



National Disability Coordination Officer Program
AN AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE

CAREER PLANNING

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The Career Planning resource is designed to be used in collaboration with young people with disability and their families.

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Introduction

Career Planning involves decisions and choices that will help you plan for your future career pathway. This resource provides information about these choices, as well as supports and services which may be available to you.

These may include, completing:

- A Vocational Education and Training (VET) qualification, including a school-based traineeship
- An Australian Apprenticeship, including a school-based apprenticeship
- A University Degree

Other options may include:

- Getting a job
- Taking a 'gap year' to work, travel or volunteer

You can do more than one of these choices at the same time.

This resource provides information about these options, as well as support services which may be available to you. It is important to remember the choices you make now can be changed as you explore your choices. It is common for people to change their career path a number of times during their lives. However, the knowledge and skills you gain in each transition can be used in future jobs and give you more choice for the types of jobs you can apply for.

Many people can provide advice and help in planning your career. They may include:

- Secondary Education Teachers/Coordinators
- Student Counsellors
- Career Advisors
- Homegroup/Pastoral Care Teachers
- Vocational Education and Training Coordinators/ Career Pathways Managers
- Aboriginal Education Teachers and/or friends
- Disability Employment Services / School Leavers Employment Supports (SLES)
- NDIS Providers/Local Area Coordinators

Tip: It is important to explore a range of tertiary study and employment options that match your skills and interests. This means that if you identify that your preferred career pathway is unsuitable, you will have other options to explore. Speak to school careers counsellors, a transition coordinator, or post school career counselling services offered by Disability Employment Services (DES), Universities or TAFE. Keep in mind that your first few jobs will provide a good opportunity to find out what you want to do and what you don't want to do.

Transition from school to tertiary study and employment

Planning ahead

Don't wait until it's too late!

During secondary school, students begin to consider their career in a number of ways, including completing a Personal Learning Plan (PLP), Research Project, a Vocational Education and Training (VET) course, commencing a School-based Apprenticeship or through subject choices. By the end of year 11 you may have mapped out a career path you would like to follow or perhaps you are still unsure of what direction you want to take.

Finishing school is an exciting time! What can make it an even better experience is getting ready for the transition ahead of time. It's a good idea to take time to explore all of your options, and talk with school staff, family or friends about careers which interest you.

The transition from secondary school to life after school can cause some anxiety for parents/caregivers. Planning and making arrangements prior to the young person leaving school can provide some reassurance for families.

There is a checklist at the end of this booklet designed to assist with transitioning during the final year of schooling.

It can be difficult to decide what to do after school. It is important to remember that it is not a decision that is unchangeable for the rest of a person's life. Following are some questions that might help to plan.

- What do I love to do?
- What are my special talents and skills?
- What types of situations and environments do I like and enjoy?
- What can I offer an organisation/business that will help me get a job?
- What work arrangements will suit me and potential employers?
- Do I need to complete further study to achieve my goals?

School and Further Education information links about post school options are available at:

<https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/care-and-support/disability/activities/leaving-school>

On the Get Ready for Study and Work website you can find helpful information and guides for students, parents and teachers.

Go to <https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/getreadyforstudyandwork>

What is a transition plan?

A transition plan is designed to help students identify their skills and interests and can assist in planning what future pathways will suit them best. Start working with your school on a transition plan once you start secondary school to ensure you are best prepared for your final year of schooling. Transition Planning can also keep record of the types of activities you have been involved in whilst at school to build a portfolio for talking to employers.

Tip: A transition plan can be started in the early years of secondary school. However, generally schools start speaking to students and parents in years 10 through to 12. Students with additional needs should have a transition plan in place by year 10 and continue to update the transition plan right up to year 12.

How can others help?

Parents, caregivers or teachers have a key role to play in helping young people make career decisions. Career development is a lifelong process. Many adults say that they decided on their current occupations when they were children. However this is less likely for young people leaving school now, due to rapid technological and economic changes. Research shows parental involvement is one of the biggest factors influencing the development of young people's perceptions about careers. While the information provided by career professionals is very important, the conversations parents and caregivers have with young people about career pathway options are also very valuable.

It is important to talk with young people about all the choices available for further study and employment after school. There are many options to think about and it can take a young person some time to get a sense of what they are interested in. Remember that many people will change career direction multiple times in their lifetime and many jobs that exist in the future do not exist yet. Career exploration is about finding a starting point and sometimes it helps to talk about a "first career step" as a way to reduce the stress some people feel about making big career choices.

Young people can benefit from others being positive about their ideas and opportunities for finding a satisfying career path. Help them consider: their suitability for different jobs and further study and help identify their skills, interests and experiences. Discuss any ideas about further study and work that young people have and their future goals, including the lifestyle they wish to have. It is also important to understand the inherent requirements of the study and employment goals and if support may be needed to achieve these goals.

The role of the school

It is important to be proactive in your own journey to discover your career path and not rely completely on the school as the primary source for finding a career and meeting all our personal learning needs. It is better to recognise that the school will be only one part of the career journey. Schools believe in the benefits of planning for each student's individual needs for the successful transition from school into meaningful further education and employment. This planning process with schools is essential for an optimum outcome for each student.

Students and their families have the right to:

- Request a transition meeting with staff responsible for transition planning and disability support at your school
- Give their opinions and thoughts on a possible learning pathway
- Present the objectives they want in the transition meeting
- Ask how the school can support the student and family in reaching goals

In return, the students and their families' responsibilities include:

- Thinking about what they want for the future
- Communicating with the school to determine realistic goals
- Be proactive and involved in following up on elements of the transition planning process for which they are responsible and check back in to make sure everyone is on track

Tips for communicating with the school:

- **Clarify your goals** - before meetings, write down what you want to accomplish. Decide what is most important, and what you are willing to negotiate
- **Be a good listener** - allow school staff to explain their opinions. If you don't understand what someone is saying, ask for clarification.
- **Offer new solutions** - do your research - find examples of what other schools have done.
- **Keep the focus** - help the meeting stay focused on your needs. Go into the meeting assuming that everyone wants to help
- **Don't give up easily** - if you are not satisfied with the school's response, try again

Leaving school...

People with a disability are successful in various jobs and professions. Planning ahead will give school leavers a better chance of achieving their goals.

Top five reasons why it's important to support a young person's transition from school to further education, training or work:

- It's a rite of passage
- It encourages new experiences
- It exposes them to new skills and environments
- It's important to change the learning environment in order to continue to progress
- It's the path to independence, including earning their own money

If you or someone you know is at risk of disengaging from school early, ask to discuss possible career pathways with staff at the school. There are various career pathways that can support students to remain engaged at school. For example, a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship, require students to attend a work-place part-time and attend school part-time to complete the training.

Transition planning helps students to remain engaged in their learning at school, particularly if it supports them to explore aspirations and tertiary pathways related to their career goals. It is also important to explore disability specific needs as part of transition planning. People with a disability can take advantage of Assistive Technologies and other supports which will assist them in their path to reaching their education and employment goals.

What are my options?

Exploring tertiary education and post school training

Adult Community Education

Adult Community Education (ACE) is funded by the South Australian Government Department for Innovation and Skills (DIS). ACE is a term used in South Australia to describe a wide range of accredited and non-accredited courses for adults, ACE Programs are usually free or low cost.

ACE learning activities can include:

- Courses and workshops to assist adults to develop their personal skills in preparation for tertiary study and employment
- Tutoring services, classes and small group activities designed to meet individual and group needs for improved foundation skills such as literacy and numeracy

What does the program aim to achieve?

The focus of the program is to ensure adults who may experience barriers to participation in the workforce have access to learning pathways. Additional information is available at: https://sacommunity.org/org/197187-Adult_Community_Education

Vocational Education and Training (VET)

VET is education and training that provides skills and knowledge essential for work particularly in trades and industry.

Who provides VET training?

Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) provide nationally-accredited training in a range of industry areas. RTOs range from private training companies to large organisations such as TAFE and professional industry associations. There are many RTOs that provide training to gain qualifications in chosen industry areas. To search for an RTO nearest to you visit: <http://www.skills.sa.gov.au/>

Core Skills Profile for Adults (CSPA)

The CSPA is a tool designed to indicate reading, writing and numeracy/maths skills. TAFE SA use this information to assess if you will need any learning support during your studies and to assist your lecturer in personalising your training. Some qualifications require CSPA as part of Course Admissions Requirements when applying for a place at TAFE SA.

Short courses are available to assist in improving numeracy, reading and writing skills.

Subsidised training requirements stipulate that applicants must be assessed up front for literacy and numeracy using the CSPA. Further information regarding the CSPA and subsidised training is available at <https://www.tafesa.edu.au/apply-enrol/cspa>

Some students with disability may need support to meet the inherent requirements of a course. TAFE SA has a range of supports and services that students with disabilities, mental health or medical conditions can access to achieve their study and learning goals:

<https://www.tafesa.edu.au/services/disability-support>

NDCOs and TAFE SA has published a booklet for students about disability services at TAFE SA: <https://www.tafesa.edu.au/docs/default-source/disability/disability-student-guide.pdf>

Australian Apprenticeships and Traineeships

Is a trade possible for a young person with a disability? YES!

Australian Apprenticeships combine practical work with structured training to provide a nationally recognised qualification and experience needed to get a particular job. Apprenticeships and Traineeships may take between one and four years to complete depending on the trade or qualification.

Australian Apprenticeships are 'competency based'. This means it may be possible for a person to complete training sooner if they have reached the skill and knowledge level required. Apprenticeships are covered by formal agreements known as either 'Training Agreements' or 'Contracts of Training'. These agreements set out the training and supervision an employer must provide as well as the apprentice's obligations. The training provided can be delivered on-the-job, off the-job, or a combination of both. Off-the-job training is provided by TAFE or other approved training providers (Registered Training Organisations). Training is available in many occupations in a range of industries.

Traineeship and Apprenticeship Services

Traineeship and Apprenticeship Services provide information and advice about:

- Traineeships and apprenticeships
- Subsidies to support the training of trainees and apprentices
- Allowances for eligible trainees who are required to travel to attend off-the-job training

Traineeship and Apprenticeship Services assist:

- Trainees and apprentices
- Employers and Group Training Organisations (GTOs)
- Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)
- Anyone interested in finding out more about traineeships and apprenticeships

There is a range of information about Traineeships and Apprenticeships on the Skills SA website:

<http://www.skills.sa.gov.au/apprenticeships-traineeships> If you're not sure where to start, call Traineeship and Apprenticeship Services on **1800 673 097**.

What support is available for Australian apprentices with disability?

There is support available for Australian Apprentices with disability. The Disabled Australian Apprentice Wage Support (DAAWS) Program. Wage supports are paid to employers and assistance for tutorial, interpreter and mentor services are available for apprentices. To assess eligibility for DAAWS, it is important that prior to signing a contract of training, the apprentice, discusses possible support needs regarding his/ her disability with the employer, and the Traineeship and Apprenticeship Service provider.

<https://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au/aus>

Assistance is also available through the Employment Assistance Fund (EAF). This assistance can be provided to modify workplaces or purchase modified tools and other specialised equipment. Employees and Employers can access the scheme via JobAccess: <https://www.jobaccess.gov.au/employment-assistance-fund-eaf> or through Disability Employment Services.

Universities

Universities provide services to support students with a disability, learning difficulty or medical condition to successfully undertake courses. Universities in South Australia have well established disability services and processes. Students are required to make an appointment with an Access and Inclusion Advisor/ Disability Support Officer to discuss the functional effect of their disability on their studies. Supports are negotiated individually and are designed to meet the unique needs of each student.

Entry into university

There are now many ways to enter university. These do not vary for students with a disability. Modes of entry include:

- The South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) uses an Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank (ATAR) to apply through the South Australian Tertiary Admissions Centre (SATAC)
- The Special Tertiary Admissions Test (STAT) is a test that has 70 multiple choice questions. The questions are designed to assess the ability to think critically and to make sense of a variety of material
- Via Special Entry and Foundation Studies Programs run by some universities, check on their websites for more information
- Credit transfer from some TAFE courses and private Registered Training Organisations
- Via Foundation Studies or Aboriginal Pathways Programs

Is support for disabilities available through training and education providers?

Under the Disability Standards for Education (2005), arising from the Disability Discrimination Act (1992) <http://www.dese.gov.au/disability-standards-education-2005> all education and training providers, including Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) must identify barriers that people with a disability encounter when accessing programs and services and develop strategies to minimise the impact of these barriers. If a student's disability needs are not met, they should follow the University's or the RTO's complaint procedures. If this does not help, then the student can inquire with the Equal Opportunity Commission <https://eoc.sa.gov.au/> or the Australian Human Rights Commission <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/>. The South Australian Skills Commission may assist with dispute resolution regarding RTOs: <http://skillscommission.sa.gov.au/>.

All education and training providers are required by law to support students with disabilities to make sure they are not disadvantaged by their disability. This legal requirement covers 5 areas:

- Enrolment
- Participation in the course
- Curriculum development, accreditation and delivery
- Student support services
- Elimination of harassment and victimisation

Education and training providers must not lower education standards, ignore inherent requirements or ignore health and safety.

Inherent requirements refer to the skills and knowledge in a program or course which must be successfully completed by students regardless of their disability because these requirements are essential to the qualification. Students with disabilities can be provided with reasonable services and adjustments, however, inherent requirements must be maintained.

Some examples of inherent requirements of courses may include:

- Ability to read and interpret specifications and correctly use power tools in a building course
- Injecting animals in a veterinary care course
- Cutting vegetables in a commercial cookery course

Unjustifiable hardship

Unjustifiable hardship happens when an adjustment that the school and parents, guardians or carers feel would achieve the desired goal for the student with a disability is not possible to do as it imposes an excessive burden on the education provider, staff or other students. Unjustifiable hardship does not usually refer to financial hardship. The onus for proving unjustifiable hardship rests on the organisation. Further information is available at:

<https://www.nccd.edu.au/wider-support-materials/legal-exceptions>

Access Plans - what are they?

Having an Access Plan is an individual choice. It provides information about the impact of a student's disability, learning difficulty, mental health or medical condition on their studies. It also identifies agreed services that will be provided by Disability/Access and Inclusion Services and any alternative exam adjustments. Access Plans help students to negotiate reasonable adjustments with lecturers, so they can achieve their learning goals.

All information about a student's disability is confidential, lecturing staff will receive information in regard to the adjustments to be made. For example, an Access Plan might state that the student needs PowerPoint presentations a day before each lecture, but it will not state why. It is the student's choice whether or not to disclose their disability to their lecturer/s.

For information about how the Access Plan is developed and what it is used for, students should contact the University or TAFE Disability Service. It is important to negotiate an Access Plan as soon as possible after enrolment.

Some examples of adjustments to help a student with a disability include:

- Assistive technology such as screen readers and/or voice recognition software
- AUSLAN interpreters
- Texts provided in alternative format (such as Braille, electronic files, MP3 files etc)
- Adapted equipment or furniture
- Alternative assessment methods
- Extra time for essays/exams/coursework
- Physical access modifications to buildings, classrooms etc
- Hearing loops or assistive hearing devices
- Special equipment
- Electronic versions of lectures and/or lecture notes provided ahead of time

Important things to consider in mainstream education and training:

- All students, including those with a disability, need to be able to meet the inherent or core requirements of a course/qualification
- It is a good idea to contact disability staff at the university or TAFE before you apply for a course to discuss if your disability will impact on fulfilling the inherent requirements.
- There is no entitlement package attached to particular disabilities. Supports are negotiated individually and are designed to meet the unique needs of each student.

Some university courses require students to be professionally registered while they do their course. Qualifications in nursing, medicine and allied health require graduates to register with their corresponding peak body. If a student has a disability and wants to study in these fields, it is important to contact the university disability service to discuss the inherent requirements and the requirements for professional registration before applying. This is to make sure that they can meet the requirements for registration.

SATAC

The South Australian Tertiary Admissions Centre (SATAC) is the organisation that processes applications for study at University and TAFEs in South Australia and the Northern Territory. Each State and Territory has a similar body and people wishing to apply for courses in other states should check with their school about their local application authority. The institution offering the course sets out the entry requirements for the course and SATAC assesses the applicants based on their academic and non-academic qualifications. Most applicants considered for entry to courses on the basis of results from their final year of secondary schooling are ranked using the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR). The ATAR is an indication of how a student has performed in comparison with other students.

SATAC is a central point for enquiries about the outcomes of applications. They can be contacted by phone 1300 138 440 or go online to <https://www.satac.edu.au/>

TAFE Credit Transfers

In South Australia, universities recognise some TAFE SA qualifications for entry into some university degrees. To find out more about these pathways, visit university websites or go to a University 'Open Day' and speak to the prospective students office. TAFE SA Student Services can also provide advice on Credit Transfers.

Tip: There are strict deadlines for SATAC application closing dates. Further information is available at <https://www.satac.edu.au/postgraduate-key-dates>. Applications made after the closing date may not be considered. In other cases, the applicant may be required to pay a late application fee.

National Disability Insurance Scheme

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) provides individualised, reasonable and necessary funding supports to eligible participants with a permanent and significant disability to build skills and capability so they can participate socially and economically in the community. The scheme is administered by the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA). Local Area Coordinators (LACs) help people understand and access the NDIS and to develop and use their NDIS plan. LACs can also advise on support coordination that may be funded to assist people with disabilities, including those not eligible for NDIS, to locate and make connections to services and activities.

It is important to discuss your education and employment goals with the NDIS, Local Area Coordinator, when your NDIS plan is being developed, so that the supports you need can be included in your NDIS plan and accessed as soon as possible. Discuss your options with your Local Area Coordinator, NDIS Planner or support coordinator. Further information on the NDIS is available at <https://www.ndis.gov.au/> or phone 1800 800 110.

Exploring Employment Options

Graduate Employment Support for Students with Disability

University Specialist Employment Partnerships (USEP) and TAFE Specialist Employment Partnerships (TSEP) are initiatives of the National Disability Coordination Officer (NDCO) Program. These partnerships are a collaboration between NDCOs, selected Disability Employment Services, Universities and TAFEs to improve 'on campus' access to employment opportunities for graduating or graduated students with disability. Not all Universities and TAFEs have these partnerships so ask the Career Services / Disability Services on campus, if there is a USEP or TSEP partnership available. Further information is available at:

[ADCET Employment Services and Programs - Graduate Programs](#)

Information on School Leavers Employment Supports (SLES)

SLES has been designed to assist young people with disability transition confidently from school into employment once year 12 is completed. This may include support to explore VET courses, gain work experience or job skills training. SLES supports are tailored to meet an individual's employment goals. Speak to your LAC about SLES eligibility criteria. For more information about SLES go to <https://www.ndis.gov.au/providers/working-provider/school-leaver-employment-supports>

Disability Employment Services (DES)

Disability Employment Services (DES) support people with a disability, injury or health condition to gain suitable and sustainable employment. All eligible people with disability have immediate access to the service they need. There are no waiting lists.

There are two clearly distinct programs within Disability Employment Services:

- Disability Management Service (DMS) for job seekers with disability, injury or health condition who need assistance of a disability employment service but are not expected to need long-term support in the workplace
- Employment Support Service (ESS) for job seekers with permanent disability and with an assessed need for more long term, regular support in the workplace

All eligible job seekers with disability have access to individually tailored and comprehensive services which meet their needs including capacity building, tertiary study, work experience and other interventions to help obtain and maintain suitable employment. Participants can choose their preferred provider when they first enter the DES or change their provider if unhappy with the services they are receiving.

Accessing DES for School Leavers

An Eligible School Leaver can approach a DES provider directly, or by referral through their school. There are certain requirements that need to be met to qualify for this program.

An Eligible School Leaver must be:

- In the last 6 months of full-time secondary school and considering post-school options/ employment opportunities, or
- A fulltime student who is participating in a school-based apprenticeship which is recognised by an Australia Apprenticeship Centre and with a training contract lodged in the Training Recognition System (TRS)

And be:

- Of legal working age
- Assessed by the DES provider as having capacity to work for a minimum of 8 hours per week
- Not currently employed for more than 8 hours per week
- Able to provide suitable evidence from their current educational authority recognising the student's need for education support due to the nature of their disability
- Does not have a current and valid Job Capacity Assessment (JCA/ESAT) with an employment services referral

Questions to ask DES

- Do you subsidise further studies and training?
- How do you assist with individual jobseeker's aspirations and goals?
- What support do you provide participants while studying?
- How do you support participants to prepare for job search before completing tertiary qualifications?
- How do you match job seekers to jobs that use their qualifications?
- What examples can you provide of skilled jobs you have gained for people with VET and Higher Education qualifications?
- How do you work with employers to build inclusive recruitment processes and team building?
- How do you support job seekers to self-advocate for accessibility requirements during the recruitment process and employment?
- Do you assist with preparing tailored job applications (including addressing selection criteria) and resumés?
- Do you assist with interview skills training and interview preparation for specific jobs?
- What on the job support do you provide?
- Does your organisation offer re-training for a new task or position?
- Do you offer any programs to assist with work preparation?
- What range of services does your organisation provide? For example, counselling, connecting to other services, including NDIS and Centrelink.
- Do you provide transport support and what support will you offer?

How to access DES

Centrelink will assess a person's individual situation and work out eligibility and suitability to a service. People may also directly register with a DES provider in their area without going to Centrelink. During Centrelink's assessment, or the direct registration process, a referral may be made for an Employment Services Assessment (ESA). To find out more about DES you can go to the JobAccess website: <https://www.jobaccess.gov.au/> or search for a DES provider at the following webpage: <https://www.jobaccess.gov.au/find-a-provider>.

Tip: Each DES provider is different, so it is important that questions are asked about the service when deciding which DES will best support the future needs of the person with a disability who is seeking employment.

Jobactive (previously known as Job Services Australia)

Jobactive provides opportunities for training, skills development, work experience and tailored assistance. The service is highly focused on meeting individual needs, whether the client is a job seeker or an employer.

People who have a disability, learning difficulty, injury and/or health condition may access Jobactive providers rather than specialist DES if they choose.

To access services through Jobactive, a person must be a client of Centrelink and wanting to enter or re-enter the workforce. They may be referred by Centrelink or may self-refer by contacting a Jobactive Provider directly.

Gap Year

While many school leavers want to go straight on to further education and training, many take a break in their first year out of school to travel, pursue a hobby, earn money, volunteer, or gain skills and life experience. This is known as a gap year. Taking a break from studying to do something different can really help young people if they are not sure about what career they want to pursue. There are many ways a gap year can increase skills and experience, enhance understanding of a chosen field of study, and add to future employability.

Many young people choose to do volunteer work during their gap year as it is an excellent way of experiencing new challenges and learning about the world of work. Volunteers can work anywhere around Australia and overseas, providing a valuable service to these communities. A variety of organisations rely on volunteers and it can be a great way to build new skills and add to work experience. Find out more at: <https://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/#/>

It is important to use a gap year to engage in activities that will strengthen future career pathways. Spending time at home without being engaged in volunteer work etc. may result in unexplained gaps in the résumé that employers may not view positively.

Applying for a job

Before starting to apply for jobs, it is important to research a variety of sectors that offer careers that may interest you. Researching different sectors and specific employers will help you to start to gain knowledge about various jobs and the skills and personal attributes that employers may require when hiring staff for specific positions. Researching industries may also provide ideas for what skills and experience to include on your résumé and cover letters.

Your résumé

This is a snapshot of who you are and gives the employer a chance to make a brief assessment of you. It is your chance to present your employable qualities and persuade the employer that they should ask you in for an interview, to find out more about you. The résumé should be clearly laid out, with all necessary information provided – this will make it easy to read and also make a positive impression about you.

Your résumé should not:

- Use fancy fonts
- Include your age, marital status, religion, or ethnic origin (unless you want to)
- Use slang, jargon or abbreviations
- Include anything you are not confident to discuss or information that is not honest.

Your résumé should:

- Be in easy to read font - 11 or 12 point, Arial, Calibri or Verdana
- Show qualifications and experience with most recent first
- Use action verbs such as “created”, “organised” or “coordinated”
- Have your name and page number on the footer of each page
- Be brief and to the point
- Have no errors - proofread carefully.

Tips: What to Include in Your Résumé

Make sure your email address message is appropriate

Email addresses such as: missbutterfly@hotmail.com do not show professionalism when looking for work. Make sure you have an email address and voicemail message which is professional, plain and simple and preferably uses your name.

Skills and competencies

Include key skills and competencies that you have demonstrated at school and during employment, work experience or volunteer work.

Examples of skills and competencies may include communication, teamwork, problem solving, self-management, planning and organising, initiative and enterprise skills.

Think about examples that you can provide in your application letters and interviews that demonstrate the skills and competencies in your résumé.

Education and Training

List your most recent qualification first. Include academic achievements, certificates completed, VET and other courses you are currently studying.

Employment

Include casual, part-time and vacation work and list the most recent job first. You should include the name of the organisation, the dates of employment (e.g., Jan. 2020-June. 2023), the position and the duties and responsibilities.

When listing duties and responsibilities, think of the tasks within the jobs you did. List your duties in bullet points and start each sentence with verbs or action words wherever possible.

For example,

Child Minding:

Duties

- Communicated with parents regarding expectations
- Organised play activities suited to children's needs
- Maintained positive relationships with parents and children
- Followed instructions as requested
- Supervised children's play and safety
- Developed problem-solving strategies to support children's needs

Volunteer Work

If you do not have any paid work to include on your résumé, your non-paid work, including student work experience placements and voluntary work can still provide a good impression to an employer. Volunteer work may include Positions of Responsibility at school or in the community.

For example,

School Council Representative

Duties:

- Built relationships with students and council members
- Gathered student feedback and identified key concerns
- Advocated for student's needs
- Organised school events
- Developed presentations for council members
- Attended meetings

Achievements

Include extra-curricular achievements or awards.

Referees

List the referee's names, the company they work for, phone numbers and email addresses.

Prior to including referees on your résumé contact them to ask if they wish to be your referee.

Each time you gain an interview, phone/email each of your referees, advise them of the job you have applied for and the possibility of receiving a request for reference from the employer.

Applying for a job online

The majority of employment vacancies require job applications to be submitted online. Follow all the instructions for applying for your chosen job/s. If you do not follow all the instructions your application may not be considered. The job advertisement will specify what documents you need to email to the contact person specified. Online applications usually require job applicants to email their application letter, résumé and/or responses to selection criteria. Submitting a video discussing how your skills and abilities meet the job requirements or completing an online assessment are other ways you may be requested to submit a job application.

Please see the tip below for information about requesting reasonable adjustments if the recruitment process discourages or prevents you from applying for the role.

Review and edit your email and attachments prior to sending. The email subject line should have your name and position you are applying for. Call and confirm it has been received.

Include a brief statement in the email regarding the position you are applying for and specify what documents you have attached. For example, "I have attached my application letter and résumé for your reference and I look forward to discussing my application further with you".

Sign the email with your full name.

Tip: Many job advertisements encourage applicants with disability to apply for the job advertised. Use this encouragement as a prompt to contact the organisation to discuss the recruitment process and to request adjustments and accommodations you may require for the interview and/or assessments.

Employers may provide a range of accommodations to suit the diverse accessibility requirements of job applicants. For example, some employers provide opportunities for neurodiverse job applicants to provide practical demonstrations of their skills, rather than attend formal interviews. Specialisterne has further information on inclusive recruitment practices available at <https://specialisterne.com.au/>

Résumé templates

There are various websites that provide templates and /or examples of résumés, cover letters and selection criteria. For example,

- <https://www.youthcentral.vic.gov.au/jobs-and-careers/applying-for-a-job/sample-resumes-and-cover-letters>
- Seek <https://www.seek.com.au/career-advice/article/this-is-what-a-great-résumé-looks-like>
- Google 'High School Student Résumé' for additional template examples
- Websites such as The National Careers Institute and Australian Jobs also include information on careers including the industries hiring and the skills they require.

<https://yourcareer.gov.au/>

<https://nci.dese.gov.au/resources>

<https://myfuture.edu.au/>

<https://www.gooduniversitiesguide.com.au/careers-guide>

<https://joboutlook.gov.au/>

<https://www.skills.sa.gov.au/>

What is an application or cover letter?

A cover letter accompanies your résumé and is your opportunity to promote your skills, knowledge and attributes that are relevant to the position you are applying for.

Follow the guidance of the job advertisement to tailor your cover letter.

Some organisations will require you to include your cover letter as an attachment, in other occasions you will use your cover letter as part of your email.

For online applications, use the email's subject line to indicate you are applying for a specific job: e.g. 'Application for Administration Assistant position'.

Ensure to use your name and phone number at the end of your email.

Hints for preparing a cover letter

- Leave space around the edges (margins) and clear space between each paragraph.
- Use a basic font such as Arial, Calibri or Verdana.
- Provide examples of how you demonstrated your skills and knowledge.
- Use 'action' words, e.g. organised, supervised, communicated etc.
- If a job application lists a selection criterion, make sure you carefully address each criterion.
- Only send copies of material that was requested. E.g school reports and / or certificates.
- Keep a copy of your application.
- Check the letter carefully for errors and ask someone else to check your letter as well.

What should be included in a cover letter?

Include the name and address of the contact person provided in the job advertisement.

Address the employer directly for example: 'Dear Ms Smith'. If no contact name is provided, phone the organisation to find out the person's name. If no name is given, use 'To whom it may concern'.

Opening paragraph: Indicate which position you wish to apply for (giving reference number if applicable) and where the position was advertised.

Second paragraph: Include why you wish to apply for the role and the experience, skills and qualities you have that match the job advertised. Use two or three selling points and focus on what you have to offer. It is important to provide examples of how you have demonstrated your skills and experience. Your aim is to encourage the reader to seek more details from your résumé.

Third paragraph: Include your personal qualities that match the employer's and business needs.

Fourth paragraph: thank the reader for considering the application and refer to your enclosed résumé and other attachments. Indicate that you would appreciate an interview to further discuss your suitability.

Closing: if your salutation was Dear Sir/Madam, end with yours faithfully. If it was Dear Mr, Ms or Dr Smith, end with yours sincerely. Type your name and sign the letter above your typed name if mailing a copy of your application.

Tip: Remember to view the websites provided on p.21 for additional cover letter tips and examples.

Addressing the Selection Criteria

The most important aspect of addressing selection criteria is to provide evidence of your skills and abilities through relevant examples. Support your claims with actual, specific examples of what you have done and how well you did it. The following steps provide guidance on how to address selection criteria.

1. Ensure you understand the selection criteria
2. Brainstorm examples ideas of how you demonstrate the selection criteria skills and capabilities in previous work/volunteer/ community roles and experiences
3. Draft a paragraph for each criterion
4. Review and edit each paragraph

At this stage, it is helpful to read through your application, and check if you have:

- Been honest? Is what you have written accurate and true? Can you actually do all these things competently and independently?
- Used positive and specific examples
- Used strong action (doing) words
- Addressed all the criteria
- Paid attention to the language of the criteria

Cover Letter Example

Mr L Green
Office Manager
Smith Town Office
PO Box 999
Smith Town SA 5555

John Smith
Phone: 0444 444 444
E-Mail: john.smith@smithmail.com.au

DATE XXX

Dear Mr Green,

I wish to apply for the position of receptionist, advertised on xxx (include where the job was advertised). Please see my résumé attached to support my application for the position.

I am keen to contribute my skills and continue to learn within (state the company name) as it expands its services and continues to grow within the marketing sector. I am savvy with using a range of computer and social media platforms and able to confidently engage with people of various ages and backgrounds. In the next part of this paragraph include brief examples of schoolwork, a research project, extra- curricular activities, paid/ unpaid work etc and how you demonstrated the skills that the employer requires for the position).

My position as student representative on the School Council strengthened my communication and presentation skills with people of various ages and backgrounds. I am a confident 'team player', willing to learn and to involve myself in activities that help me to continuously develop my abilities.

Thank you for considering my application. I look forward to hearing from you to discuss an interview appointment time.

Yours Sincerely

John Smith

Tip: The Australian Public Service may require applicants to use the STAR model to address selection criteria. STAR is the acronym for Situation, Task, Action and Result.

Further information on STAR is available at:

Australian Public Service Commission <https://www.apsc.gov.au/3-applying-aps-job-cracking-code>

Further information regarding applying for jobs in the South Australian Public Sector and

addressing selection criteria is available at: I Work for SA <https://iworkfor.sa.gov.au/iworkforsa/docs/recprocrs/addressing-selection-criteria.pdf>

Phoning an employer to discuss a job vacancy

Employers are often impressed by job seekers who phone them to discuss a job vacancy prior to submitting their application. Alternatively, you could email your questions to an employer if you are not confident to phone.

Discussing a job vacancy with an employer can provide clarity about the role and provide a better understanding of how to tailor your application to match the job requirements.

Tips to prepare for your phone call to an employer:

- Make sure you have all the information with you that you will need to discuss the job and your skills. For example, the job advertisement and your résumé
- Remember to take notes
- Think about what you will say, write these thoughts down, rehearse them in your mind, sit comfortably and relax
- Find out the employer's name, write it down and use it during your conversation with them
- Make sure you are in a quiet place with no background noise
- To help calm your nerves, breathe in and breath slowly out a few times

Tips for your conversation with the employer:

- Introduce yourself using your full name
- State the job vacancy you are interested in applying for
- Ask the employer if it is an appropriate time to discuss the vacancy, or if you can arrange another time to phone
- Ask questions to clarify the recruitment process, reasonable adjustments you may require, the duties and the level of experience to perform the role
- If you have a limited employment history, you could discuss some transferable skills and ask would the skills be considered if you apply
- Avoid being too casual in your manner or speech. Your tone of voice needs to convey you are keen and want the job
- Thank the employer for their time and confirm if you intend to submit an application
- If you are offered an interview, try to reschedule other appointments and make the interview your priority. Confirm with the employer the interview date, time, location and names of staff who will be interviewing you to ensure you have all the details correct.

Interviews

Preparing for interviews and attending interviews can make many people feel nervous. Being prepared for the interview can help to reduce nervousness.

Dress for success

Go to your interview looking neat and professional. Do not wear clothing that is too casual or sporty, including T-shirts, shorts or jeans.

Arrive on time

Employers like punctual people and it makes you look professional. Plan to arrive early to the interview.

Prepare for the interview

Job seekers must be ready to answer questions. It is a good idea to go through a practice interview with a parent or another trusted adult. They should write down possible interview questions, so the job seeker can practice with them until confident with answers. Remember to revisit the employer's website to identify questions you can ask.

Some possible interview questions:

- Tell us about yourself and why you are interested in this role?
- What are your strengths?
- Can you provide an example of how you have provided good customer service?
- Can you walk me through an example of how you have contributed to a positive team environment?
- What areas do you think you need to improve on?
- How would you describe your personality?
- What makes you the best person for the job?

Asking questions shows the employer that an applicant is enthusiastic about the job and keen to learn. Prepare a list of possible questions to ask:

- What is the most important thing you look for in an employee?
- I have skills and experiences required for the job. To carry out this job I must do some things differently because of my disability. Give an example, e.g. to attend meetings I need captioning on a separate device. The technology I need can be funded by an organisation called JobAccess. This organisation can also provide free disability awareness training to help to build inclusive workplaces. Is your organisation open to further discussing reasonable adjustments and how they can be provided? Do you offer flexible work arrangements?
- Is there a workplace uniform or dress code?

- I am aware that the company is continuing to develop its services (discuss a specific example you identified through your research). Can you tell me more about these services and how staff will assist in developing them?
- If I am successful in my application, what opportunities will there be to develop my career path within the company?

Once the interview is complete thank the interviewer for their time.

Follow-Up

You may gain valuable information if you contact the employer to ask for feedback regarding your application and/or interview if unsuccessful in either gaining an interview or a job offer.

Tip: employers are impressed by job seekers who have researched the job and ask questions that relate to current or future opportunities. Why not try googling the business?

Career Services

Free Career Development Services are available and offer a range of services to suit the various needs of individuals, these may include:

- Résumé creation or redevelopment
- Application Letters
- Job Search
- Interview skills and techniques
- Identify personal challenges
- Personal presentation
- Mentoring

Career Development Services are provided in all municipalities Australia-wide. All school Career Advisers or Counsellors also have information about where to get Career Development advice. Young people should ask for a referral or contact details for services in their area. The Career Development Association of Australia may also be able to provide a list of professional Career Development Advisers in your area, although there will usually be a cost for their services.

For further information visit: <https://www.cdaa.org.au/CDAASite/Web/About-Career-Development/Find-a-Career-Specialist.aspx>

If a young person is thinking about a career after further study or training, the following questions might help:

- What are 3 career or employment goals that suit me? In other words, think about the areas of work and the environment you would like to work - working with computers in an office, working with plants in a nursery etc.

- What are the study fields that will help me achieve my career or employment goals? For example, IT Studies, Business Administration, Horticulture etc.
- What courses match my career goals? Look at the course website or booklets published by universities or training providers. Decide which courses in the study fields match your career goals and list them
- What jobs match my career goals? Look at the courses you've listed and identify possible employment pathways that these create and list them

Other support and assistance

Support from local government

Many local councils have youth focused activities, support services and other community programs. For more information on how to access these contact your local council office. Youth programs through Local Government can be a great way for young people with disabilities to develop friendship networks and employability and leadership skills. Many Local Governments have Youth Advisory Committees (YAC).

Language, literacy and numeracy support

People can receive assistance with English language, literacy and numeracy by calling the Reading and Writing Hotline on 1300 6 555 06.

Eligible job seekers can also get help by attending the Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) program. To find SEE providers, go to: <https://www.dese.gov.au/skills-education-and-employment/providers>

Centrelink

Centrelink can help support young people financially to stay on at school or participate in further education or training if they meet their eligibility criteria. They can also refer young people on to other agencies to assist with other problems the young person or their family may be experiencing. For information go to: <https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/centrelink>

Resources for students

The Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training (ADCET) provides information, advice and resources to students with disability. Resources include worksheets to download to assist planning for post-secondary education and transition from education to employment:

<https://www.adcet.edu.au/students-with-disability>

More important information

Tax File Number

A Tax File Number (TFN) is required for all forms of employment in Australia, and also for anyone who is applying for Commonwealth benefits such as Youth Allowance. Students enrolled in university and choosing the deferred payment options of HECS-HELP are also required to have a TFN. If you do not have a TFN, you should obtain an application form from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). Application forms can be found on the ATO website <https://www.ato.gov.au/> or phone **132 861**.

Medicare Australia

Medicare is an Australian government agency which provides access to free or low-cost medical, optometrical and hospital care. You will need to present your Medicare card to obtain benefits. Young people are likely to be registered on their parent's card but young people 15 years or older may register for their own Medicare card. For more information:

<http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/medicare/medicare-card>

Health Care Card

You may be eligible for a Health Care Card, which enables you to get prescriptions filled at a reduced cost as well as other concessions, if you receive income support or are on a low income.

Further information: <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/health-care-card>

Unions

Unions give working people a voice. They do this by assisting them to gain better pay, safe working environments and employment security in the workplace. Further information regarding your rights as an employee or how to join a union is available at <https://www.saunions.org.au>.

Unions also facilitate the Young Workers Legal Service: <http://www.ywls.org.au>.

Wage levels and conditions

Information on issues such as rates of pay, unfair dismissal, long service leave and workers' rights:
South Australian Government – Safework SA - <https://www.safework.sa.gov.au/workers/wages-and-conditions>. Commonwealth Government – Fair Work Commission - <http://www.fwc.gov.au/>

Enrolling to vote

Voting in State and Commonwealth elections is a right and a responsibility for all Australians from the age of 18 (although you may register at 17). Australian citizens can enrol by completing a form available at any post office or through the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) website. For more information phone 132 326 or go to www.aec.gov.au

Planning for the future – career exploration	
Questions	Ideas and Thoughts
What type of work tasks do I like to do?	
What type of work tasks don't I like to do?	
What types of work would I like? i.e. Physical /Computer/ Data/ Scientific/Customer Service	
What work environments would I like to work in? i.e. Indoors or Outdoors	
What do other people think I could do after finishing school?	
Do I want to: i.e. Get a Job /Apprenticeship/ Traineeship /Further Study / Volunteer/Combination	
Will it be full time or part-time?	

What support will I need?	
How much support will I need?	
Who can help me?	
What supports can I receive from the NDIS?	
How do I plan to get to work/study?	
Will I need to discuss my disability support needs with my tertiary provider and / or employer?	
What career options have I discussed with a career counsellor? What careers are interesting to me based on my visits to career expos?	

Planning for the future – my plan

Questions	What?	When?
What do I want to do after school?		
To achieve this, I need to...		
I will need to prepare the following information and/or contact ...		
I need to ask the following people to assist me...		
If my first plan doesn't work out I plan to...		
What other things can I be doing to keep building my skills and knowledge?		
What other activities will I do in my spare time?		

Planning for my future – preparing my portfolio

Considerations	What are they?	What evidence do I have?
My Strengths		
My Interests		
My Skills		
Sport/Leisure Participation		
What subjects have I completed in senior school?		
Training other than at school		
Community Involvement		
Volunteering Experience		
Work Experience		
Work History		
Certificates and Awards		
Recommendations/References		
Other		

Planning for the future – life after school checklist

Questions to ask myself	Yes / No	If No - what else do I need to do and by when?
I know what I want to do when I leave school.	Please Select	
I have discussed my plans with my family.	Please Select	
I have talked to service providers about my plans.	Please Select	
I have developed a transition plan.	Please Select	
I have completed forms/ requirements to leave the school.	Please Select	
I have a Proof of Age card (18 years).	Please Select	
I have 100 points of identification.	Please Select	
I am registered on the electoral roll.	Please Select	
I have a personal bank account.	Please Select	
I have my own Medicare Card.	Please Select	
I have a tax file number.	Please Select	
I have the necessary transport requirements: Driver's licence/ Public transport/ Bike/Walking	Please Select	
I am registered with NDIS and discussed my education and training goals.	Please Select	
I have met with Centrelink to check how they can help me.	Please Select	
I have contacted Disability Employment Services (DES).	Please Select	
I have an up to date résumé/ portfolio.	Please Select	
I know how to search for jobs and write a job application.	Please Select	
I am ready to take my next step.	Please Select	

