



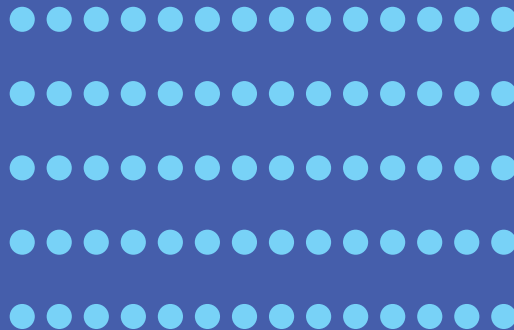
Australian Government

Your Career™

National Careers Institute



School Leavers Information Kit



Your guide to education, training and work

yourcareer.gov.au/schoolleaver

What's in this document?

Introduction	1
1 Further education and training	2
Vocational education and training (VET)	2
Apprenticeships and traineeships	2
Higher education	3
Short-term study and training	3
2 Financial assistance and planning	5
Financial tools and budgeting	7
3 Take a gap year	8
4 Build your career	10
Industries in Australia	10
How to get job ready	11
Handy hints when looking for work	12
Thinking about starting your own business?	13
5 Additional support	14
Support and services in your state or territory	14
Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	14
Support for people with disability and special education needs	14
Support for disadvantaged students	15
6 Wellbeing support	16

Introduction



You've finished school, so what's next?

Life after school can be full of exciting opportunities. It can also be challenging to decide what you want to do.

This **School Leavers Information Kit (SLIK)** has been created by the **National Careers Institute (NCI)** to help you prepare for your next steps after school.

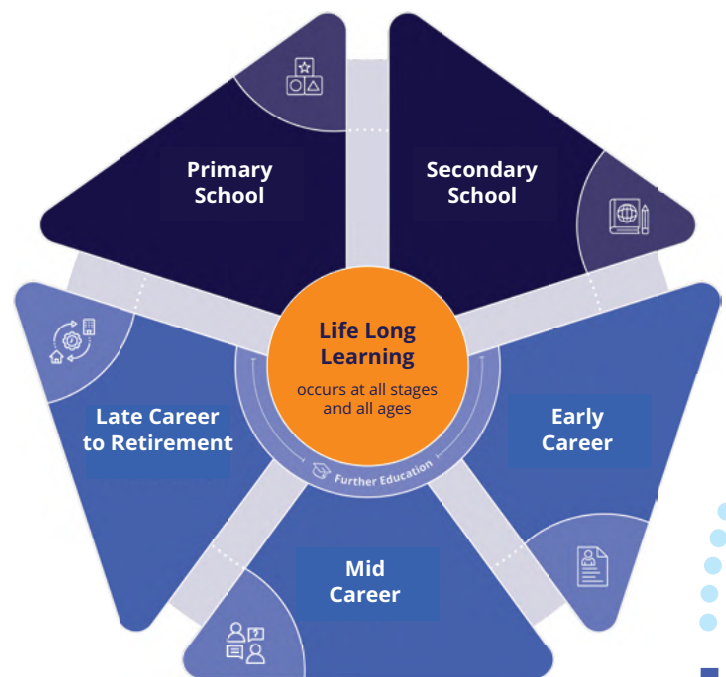
The **SLIK** is a collection of education, training, and employment information for you to explore when preparing for your next steps after leaving school, including:

- pursuing further study/education
- volunteering
- doing seasonal work
- taking a gap year
- starting work.

In addition to this SLIK you may find extra information in our **Support for young people with disability** and **Support for regional, rural and remote** booklets that connects young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with additional programs, financial assistance, and support services while they set out on their journey after school.

The **SLIKs** and booklets can be found on the **Your Career** website yourcareer.gov.au/school-leavers-support/school-leavers-information-kit.

While it may be challenging to decide what you want to do next, life after school is full of exciting opportunities and options. Remember whatever you choose to do after school, it will all contribute to your career, your way.



A career often involves forward, backwards, and sideways steps. Lifelong learning sits in the centre of the career journey, showing that we continuously learn and grow throughout our career.

1 Further education and training

Sometimes your career path might include further study or training. There are both long-term and short-term pathways available.

There are 3 main further education pathways:



Vocational education and training (VET)

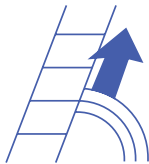
Remember if your career goals change, you don't have to stick with what you started with. You can always move between different types of courses and training if you want to.

Vocational education and training (VET)

VET is nationally accredited training designed to teach the skills needed to get a job and succeed in the workplace. VET courses may include studying Certificates I-IV, Diploma, Advanced Diploma, Skill Sets, and accredited courses.

VET is not just for traditional trades – it includes hundreds of different occupations and industries including accounting, retail, hospitality, technology, and the arts.

Most Certificates can take between 3 months and 3 years to complete. Visit the **Your Career** website yourcareer.gov.au/skills for more information on VET courses and which providers offer them.



Apprenticeships and traineeships

Apprenticeships and traineeships

An apprenticeship or traineeship offers you the ability to work while you learn. While working with an employer, you can get on-the-job skills and experience while being paid to study with a training provider and gain a qualification – from a Certificate II to an Advanced Diploma.

You can also undertake an apprenticeship or traineeship arrangement that suits your circumstances – they can be full-time, part-time, or school-based.

The type of qualification and the industry you choose will determine whether you need to complete an apprenticeship or traineeship.

Apprenticeships are usually a pathway to a trade, with structured training delivered through certificate level qualifications and take between 3 and 4 years to complete full time.



Higher education

Most traineeships are in non-trade occupations, including services and administration, and take between 1 and 2 years to complete full time.

For more information on apprenticeships and traineeships visit the **Australian Apprenticeships** website apprenticeships.gov.au.

Higher education

Most people start studying at a university or other higher education provider to get a diploma, advanced diploma, associate degree, undergraduate certificate, or bachelor degree. After that, there are options to continue study, like a master's degree.

Degrees completed through higher education could lead to many different careers, such as teacher, engineer, doctor, therapist and more.

The length of time it takes to complete higher education varies. As an example, most bachelor degrees take a minimum of 3 years to complete, and a master's degree takes a minimum of 1 year.

As prerequisites for courses vary between institutions, you should consult your preferred higher education provider for specific information related to the course/s you might be interested in.

You can compare higher education courses and providers on the **Course Seeker** website courseseeker.edu.au.

Short-term study and training

There's a range of short-term education and training options that could get you skilled up fast, from a few hours to a few months.

The best part is that they can sometimes be credited towards a full qualification if you decide to continue further study.

You can choose from a wide range of options:

- Short-term education and training options
- Higher education short courses
- Tertiary preparation courses.

Short-term education and training options

Short-term education and training options are designed to help you upskill fast, and come in many forms within the VET system (accredited, unaccredited and industry certified) and higher education system.

Accredited Skill Sets are nationally recognised microcredentials, comprising one or more units of competency, currently developed by industry. For example, you could undertake a Hybrid Electric Vehicle Inspection and Servicing Skill Set that covers the essential requirements for inspecting and servicing hybrid electric vehicles in the automotive industry. Unaccredited short courses are not nationally recognised but address a local need and can be recognised by a single state or territory.

To learn more about short-term education and training options and to compare courses offered by registered higher education providers and selected VET organisations, visit **Microcred Seeker** microcredseeker.edu.au. You can also head to the **Your Career** website yourcareer.gov.au/school-leavers-support/school-leavers-information-kit/further-study-and-training#shortcourses for more information and to search for Skill Sets you can undertake.





Higher education short courses

Short courses offer an introduction to a higher education degree through an undergraduate certificate offered by a university or other higher education provider.

Short courses are generally 6 months long and can be credited towards another higher education qualification, like a bachelor degree, if you continue further study.

You can find information on higher education short courses through the **Course Seeker** website courseseeker.edu.au.

Tertiary preparation courses

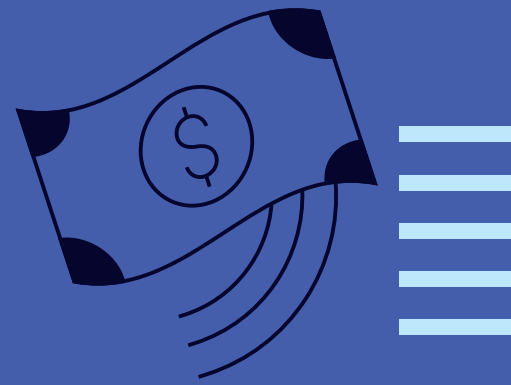
If you haven't met the entry requirements for your preferred higher education course, a tertiary preparation course or enabling course could help build skills and knowledge to prepare you for bachelor-level study with a higher education provider.

The duration of these courses varies, and you should check the higher education provider's website for details. Generally, these units are not credited towards any later bachelor qualifications.

Unique Student Identifier (USI)

If you decide to do a nationally recognised VET course or go to university, you'll need a USI. A USI is your individual education number for life and creates an online record of your Australian training achievements. You will need a USI to get Commonwealth financial assistance, and your qualification or statement of attainment. Visit the **USI** website usi.gov.au for more information.

2 Financial assistance and planning



You may be eligible for funding assistance and support, depending on your circumstances.

Fee-Free TAFE

Fee-Free TAFE provides fee-free VET to students wanting to train, retrain or upskill. You can study an accredited diploma, certificate, or a short course. These courses can prepare you for work in fast-growing industries needing skilled workers. For more information, visit the **Your Career** website yourcareer.gov.au/fee-free-tafe.

VET Student Loans (VSL)

VET Student Loans help eligible students pay tuition fees for approved higher-level (diploma and above) VET courses. To check your eligibility and find out how to apply visit the **VET Student Loans** website dewr.gov.au/vet-student-loans.

Assistance for apprentices and trainees

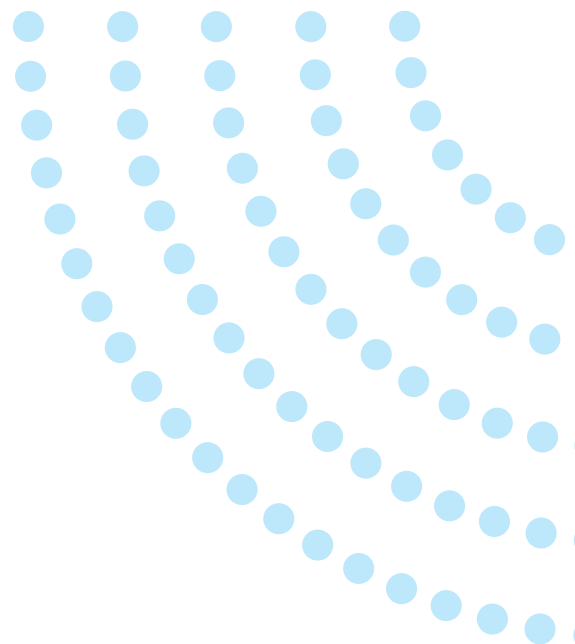
You may be eligible for financial and non-financial support if you're undertaking an apprenticeship or traineeship.

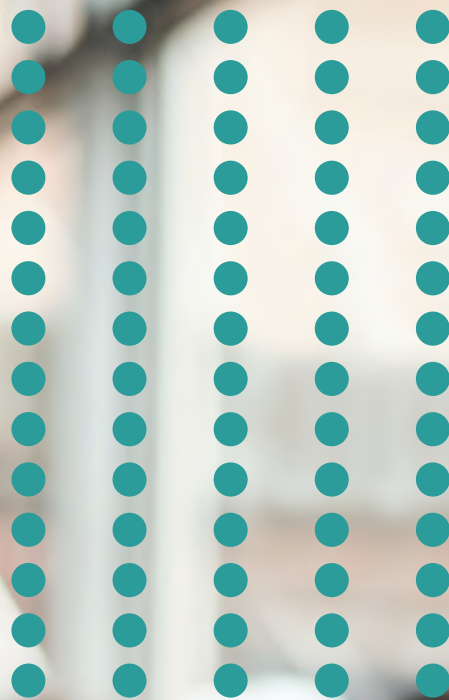
To check what support you may be eligible for, visit the **Australian Apprenticeships** website apprenticeships.gov.au/support-and-resources.

Assistance for higher education students

You could be eligible for subsidised course fees, a scholarship, or the **Higher Education Loan Program (HELP)**.

HELP assists eligible students to study without the barrier of upfront fees. A HELP debt is paid back through the tax system once you earn above the compulsory repayment threshold. You can find more information on financial support for higher education on the **Your Career** website yourcareer.gov.au/support/financial-assistance/assistance-for-higher-education-students.





Scholarships

There are many scholarships available across Australia to help you financially with your studies.

Commonwealth Teaching Scholarships

If you're thinking of pursuing a career in teaching, you could get up to \$40,000 to support new undergraduate studies. Students undertaking postgraduate studies can receive up to \$20,000. To see if you're eligible and check the application dates, visit the **Department of Education** website education.gov.au/teaching-scholarships.

To see what other scholarships are available, you can browse your chosen provider's website, or do an online search. Many organisations have a list of available scholarships by field of study and location.



Assistance with living expenses

You can apply for payments to assist with living expenses while you are studying, including Youth Allowance, Austudy and ABSTUDY.

Youth Allowance is a payment for people 16 to 24 years of age who are completing full-time tertiary study or doing a full-time Australian Apprenticeship.

Austudy provides financial assistance for full-time students and people undertaking an Australian Apprenticeship aged 25 years and older.

ABSTUDY is a group of payments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students or apprentices.

To learn more about these payments, and other payments you may be eligible for, search for the '**Get a Centrelink Payment**' tool on the Services Australia website servicesaustralia.gov.au/get-centrelink-payment or check out some short videos on **Services Australia's YouTube channel** by searching online.

Financial tools and budgeting

Believe it or not, money management is a skill and there are plenty of tools out there to help you take control of your finances.



The **Manage your money** webpage servicesaustralia.gov.au/manage-your-money can help you better manage your money, budget, deal with debt and build your savings.

MoneySmart moneysmart.gov.au also has calculators and tips to help you make the most of your money.



You can also speak to a Services Australia **Financial Information Service (FIS)** Officer for free via phone or video. FIS Officers can share tools, resources and information that can help you make more informed decisions about your money and future financial needs servicesaustralia.gov.au/financial-information-service.

Want more information on financial assistance?

For more information about what financial assistance you may be eligible for, visit the **Your Career** website yourcareer.gov.au/support/financial-assistance.



3 Take a gap year



Unsure of your next steps?

While some people decide to go directly into further education or full-time employment after finishing high school, many choose to take time off for what is known as a gap year. A gap year can be a year, but it can also be for a shorter period.

A gap year can include:

- working
- volunteering or undertaking an internship
- travelling and/or working in Australia and/or overseas
- enrolling in short-term study.

No matter which path you decide to follow, all these options will help you develop valuable skills. The best part is that you don't have to pick just one.

While information regarding work, education and training can be found in earlier sections of the SLIK, this section has additional information about some alternative options.

Harvest Trail

Seasonal harvesting work is a great way to travel, see beautiful parts of Australia, earn some money, meet new people, and add solid work experience to your resume.

To see what jobs are available now check out the **Harvest Trail** website workforceaustralia.gov.au/individuals/coaching/careers/harvest or call 1800 062 332.

Australian Defence Force (ADF) Gap Year programs

The Navy, Army and Airforce all have gap year programs, where you get paid for working while travelling around Australia. For more information go to the **ADF** website adfcareers.gov.au/students-and-education/gap-year.

Internships

An internship is a type of supervised work placement and can be paid or unpaid. It's designed to help you gain professional skills and experience in your preferred industry.

Internships are usually completed over a set number of days during a fixed period but will vary for each internship and workplace. In some cases, full-time internships may also be offered over summer or winter study breaks. Search online to find internship opportunities in your area.

Volunteering opportunities

Volunteering can give you the chance to make a difference and help build valuable skills for your future. There are many organisations that you can get involved with, depending on your interests, location, and availability. Find information on volunteering opportunities in your area by searching online.

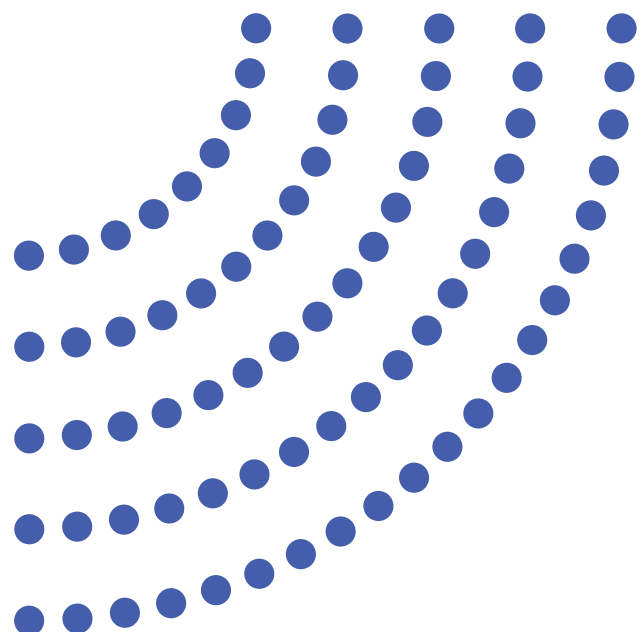
Short-term work placements

Early experience in your industry of interest can give you a taste of the future and help you decide whether a particular job is right for you. Consider the types of roles that you are interested in and how they might further your career. Search online to find short-term work placement opportunities in your area.

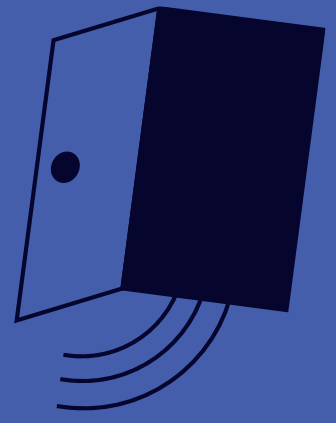
Working holidays

The **Working Holiday Maker program** offers the opportunity to travel and work overseas in over 40 different countries or jurisdictions. Participants can generally stay for up to 12 months and undertake short-term work and study.

Visit the **Department of Home Affairs** website for more information immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/what-we-do/whm-program/working-holidays-for-australians.



4 Build your career



Are you ready to jump into the world of work to build your career?

The **Your Career** website yourcareer.gov.au is designed to help you navigate your study and work options.

You can use the **Your Career** website to explore:

- growing industries
- trending occupations
- how to get job ready
- support services available to help you find employment.

Try the career finder

Answer some questions and find out which occupations match your preferences. You will be asked about your interests, industries you have in mind, and any deal-breakers like shift work. Try the career finder on the **Your Career** website yourcareer.gov.au.

Industries in Australia

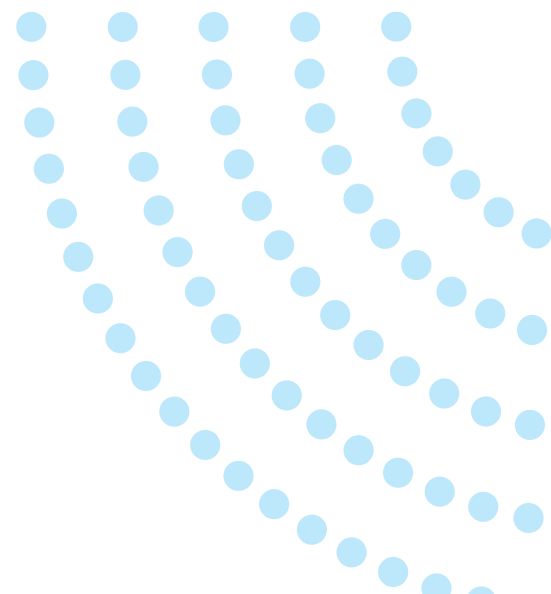
If you are thinking about your future career, it's good to have an idea about the industries that are in Australia. Remember within each industry there is a range of jobs – some are well known, and others are emerging.

Think broadly about your skills, interests, and abilities. You don't have to lock yourself into one industry; there might be lots of different jobs in several industries that suit you.

Explore the large range of industries you can choose from on the **Your Career** website yourcareer.gov.au/industries.

Interested in labour market trends in Australia?

Explore the **Australian Jobs 2023** yourcareer.gov.au/resources/australian-jobs-report to learn about the most up to date trends in the Australian labour market. You can also explore emerging skills and see the type of skills that are transferrable.



Growing industries and occupations in 2023^{1,2}

Dive into these exciting industries that are on the rise. They could offer you fantastic career opportunities.



Health Care and Social Assistance

- Registered Nurse
- Aged and Disabled Carer
- Child Carer



Construction

- Carpenter and Joiner
- Electrician
- Plumber



Professional, Scientific and Technical Services

- Software and Applications Programmer
- Accountant / Solicitor
- Management and Organisation Analyst

Learn more about these fast-growing industries and occupations on the **Your Career** website yourcareer.gov.au.

Emerging industries

Jobs in Clean Energy

You could contribute to a more sustainable future and help drive innovation with a career in clean energy. The clean energy sector has career opportunities at all levels. There are many pathways to enter the sector, from entry level jobs that require no formal training through to higher skilled roles that require a qualification. To find out more about these industries, visit the **Your Career** website yourcareer.gov.au/resources/clean-energy.

If you're thinking about an Australian Apprenticeship in the clean energy sector, you may be eligible for financial support. Australian Apprentices undertaking an eligible qualification in a New Energy pathway may qualify for up to \$10,000 over the course of an eligible apprenticeship. Find out more on the **Australian Apprenticeships** website apprenticeships.gov.au/support-and-resources/financial-support-apprentices-priority-occupations.

How to get job ready

Before you start working

To help transition to life after school, you first might need to:

- get a tax file number (TFN). Applications for a TFN are free and you can apply for one on the **Australian Taxation Office (ATO)** website ato.gov.au/Individuals/Tax-file-number.
- find out how tax and superannuation works from the **ATO** ato.gov.au/individuals/super, and what you need to do.
- create a myGov account on the **myGov** website my.gov.au and link to your Centrelink online account (if you have one).

1 jobsandskills.gov.au/reports/labour-market-update-september-2023

2 yourcareer.gov.au/industries

Handy hints when looking for work

The following steps can help you get a job:

1 Set your expectations

- Consider how many hours you can and want to work each week. What days or times do you want to work? Do you want or need flexibility in your work schedule?
- Does the job have licensing, training, or registration requirements?
- While most employers do the right thing, it is always good to understand your rights at work, including minimum wage and conditions. You can find more information on the **Your Career** website yourcareer.gov.au/support/work-support.

2 Network with family and friends

- Talk to your friends, family and schoolmates and let them know you're actively seeking a job. Having a connection to a role significantly increases your chances of obtaining the position.

3 Identify your skills

- To see how your skills match the skills employers are looking for, go to the **Your Career** website yourcareer.gov.au/occupations.

4 Write a resume and prepare for interviews

- There are many resume building tools to help you get started. Check out the Resume Checklist and take the Resume Quiz on the **Your Career** website yourcareer.gov.au/get-job-ready.
- Prepare for interviews by watching some helpful videos on the **Your Career** website yourcareer.gov.au/get-job-ready/videos.

5 Search for a job

- There are many tools and applications both online on your computer and on your smartphone that can help. Some solely focus on the job search, while others include features like social media and networking elements.
- View jobs with current vacancies near you and access further support and information to improve your chances of getting a job on the **Workforce Australia** website workforceaustralia.gov.au.
- There are many **entry-level and school leaver programs** available for school leavers, across both government and private sectors. To see what government organisations offer, visit the **Australian Public Service apprenticeship, trainee and school leaver career pathways** apsjobs.gov.au/s/career-pathways-home.
- For more job search help, visit **Services Australia's Job Hunting** page at servicesaustralia.gov.au/looking-for-work-and-job-hunting.
- You can also find more opportunities by searching online and visiting websites of the organisations, departments, and agencies you're interested in.

6 Manage your personal brand

- Social media can be a great way for hirers, employers, and recruiters to get an idea of who you are.
- Consider what you are posting online and if you would be comfortable with a future employer seeing it.

Want more tips for getting job ready?

Visit the **Get Job Ready** page on the **Your Career** website yourcareer.gov.au/get-job-ready for information on writing job applications, preparing for online interviews, and how to market yourself to employers. There you'll also find checklists, factsheets, tips, and helpful videos to help you get your dream job.



Thinking about starting your own business?

Self-Employment Assistance can help you turn your business idea or existing small business into a viable business. You can access Self-Employment Assistance while you are in school or higher education to prepare and assist with the transition into your own business once you finish your studies. Self-Employment Assistance can help you:

- determine if self-employment is for you
- decide on a viable business idea and develop a business plan
- get a business up and running
- get assistance to access finance.

To learn more, jump on the **Department of Employment and Workplace Relations** website dewr.gov.au/self-employment-assistance.

5 Additional support



Support and services in your state or territory

There are many programs and services for young people who are setting out on their journey after school. These include:

- services that help you get into university or VET courses
- programs to help you get a job
- programs to help you gain new skills.

For a list of programs and services in your area, visit the **Your Career** website yourcareer.gov.au/school-leavers-support/school-leavers-information-kit/additional-information/information-in-your-state-territory.

Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

There's lots of support out there for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school leavers. These include:

- services that help you get into university or VET courses
- financial support to help you with your studies
- programs to help you get a job or gain new skills.

Download the **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander School Leavers Information Kit** yourcareer.gov.au/school-leavers-support/school-leavers-information-kit/aboriginal-torres-strait-islander-peoples to find more information on programs and support services available to you.

Support for people with disability and special education needs

There are a range of programs and support for students with disability or special education needs.

Disability may mean that you need extra support in the years following school.

Support can come from the people around you, like your teachers, friends, NDIS workers, and parents or guardians. There are also many programs and services that you can access to help you shift from school to work, training or further education more easily.

Download the **Support for young people with disability** booklet yourcareer.gov.au/school-leavers-support/school-leavers-information-kit/people-disability to find more information on the programs and support services available to you.



Support for disadvantaged students

There are many ways you might be disadvantaged.

You may not be in a situation to afford further education, or you might need someone to support and mentor you through the coming years. If this is you, then we have included some services you can access for extra support.

The **Transition to Work** (TtW) service supports disadvantaged people aged 15–24 years. You can receive intensive support over 25 hours a week to:

- identify and explore career options
- finish your education
- connect with further education or training
- develop skills to get a job and address barriers to employment
- connect with organisations and government agencies to access support.

You can chat with a TtW provider to see if you're eligible. Visit the **TtW** website dewr.gov.au/transition-work to find out more and find a provider near you.

Support for students living in a regional, rural or remote area

Depending on what you want to do after leaving school, if you live in a regional, rural or remote area, you may face some extra challenges.

Check out the information for regional, rural and remote young people on the **Your Career** website yourcareer.gov.au/school-leavers-support/school-leavers-information-kit/regional-rural-remote.

The Smith Family

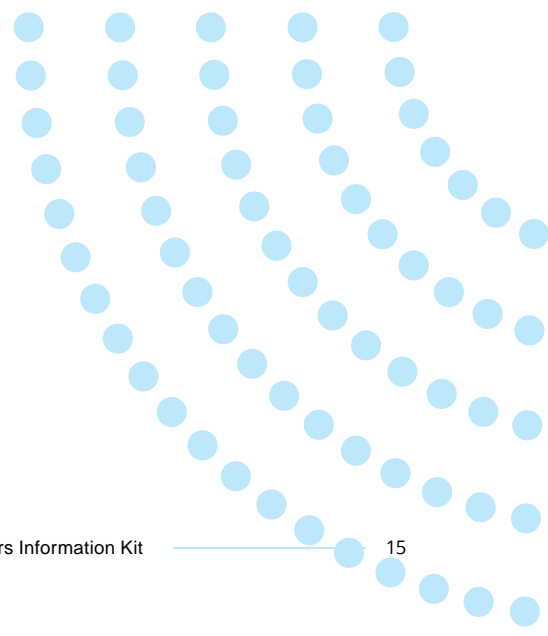
The Smith Family provides eligible students with mentoring and sponsorship to develop their academic skills to go on to further studies or employment. For more information, check out **The Smith Family** website thesmithfamily.com.au/programs.

Study Assist

The **Study Assist** website provides information about government assistance for financing tertiary study studyassist.gov.au/support-while-you-study/support-students.

Educational Access Scheme

The Educational Access Scheme helps students who have experienced significant educational disadvantage receive an offer to university. Learn more on the **Universities Admissions Centre** website uac.edu.au/future-applicants/scholarships-and-schemes/educational-access-schemes.



6 Wellbeing support



Leaving school can sometimes be challenging. There are plenty of people you can talk to if you need support.

Talk to your parents, guardians, or someone at your school

If you're still at school, your career advisor, guidance counsellor, school psychologist or wellness team can provide wellbeing support and help you identify the right options for your circumstances as well as provide information on what support is available in your state or territory.

You can talk to someone at university or TAFE

If you're studying at university or TAFE, you can book an appointment with your career advisor, campus counsellor or student advisor to help you discover which support and career pathways are suitable for you. They can also provide information on what other support options are available in your state or territory.

Headspace

Learn about ways to look after your mental health, or if you need support, get in touch with someone who can help. Headspace offers a dedicated service for young people aged 12–25 years.

- Website: [headspace.org.au](https://www.headspace.org.au)
- Phone: 1800 650 890

Beyond Blue

Beyond Blue is an independent, not-for-profit organisation working to reduce the impact of anxiety, depression and suicide in Australia.

- Website: [beyondblue.org.au](https://www.beyondblue.org.au)
- Phone: 1300 22 4636

Lifeline

Lifeline provides confidential crisis support that is accessible 24 hours a day.

- Visit: [lifeline.org.au/gethelp](https://www.lifeline.org.au/gethelp) for Lifeline Chat Service (24/7)
- Phone: 13 11 14
- Text: 0477 13 11 14

Kids Helpline

A free, private and confidential 24/7 phone and online counselling service for young people aged 5–25 years.

- Website: [kidshelpline.com.au](https://www.kidshelpline.com.au)
- Phone: 1800 55 1800

Head to Health

Free and low-cost, trusted online and phone mental health resource.

- Visit: [headtohealth.gov.au](https://www.headtohealth.gov.au) for mental health guidance and advice.
- Phone: 1800 595 212

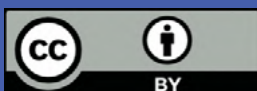
Acknowledgment of Country

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Country throughout Australia and acknowledges their continuing connection to land, water, and community. We pay our respects to the people, the cultures, and the Elders past and present.

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations acknowledges diversity and respectfully uses the term 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' throughout this document.

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The document must be attributed as the **School Leavers Information Kit. Your guide to education, training and work.**

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (department) takes reasonable care to ensure that the information and advice provided is accurate and up to date. However, it is your responsibility to give us correct and complete information about your circumstances and to decide if you wish to take any action or decision based on any information or advice provided by our information officers. Before doing so you should exercise your own independent skill and judgement and make your own further enquiries relevant to your particular circumstances. The department is not liable for any loss resulting from any action taken or reliance made by you on any information or advice provided to you.

January 2024.



yourcareer.gov.au/schoolleaver