



 Career Tools

# Subject Selection Guide

June 2023

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# Introduction to Subject Selection

## Why Subject Selection Matters

Subject selection is your chance to experiment and explore through choosing electives! You finally get to exercise some independence and have a say in your learning through your subject choices. While this is pretty exciting, it comes with extra responsibility.

What do we mean by this?

The subjects you choose now can:

- Determine which subjects you will and won't be able to study in Year 12.
- Influence the VET or higher education options open to you when you finish school.
- Influence your selection to specific institutions based on prerequisites studies.
- To some extent, shape your career and life trajectory.

The subjects you choose also impact the way your school operates by determining:

- Which subjects will or won't run next year.
- The number of classes for each subject.
- How many teachers are needed and the subjects they will teach.
- How the timetable is put together.

Now you understand the ripple effect your choices have on the future, this guide will help you put the necessary time, effort, and thought into making smart subject choices so you can:

- Map multiple pathways to success.
- Feel confident about your subject decisions.
- Know your subject choices are point you towards your preferred future.





# Introduction to Subject Selection

## Planning Backwards

Subject selection starts by planning backwards. We think about how we want our lives to be in the future, set goals, and take the actions that help us get there. It looks something like this:

### My Big Picture Goals

It's alright if you're not sure how to answer these questions yet, but have a go anyway:

What are my life goals?

What sort of future do I want for myself?

At 18, 23, and 30 years old I will...

### Pathways to Get There

What kinds of work would I like to do?

What education, training, and experiences will I need?

What are the different ways to get there?

What are my other options if I change my mind?

### Prepare for My Journey

Plan for the trip of a lifetime! Speak to people, do your research, try things out, and get involved. It's your responsibility to be informed and to make a Career Plan.

### Select My Subjects

Now you know where you're going and how to get there you're ready to choose the subjects that point you in the right direction!



# Pathways to Get There

## Where to Next?

Hopefully you've got lots of exciting ideas about where the future may take you! Now you need to work out the practicalities of getting there, which starts with understanding your options for life, study, and work after you finish school. These options are commonly referred to as 'pathways'.

The general rule in Australia is that you must be in full time education, training or employment until you are 17 years old (or 17.5 in Western Australia and 18 in Tasmania). For most young people, this means completing their Senior Secondary School Certificate in Years 11 and 12 and then progressing into further study and/or work. For others however, the transition from school may begin during or after Year 10 or 11.

The map on the next page illustrates the many education, training, work experience, and employment pathways that open up from Year 10 (light blue) and after Year 12 (dark blue), and then remain open for the rest of our lives. Using the map, how many pathways can you identify to reach the big picture goals you imagined earlier?



## Activities



**1. Find out which careers could be a match! Take the Career Personality Quiz within the Learn About Myself career journey.**



**2. Learn what your dream jobs are really like, and what it takes to get there with the Career Investigator tool inside the Career Exploration journey.**

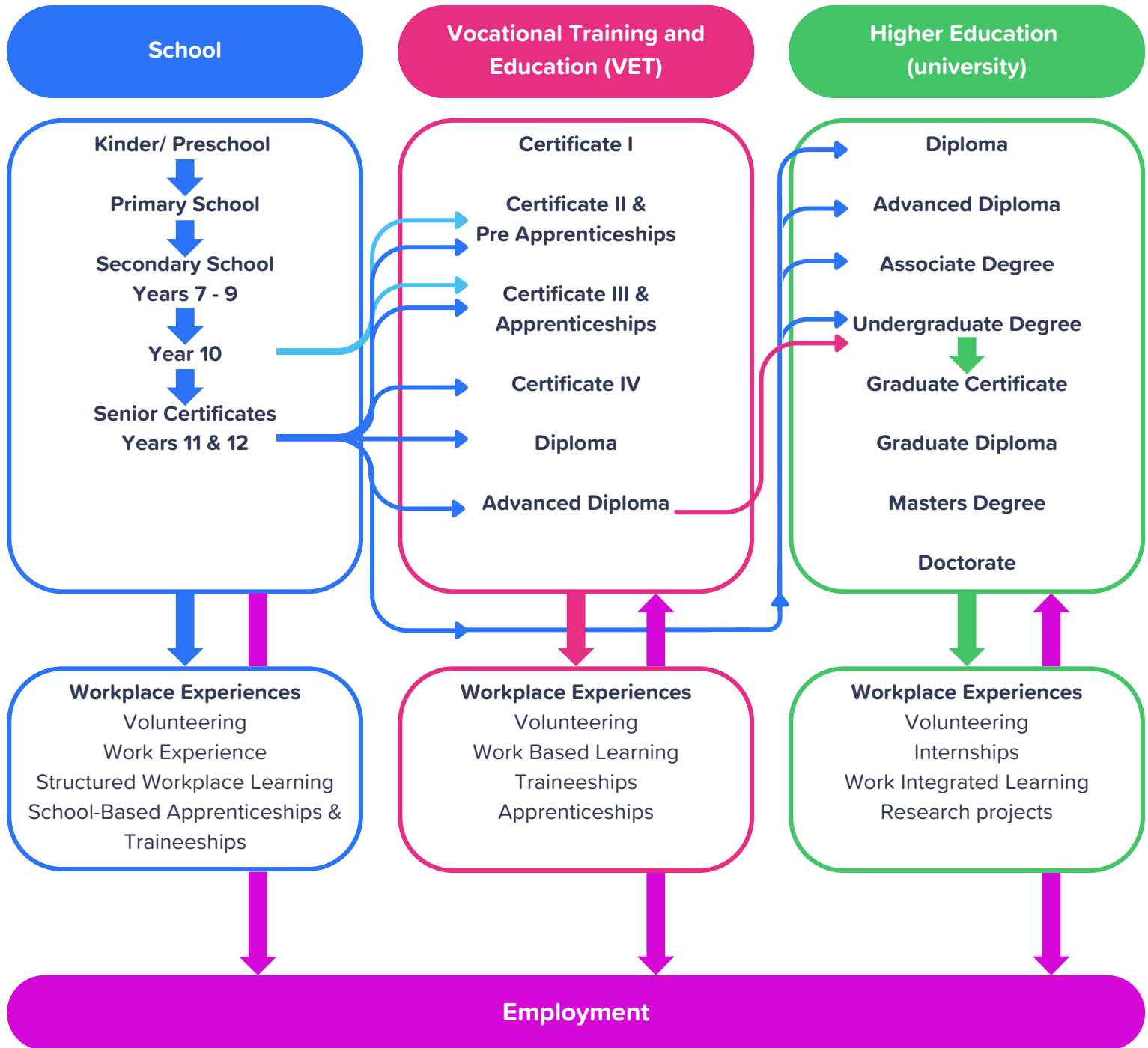


**3. Round out your understanding of post-school pathways by completing the After Year 10 What are My Options? Activity within the Post School Options and Planning journey.**



# Pathways to Get There

## Education, Training, and Employment Pathways Map





# Pathways to Get There

## Understanding Your Senior Secondary School Certificate

Now you have a clearer idea of what your options are and which one/s you might like to pursue, you can see how school helps you get there.

Meeting the requirements of your Senior Secondary School Certificate is vital to your success, so you'll need to put some time and research into understanding how it works and which subject choices will be best.

While you get more choice about which subjects to study in your senior years of school, the stakes are higher because your choices can broaden or narrow your post-school pathways.

You may also have some additional subject options available, such as a Vocational Education and Training (VET) subject and/or accelerating in a subject. These are great opportunities, but they're not for everyone and your school may have its own policies about them, so speak to your Careers Advisor, family, and teachers to help you decide.

### VET Subjects

A VET subject may be a good choice if you:

- Like hands-on learning.
- Have interest in a specific subject area.
- Think you might like to do an apprenticeship or traineeship one day.
- Might want to study VET after finishing school.

### Acceleration

Acceleration means starting a Year 11 subject when you're in Year 10. If you're mature, academically capable, and well organised, accelerating can provide you with a:

- Chance to study a subject you're strong in at a higher level.
- Taste of senior subjects so you know what to expect.
- Sixth or seventh subject which may contribute to your ATAR.



### Activity



**Learn all you need to know about your Senior Secondary School Certificate by doing the Senior Subject Selection activity in the Post School Options and Planning journey.**

**Have your school subject selection handbook at the ready, because this is where you start thinking about which subjects you might want to choose!**





# Pathways to Get There

## Going to University from Year 12

### Prerequisites

- Prerequisites are subjects that you must complete (often to a certain standard), to be considered for entry into courses.
- They ensure you have the background knowledge to understand the course content and succeed.
- If you don't meet the prerequisites for a course you won't be considered for a place, even with a high ATAR.
- Prerequisites can vary for the same course at different campuses of the same university, and for similar courses at different universities, so research carefully.

### Assumed knowledge

- Sometimes institutions have 'assumed knowledge' or 'recommended studies' which mean the course will be taught as though you are familiar with the Year 12 content.
- Not choosing these subjects won't exclude you from a course offer like not studying a prerequisite will, but the advice is there to help you and you will have a smoother transition to university if you follow it.

### Remember

- If a course has prerequisites, recommended studies, or assumed knowledge for a subject you find difficult or don't enjoy, there is likely to be more of it in the course.
- Even if a subject isn't a prerequisite, it may still support your preferred pathway. For example, Biology isn't usually a prerequisite for Medicine or Nursing, however it will be advantageous to studying and working in health-related fields.

**BACHELOR OF SCIENCE**

Personalised by Domestic Parent or guardian Pathways

<b>CAMPUS</b> Gold Coast campus Nathan campus	<b>DURATION</b> 3 years full-time 6 years part-time	<b>COMMENCING IN</b> Trimester 1, 2, 3	<b>ENTRY REQUIREMENTS</b> <b>ATAR RANK</b> <b>65.00</b> OR VET qualification, Certificate III <b>Prerequisites</b> <a href="#">view all</a> Any General or Applied English subject (Units 3&4, C) <b>Assumed knowledge</b> <a href="#">view all</a> General Mathematics or Mathematical Methods (Units 3&4... <b>Recommended</b> <a href="#">view all</a> One of Biology, Chemistry or Physics	<b>FEE (INDICATIVE)</b> \$6,500 per year
<b>CREDIT POINTS</b> 240	<b>DEGREE CODE</b> 1634	<b>QTAC CODE</b> <a href="#">View QTAC requirements</a>	<b>GUARANTEED ADMISSION SCHEME</b>	





# Senior Secondary School

## Going to University from Year 12

### The Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR)








- Getting an ATAR is a direct pathway to university from Year 12.
- The only purpose of the ATAR is to help universities select students for their courses.
- The higher your ATAR, the more course options you will have open to you.
- HOWEVER, you must still meet other admission requirements such as prerequisites, selection tasks, folios, auditions, exams/tests, personal statements, and so on.

### The Role of Tertiary Admission Centres

Your state's Tertiary Admission Centre (TAC) sets the subject requirements you need for an ATAR in consultation with the state's curriculum and assessment authority. Together, they scale your subject results and calculate your ATAR. Refer to your state's TAC for further information about these topics.

### Scaling

Scaling is a rigorous and unbiased mathematical process that allows for fair comparison of students' achievements across all their subjects. It ensures you are neither advantaged nor disadvantaged based on the Year 12 subjects you choose. This means you should freely choose subjects you like and are good at without worrying about your ATAR.

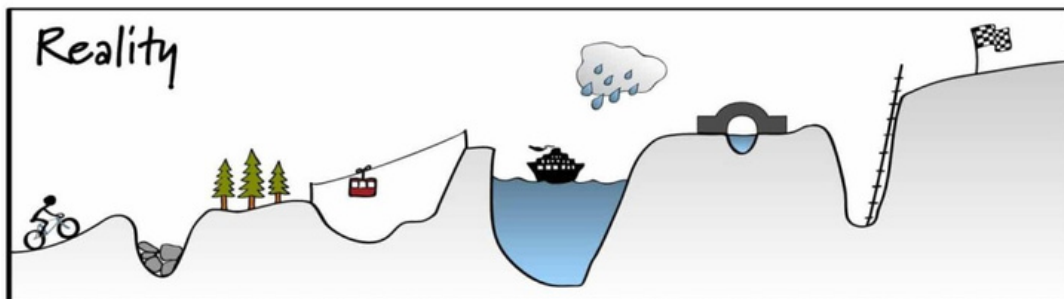
Myth	Fact
 <p>Some courses are always 'scaled up,' therefore I should study those.</p> <p>-----</p>  <p>Some courses are always 'scaled down,' therefore I should avoid those.</p>	 <p>The way a course is scaled depends entirely on the average academic performance of all the students doing that course that year – and it can change from year to year. For most courses, your scaled mark will be lower than your HSC mark. To get the best possible position and maximise your scaled marks, select the courses you'll do best in.</p>
 <p>I need to study 'hard' subjects to get high scaled marks.</p>	 <p>'Hard' is a subjective term. Everyone has different strengths and interests. Students who achieve an ATAR of 99.95 study a large variety of subjects.</p>
 <p>I should study Mathematics Standard 2 rather than Mathematics Advanced to get a better ATAR.</p>	 <p>It's very difficult to predict which course will lead to a higher scaled mark. Your scaled mark depends on the average academic ability of the students studying that course and your position in the course. When considering which maths course to study, remember that some university courses have prerequisites or assumed knowledge of Mathematics Advanced. It's important to choose the level of maths that best suits your plans for further study.</p>

Source: UAC 2022



# Prepare for the Journey

## Your Life and Career Plan



You've made some big plans, and processed a lot of information! Now it's time to bring it all together by mapping out your unique career plan.

Think of it like planning a holiday - before you leave you plan your journey and research your destination. You work out how to get there, where you will stay, and the activities you want to do. Along the way, plans sometimes change. The theme park you wanted to go to might be closed, but it doesn't matter because there are other things you want to see too.

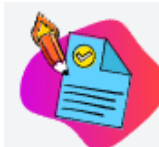
The same concept applies to planning for your life and career. While you can't predict the future or guarantee it will go to plan, you can map out your dream journey and make adjustments as you need to.

Developing a future roadmap gives you a sense of purpose, and when you break your aspirations into smaller, achievable goals they become stepping stones to success.

As you progress through school and encounter new opportunities, your roadmap will change too. So keep an open mind and stay on top by regularly updating your career plan.



Create or update your Career Plan from the dashboard of your secure area.



Career Action Plan



# Selecting Subjects

## I Still Don't Know What I Want to Do!

No idea what you want to do? Can't imagine your adult self and futures life? Don't let these things get the better of you. You can still make wise and satisfying subject choices by identifying what you do and don't like, and what you are and aren't so good at.

### Think of it like this

- If you choose subjects based on what you like and enjoy, you'll be more motivated.
- When you're motivated you give your best efforts.
- Your best efforts are likely to result in better marks.
- Doing well helps you feel more confident, which means you'll be excited to explore different careers.
- The more careers you explore, the more likely you are to find you study and work choices satisfying.



**To identify your preferences, try the My Interests, My Skills, and Work Values activities within the Learn About Myself journey.**

### Informed Decisions Matter

The more you investigate your options, the more satisfying your pathway choices are likely to be.

### Every Experience Counts

No education or work is pointless - all our experiences add to our skills and strengths.

### Change is Constant

What you do next is just a starting point and you will need to keep learning throughout your entire life.

### The Future is Flexible

It's not set in stone and you can change directions if you change your mind.



# Selecting Subjects

## The Right Ways to Choose Subjects

### Consider your pathway

Are you aiming for a high ATAR or developing practical skills for the workforce? Multiple options exist beyond school, including vocational training, apprenticeships, or university via ATAR or non-ATAR pathways, so choose subjects to support your pathway.

### Select subjects you enjoy

You are more likely to put your full effort in if you like what you are learning.

### Select subjects you're good at

When you give your best effort, you're more likely to do well. If you're choosing a subject because it's a prerequisite, reflect on whether your previous learning indicates you're likely to succeed.

### Be realistic about your results

Be sure to review your results and speak to your teachers. Being realistic about your abilities and skills helps you choose subjects at the right challenge level.

### Balance your workload

Aim for a combination of subjects that challenge you without overwhelming you and that fit with your other commitments.

### Know what you're signing up for

Speak to the subject teachers, read the textbook, talk to students taking the class. Read the subject handbook and attend 'taster' lessons or subject information sessions so you really know what each subject involves and if it's for you.

### Keep your options open

If you're unsure about your pathway, keep your subject choices broad and diverse so you have flexibility in your future studies and career choices.

### Seek guidance from your allies

Your teachers, coordinators, and Careers Advisor can help you develop a plan aligned with your aspirations. Ask them questions and listen to their advice, as they really are there to help you.

### Remember the big picture

School isn't just about academics. Consider extracurricular activities, sports, arts, or community service which provide valuable skills and learning, contribute to personal growth, and enhance your overall school experience.



# Selecting Subjects

## The Wrong Ways to Choose Subjects

### Select subjects you think will be 'easy'

All subjects require effort to do well, even if you're naturally talented in the area. You're better off choosing a subject you enjoy and will be engaged in rather than one that doesn't really interest you, but that you think will be easy.

### Choose subjects based on teachers

Subjects are allocated to teachers based on the demands on the timetable, and changes can be made at the last minute. This means you can't guarantee who your teacher will be.

### Select subjects for 'prestige' or to impress others

It's your own satisfaction that matters, not how you think other people will perceive you.

### Pick subjects to be with your friends

There is no guarantee your timetables will align, and if you're prone to distractions, you may learn better independently.

## What If I choose a 'wrong' subject?

Putting time and effort into picking the right subjects matters because once you've chosen them, you may not be able to make changes. If, despite your best efforts to choose wisely, you find yourself in a subject you don't like or aren't doing well in, use the challenge as an opportunity to develop:

- Perseverance by giving it your best anyway.
- The attitude that you get out what you put in.
- Skills in something that doesn't come naturally which demonstrates maturity and discipline.
- A growth mindset by realising that learning what we don't like or what we're not good at helps us to know ourselves better.

Use your new self-knowledge to inform your future decisions. For example, if you thought you'd love Food Tech but just found yourself in a mess, cross it off your list and confidently know careers in a kitchen aren't for you.



# Selecting Subjects

## Subject x Industry Matrix

This matrix is a general guide to how your preferred industry areas relate to your school subjects. Within each industry there are many occupations with differing requirements. The best thing to do is select a broad range of subjects that will support your Plan A, B and C. It's important to note that many skills overlap across industries, and with the many pathways available to you, this matrix is not exhaustive. Click on the industry names in the table to view Labour Market Insights information about the industry and the occupations it covers.




	English	Maths	Sciences	Humanities	Technical and Applied	Health and Phys Ed	Creative Arts
Accommodation and Food Services	✓	✓		✓	✓		
Administrative and Support Services	✓	✓		✓			
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Arts and Recreation Services	✓			✓		✓	✓
Construction	✓	✓			✓		
Education and Training	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
Electricity, Gas, Water, Waste	✓	✓	✓		✓		
Financial and Insurance Services	✓	✓					
Health Care and Social Assistance	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Information, Media and Telecommunications	✓	✓	✓		✓		
Manufacturing	✓	✓			✓		
Mining	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Other Services	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Professional, Scientific, Technical Services	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Public Administration and Safety	✓	✓		✓	✓		
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	✓	✓		✓			
Retail Trade	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	✓	✓			✓		
Wholesale Trade	✓	✓		✓	✓		



# Selecting Subjects

## Am I Ready to Select My Subjects?

Use this checklist to see when you're ready to make your subject choices. If you answer 'no' or 'unsure' to any of the statements, do a bit more research before you lock in your selections. If you can answer 'yes' to all of them, select your subjects with confidence, knowing you've made informed choices.

Am I ready to select my subjects?			
I like the subjects I'm choosing enough to study them every day.			
The subjects I'm choosing cover prerequisites for courses I'm interested in.			
I have spoken to the subject teachers.			
I understand what each subject is about and how I will be assessed.			
I can realistically manage the workload given my other commitments.			
I'm aware of other requirements I need to meet e.g. folio, audition, etc.			
I meet the recommended subjects or grades for selecting these subject.			