

2023
SCHOOL
LEAVERS'
HANDBOOK



TANYA PLIBERSEK MP

You can speak
to your school
Careers Advisor
for details on
what courses
are available
and how to
apply.



Every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in this handbook is correct at the time of printing.

Authorised by Tanya Plibersek MP (ALP) Sydney

A Message from Tanya

DEAR CLASS OF 2023,

Congratulations & good luck!

Finishing school is an exciting opportunity for you to consider your prospects.

This handbook aims to provide you with information about important aspects of life after school. It is designed as a starting point to make the transition to work or study easier.

In this handbook you will find information on:

- Education and training
- Tips on finding employment
- Seeking financial assistance
- Applying for essentials such as Medicare, a Tax File Number and enrolling to vote.

I wish you every success for the future.

Very best,



Tanya Plibersek MP
Federal Member for Sydney



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Choosing what
to do in your
post-school
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Introduction

Choosing what to do in your post-school life is exciting but also challenging. There are many pathways to choose from.

The best way to succeed when planning for your future is to identify your interests. There are lots of people and organisations that can help you choose something that interests you. Finding out what your strengths and weaknesses are is the best way to identify what pathway best suits you.

www.myfuture.edu.au and www.education.gov.au/school-work-transitions are excellent resources to help you identify your interests and strengths. They provide an in-depth look at a range of occupations and the requirements needed to pursue those jobs.



Education and Training

University

University offers a wide range of tertiary education courses. Entrance into university is usually based on your performance in Year 12. Checking requirements for courses should be a priority before submitting your application through the University Admissions Centre (UAC). Your school can also assist you with this.

When selecting a course, consider the following:

- What am I interested in?
- What do I want to do for a living?
- Which program will allow me to study this?
- Where do I want to study?
- Am I prepared to move away from home?
- How flexible is my course?
- Can I complete my course part-time?

It's important to remember that regardless of the final mark you receive, consider a course that best suits your interests; this will deliver satisfaction as well as better success. If your circumstances change, speak to your course coordinator to consider the options that are available. You may be able to change your degree and even look at changing from full time to part time studies. Just remember different courses can have different requirements.

For help on deciding which course is right for you, or to check which courses are on offer, visit www.studyassist.gov.au

Be sure to check out the open days and handbooks of the individual universities. They provide useful information and can assist in directing you to finding a course that best suits you. Sometimes it may even lead you to a course that you might not have previously considered.

University Admission Centre (UAC)

If you intend to apply for University in either NSW or ACT, you must submit an application through UAC. To apply through UAC, you will need a UAC application number and PIN. Once you have logged into the UAC portal, you can begin your application.

Applying students can select up to nine preferences. Be sure to put the course you want to do first. The main round of offers occurs in late January. If you do not receive an offer in the first round there is always a chance you will receive an offer in the subsequent rounds.

For more info:
www.uac.edu.au

Higher Education Loan Scheme (HELP)

The Australian Government assists eligible students by providing access to the Higher Education Loan Scheme. The HELP scheme offers different loans for different types of study so students can study now and pay the tuition costs later.

For more info: www.studyassist.gov.au/help-loans

TAFE

TAFE offer a wide range of study options from online courses, to training and full-time education. Vocational Education and Training (VET) will equip you with the necessary and practical skills needed for employment. It is also a good option to consider if you want to go to University but need to gain entrance qualifications or be more prepared before you start your degree. TAFE courses can range from a few weeks up to a few years. Unlike University, TAFE and Registered Training Organisations (RTO) do not require a specific ATAR mark to be accepted, although some courses may have prerequisites.

For more info on TAFE courses, visit www.tafensw.edu.au/courses or call **131 225**.

You can also speak to your school Careers Advisor for details on what VET courses are available. Some are fee free.

Registered Training Organisations (RTO)

Registered Training Organisations are training providers who are registered to deliver VET courses. They provide training and qualifications that are nationally recognised. RTOs offer qualifications at the following levels: Certificate I, II, III and IV, Diploma, Advanced Diploma, Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma.

For more info: www.smartandskilled.nsw.gov.au or **1300 772 104**

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are available to anyone of working age. You don't need a secondary school certificate or other qualification to be able to do an apprenticeship.

Apprenticeships offer opportunities for you to train, study and earn an income at a variety of qualification levels in most occupations, as well as in traditional trades.

For more information www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au or call **13 38 73**.





**A well-written resume
is a key part of any job
application**

Employment

Resume

One of the first things you need before applying for a job is a resume or curriculum vitae (CV). A well-written resume is a key part of any job application, that lists your study, work and life experiences. The purpose of a resume is to convince employers to interview you.

Your resume should include some, or all, of the following information:

- Personal Details
- Education Details
- Work or Volunteering Experiences
- Awards or Certificates

- Interests and Hobbies
- References

Handy tips before sending your resume:

- Make sure it's typed on plain A4 paper
- Double-check your spelling and details
- Ask someone to proof-read your resume and job application
- Create a portfolio of your work (or photographs of it) when applying for jobs that require artistic ability

The Interview

This can be an intimidating process but try to relax during the interview as much as possible.

You should show enthusiasm for the company and the type of work you will be expected to do. It will help you to do some homework about the company if you can. Having knowledge of things such as what the company does, and the position you are applying for, will also make a favourable impression on a prospective employer.

Examples of questions an employer might ask:

- Why do you think you are suitable for this position?
- Why would you like to work for this company?
- What do you know about this organisation?
- Why did you apply for this job?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- Why do you think we should employ you?
- Tell me about a problem you had and how you solved it.
- Give me an example of a time where you successfully worked in a team.

It often helps to practice your answers before an interview. Ask a friend, teacher or parent to role-play an interview with you.

For guidance on writing a resume and cover letter and preparing for interviews, visit www.jobjumpstart.gov.au

Rights at Work

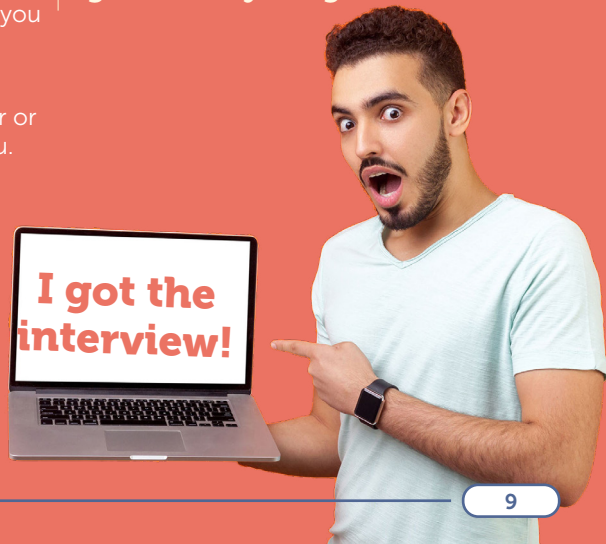
If you are leaving school and are heading straight for the workforce, it is vital you understand your rights as a worker.

The best place to find answers to the most common questions about your rights at work is the Guide for Young Workers on the Fair Work website (see details below). This guide is useful for students transitioning from school to work or working part-time while studying.

Other places that offer advice on your rights at work include the Fair Work Ombudsman. They can offer useful information such as what the minimum rate of pay you should be entitled to and what the conditions of employment for your job are. The Fair Work Ombudsman also has the power to investigate if required.

Fair Work Ombudsman:
www.fairwork.gov.au

Guide for Young Workers:
www.fairwork.gov.au/how-we-will-help/templates-and-guides/best-practice-guides/a-guide-for-young-workers



Superannuation

Superannuation is money set aside during your working life for when you retire. Superannuation begins when you start work and your employer starts paying a portion of your salary or wages into your superannuation for you.

You can choose between a superannuation fund that manages your super for you or you can set up your own Self-Managed Superannuation Fund (SMSF). They may also offer different types of insurance, such as income protection.

You should provide your Tax File Number (TFN) to your employer and/or superannuation fund. If you don't, your superannuation fund may take extra tax out of your super contributions and will not be able to accept any non-employer contributions.

For more information:

www.ato.gov.au/individuals/super

Tax File Number (TFN)

Your tax file number (TFN) is your personal reference number in the tax and superannuation systems. It's an important part of your tax and superannuation records as well as your identity, so keep it secure. Your TFN is yours for life. You keep the same TFN even if you change your name, change jobs, move interstate or go overseas.

You don't have to have a TFN, but without one you pay more tax. You also won't be able to apply for government benefits, lodge your tax return electronically or get an Australian Business Number (ABN).

You can obtain your TFN while still in school through your Careers Advisor - or you can apply for a TFN at any time.

To apply for a TFN:

www.ato.gov.au/Individuals/Tax-file-number/Apply-for-a-TFN

Unions

Throughout Australia's history, unions have given working people a voice in their workplaces and in broader society.

Unions provide advice and assistance in a range of work-related matters. Unions represent workers to protect their rights, conditions and wages. Joining a Union will assist you with negotiating better wages and conditions in your workplace, represent you in workplace issues including termination of employment, and they can take further action to make sure your employer is paying you correctly and providing a safe workplace. Union memberships remain confidential, meaning you do not have to disclose your union to your employer or colleagues.

The Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) is the peak National Union Body.

You can join a union that suits you through the ACTU's website at www.australianunions.org.au or call **1300 362 223**.



Minimum Wage

IT PAYS TO CHECK YOUR PAY !!!

What is the minimum wage?

The minimum wage is the lowest amount (or the base hourly rate) you can legally be paid for the work you do.

From 1 July 2023, the national minimum wage was lifted to \$23.23 per hour.

Young Workers

Different minimum wages may apply to workers who are younger than 21.

Minimum wages for young workers are calculated as a percentage of the national minimum wage. **This table shows the minimum rate you can be paid, depending on your age.**

Age	Percentage	Hourly minimum
Under 16	36.8%	\$8.55
16	47.3%	\$10.99
17	57.8%	\$13.43
18	68.3%	\$15.87
19	82.5%	\$19.16
20	97.7%	\$22.70

Under certain Awards or enterprise bargaining agreements, young workers may be entitled to the full adult minimum wage

Not getting paid what you should?

Contact Australian Unions on 1300 486466 or australianunions.org.au

What's not ok at work



Not receiving a payslip every time you get paid



Being paid in goods and services instead of money (for example, food)



Unpaid trials are against the law. You must be paid for work you do



Being sacked because you were sick or injured



Having money deducted from your wages without your permission (not including tax)

If you are unsure about your rights at work, or think you may be being underpaid you should contact Australian Unions on **1300 486 466** or australianunions.org.au



Financial Assistance

Youth Allowance

Youth Allowance is financial help from Services Australia if you're 24 or younger and a student or Australian Apprentice, or 21 or younger and looking for work.

To get Youth Allowance as a student or an Australian Apprentice you must be under 24 years of age and be completing an approved course or full time Australian Apprenticeship. You must also satisfy an income test and meet the parental means test.

To get Youth Allowance as a job seeker you must be under 21 years of age and looking for full-time work or studying part time and looking for work or temporarily unable to work.

For more information:

Youth Allowance for Students and Australian Apprentices
www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/youth-allowance-students-and-australian-apprentices

Youth Allowance for Job Seekers www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/youth-allowance-job-seekers

Indigenous youth and employment



ABSTUDY: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Study Scheme

ABSTUDY provides means-tested living allowance and other supplementary benefits to eligible secondary and tertiary students. ABSTUDY can assist with your study costs and housing if you need to travel to study.

For more information: www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/abstudy or call the ABSTUDY Hotline (1800 132 317)

Indigenous Employment

The Australian Government offers a large range of employment programs and assistance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

For more information about the Indigenous Skills and Employment Program (ISEP): www.niaa.gov.au/indigenous-affairs/employment/indigenous-skills-and-employment-program-isep

Gadigal Centre (USyd)

The Gadigal Centre is the University of Sydney's dedicated student centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

They provide access to academic, pastoral and cultural support services as well as academic and social enrichment programs like ITAS and MOBS to ensure you get the most out of your university experience.

For more information: www.sydney.edu.au

Jumbunna Institute for Indigenous Education and Research (UTS)

The Jumbunna Institute for Indigenous Education and Research aims to produce the highest quality research on Indigenous legal and policy issues and to develop highly skilled Indigenous researchers.

More information: www.uts.edu.au
E: Jumbunna@uts.edu.au
P: 1800 064 312

School leavers with disabilities



NDIS Participants

The School Leaver Employment Support (SLES) is a new NDIS support which may help you.

SLES is about giving you the skills and confidence to help you move from school to employment. It offers individualised support for up to two years after finishing Year 12 to help you get ready for work and plan your pathway to employment.

For more information: www.ndis.gov.au/participants/finding-keeping-and-changing-jobs

Disability Employment Services

Disability Employment Services (DES) is the Australian Government's employment service that helps people with disability find work and keep a job.

Jobseekers can access DES either through referral by the Services Australia - generally for those receiving Centrelink payments - or by directly registering with a DES provider of their choice.

Visit www.jobaccess.gov.au/find-a-provider to find a DES provider.

JobAccess

JobAccess is the national hub for workplace and employment information for people with a disability, employers and service providers. Created by the Australian Government, it brings together the information and resources that can 'drive disability employment'.

For more information: www.jobaccess.gov.au or call the advice line on **1800 464 800**.

Health

Medicare

Medicare is Australia's universal health care system.

It helps Australians with the cost of their health care by paying some or all the costs for visits to the doctor or hospital. When you go to any health professional (such as a doctor, specialist, optometrist) or a public hospital or if you get prescription medicine from the chemist, you will need to show your Medicare card.

If you're on your parent's Medicare card, you're already enrolled. This means you don't need to re-enrol. When you're 15 years old, you can get your own Medicare card.

For information on how to enrol in Medicare or to transfer to your own card, visit:
www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/medicare/medicare-card

Mental Health

Almost half of all Australians adults will face mental ill-health at some point.

Your mental health affects how you think, feel and act. It influences how you handle stress, how you relate to people, and how you see yourself and the world around you.

It can affect anyone at any stage of life, and can have a negative effect not just on your own life, but also on the people around you.

It shapes the choices you make throughout the course of your life, and has an impact on your work, relationships, and even physical health.

Mental Health Symptoms

There are many types of mental health conditions and disorders, most common are anxiety; affective disorders, including depression; substance use disorders, including alcohol use. They can be short or long term and affect people in different ways.



MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT AND SUPPORT

With the right support, you can manage and improve mental ill-health, and maintain your mental health. If you feel worried, anxious or depressed, seek help. **As a first step, seek online or phone support, or see your doctor** about getting a mental health care plan.

headspace

Headspace is the National Youth Mental Health Foundation. They began in 2006, and ever since have provided early intervention mental health services to 12 – 25 year olds.

Each year, they help thousands of young people and their family and friends access vital support through their headspace services in over 154 communities across Australia. There online and phone counselling services are available and can be accessed via the below options.

OUR LOCAL HEADSPACE:

Level 2, 97 Church St, Camperdown

Phone: (02) 9114 4100

More info: www.headspace.org.au

Healthdirect

Healthdirect provides quality, approved mental health information, advice and resources and information on various conditions. **For more information, visit:** www.healthdirect.gov.au

Head to Health

Head to Health provides information, advice and links to free and low-cost phone and online mental health services and supports to help you or someone you know.

- ways to improve your wellbeing
- ways to help someone you are worried about
- information on specific mental health conditions
- support for specific community groups
- links to relevant digital services suited to your needs.

For more information, visit:
www.headtohealth.gov.au

Let your
voice
be heard



Voting

Voting in Australia is compulsory by law for all eligible Australian citizens. It is also your opportunity to determine who you would like to be your representative. If you are 16 or 17 years old, you can enrol now so once you turn 18, you will be able to vote.

To enrol to vote, you will need to visit the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) website.

- 1 Visit www.aec.gov.au/enrol
- 2 Complete the online enrolment form, print it out and sign it
(or complete this form) 
- 3 Upload your form to AEC

You can upload a scan of your enrolment form on www.aec.gov.au/enrol/send-form.htm. You can also find your local AEC office on the above website.

Remember, if you move address, you will need to update your enrolment with the AEC.

If you are not sure if you are enrolled, visit www.aec.gov.au/check or call 13 23 26.



Enrol to vote or update your details

for federal, state and local government elections in New South Wales

You can complete this form online today at www.aec.gov.au



12

Office use only –
Date received

Notation

CATS

NIN

1 Your current name

If completing by hand use a where appropriate. Use black or blue pen and BLOCK LETTERS

Mr Mrs Miss Ms Other

Family name
Given name(s)

If notifying a change of name

Previous family name
Previous given name(s)

2 Date of birth (dd/mm/yyyy)

. .

Gender

Occupation

3 Current residential address

Clearly identify your residential address. A locality name or mail service number is not enough

State Postcode

Current postal address

Leave blank if the same as your residential address

State Postcode

If notifying a change of address

Previous residential address

State Postcode

4 Phone numbers

Mobile Daytime ()

Email address

5 Citizenship status

To enrol you must be an Australian citizen, or a British subject who was on the Commonwealth electoral roll on 25 January 1984

Australian citizen by birth Town of birth State or territory

or

I have become an Australian citizen Citizenship certificate number

Country of birth
Name on citizenship certificate

or

British subject who was enrolled on 25 January 1984 Country of birth
Name on 25 January 1984

6 Evidence of your identity

Complete ONE option only

Australian driver's licence Number State or territory

OR

Australian passport Number

OR

A person who is on the Commonwealth electoral roll will confirm my identity

Person's name and address (BLOCK LETTERS)

Date of birth (dd/mm/yyyy) .

Declaration by person confirming your identity

- I am on the Commonwealth electoral roll, and
- I confirm the identity of the applicant.

Signature

7 Your declaration

- I am eligible to enrol at my current residential address as listed at Question 3 and claim enrolment for federal, state and local government elections in NSW
- The information I have given on this form is true and complete, and
- I understand that giving false or misleading information is a serious offence.

Your signature or mark

NOTE: A person who is on the Commonwealth electoral roll must confirm the elector's identity at Question 6 if the elector has made a mark because they are unable to sign their name.

Community

The Three Levels of Government

In Australia there are three levels of Government.

1

Local Councils are responsible for building regulations, development applications, community facilities, roads, parks, recreational facilities and waste management.

2

State Governments are responsible for police, transport, hospitals, schools and social housing.

3

Federal Government is responsible for defence, immigration, foreign affairs, trade, communication services like Australia Post and NBN, taxation and many other things.



Federal Government

Raises money through taxing incomes, spending and businesses.



DEFENCE	TRADE
IMMIGRATION	FOREIGN AFFAIRS
NBN	SERVICES AUSTRALIA



State Government

Receives more than half of their money from the Federal Government and also collects taxes.



POLICE	TRANSPORT
HOSPITALS	SCHOOLS
SOCIAL HOUSING	



Local Councils

Collects taxes (rates) from all local property owners and receives money from Federal and State Governments.



ROADS	WASTE MANAGEMENT
PARKS	SEWERAGE
TOWN PLANNING	

As your representative to the Australian Parliament, if you have a question or enquiries about Federal Government matters, please don't hesitate to contact me or my staff at Tanya.Plibersek.MP@aph.gov.au or call (02) 9379 0700.

Useful Contacts

Emergency (Police, Fire, Ambulance)

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Police Assistance Line (non-urgent)	131 444
Royal Prince Alfred Hospital	9515 6111
St Vincent's Hospital	8382 1111
State Emergency Service	132 500
Poisons Information Centre	131 126
Lifeline	131 114
Mental Health Line	1800 011 511
Headspace (Camperdown)	02 9114 4100
Beyondblue	1300 224 636
Medicare	132 011
National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA)	1800 800 110
JobAccess	1800 464 800
ABSTUDY	1800 132 317
Youth Allowance	132 490
Australian Taxation Office (Individuals)	132 861
Universities Admission Centre	9752 0200
Smart and Skilled	1300 772 104
TAFE NSW	131 601
Australian Apprenticeships	1300 363 831
Fair Work Ombudsman	131 394
Australian Council of Trade Unions	1300 362 223
Redfern Legal Centre	9698 7277
Tenant's Union NSW	8117 3700
Australian Electoral Commission	132 326
Transport Infoline	131 500

Our Local State Members of Parliament

Alex Greenwich MP, Member for Sydney	9267 5999
Ron Hoenig MP, Member for Heffron	9699 8166
Jenny Leong MP, Member for Newtown	9517 2800
Kobi Shetty MP, Member for Balmain	9660 7586

Our Local Councils

City of Sydney Council	9265 9333
Inner West Council	9392 5000



Volunteering

Volunteering is an extremely satisfying way to repay the community in which you live. Potential employers also regard volunteering roles highly as it shows a dedication to your community and your willingness to give back.

There are many volunteering opportunities available, depending on how much time you have available. Some volunteering may give you the skills to enhance your ability to participate in the work force.

For more information about volunteering, visit NSW Volunteering at www.volunteering.nsw.gov.au





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