or partly, in the selection process. The ATAR profile provides a statistical overview of the offers made into a course. This fact sheet explains how to interpret the data presented in an ATAR profile.

## Why have ATAR profiles been introduced?

To increase the transparency of tertiary admissions, in 2018 the Australian Government asked institutions to make more statistical information available and for it to be published in a uniform way across all Australian institutions. The ATAR profile is the format for this information.

## Which data is used for an ATAR profile?

Each course that considers the ATAR in selection has its own ATAR profile. The data is based upon the ATARs of successful applicants who graduated from Year 12 in 2019, 2018 or 2017, who:

- » have not commenced a university or VET course (except as a part of their secondary schooling), and
- » were offered a place wholly or partly based on their ATAR.

The ATAR profile does not include any applicants who applied for specifically targeted programs for which the ATAR was not a consideration, e.g. some Indigenous entry courses; international students; applicants who were considered on their VET or university study; and applicants who graduated from Year 12 prior to 2017.

The ATAR profiles currently published pertain to applicants who were selected from November 2018 until 16 January 2019.

## What is the difference between an ATAR and a selection rank?

An ATAR is an overall percentile ranking reflecting a student's academic achievement in Year 12, relative to the relevant age group in a given year. A student's ATAR is fixed and the graduating student is told its value.

A selection rank reflects an applicant's ATAR as well as consideration of any adjustment factors specified in the admission criteria of a course. Selection ranks are course specific and used by course selection officials for making selection decisions for that specific course. An individual is not made aware of their selection rank for a course.

## What are adjustment factors?

Many courses have selection considerations in addition to the ATAR as indicated in course entries within CourseSearch. After these adjustment factors are considered, upward adjustments may be made to an applicant's ATAR to produce a selection rank. Examples of adjustment factors include:

- » performance in an interview, audition, additional test or the presentation of a folio,
- » the information included on an additional form,
- » performance in individual subjects that may or may not have been prerequisite studies, and
- » consideration based on access and equity factors and/or educational, financial or socio-economic disadvantage.

## How do I find out the value of an adjustment factor?

Some courses publish information on the value of specific adjustment factors in course entries. However, this information is not published for all adjustment factors, such as the Special Entry Access Scheme (SEAS).

If the value of an adjustment is published, it will be quantified in aggregate points. Aggregate points are not the same as the percentile steps between ATARs. The [VTAC subject adjustment tool](#) allows you to estimate the impact of published adjustment points on your ATAR. For more information on the aggregate see the [ABC of Scaling](#) on the VTAC website.

Multiple adjustment factors can contribute to your selection rank for a course.

## How do I know what level of achievement was needed to get into the course?

The piece of data that indicates the minimum selection rank required for entry into a specific course within a selection period is the **lowest selection rank**. This rank takes into account not only the ATAR but all other published selection factors such as interviews, tests, auditions, and/or special consideration for access and equity schemes.

**The lowest selection rank represents the point (at or above) that everyone who applied for the course was made an offer, as long as they also met all the course requirements including prerequisites.**

The lowest selection rank can represent one or a number of successful applicants. It might represent the actual ATAR of the applicant/s (if no adjustments have been made), or an adjusted ATAR. Therefore, if you are using the lowest selection rank to evaluate your chances of an offer in a different round, and your ATAR is lower than the lowest selection rank, it may still be worth listing this course on your preferences as you might be eligible for adjustment factors.

## Why do some applicants get into a course with an ATAR lower than the lowest selection rank?

The ATAR is only one tool used to select Year 12 students for a course. A selection rank reflects a student's ATAR and consideration of adjustment factors. These factors may include information in additional forms, interviews, auditions, folio presentations, and additional tests; performance in individual subjects; and circumstances pertaining to access and equity.

A selection rank is produced from an applicant's aggregate (a sum of the applicant's scaled primary four study scores and any other contributions) plus any upward adjustments made after consideration of adjustment factors. Selection ranks are course specific and are represented in ATAR format. You can find the factors considered for adjustments for a particular course in the 'selection criteria' section of a course entry in [CourseSearch](#).

## The ATAR profile table

ATAR profiles are published for relevant courses in VTAC's [CourseSearch](#). If the course uses the ATAR in selection, an ATAR profile will be found under the 'selection data' section of the course entry. For example:

Course code	Campus	ATAR (excluding adjustment factors)			Selection rank (ATAR plus any adjustment factors)		
		Highest	Median	Lowest	Highest	Median	Lowest
1234567891	Melbourne	76.65	66.65	60.15	84.90	80.25	<b>83.70</b>
1234467891	Online	86.75	72.05	66.15	92.45	79.30	<b>71.50</b>

The lowest selection rank is highlighted because it is the minimum standard required to have been made an offer in that course.

## Definitions

### ATAR (excluding adjustment factors)

The ATAR (excluding adjustment factors) refers to the actual ATAR a student received in 2018, 2017 or 2016.

- » **Highest ATAR** (excluding adjustment factors) to receive an offer. This figure pertains to the selected applicant/s with the highest ATAR excluding adjustments.
- » **Median ATAR** (excluding adjustment factors) to receive an offer. The median ATAR is the middle ATAR excluding adjustments. For example, if there are 11 offers, the median ATAR is the ATAR associated with the sixth applicant selected.
- » **Lowest ATAR** (excluding adjustment factors) to receive an offer. This figure pertains to the selected applicant/s with the lowest ATAR excluding adjustments. NOTE: This is not the minimum selection standard required for this course (see lowest selection rank).

### Selection rank (ATAR plus any adjustment factors)

The selection rank provides an overview of the selection standards of applicants who were offered a place in the course.

A selection rank is course specific. It is produced as a sum of an applicant's ATAR (received in 2018, 2017 or 2016) and any upward adjustments. Adjustment factors vary between courses and may include achievement in interviews, folio presentations, auditions, performance in Year 12 subjects and/or special consideration.

- » **Highest selection rank**. This figure pertains to the selected applicant/s with the highest selection rank. The highest selection rank includes the ATAR and any upward adjustment factors.
- » **Median selection rank**. The median selection rank is the middle selection rank. For example, if there are 11 offers, the median selection rank will be the selection rank associated with the sixth applicant selected.
- » **Lowest selection rank**. This figure pertains to the selected applicant/s with the lowest selection rank to be offered a place. The lowest selection rank includes an applicant's ATAR plus any adjustment factors. This is the minimum selection rank required to have been made an offer in this course.

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