

Dear Committee Members,

The Australian Centre for Career Education (ACCE) is pleased to provide feedback to the inquiry into student pathways to in-demand industries.

The Australian Centre for Career Education is a national not-for-profit thought leader in career development, an education and professional career association, and a founding member association of the national peak industry body, The Career Education Council of Australia (CICA).

ACCE was established by the Victorian Government in 1975 to train teachers in career education so that they could support student subject choices and successful transitions from school. ACCE is a CICA endorsed training provider of career professionals through its CEAV Institute (RTO 22523), and has trained career professionals in Victoria, Tasmania, WA, NSW, and Queensland.

ACCE is the largest provider of career services in Victoria and delivers over 39,000 vocational assessments to year 9 students in government schools and equivalent settings each year followed by a career guidance session to unpack and discuss their results. ACCE members work in a wide range of industries including schools, tertiary settings, industry and community and employment services.

ACCE acknowledges and thanks the contributions to this submission received from its Board, staff and members.

Penne Dawe

CEO, ACCE



Submission to the inquiry into student pathways to in-demand industries

August 2025



History of career education in Victoria

In the 1960s, career and vocational guidance counselling sat within the Psychology and Guidance Branch of the Department of Education, Victoria. Increasing complexity in careers and higher education opportunities was making it more difficult to provide support to schools.

Mr Jack Ford, Director of Secondary Education visited the United Kingdom in 1973 to investigate the delivery of career education. He was impressed by developments in the UK and on his return, the Psychology and Guidance Branch was renamed the Counselling, Guidance and Clinical Services Unit. The department also established the career education section and funded a conference on career education at Monash University in May 1974, organised by Dr Betty Levy.

Following the conference, there was a recommendation for an association to be formed for those interested or working in the field of career education. The inaugural meeting of the new association, the Career Education Association was advertised in the Education Gazette, with the meeting held on 16 April 16, 1975, at Storey Hall RMIT. At that time, 66% of students entered vocational pathways after school and there were only two universities in Victoria.

Training was developed for teachers to become careers teachers, and the first eleven career teachers were trained in a pilot scheme that was established with eleven schools to appoint full-time careers teachers. Their positions in the 1980's were substantive roles with a maximum of five periods a week for

teaching. Training was provided one week per term by the Career Education Section.

At the time was considered important to be qualified and there was an expectation that schools provide a career counselling room and a telephone. Later training was offered at Deakin University as a Graduate Diploma of careers education. (Gigliotti & Corlett, 2025).

Around 1994, vocational education and training (VET) was offered in schools, but this shifted the position of the career practitioner to the side with principals appointing career practitioners to be VET coordinators. This also added complexity to the role of career practitioners.

In 1996, a national forum was held in Melbourne sponsored by the Career Education Association Victoria (now ACCE) in conjunction with the Dusseldorf Skills Forum to discuss the importance of career education and guidance due to a decline in its importance and school positions losing their permanency (Dusseldorf Skills Forum & Career Education Association Victoria, 1996).

Over time, there also significant changes in tertiary education including the marketisation of the sector, introduction of new entrants and the introduction of fees/loans. Where once the gas fitters had trained gas fitters, industry divested itself from training young people and students were required to navigate their way into and through the tertiary education marketplace and into to employment.

Current context for career education and development

Today, there are many complex issues impacting students' career education and development so there is a pressing need to ensure young people receive this support to successfully transition from school given the many constraints facing schools including:

- Teacher shortages (higher in some subject areas e.g. economics and locations).
- Rural, remote or low SES schools with fewer resources and access to career activities, services, industries and transport.
- Limited career resources: staff, budget or non-career professionals in the role.
- A crowded curriculum.

Industry expects that students will be attracted to its opportunities and have long claimed that career practitioners in schools should introduce students to their industry. However, with so many industries competing for student attention and so many roles to learn about, this is impossible. It is also complicated by schools being designed to foster students' interests across many areas.

International research from the OECD about teenage career readiness highlights that career guidance at school and work-related engagements through job fairs, work experience/volunteering and other employer related engagements are critical to students' ability to make a career decision. This does not require students to know the exact job they want to do but to have some idea of the direction they want to head towards.

Schools need to provide age-appropriate career education throughout schooling to support student career decision-making and career development:

Career education is a planned program of learning experiences designed to help students make informed decisions about their future, including career paths, education, and training options. It connects learning to the world of work and future life, helping students understand their strengths, interests, and goals, and how they relate to various career pathways.

Sound career education provides students with developmentally appropriate lessons, experiences and activities to support the development of their self-awareness. This is a fundamental part of career development and goes together with information about the world of work, labour market, and pathways, to support career decisions that align with students' values, interests and aspirations.

Labour market information (a core competency of career professionals) ensures students are making informed choices based on demands and changes in the labour market. Career professionals engage with industry, industry information and government (including sites such as the Jobs and Skills Atlas and the Victorian Skills Authority Employment Projections Dashboard) to stay informed and guide students.

Australia has also developed the Australian Blueprint for Career Development that sets out career development for all Australians. While career practitioners refer to this nationally it is not imbedded throughout schooling and formal K-12 career programs and plans are rarely seen in schools (see Appendix A for an example).

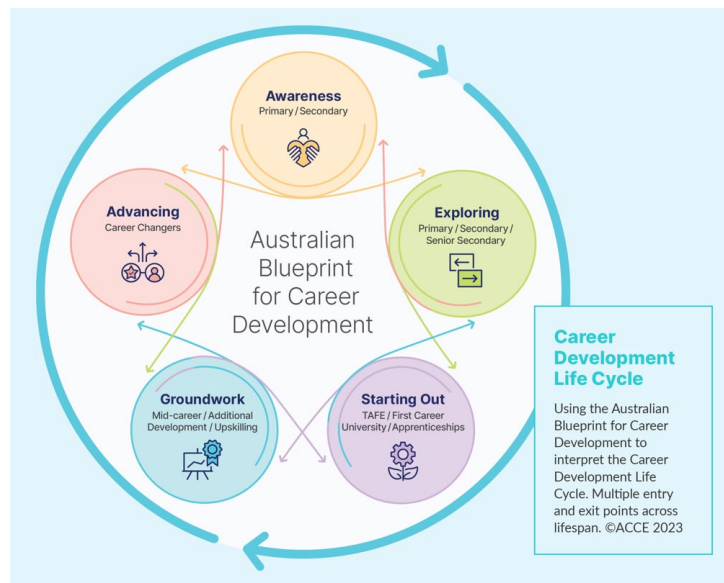


Diagram: ACCE Career Development Lifecycle

Career education and development is not a single unit or subject but a lifecycle of development and learning that takes place across the lifespan.

The OECD's 2025 report, *The State of Global Teenage Career Preparation*, surveyed 700,000 students in 80 countries including Australia. The results show that students who do not have an idea of their future career at age 15 have worse outcomes in the early labour market, and it is a clear predictor for poor transitioning from school.

This research also identified that students are less prepared now than they were in their previous research into teenage work readiness. Students have continued to focus their decisions on an ever-decreasing number of careers (10). If students cannot pick a career, they cannot move to skills training, education or employment. This is defined as being 'not work ready'. When people are not work ready, the labour market loses capacity and cannot function effectively.

It is role of schools is to prepare students for the workforce (jobs) and the role of tertiary education providers to prepare young people for employment (skills).

It is critical to the success of young people, that their aspirations are achievable and aligned to labour market realities. However, if students are passionate about pursuing a career that may eventually become less viable (decline, move offshore etc.) they should be fully informed and understand how to transition if necessary.

The world of work and the variety of roles available to students has become even more complex and students are often not clear on how to navigate their pathway into industry. It is important that they are given enough information as cognitive decision making is essential to making a career decision. This means students also need to be receive and access significant information over time such as rapid labour market changes through developments like AI and its impact on jobs (including creating new ones). Other complex issues include but are not limited to the impact on work due to demographic shifts, globalisation, skill obsolescence, technology trends, digital transition, global economics, sustainability and the changing nature of work.

Career professionals can support students to understand the complexities of the labour market and are required to remain up to date with information about the factors impacting work, industry and in demand/decline opportunities. Australia has a highly qualified and professional career workforce (CICA, 2025) and labour market information is a core competency in the career industry's professional standards:

Core Competency 2 Labour market information

2a Source, understand and apply credible, reliable labour market information that is free of bias.

2b Use labour market information to assist clients in job search strategies and career planning. (CICA, 2022)

Career support at school

Many school career practitioners are under-resourced for the number of students needing support and there is no minimum ratio of students to career practitioners in Victoria. Each school sets its own agenda of activities. ACCE advocated for a ratio of one career professional to 450 students in 2017 based on OECD benchmarks in its submission to the Inquiry into Career Advice Activities in Victorian Schools (Career Education Association of Victoria, 2017). Since then, countries like Ireland and Wales have improved their school ratios significantly in line with complexity and important career policies. Their ratios are 1:250 and 1:195 with Irish students in disadvantaged schools receiving double the career guidance and support. (ACCE, 2023, 25:03)

Without time in the curriculum to establish an explicit career education and development framework throughout schooling, students can remain unprepared for transitioning. While some may consider that students receive the necessary preparation through the learning area: Personal and Social Capability, this is unlikely without the requisite professional career knowledge, lessons and support for teachers. To ensure thorough career learning, there should be a level of assessment or delivery against a framework such as the Australian Blueprint for Career Development that has been developed for this purpose.

Career education and development should include curriculum integration, life skills development, career guidance, experiential learning, self-awareness, connecting learning to work, career exploration and transition support. However, career education and guidance in schools is not sufficiently resourced to ensure students meet the necessary career developmental milestones for successful transitioning. There are also many schools that do not employ a qualified career practitioner or provide enough time allocated to the role.

Since the first career teachers were trained in Victoria, school career services have taken on other functions such as supporting VET in schools (ACCE, 2025 May, 2:51) and this has resulted in career services struggling to deliver all the functions now expected of them (See Appendix B for the dimensions of work that can be required of school career services).

Career development at school requires a whole school approach, but it also needs career practitioners who are qualified and adequately resourced to build the whole-school career culture and a sense of ownership. Effective career services and guidance require someone who is trained in one-to-one career counselling. As schools have no mandatory standards for career education

and development non-trained people can be hired to fill the career role to save costs. This leads to considerable variation in what is delivered in schools.

The faculty leads were doing the subject selections in year 10 as the career practitioner didn't have time.

Career practitioner, 2025

Career development needs to be at the core of curriculum so that students know why they are studying a subject, how it applies to work, and can link their learning to real world of work and their aspirations.

Curriculum drives schools and to create career services and programs that can 'wedge into' this framework and work across a school, structural support must be provided for it to be embedded. There are already too many tasks and responsibilities on school career services. Because school career development is a planned series of lessons, activities and experiences, it must commence from kindergarten to ensure students learn the language of the world of work and can engage in early, age-appropriate concepts. As students continue their school journey, they need to learn about themselves - their interests, values, aptitudes, and how these factors and their learning link to future opportunities. It must be supported by qualified professionals and satisfactory resourcing.

It is with enormous disappointment I share my opinion. Career development is not effective at meeting the needs of students and industry because there are not enough careers practitioners actively employed in all our Victorian schools to deliver all the necessary knowledge and skills about in demand jobs required in industry to each of our students.

School career practitioner, Victoria 2025.

What influences students' career decisions

Teachers and parents

Teachers and parents remain key influencers in a young person's career development, but they may base their advice on their own knowledge or experiences and not a formal understanding of career development, student pathways, or labour market realities. Career education was once included in education qualifications but over time, Australia has lost its methodology from these qualifications¹ yet there is retained thinking that 'every teacher is a career teacher' (along with everything else).

External pressures to pick certain pathways can be strong, so it is critical that more information is provided to parents so they can better support their children. This is especially important for vulnerable students who need additional support and to shift entrenched misunderstandings about pathways and careers.

¹ Deakin University has advertised for a career education lecturer in the first half of 2025.

The following table form the OECD teenage career readiness dashboard² shows Australian student responses for:

- *I feel pressure from my family to follow a specific path.*

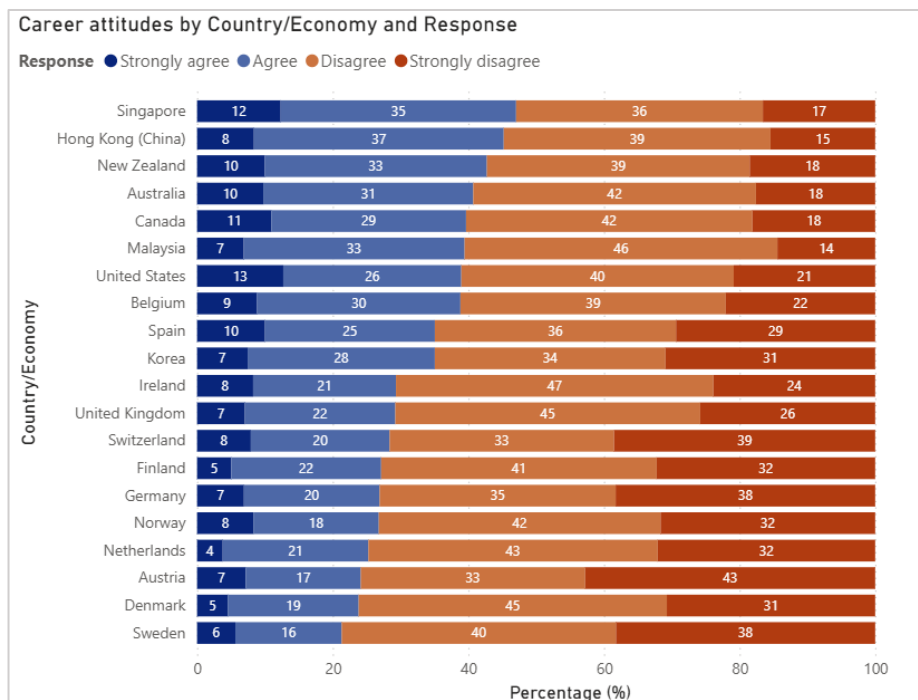


Table: OECD Teenage Career Readiness Dashboard

Awareness of the high in demand industries needs to shift from adding more information on websites and sending booklets to students. Both parents and students need to be communicated with from credible government sources and the career sector through a well-planned communication strategy and channels accessed by these cohorts.

Media and Peers

Other influences on student career decisions include their peers, media and TV shows. When new TV programs like CSI are launched, a cohort of students want to pursue roles in the series but are unlikely to understand what the roles really entail. This can lead students to pursuing the wrong career path if misrepresentations of roles are not corrected.

Students are also strongly influenced by their peers, and this has led to some interesting trends in course uptake. For example, general business degrees have seen increased enrolments over time at the cost of studying something like economics as students believe it is more desired by employers or that economics requires more advanced mathematics.

It is not uncommon for peers to recommend pathways and courses based on their own incorrect knowledge. Young people tend to take advice from peers, but it highlights how important proper

² The OECD Teenage Career Readiness Dashboard monitors country efforts to review the state of teenage career development from all countries and economies participating in PISA 2022.
www.oecd.org/en/data/dashboards/teenage-career-readiness.html

career learning and guidance is to ensure students are making their decisions and plans on accurate labour market information.

The State of Global Teenage Career Preparation report (OECD, 2025) also identified that there is a mismatch between their student's choices and labour market reality. The mismatch is worse amongst disadvantaged students.

Senior Secondary Pathway Reforms

The Senior Secondary Pathways reforms developed new certificates to improve equity in pathway choices amongst students in Victorian secondary schools. At this time:

- not all schools offer the Victorian Certificate of Education Vocational Major (VCE VM);
- some government schools don't offer the VCE VM in year 10 to prioritise it for year 11/12, and
- some schools do not offer the VPC.

ACCE has also received feedback from school career practitioners that there is confusion in some schools and amongst parents and students about the new pathways. This indicates that further communication and training is needed to ensure the changes from the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning to the Victorian Certificate of Education, VCE VM and Victorian Pathways Certificate are clearly understood.

Those schools that have rigid VCE timetables and do not offer the VCE VM can restrict students from enrolling in vocational courses and pursuing a structured workplace learning placement or school-based apprenticeships or traineeship (SBAT). While the Department of Education supports



are often provided to government schools, the opportunities can be narrower for non-government schools. Access to micro credentialed units may an opportunity to encourage students in these schools to continue into a full vocational course.

It is not clear how successful the VCE VM has been in providing senior secondary students with opportunities to choose a senior secondary course that fits with their preferences and learning style. Nonetheless, the VCE VM is the clearest way that pathways into in demand industries can be supported. Supporting and encouraging students to undertake SBATs is important to meeting industry needs. Access to quality VET in schools is essential to provide students with pathways they feel confident will give them the skills to continue pursuing vocational courses after school. Promoting in demand sectors through career programs at school can encourage students into those sectors.

However, there have been issues around access to VET which can frustrate parents, students including conflicts with school curriculums. This is partly due to a history of offering as many subjects as possible in TAFEs and secondary schools so students can explore their options (rather than in demand sectors). Linking in demand information and vocational training through school is important to create a pipeline. Some tertiary providers are already specialising in in demand opportunities:

Kangan Institute prioritises training in high-demand industries like health, community services, automotive, and digital technologies. They are expanding their offerings in these areas, including a new Health and Community Centre of Excellence in Broadmeadows and a new campus in Melton focusing on construction, trades, and digital technologies. Additionally, Kangan Institute is a leader in digital innovation, developing new qualifications.

William Anglis has focused on hospitality.

Some school career professionals have reported there are issues for students who complete a pre-apprenticeship (e.g. plumbing or electrical) or a Certificate II or III in something like Community Services, struggling to find employment when they leave school. This can disincentivise other students from pursuing similar pathways so support into employment is vital to deliver the right message.

OECD research acknowledges that students benefit from highly individualised career guidance. Helping students through career and pathway complexities is a major role played by a qualified school career practitioner which is to provide students with careers education and counselling. These practitioners who know the students can access relevant data and are still best placed to offer support. The fact that careers education and development in schools is under-resourced means that students cannot access the pre- and post-school support they need.

Training and assessment

TAFE's work hard to employ enough trainers to support courses for students in the in-demand sectors but can fall short impacting course delivery. In addition, sourcing trainers and assessors who are more than experts in their field and can scaffold young people who may not be ready for an adult education environment is critical. Some school career practitioners have reported their students need more support:

Some of our year 12 students have been terrified they are going to fail their VET in school's unit 3 and 4 because they were given two days warning that work was overdue and it needed to be submitted in 24 hours.

Career professional, 2025

Some students are also put off by the written and theory-based assessments in TAFE as they are different to the practices used in schools such as providing worked examples. These aren't used in the TAFE sector. Some things at TAFE need to be written in a simpler format for school students so they stay engaged. As VET and TAFE are promoted as hands-on, applied courses, it can downplay the significant amount of theory students need to engage with.

It is worth noting that that early vocational training (which can include early medical training) included substantial practice, discussion and demonstration as part of competency assessment. Previous trade school assessments could be done verbally along with demonstrations and be marked by a trained assessor for competency. Increasing this approach for VET students could help to improve their retention and may be an attractive offering for students in in-demand sectors.

Experiences supporting career decisions

Taster experiences with local employers, universities and RTOs have a positive impact on students and some TAFEs have reintroduced tasters to support student choices either through encouraging participation or developing awareness of industries in which they have no real experience. Ultimately, these can improve motivation for a pathway and increase the chance of students completing a qualification when they are more confident and better aligned/matched in their choice.



Focused tasters and programs have also been effective at tackling gendered role perceptions and supporting certain student cohorts and regional students but can be difficult to organise and for schools to attend. Alternative means of communicating and sharing this information with students or removing barriers to participation is essential to improve their work readiness and promote in demand sectors.

A successful taster program is run in Geelong by the Gordon TAFE. The Gordon TAFE Tertiary Futures Program (GTFP) is an initiative for year nine students that provides an in-depth preview of a broad range of tertiary studies in partnership with Geelong secondary schools. The program is recognised as a good VET pathways delivery and engagement program containing career previews. Local schools are involved, and students select five different industries each. The program incorporates one day of hands-on experience and one day of theory and the taster has positively impacted VET drop-out rates.

Higher education and VET are facing the same issues as students drop out because they don't understand the sector, what they are getting themselves into, or don't like the course. Really articulating the pathways from school into VET and into higher education and across is critical.

Some regional areas have great programs. In Werribee they were linking in onsite visits, demonstrations and speakers. The Local Learning and Employment Network (LLEN) came in and ran a virtual reality session. There were presentation talking about careers in agriculture using drones. Agriculture is a big area, and the students visit farms and a range of farm types. Students from year 9-12 learned about a cross section of careers from entry level to scientific agronomy and it runs for a term.

In the Otway's, students can access VET, but transport is very challenging.

Career professional, 2025

Ranges Tec in Lilydale has developed its tasters and offering to specifically scaffold students into its trades on offer (see Appendix C).

Students also benefit from hearing from industry speakers about their journey into industry and their role. This helps to 'de-bunk myths' about different jobs, skills and study options. World Skills and VET Champions provide excellent support for vocational pathways, and higher education graduates can explain their course and industry journey.

Industry immersion programs also help to develop career awareness and industry must support and help to expand these offerings. Tech schools and LLENs currently engage with industry to support local students. Increasing their offerings and ensuring a focus on in demand sectors can improve student understanding of the opportunities. Schools report industry immersions have worked well where the Department of Education has assisted with the transport and organisation to remove some of the burden from schools. However, additional financial support is needed at the school to replace supervising teachers so they can support students to access these opportunities in government schools.

Placements and internships

Tertiary courses that have no connection to industry must be improved with early placement or paid internships/traineeships as part of the qualification to increase student employability and help fill labour market gaps. Higher education qualifications with internships/placements are the most contested degrees as they are likely to lead to work opportunities. With industry waiting at the end of the graduate pipeline, and some graduates failing to land early employment, embedding these opportunities from year one or two will have a positive impact on employability. This also ensures that students continue in the course or shift early rather than later if they feel they are mismatched in their choice.

The most recent graduate employment survey indicates that three years after completing study:

- 17.7% of respondents state they do not have enough work experience to be employed
- 10.8% do not have suitable jobs in their area of expertise
- 7.9% state there are no suitable jobs in their local area
- 3.6% are considered too young by employers.

These represent 40% of responses and indicate that some of these students may not have understood the employability factors associated with their pathway choice.

Greater linking of vocational and higher education qualifications and early industry opportunities are critical for supporting enrolments and pipelines into in demand industries and developing workforce capacity within these sectors. The Australian Qualification Framework is already established to support Australians into and through tertiary learning systems, but more can be done through collaboration between industry and tertiary providers.

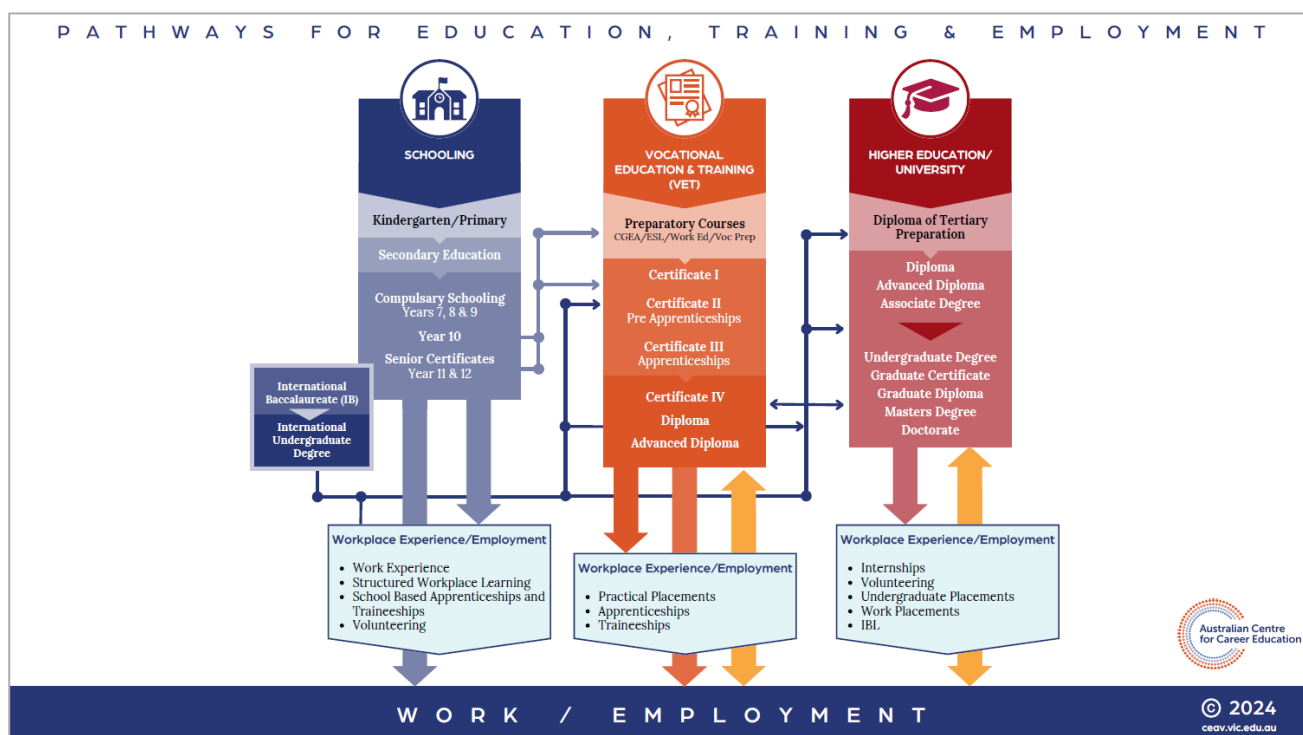


Diagram: AQF pathways, ACCE 2024

Study Incentives

Funding for higher education courses leading to in-demand industries and linkages to long term internships or funded placements in high demand sectors such as nursing helps to attract enrolments. It may not sway young people away from other industries but making education and training attractive through financial incentives will increase uptake. Other incentives such as scholarship funding or HECS waivers/reductions could be applied to build a labour pipeline to in demand sectors.

Free TAFE initiatives, including the Priority Pathways have worked well so including more industries in the priority pathways options and providing incentives to complete the training, such as a partial refund of materials and equipment costs, would support student engagement and retention.

National Enrolment Support

School students preparing to transition from school to tertiary courses also need support as the enrolment process can be complex. Those applying for vocational courses must apply with the institution and provider/course the Victorian Skills Gateway site takes time to navigate. Students must search for an appropriate course and work through the information to check on the qualification, course content, cost, provider offerings, delivery modality, location and other details. This can be challenging for young people, especially if they cannot access career support at their school. Higher education applications are made through the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC) that acts as a clearing house for ATAR results and is owned by the universities and not inclusive of vocational courses.

Jobs and Skills Australia has been reviewing a means to centralise all course information. States can support this process at the state

level through the development of a government system for all qualifications that feeds into a nationally centralised hub. Portability of learning must be national to support labour market movement and students should be able to search and enrol through one central platform for a vocational or higher education course in their own state or another.

The Role of Industry

Industry has a vital role to play in the development of its future workforce and must do its part to support the pipeline of students from school into its industry.

Some industries can improve the promotion of the wide range of roles in their sector or better market opportunities to young people. Career practitioners, schools and tertiary institutions can only use the information that industry provides. Structural issues in industry such as pay rates that make roles less inviting for young people are issues that must be addressed by the industry sector itself. Career practitioners cannot be responsible for the competitive positioning of industries.

Industry could also develop traineeships that can begin at year 13 and are similar in nature to the gap year defence program. This has been a highly effective recruitment program for the defence sector and industry available programs of this type can help students explore different jobs in in demand sectors. Industry could also make speakers available so that schools can schedule them for their students.

The EduSkills OECD webinar (2025) has identified that it is increasingly difficult for students to access the necessary industry and employer engagements and suggested that technology needs to be investigated as an ‘amplifier’ where resources are

constrained. The LLENs are already providing virtual industry career experiences linked to 13 interactive workplaces and this program could be expanded. In addition, a career collection of national importance should be built around a structured career framework for both primary and secondary students and linked hosted through myfuture. Development support can be provided by the career sector, and the videos can be linked to lessons, resources and other information to support school career programs. In demand industry videos can be highlighted and support for non-traditional roles could be included.

Students also need access to work experience and often struggle to access this. For example, there is currently not enough work experience to support the VET in schools electrotechnology course which is an in-demand trade. Students need industry to provide these opportunities as a lack of work placement/experience disincentivises students from choosing to study for jobs. Increasing this in in demand industries through better connection between businesses, local government and tertiary education providers is critical build a pipeline of workers for industry.

Supporting Specific Cohorts

A range of issues can impact students in specific cohorts:

- Over a number of years, tertiary institutions have become less willing to visit regional centres and meet with students. This means students have less information and understanding of what is on offer and this can be compounded by limited industry opportunities in their region.

Tertiary bodies receiving government funding should be required to visit regional centres annually and this could include involvement in locally coordinated approaches that includes speakers and employers who can present on pathways and opportunities for students.

- Regional and disadvantaged students require transport support to be able pursue their courses and SBAT's. One student from the Otways had to travel to Geelong to do the Beauty Certificate and was arriving back home at 7pm.

Transport issues are regularly raised in relation to the needs of rural and remote students and those facing disadvantage. The young person with few family supports who picks up an apprenticeship will need of a range of supports from financial, through to transport and mentoring.

In Colac, Go TAFE made the theory for equine course available online with condensed practicals a week in school holidays so that students could attend as a means of supporting greater access due to timetabling and distance.

- Regional and disadvantaged students need financial support and real time assistance and to address questions and stay engaged/complete their course. Disadvantaged students who need to be away from home may benefit from mentoring.
- Career development can have a positive and critical impact on gendered career decisions when delivered in primary school (Brussino & McBrien, 2022). In 2016, children in five countries were asked to draw pictures of people doing a number of jobs. It highlighted that

gendered career decisions were made between the ages of 5-7 ([Education and Employers, 2023](#)). This is well supported by OECD research and the short video highlights how critical it is to intervene early.

Female students need to see themselves in non-traditional roles and feel safe in these sectors to pursue these pathways. Schools need to begin this work early and include parents so they can support these opportunities as viable for their daughters. Mentoring students is important for ensuring young men and women pursue nontraditional roles.

- Students in rural and remote regions, indigenous students and disadvantaged students need mentoring or career support to keep them progressing in their courses to completion.



Conclusion

Given the complex nature of the world of work and the demands on schools, there is not enough space in the curriculum or resourcing of career support in schools to deliver on the dimensions of the role and support the career education and development students. Given the complexity in schools, more career education is need for students to make informed career decisions.

The Department of Education in Victoria has made significant commitments to support improvements for students through programs such as Headstart and the My Career Insights (MCI) program that supports the career exploration of all year 9 students in government schools (and equivalent settings). More recently, the department has supported a trial extension of the MCI program for referred students in priority cohorts to improve their work readiness.

However, as career education is a planned and ongoing set of activities, electives and lessons across schooling, it must commence in kindergarten if it is to cover what is required. With rapid changes to jobs and the workforce, and significant global issues impacting the world of work, it is essential that students are given skills to successfully transition from school and navigate their career across many expected transitions.

In 2024, ACARA conducted research among Australia's career professionals to gather feedback about the amount of career education that would be needed to support students and be sustainable. The career industry was unanimous in its feedback that career education from K-12 is essential.

There are variations in some schools in the delivery of the Senior Secondary Certificates and confusion among some staff, parents and students so more communication is needed. Supporting uptake of VET in schools and SBATs is important but timetabling, transport and funding issues need addressing in some locations and amongst some cohorts of students.

Supporting young people into particular pathways requires early and ongoing exposure to the information, guidance and experiences and industry and tertiary education providers need to support students to experience industry and courses through taskers and other activities. Students also need additional scaffolding at TAFE to support theoretical components so they will complete their courses.

Ultimately, a combined effort is required between education, governments and industry to overcome some of the issues and increase students' interest and exposure to courses and work in in demand industries.

Recommendations

School Career Education

- Legislate a ratio of one qualified career professional for every 450 students in schools.
- Implement career education within the curriculum from K-12.
- Develop short focused professional career development training for year level/subject teachers supported by resources, lessons and information.
- Improve schools, parents and students understanding of the Senior Secondary Pathways: VCE, VCE VM.
- Improve information for parents so they have a better understanding of career education and how to support their children.
- Develop a bank of industry and graduate speakers for schools to discuss roles, industries and pathways.
- Ensure all students have a quality career plan and can access a career professional or mentor from the industry they intend to enter before, during and after they complete a qualification.
- Provide several hours a year for students in years 10-12 to attend a compulsory activity or session about 'in demand jobs'.
- Investigate options for career hubs with local schools and tertiary education providers to coordinate time for VET/SBATs within school curriculums.

- Develop a national collection of industry/career videos for primary and secondary student career development on myfuture and link with lessons and pathway information for schools.

Role of Industry

- Industry must increase work experience availability for students in in demand sectors.
- Make industry speakers and taster experiences available for schools.
- Improve role and sector marketing.

Training and Qualifications

- Continue to promote and support the uptake of VET and SBATs in schools.
- Investigate if a group training model for apprenticeships and traineeships in rural and remote areas can deliver Certificate II and SBATs with local employers.
- Offer taster sessions to school students to explore pathway options.
- Increase in demand courses in the Priority Pathways TAFE Initiative.
- Improve linkages between vocational and higher education qualifications in in demand industries and include industry internships, placements and traineeships in the early course years.
- Provide incentive funding for courses: course costs, loan reductions/waivers in in

demand sectors for vocational and high education qualifications.

- Review scaffolding for students by trainers and assessors at TAFE and review how to make theoretical components more suited to young in schools.
- Improve the functionality of the Victorian Skills Gateway site for young people.
- Establish a state government tertiary course and enrolment system that can link to a national system to support national enrolments and labour market portability.

Specific Cohorts

- Increase transport and transport funding to support disadvantaged school students and those in remote and rural areas to access vocational courses. Review if some components can be online or delivered face-to-face in school holidays as offered in the GOTAFE Equine course.
- Establish mini-grants/funding to help disadvantaged and regional students to step towards in demand careers (for transport, tools, uniforms, short course fees, or technology support such as a laptop).

- Incentivise employers who are the best training and work experience providers of young people to increase opportunities for students in in demand sectors.
- Offer a peer/professional mentorship model for disadvantaged, regional and female students that matches students to a buddy/mentor in the same sector and region.

Other

- Evaluate the establishment of a Skills Hub as a central or roving pop-up experience that visits regional schools. In 2016, ACCE took the World of Work on Wheels Bus (WOWOW bus) to 5,000 students and teachers in rural and remote schools to showcase STEM careers and using virtual reality. Include hands-on workshops in trades, STEM, healthcare and in demand industries and link to the virtual reality industry offering of the LLEN offerings.
- Promote Jobs and Skills Centres better to assist students enrolling in a VET course after school.

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One example of a career programming throughout school

STUDENTS IN THE PRIMARY SCHOOL YEARS

Students in primary school exposed to early information and the language of the world of work.

Supported through fun and engaging lessons and games to explore ideas about work and its connection to learning.

YR 7- 8 ENTRY TO SECONDARY SCHOOL

Building the following skills:

- critical thinking
- decision making
- problem solving
- citizenship and social responsibility
- entrepreneurial thinking
- financial
- engaging career education experiences linked to all areas of learning
- experiential learning opportunities
- habits of mind and curiosity
- leadership and mentorship opportunities
- opportunities to identify personal knowledge, skills, interests, and values
- peer-to-peer learning experiences
- personalized and project-based learning experiences
- an understanding of the importance of knowledge and skills in school, work, leisure, and life

YR 9 CAREER DEVELOPMENT LIFE/WORK EXPLORATION

Students increase their self-awareness and interpersonal skills and develop knowledge and skills in personal management and career exploration while learning about their interests, personality traits, and values.

- Students
- develop connections between school and work
- develop their confidence, personal skills, and abilities
- connect skills and knowledge to tasks and responsibilities of occupations
- explore careers and the world of work, including labour market information and workplace safety and health
- are exposed to meaningful community and career experiences

YR 10 CAREER DEVELOPMENT LIFE/WORK PLANNING

Students plan for their senior years by selecting the courses and programs of interest to them and developing the knowledge and skills to prepare for post-secondary education and training.

- Students
- discover how their knowledge and skills relate to the workplace
- explore types of work that they find fulfilling and enjoyable
- make curricular and co-curricular connections to career development
- explore careers and the world of work, including labour market information and workplace safety and health
- are exposed to meaningful community and career experiences and mentors

YR 11 CAREER DEVELOPMENT LIFE/WORK BUILDING

Students focus on building career knowledge and skills, while preparing for life and career transitions. Students focus on building a solid foundation to grow and change throughout their lives.

- Students
- build their knowledge, skills, and qualities to establish a career foundation
- explore specific post-graduation options
- refine their knowledge and skills while exploring ways to improve their employability attributes
- explore career information and the world of work, including labour market information, workplace safety and health, and employer and employee responsibilities
- are exposed to meaningful integrated career-related placement(s) and career mentors

YR 12 CAREER DEVELOPMENT LIFE/WORK TRANSITIONING

Students continue to develop skills to help them transition into post-secondary education, the world of work, and other pathways while refining their life-learning and work goals, employability skills, and future visions.

- Students
- develop a post-graduation plan including their dreams, and short- and long-term goals
- market their knowledge, skills, and abilities to potential employers
- reflect on their school careers, while enacting their post-graduation plans
- participate in and demonstrate leadership in integrated career-related placement(s), and gain exposure to career teams at the placement(s)

TRANSITION TO PATHWAYS INCLUDING

- apprenticeship
 - the workforce
 - entrepreneurship
 - post-secondary education
 - travel
 - volunteering
 - lifelong learning
- with agency and efficacy to create and innovate in a rapidly changing world.

Dimensions of Work – career practitioners

- Run one on one career counselling sessions with Year 12 students
- Run a Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre Information Session
- Assist students with interstate applications
- Help to prepare resumes for students
- Coordinate VET students
- Calculate and prepare predicted ATARs for early offers
- Meeting with students during change of preference
- Attend university/TAFE career practitioner days
- Class lessons
- Careers Expo
- Run one or more parent information sessions
- Organise guest speakers
- Meeting with parents and students
- Running information sessions on subject selection for parents
- Distributing information on subject selection
- Conduct training and instruction to colleagues in subject selection
- Running parent information sessions
- Working with ex-student networks
- Organising of graduates for tertiary/pathway planning expos
- Undertake strategic planning of careers service
- Coordinate distance education programs with external providers
- Coordinate an on-campus VET program with internal or external providers
- Coordinating a compulsory work experience program
- Coordinating a structured workplace learning program
- Implementing/coordinating a whole school approach to careers education
- Preparing a budget
- Organising payments to organisations
- Presenting a budget to management
- Payment of guest speakers/presenters
- Submission of purchase orders
- Meeting with welfare coordinator to discuss students
- Meeting with students transitioning from school
- Meeting with individual students in a welfare capacity to create achievable pathways through school
- Discussing Special Entry Access Scheme (SEAS) applications with students
- Meeting with senior management on a regular basis
- Regular formal report of careers program to senior management
- Summarising Year 12 outcomes for senior management
- Offering individual career counselling sessions with Year 12 students or others
- Offering individual subject pathway planning information to students and parents.
- Communicating with tertiary providers on behalf of current students
- Development of career lesson plans or a careers curriculum
- Delivery of careers classes
- Develop digital resources for use by students
- Organising and running Morrisby Profiling or other career profiling programs
- Meeting with students to discuss testing results
- Conduct training and instruction to colleagues in Morrisby or other career profiling programs of other careers staff
- Management of an assistant/support staff
- Management of internal VET providers
- Liaising with employers with regards to work experience
- Organising and completing work experience documentation
- Visiting students on work experience
- Meeting with students to debrief work experience
- Use of LMS for development of careers materials/curriculum
- Creation of careers newsletters
- Use of social media or other digital platforms in communicating careers information/encouraging career exploration
- Reviewing careers program/research
- Regular surveys of student use of service/program
- Creation of destination surveys
- Undertaking regular benchmarking of careers program/services regular career practitioner days
- Attending industry information sessions
- Maintaining membership of a CICA Career Association
- Attending VTAC briefings

Appendix C

Ranges TEC delivers senior secondary schooling, specialising in the VCE VM. There are six trades on scope for pre-apprenticeship training and Certificate II courses as an RTO:

1. Building and Construction
2. Cookery
3. Electrotechnology
4. Engineering
5. Furniture Making
6. Horticulture

The school offers a Year 10 Taster that provides students with a pathway into the VCE VM. Students get to experience each of the six trades and undertake work related skills and maths related to the trade. They are supported by applied subjects to help increase their confidence in a formal learning environment.

The program starts with skills training, then students move onto project-based work, followed by electives in Year 10. This keeps students engaged and growing and ensures they don't stay on skills too much and get bored. The school has found that if students jump straight into projects, it can be too much.

Students start with skills, two terms of project work and then electives. Transferable skills are discussed often as students ask why they need to know something, or how to do a specific task.

At the end of the Taster Year, students can move into the VCE VM and choose a Certificate II to focus on for their studies. The VCE VM is a fairly new for Ranges TEC but the changes have benefited access to applied learning for many students.

The school recognises that some students are ready to move to a post-school pathway earlier than the end of Year 12. To help students achieve their individual goals, the Certificate II courses are delivered in full in Year 11 to provide positive options.

The Ranges TEC Year 10 Taster program puts students on the tools. Students get a chance to do welding and work on the lathe. All the safety units

are covered first to meet a high level of workplace health and safety. As the Taster program is not accredited training, students don't have to perform to a standard, they are supported to have a go.

Ranges TEC focuses on helping to build confidence and resilience. Safely having a go is the first step. After completing our Year 10 Taster year students are able to make an informed decision in choosing a Certificate II as part of their VCVE VM. There is an 11-acre farm in Monbulk where they deliver Horticulture and Building and Construction.

There is a high level of contact with school or home and Ranges TEC aims to help parents understand the kinds of conversations students need to have for themselves, especially if they are going to go to TAFE later. A lot of work goes into making sure students get applied support and the teachers care about the students and are good in their trades. Both male and female trade trainers support students as role models for all the students.

Ranges TEC is one of the premier providers within the Yarra Valley VET cluster and understands young people aged 15 to 18. For students in the local Yarra Valley VET cluster and at a local school, they can do their one-day a week VET (normally over 2 years) and get their full certificate.

Their electrotechnology also offers night classes to give flexibility to the students and the cookery course in the second year adopts a real-world approach to the learning as the course is delivered after school hours from 4.00-8.30pm. The facility turns into a restaurant and every student gets to be a head chef and command the kitchen. They collect the money and get to manage a number of different areas and functions.



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