



Parents and guardians guide
to education, training and work opportunities
for your young person (15–24 years)

yourcareer.gov.au/schoolleaver

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Introduction

When it's time to think about life after school, you can help your young person make their next move.



How this guide can help

This guide will help you discover what the options are, and which ones are right for your young person. It sits alongside the more detailed **School Leavers Information Kit**, or 'SLIK', for young people aged 15 to 24 (yourcareer.gov.au/school-leavers-support/school-leavers-information-kit).

The options in a nutshell

There are 3 broad directions your young person could choose to start with:

- jump straight into the world of work
- start further education, training or an apprenticeship
- try something different like a gap year, volunteering or seasonal work.

This guide outlines the range of pathways in each of these directions.

With all the options out there, your young person might still be deciding what to do next. They're definitely not alone. This guide and the SLIK can help by providing the information you need to make informed decisions.

Money and other challenges

The transition from school can be a big change in very practical ways.

To help, this guide also provides information on options for:

- financial assistance and other support for moving into further education or employment
- school leavers with disability
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander school leavers
- school leavers affected by economic or educational disadvantage
- school leavers living in a rural, regional or remote area.

Talking about the options

A good way to start talking with your young person about the options for their future is to ask them what they like or enjoy doing. Ask what they think they're good at or might be interested in. They might already have some strong ideas.

The **School Leavers Information Kit** is a good resource for focusing and developing their thoughts.



Your Career website

Your Career (yourcareer.gov.au) helps Australians explore career options. It has information specifically for young people, including the SLIK (yourcareer.gov.au/schoolleaver).

Your career offers information about:

- occupations and industries
- learning and training
- finding a job
- building a career
- financial support available.

There's even a tool for finding out which occupations match your young persons preferences. Answer a few questions to get a list of jobs that suit. For each kind of job, it shows if further education and training is needed, what skills employers are looking for and the estimated pay.

Using this tool will encourage your young person to think about their interests, any deal breakers they have, and what industries they have in mind.



Further education and training

Pathways to a qualification are increasingly varied and flexible.

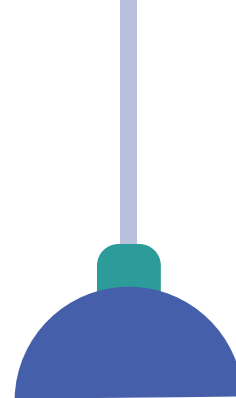
If your young person wants to get qualified, they have 3 main pathways:

- 1 Apprenticeships and traineeships**
- 2 Vocational education and training (VET)**
- 3 Higher education**

Choosing a pathway and a course can be challenging and it's normal for students to change their mind as they learn more and their career goals change. Because of this, most further education and training is designed to be flexible. It's possible to move between different courses and training, and students can often get credit for work they've already done in another course.

Funding support varies between courses and providers. See the 'Financial assistance' section on page 7 for more information.





Apprenticeships and traineeships

Apprenticeships and traineeships combine paid work with structured training and commonly include both on and off the job training.

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.

The majority of traineeships are in non-trade occupations, including services and administration, and take between 12 and 24 months to complete full time.

For more information, visit:

- the **Australian Apprenticeships** website (australianapprenticeships.gov.au)
- the **Your Career** website (yourcareer.gov.au/learn-and-train).



Vocational education and training

VET is nationally accredited training designed to teach the skills needed to get a job and succeed in the workplace. VET courses include Certificates I–IV, Diploma, Advanced Diploma, Skill Sets, and accredited courses. The majority of Certificates can take between 3 months and 3 years to complete.

There are VET courses for hundreds of different occupations in industries ranging from traditional trades to accounting, retail, hospitality, technology and the arts. TAFEs and other registered training organisations offer these courses.

Visit the **Your Career** website (yourcareer.gov.au) for more information on VET courses and which providers offer them.

Higher education

Higher education normally means studying for a bachelor's degree, diploma, advanced diploma, associate degree or undergraduate certificate at a university or other provider. Most bachelor's degrees take a minimum of 3 years to complete.

Later there are options for postgraduate study, like a master's degree.





Some higher education courses have prerequisites — subjects that the student needs to have completed at school or in a post-school bridging course. Students should check with the higher education provider about this.

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

Micro-credentials and other short courses

Many young people benefit from short courses before starting a career or longer term study or training.

This option is a chance to learn in-demand skills very quickly — from a few hours to a couple of months. Short courses can also be credited towards a full qualification if your young person decides to continue further study. They can choose from a wide range of options for:

-  **micro-credentials**
-  **VET Skill Sets**
-  **higher education short courses**
-  **tertiary preparation courses.**

Micro-credentials

Micro-credentials are short and targeted training certifications, often industry recognised. They can be ‘stacked’ to build up a portfolio of in-demand skills and proven competencies. Some can also be credited towards a longer-term course of study.

For example, there are micro-credentials in particular kinds of coding; professional and leadership skills targeted to certain industries, like child care or health; and training to use specific software packages.

Many TAFEs, universities and other higher education providers now offer a wide range of micro-credentials to consider.

You can browse and compare micro credentials available in Australia on **Microcred Seeker** (microcredseeker.edu.au).

VET Skill Sets

Skill Sets are discrete blocks of units of competency that meet an identified industry need or a specific licensing/regulatory requirement. They can usually be credited towards a VET qualification.

Visit the **Your Career** website (yourcareer.gov.au) for information about VET Skill Sets.

Higher education short courses

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

They’re generally 6 months long and can be credited towards a longer course, like a bachelor’s degree, if the student decides to continue further study.

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

Tertiary preparation courses

If your young person hasn’t met the entry requirements for the higher education course they most want to do, they may be able to get accepted by doing a tertiary preparation course or enabling course.

Check the higher education provider’s website for details.



Something different

Is your young person looking to explore the world for a while after finishing school? The following options offer both a completely different environment and a chance to develop valuable skills.



Jobs and short courses

Explore jobs that are available right now by asking your young person to answer a few questions about their personal interests and preferences.

Users can enter their preferred location and any experience, and the tool will show courses or jobs that match. It also shows what the prospects for future growth opportunities in that area might be. Find it on the **Your Career** homepage (yourcareer.gov.au)

The Get Job Ready page on **Your Career** (yourcareer.gov.au/get-job-ready) provides checklists, fact sheets and strategies for getting a job.

Gap year

The classic gap year is a chance to travel, meet people and learn more about the world, often doing casual jobs along the way. This might include travelling around Australia and doing seasonal work, like fruit picking.

Many people use a gap year to get a job. It's a good chance to earn some money and try out an industry they may be interested in. Your young person might also get to know an industry through volunteer work or short-term study.

Harvest Trail

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

Call the Harvest Trail Information Service on 1800 062 332 or visit the **Harvest Trail** website (workforceaustralia.gov.au/individuals/coaching/careers/harvest) for details and available jobs.

Short-term work placements

Early experience in industry can offer a taste of what it's like to work in that field and help young people decide whether a particular job is right for them. Find tips on short-term work placements on the **Your Career** website (yourcareer.gov.au/schoolleaver).

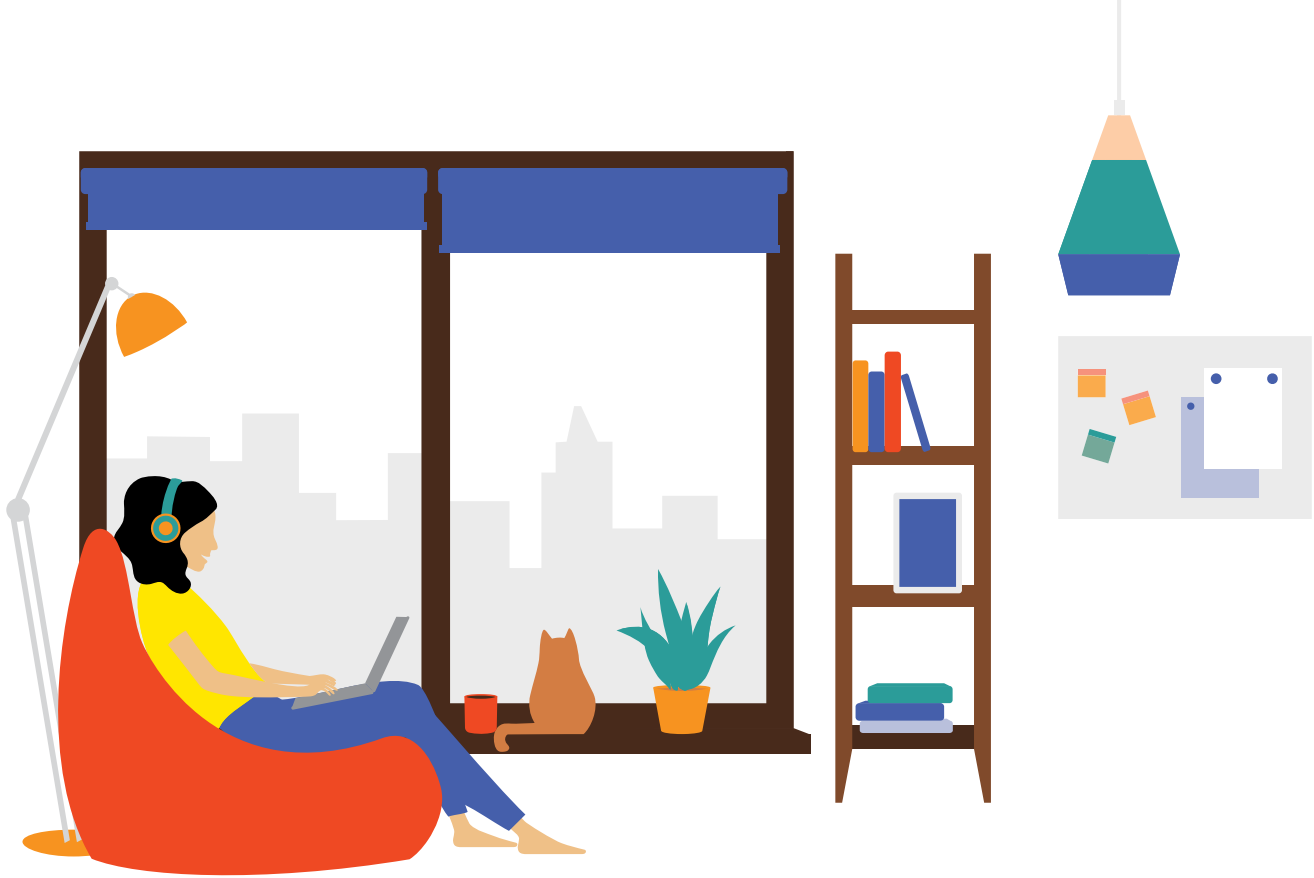
Volunteering

Young people can get the satisfaction of helping others while building valuable skills for the future through volunteering. See 'Information in your state/territory' for volunteer opportunities where you live.

Starting a business

Could your young person turn a passion into a business idea? Even though a business is a long-term venture, there are a range of steps they can take to get started.

For tips on starting a small business, visit the **Workforce Australia** website (workforceaustralia.gov.au/individuals/training/activities/self-employment-assistance).



Financial assistance

Your young person might be eligible for financial help to study, train or find work.

Assistance for higher education students

Your young person may be eligible for subsidised course fees, a HELP loan (studyassist.gov.au/help-loans) or a scholarship.

Assistance for VET students

Your young person could be eligible for a VET student loan if they're studying an approved course.

Visit dewr.gov.au/vet-student-loans for more information.

Assistance with living expenses

Some young people can get payments through Services Australia to help with their living expenses while studying, looking for a job or working part time. This includes Youth Allowance, ABSTUDY and the Disability Support Pension.

More information on financial assistance

Visit Your Career for more information on financial support to:

- work (yourcareer.gov.au/work-support)
- study (yourcareer.gov.au/learn-and-train/study-assistance).

You can also use the Payment and Service Finder to help you identify what support your young person may be eligible for. Search for '**Payment and Service Finder**' on the **Services Australia** website (centrelink.gov.au)

Extra help and support

Not everyone feels ready to take their next steps after school with confidence.

There are plenty of people your young person can talk to when they need support.

Career counselling

Schools

School career advisors, guidance counsellors, psychologists and wellness teams are also there to support students' wellbeing and help them find the right options for their circumstances. They can also provide referrals to other support options.

Universities and TAFE

Students at university or TAFE can book an appointment with a career advisor, campus counsellor or a student advisor to help them get support with their studies and find suitable career pathways. They can also provide referrals to other support options.





Mental health support

Headspace offers a dedicated service for young people aged 12 to 25 years.

- Website: headspace.org.au
- Phone: **1800 650 890**

Beyond Blue works to reduce the impact of anxiety, depression and suicide.

- Website: beyondblue.org.au
- Phone: **1300 224 636**

Lifeline provides mental health and wellbeing information and support for everyone.

- Website: lifeline.org.au
- Phone: **13 11 14**

kidshelpline provides free, private and confidential 24/7 phone and online counselling for young people aged 5 to 25.

- Website: kidshelpline.com.au
- Phone: **1800 55 1800**

Support for young people with mental illness

The Individual Placement and Support Program aims to improve educational and employment outcomes for people aged up to 25 with mental illness. It provides job coaching, help with navigating community support services and Centrelink systems, and on-the-job support for as long as needed.

For more information visit the Individual Placement and Support Program page on the **Department of Social Services** website (dss.gov.au/mental-health-programs-services/individual-placement-and-support-ips-trial).

School leavers with disability or special education needs

There are lots of supports available to help your young person reach their full potential in a way that suits them.

Here are some useful resources to help you and your young person plan their next steps.

General support

These are organisations and services that provide tools and information to make the transition from school smoother. It's also a good idea to ask around in your networks about other support services people you know have used.

Children and Young People with Disability Australia (CYDA) is an advocacy organisation that provides resources, information and advice on services and support for young people, including mechanisms to address any concerns or complaints. Learn more on the **CYDA** website (cyda.org.au/young-people).

Get ready for study and work is an online resource featuring 10 top tips for young people with disability who are leaving school and going on to work or study. It's on the **Western Sydney University** website (westernsydney.edu.au/getreadyforstudyandwork/resources/get_ready_top_tip_workbooks).

The **Better Health Channel** website has information about post-school options for people with disability (betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/servicesandsupport/postschool-options-for-people-with-a-disability).





Employment support

A **Disability Employment Services (DES)** provider can help your young person get job ready and find a job. They provide training, help with resume writing and interview skills, and look for suitable jobs. If your young person already has a job, a DES provider can help them with specific on-the-job training and support to suit their needs. Learn more on the **Department of Employment and Workplace Relations** website (dewr.gov.au/disability-employment-services) and the **Job Access** website (jobaccess.gov.au).

A **School Leaver Employment Supports** provider can help your young person get ready for work and plan a pathway to employment. Learn more on the **NDIS** website (ndis.gov.au/participants/finding-keeping-and-changing-jobs/leaving-school).

Australian Disability Enterprises (ADEs) provide employment experience and training opportunities for people with disability. Learn more about ADEs on the **Department of Social Services** website (dss.gov.au/disability-and-carers-programmes-services-for-people-with-disability/australian-disability-enterprises).

myWAY Employability is a smart web platform to help young autistic people plan and prepare for work. Learn more on the **myWAY Employability** website (mywayemployability.com.au).

Traineeship and apprenticeship support

The Disabled Australian Apprentice Wage Support Program (DAAWS) mentors and supports young people with disability wanting to pursue a traineeship or apprenticeship. Learn more from the **Australian Apprenticeships** website (australianapprenticeships.gov.au), including the DAAWS factsheet (australianapprenticeships.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-05/Support%20for%20Australian%20Apprentices%20with%20disability.pdf).

Education and training support

Leaving school and career planning — students with disability is a web resource for students with disabilities when they're planning to move from school to work or other options. Find out more on the **NDIS** website (ndis.gov.au/participants/finding-keeping-and-change-jobs/leaving-school).

The Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training (ADCET) provides information, resources and practical worksheets to help students with disability plan their transition to further education. Find out more on the **ADCET** website (adcet.edu.au/students-with-disability).



School leavers in regional, rural and remote areas

Some school leavers may face additional challenges at first because of where they live.

A range of services and resources recognise this and provide targeted support and information.

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) for information relating to your situation.



School leavers with economic or educational disadvantage

Lots of families aren't in a situation to afford further education for their young person or to support them through their studies.

Young people may also face greater challenges because of educational disadvantage. Educational disadvantage can arise from a wide range of factors, including disrupted schooling, financial hardship, English language difficulty, refugee status, school environment or location.

The services on this page provide extra support in these situations.

Study Assist

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

The Smith Family

The Smith Family (thesmithfamily.com.au/programs/work-experience) provides mentoring, learning programs and activities, and sponsorship to help students develop their academic skills and go on to further studies or employment.

UAC 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).



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school leavers

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people can access a range of targeted programs and support services.

This page highlights just some of the support available nationally. The School Leavers Information Kit has details of services in your state or territory.

Support services

Toorong Marnong ATAR Hotline

This hotline is for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people seeking advice about university entrance. It's a 24-hour service available from when ATAR (Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank) scores are released until the beginning of Semester 1. The line is staffed by Indigenous academics and support staff. For more information, visit the hotline website (vaeai.org.au/support-for-koorie-learners-heading-to-university) or call **1800 862 827**.

indigenous.gov.au

This website links to government services and programs and your closest regional office. For more information, visit indigenous.gov.au.

Indigenous Student Success Program

This program provides funding to universities to help students take on the demands of university and succeed. Universities offer scholarships, tutorial assistance, mentoring, safe cultural spaces and other personal support services. Learn more on the **National Indigenous Australians Agency** website (niaa.gov.au/indigenous-affairs/education/indigenous-student-success-program).

Government careers

Targeted options for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people who want to get a job in the Australian Public Service (APS) include:

- the Australian Defence Force's specialist Indigenous recruitment team
- the Australian Federal Police's Directions Program
- the Australian Taxation Office's Evergreen Program
- the Indigenous Apprenticeships Program, where participants join the APS and complete a formal qualification
- the Indigenous Australian Government Development Program, an entry-level opportunity to join the APS.



Information in your state/territory

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

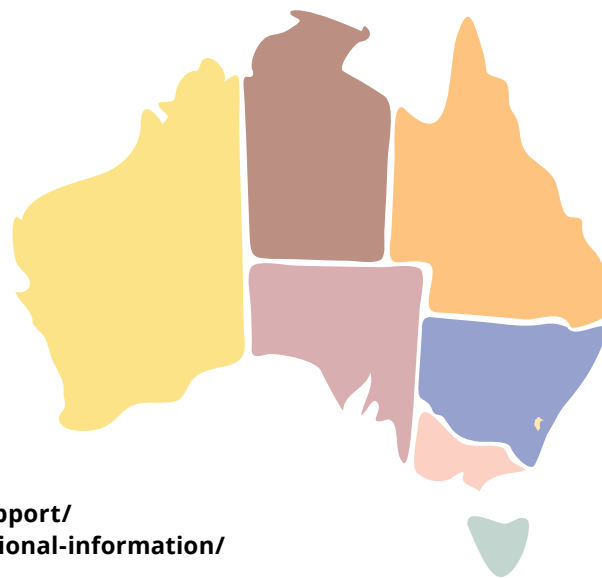
These include:

- services that help you get into university or Vocational Education and Training (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 using the QR Code below.



yourcareer.gov.au/school-leavers-support/school-leavers-information-kit/additional-information/information-in-your-state-territory



Thoughts and ideas

Key phone numbers

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Key websites

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For follow up

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

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