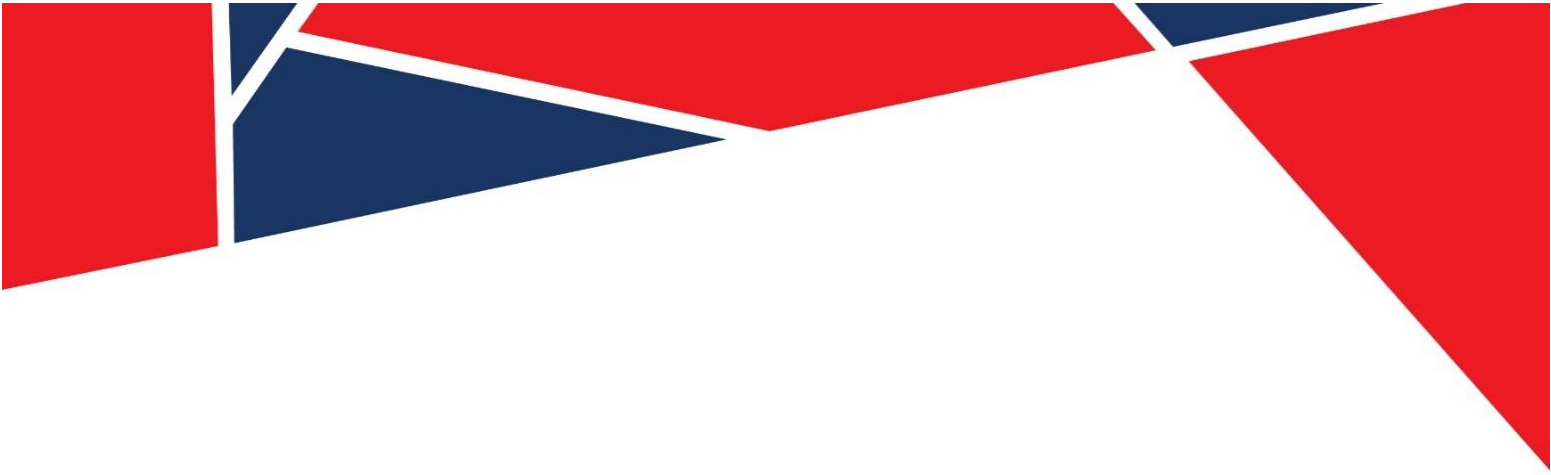
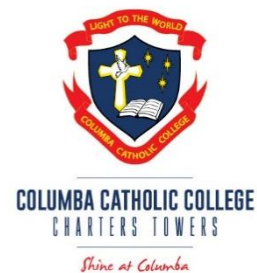




# Careers Newsletter



# Weekly Careers News for Columba Catholic College

October 6, 2025

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## Job Opportunities

<https://www.columbacareers.com/for-students/current-opportunities>

### Casual/Part Time – Charters Towers

KHub – Holiday Casual Team Member Opportunities

Titleys Footwear – Part time and Casual Sales Assistant

### Apprenticeship/Traineeship Programs & General Roles

Eagle Drilling NQ – Diesel Fitting Apprenticeship

Titleys Footwear – Full Time Sales Assistant

Rural Mechanical Repairs – Charters Towers - Parts Interpreter Apprenticeship

More details on each of these roles is available on the Columba Careers Website link provided above.

## Events

### This Week's Events

#### William Angliss Institute Scholarship-Ready Online Information Session

**Organisation:** William Angliss Institute

**Location:** Online

**Date:** October 8, 2025

Attending this session is strongly encouraged before you apply for scholarships at William Angliss Institute. By attending, you'll receive a rundown of the application process, scholarship requirements, some key dates, and ways to improve your application.

Scholarship applications for Semester 1, 2026 are open between Monday 15th of September and will close on Sunday 26th of October.

[Find out more and register](#)

#### CQUniversity STEPS Term 3 Information Session

**Organisation:** CQUniversity

**Location:** Online

**Date:** October 8, 2025

Are you ready to take the next step toward university study?

Whether you're unsure about meeting entry requirements, returning to study after a break, or need to complete prerequisite subjects for your dream degree, our Skills For Tertiary Education Preparatory Studies (STEPS) course is the perfect option to build your confidence and help you succeed at university.

Join us for an informative session on 8 October from 12 - 1 pm AEST that covers everything you would like to know about STEPS including how it can help you meet the entry requirements of your degree, how long it takes to complete, and what the process for application is. You'll also have the opportunity to meet some of our friendly STEPS team who will support you through your STEPS study journey and ask any questions you might have.

[Find out more and register](#)

## James Cook University Year 12 Webinar

**Organisation:** James Cook University

**Location:** Online

**Date:** October 9, 2025

Get all the info and tips you need to discover what your life could look like at JCU.

By joining our Year 12 Webinar you will gain first-hand advice from current JCU as they share real stories about making the leap from high school to uni. From essential study tips to the latest on student clubs and social activities, this webinar will give you practical advice to help you thrive in your first year at JCU.

You can also get answers to all your burning questions about studying at JCU during our Q&A session.

This webinar is suitable for Year 12 students, parents, teachers and guidance officers.

[Find out more and register](#)

## Next Week's Events

### Future Events

## CQUniversity Change of Preference Online Chat for Future Students

**Organisation:** CQUniversity

**Location:** Online

**Date:** December 12, 2025

Didn't get the ATAR you need or changed your mind about what course you want to study in 2026?

We're here to help!

All you need to do is head over to Facebook Messenger and send us a message during our Change of Preference event and you'll receive real-time answers to all your questions. Alternatively, you can call us on 13 27 86 to speak directly to a student adviser.

Speak with our expert team and discover your options at our Change of Preference event on Friday, 12 December at 9 am AEST. Get guidance on how to change your preferences and learn more about CQUni's alternative pathways.

[Find out more and register](#)

## Scholarships

### Australian Medical Association Scholarship for Indigenous Medical University Students

**Organisation:** Australian Medical Association

**Location:** Australia

**Value:** \$11,000 AUD per year

**Open Date:** November 1, 2025

**Close Date:** January 31, 2026

[Find out more](#)

## ACU Refugee Scholarship for Undergraduate Students

**Organisation:** Australian Catholic University

**Location:** Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria

**Value:** Fee waiver

**Open Date:** October 1, 2025

**Close Date:** January 11, 2026

[Find out more](#)

## Competitions

### Find Your Path Competition for Year 3-7 Classes in Australia

Organisation: Future you

Location: Australia

Close Date: November 28, 2025

[Find out more](#)

## Weekly Posts

### Adaptability, Resilience, Skills for Work

#### Why flexibility matters at work

If you've ever wondered what employers mean when they say they want "flexible" team members, you're not alone. Flexibility in the workplace goes far beyond being willing to work different hours or cover extra shifts – though that can be part of it. Real workplace flexibility is about how you respond when things don't go according to plan, how quickly you can learn new ways of doing things, and how well you adapt when priorities shift unexpectedly.

The truth is, most jobs today involve constant change. Technology evolves, customer needs shift, market conditions fluctuate, and organisational priorities change direction. Employees who can roll with these changes – and even thrive in them – are incredibly valuable to employers and often find themselves with more opportunities for interesting projects, promotions, and career growth.

#### What flexibility looks like in practice

Workplace flexibility shows up in numerous ways throughout a typical working day. You might be asked to switch from one project to another with little notice because a client emergency has come up, or discover that the software your team has been using for months is being replaced with something completely different next week.

Flexible employees handle these situations without getting flustered or resistant. They ask clarifying questions, figure out what they need to learn or do differently, and get on with adapting to the new situation. When a colleague calls in sick and their tasks need to be redistributed, flexible team members step up to help cover essential work, even if it's outside their usual responsibilities.

It also means being open to feedback and willing to adjust your approach when something isn't working. Rather than defending your original method or feeling personally criticised, flexible workers treat feedback as useful information that helps them improve their results.

Communication flexibility is equally important – adapting your style when working with different personality types, adjusting your level of detail based on your audience, or shifting between formal and informal communication as situations require. You might need to explain a complex process to a

technical expert using industry terminology, then turn around and describe the same process to a new employee using simpler language.

### **Why employers value flexibility so highly**

From an employer's perspective, flexible employees offer multiple advantages that make teams more effective and resilient:

- **They're insurance against uncertainty** – When market conditions change suddenly or new opportunities arise, teams with flexible members can pivot quickly rather than getting stuck in old ways of doing things. This agility can be the difference between thriving and struggling in competitive industries.
- **They require less management oversight** – Flexible employees can problem-solve independently when unexpected situations arise. Instead of needing detailed instructions for every scenario, they can assess new situations and determine appropriate responses, saving managers time and allowing organisations to respond more quickly to challenges.
- **Training costs are typically lower** – They're generally more receptive to learning new skills and adapting to new systems. When organisations adopt new technology or change processes, flexible team members usually embrace these changes rather than resisting them, making transitions smoother for everyone.
- **They become valuable connectors** – Flexible employees often bridge different departments, projects, or ways of working. They can translate between technical and non-technical team members, help integrate new employees, and facilitate collaboration between groups with different working styles.

### **How flexibility opens up opportunities**

One of the biggest career advantages of being flexible is that you become someone managers think of when interesting projects or opportunities arise. When a cross-departmental team needs someone who can work with diverse groups, or when a new initiative requires someone willing to learn unfamiliar skills, flexible employees often get first consideration.

Flexible workers also tend to build broader professional networks because they work well with different types of people and adapt easily to various team dynamics. These relationships often lead to new opportunities, whether within their current organisation or elsewhere.

The ability to adapt quickly also means you're more likely to spot and capitalise on emerging trends or opportunities in your industry. While others might be focused on perfecting existing approaches, flexible individuals are often the first to recognise when it's time to try something new.

### **Assessing your current flexibility skills**

Before working on building flexibility, it's helpful to honestly evaluate your current comfort level with change and adaptation. Consider how you typically respond in these situations:

- When you're halfway through a task and someone asks you to switch to something more urgent, do you feel frustrated and resistant, or can you bookmark what you're doing and shift focus relatively easily? Your emotional response to task switching can indicate how naturally flexible you are in work situations.
- How do you react when introduced to new technology or software? Do you feel excited about learning something new, anxious about having to change your routine, or somewhere in

between? Your willingness to embrace technological changes is increasingly important in most workplaces.

- When you receive feedback suggesting you try a different approach to something, what's your first instinct? Do you immediately think about how to implement the suggestions, or do you find yourself wanting to explain why your original method was better? Flexibility with feedback often determines how quickly you grow in any role.
- Think about how you handle working with people who have very different communication styles or working preferences from your own. Can you adjust your approach to work effectively with detail-oriented colleagues and big-picture thinkers equally well?
- When plans change at the last minute – whether for work projects, social events, or study schedules – how do you typically respond? Do you adapt quickly and focus on making the new plan work, or do you get stuck feeling disappointed about the original plan?
- Consider your response to taking on tasks outside your usual responsibilities. When asked to help with something unfamiliar, do you approach it as a learning opportunity or worry about doing it imperfectly?

**A note on neurodiversity:** If you're neurodivergent, your relationship with flexibility might look different from what's described here, and that's completely normal. For example, if you have ADHD or autism and experience hyperfocus, task switching might feel particularly jarring or difficult – but hyperfocus itself is also a valuable workplace skill that many employers appreciate. The key is developing strategies that work with your brain, not against it. This might include using transition rituals between tasks, building in buffer time for processing changes, asking for advance notice when possible, or negotiating roles that leverage your strengths like deep focus and attention to detail.

### **Building your flexibility through experiences and activities**

The good news about flexibility is that it's a skill you can definitely develop through practice. The key is deliberately putting yourself in situations that require adaptation and getting comfortable with the feeling of not knowing exactly what you're doing initially.

Volunteering provides excellent flexibility training because volunteer organisations often operate with limited resources and changing priorities. You might sign up to help with event setup and find yourself doing registration instead, or volunteer for a marketing role and end up learning basic graphic design. [Volunteering Australia](#) can help you find opportunities that will challenge you to adapt and learn new skills.

Taking on part-time work in different industries exposes you to various working styles, expectations, and challenges. Working in retail teaches you to adapt quickly to different customers and busy periods, while office work might require adjusting to formal communication styles and deadline management.

Restaurant work develops your ability to handle multiple priorities simultaneously and respond quickly to changing situations.

### **Building your flexibility through experiences and activities**

The good news about flexibility is that it's a skill you can definitely develop through practice. The key is deliberately putting yourself in situations that require adaptation and getting comfortable with the feeling of not knowing exactly what you're doing initially.

## Work and volunteer experiences

Real-world work environments provide some of the best flexibility training because they involve genuine consequences and unpredictable situations:

- **Volunteer for community organisations** – Volunteer groups often operate with limited resources and changing priorities. You might sign up to help with event setup and find yourself doing registration instead, or volunteer for a marketing role and end up learning basic graphic design. [Volunteering Australia](#) can help you find opportunities that will challenge you to adapt.
- **Take on part-time work in different industries** – Working in retail teaches you to adapt quickly to different customers and busy periods, whilst office work might require adjusting to formal communication styles and deadline management. Restaurant work develops your ability to handle multiple priorities simultaneously.
- **Seek out diverse group projects** – Working with people you don't know well requires constant adaptation as you figure out different working styles, communication preferences, and skill levels. Look for opportunities through school projects, community initiatives, or online collaborations.

## Learning and skill development

Regularly challenging yourself to learn new things builds your tolerance for discomfort and strengthens your ability to adapt your approach:

- **Learn skills outside your comfort zone** – Try learning a musical instrument if you're typically academic, or explore creative writing if you're usually focused on technical subjects. The goal is experiencing different types of learning challenges.
- **Stay current with new technologies** – Regularly trying new apps, platforms, or digital tools helps you become more comfortable with the learning process and less resistant to technological changes. You don't need to become an expert, just practice adapting.
- **Try improvisation activities** – Drama classes, comedy workshops, or even improv games with friends specifically train your ability to think quickly and adapt to unexpected situations. Many community centres and universities offer classes focused on collaboration and quick thinking.
- **Read widely across different topics** – Exploring books outside your preferred genres, following thought leaders in unfamiliar fields, or reading news from different sources helps develop mental flexibility by exposing you to various ways of thinking about problems.

## Social and leadership opportunities

Working with different groups of people in various contexts teaches you to adjust your communication and working style:

- **Take on leadership roles in different settings** – Leading a sports team requires different skills from leading a debate club or volunteer group. Each context teaches you to adapt your leadership style to different groups and situations.
- **Travel and explore new environments** – Whether it's international travel, exploring different areas of your city, using unfamiliar public transport, or attending cultural events outside your usual interests, new environments push you to navigate unfamiliar systems and communicate with diverse people.

- **Join activities that require real-time adaptation** – Team sports, competitive debating, or even strategic video games help you practice making quick decisions and adjusting your approach based on changing circumstances.

### Daily habits and mindset

Building flexibility isn't just about occasional challenges – it's about developing habits that keep your adaptation skills sharp:

- **Deliberately vary your routines occasionally** – Take different routes to familiar places, try new cafes or study spots, or approach familiar tasks from new angles. Small variations build comfort with change.
- **Say yes to invitations outside your usual social circle** – Accepting invitations to events or activities you might not normally choose exposes you to different perspectives and social dynamics.
- **Practice the mindset of "multiple right answers"** – Instead of seeking the one perfect solution, get comfortable with the idea that there are often several effective ways to approach problems or achieve goals.

### Making flexibility a habit

Remember that flexibility isn't about becoming someone who lacks preferences or opinions. Strong flexible workers have clear values and goals, but multiple strategies for achieving them. The goal is to maintain effectiveness and positivity even when circumstances don't match your preferences.

As artificial intelligence and automation continue to evolve, the ability to adapt, learn new skills, and work alongside new technologies will become even more important. Building your flexibility now isn't just about succeeding in your first job – it's about ensuring you can thrive throughout your entire career, whatever changes come your way.

## Jobs & Careers, Resilience

### Your first job doesn't define you

Feeling a bit overwhelmed about what comes next after high school? That's completely normal. If you're scrolling through endless career websites, feeling like everyone else has it all figured out, take a deep breath. Here's some reassuring news: your first job is just that—your first, not your last.

#### Entry-level roles that open doors

Some of the best careers start with surprisingly simple entry-level positions. These roles might seem ordinary on the surface, but they could be stepping stones to extraordinary opportunities.

**Customer service roles** are brilliant training grounds for almost any career. Whether you're working in retail, hospitality, or call centres, you'll develop communication skills that are gold in any industry. Many successful business leaders started behind a shop counter, reception, or on the end of the phone, learning how to read people, solve problems under pressure, and stay calm when things go wrong.

**Administrative positions** might sound dull, but they're like backstage passes to how businesses really work. As a junior administrator, you'll see every department in action, understand how decisions get made, and spot opportunities that others miss. It's no surprise that many CEOs started in admin roles learning the business from the ground up.

**Retail positions** can teach you skills that transfer everywhere. You'll master the art of persuasion, learn to handle rejection (a crucial life skill), and understand what makes customers tick. Not to mention the finer arts of visual merchandising, tracking stock, handling cash and balancing tills. These abilities are valuable whether you end up in marketing, management, or running your own business.

**IT support roles** are perfect entry points into the tech world. You don't need a computer science degree to start troubleshooting problems and helping colleagues. Plenty of successful software developers and cybersecurity experts began by simply being the person everyone asked for help when their computer wouldn't work.

### **The beauty of changing direction**

These days most people don't stick to their first career choice. In fact, the average person changes careers multiple times throughout their working life. In fact recent studies show that [people stay in the same job for an average of 2 years 9 months](#). Which means that unless you win lotto or are super successful and retire early - you're likely to have around 16 roles by the time you retire (assuming that you're working for the average 45 year span).

Ask people around you about their careers. You might be surprised to learn that your maths teacher started as an accountant. Or a successful marketing director began their career as a nurse. Remember career paths are rarely straight lines anymore, and most people will change direction, get opportunities, encounter hurdles, and end up in places they didn't expect.

### **Skills that travel with you**

Every job teaches you something valuable, even if it doesn't feel like it at the time. Your weekend job at the local café isn't just about making coffee—you're learning time management, working under pressure, and dealing with difficult customers. Your gaining human and transferable skills that will serve you throughout your career.

**Communication skills** develop naturally when you're interacting with colleagues and customers daily.

**Problem-solving abilities** sharpen as you handle unexpected situations. **Time management** and the ability to **prioritise** improve when you're juggling multiple tasks. All these skills become part of your professional toolkit, which you'll never stop expanding on.

### **The earning and learning advantage**

If you're unsure about your next steps, or would prefer to start work straight after school, great. That option has advantages over going [straight on to further studies](#) or [taking a gap year](#). You'll be earning money and gaining real-world experience, as well as building your professional networks from the get-go. Then at any point if you change your mind, it's never too late to dive back into education - you could even do it part time while you continue working. Or step away for a gap year to reassess your next steps or try something new.

This doesn't mean university is wrong, it's just a different path. Some careers require that you have a degree, but many successful people built their expertise through experience rather than lecture halls. The key is choosing the route that suits your goals and learning style.

### **Upskilling is always an option**

One of the best things about starting your career early is that you can always add qualifications later. Many employers offer [training programmes, apprenticeships](#), or will support you through part-time study. You might discover a passion for digital marketing while working in retail, then pursue a qualification in that area. Or you could find that your IT support role sparks an interest in cybersecurity.

Online learning has made upskilling easier than ever. You can study in your spare time, often for free or at low cost. [Professional qualifications, short courses](#), and industry certifications can boost your career prospects without requiring a full-time commitment to study.

### **Your career is a marathon, not a sprint**

Remember, building a career is a long-term project. You don't need to have it all sorted by age 18. Some of the most successful people took years to find their true calling, and that's OK you'll still be picking up valuable skills and experiences along the way.

### **Take the first step with confidence**

Your first job doesn't define your worth or determine your future. It's simply the beginning of your professional journey, the chance to start earning, learning, and exploring what the working world has to offer.

Whether you're drawn to hands-on work, people-focused roles, or technical challenges, there are entry-level positions waiting to welcome you. The key is to stay curious, work hard, and remain open to unexpected opportunities.

### **Find your perfect starting point**

Ready to explore your career options? Our [career exploration tools](#) can help you discover roles that match your interests and strengths.

## **Health & Wellbeing, People with Disability, Skills for Work**

### **What to share and what to keep private: Making smart disclosure decisions**

Deciding what personal information to share during job applications is one of the trickiest aspects of job hunting. You might be wondering whether to mention your disability, if you need to tell them about your caring responsibilities for a family member, or what happens if you're pregnant or planning to start a family soon. The answer isn't straightforward because it depends on your specific situation, the job requirements, and your personal comfort level with disclosure.

The legal framework gives you strong protections, but the practical reality is that disclosure decisions can still affect how potential employers perceive you, even when discrimination is illegal. Understanding both your rights and the practical considerations can help you make informed choices that work for your circumstances.

### **Your legal rights around disclosure**

The most important thing to understand is that you're generally not legally required to disclose personal information unless it directly affects your ability to perform the essential requirements of the job. This applies to disabilities, health conditions, pregnancy, and family responsibilities.

According to [Includeability Australia's guidance](#), if a disability doesn't affect the "inherent requirements" of the job, you are not required by law to disclose it. Similarly, [Fair Work Commission guidelines](#) make it clear that employers generally cannot ask about pregnancy or intention to become pregnant during recruitment.

The [Fair Work Ombudsman](#) emphasises that discrimination based on disability, pregnancy, or family responsibilities is illegal. Employers are required to make reasonable adjustments for employees with disabilities and cannot treat you unfairly because of pregnancy or caring responsibilities.

However, knowing your rights and navigating the practical realities of job hunting can be two different things. Even with strong legal protections, you still need to make strategic decisions about what information to share and when.

### **When disclosure can work in your favour**

There are genuine advantages to disclosure in many situations, particularly when it allows you to access support or adjustments that will help you perform your best in the role.

For people with disabilities, disclosure opens the door to reasonable adjustments. As outlined by the [Fair Work Ombudsman](#), these might include modified hours, accessible equipment, flexible work arrangements, or changes to how tasks are performed. If you know you'll need these adjustments to do the job effectively, early disclosure allows the employer to plan and budget for them.

With pregnancy, disclosure enables proper planning for parental leave and safe work arrangements. Early communication helps avoid surprises and ensures your health and safety are protected throughout your pregnancy. The [Fair Work Commission](#) guidelines detail the various protections and entitlements available once your employer is aware of your pregnancy.

For those with family caring responsibilities, disclosure can lead to flexible arrangements that help you balance work and caring duties. The [Fair Work Commission's guidance on family responsibilities](#) outlines the protections available for employees who need to care for family members.

Disclosure can also demonstrate your proactive approach to problem-solving and your understanding of your own needs and capabilities. Employers often appreciate candidates who can clearly articulate what they need to succeed rather than struggling in silence.

### **The risks and practical considerations**

While discrimination is illegal, unconscious bias still exists, and disclosure can unfortunately influence hiring decisions in ways that are difficult to prove or challenge. This is the uncomfortable reality that many people face when making disclosure decisions.

Some employers might worry about costs, time off, or perceived limitations, even when these concerns are unfounded or when reasonable adjustments would easily address any issues. Others might make assumptions about your capabilities or commitment based on limited understanding of your circumstances.

Disclosure can also open the door to requests for medical evidence or additional information, particularly around pregnancy-related health issues or safety concerns. While these requests must comply with privacy and anti-discrimination laws, they can add complexity to the application process. It's worth having examples ready of how you've successfully managed your responsibilities or performed well in previous roles if employers have questions about your capability. Being prepared to address concerns confidently can help counter any unconscious bias.

### **When disclosure might be necessary**

There are some situations where disclosure becomes necessary, either for legal or practical reasons. The key is understanding when your circumstances genuinely affect your ability to perform the essential functions of the job.

Safety considerations often require disclosure. If you have a medical condition that could be aggravated by certain job tasks, or if pregnancy means you can't safely perform particular duties, disclosure allows the employer to make appropriate adjustments or find alternative arrangements.

Jobs with specific physical requirements might also necessitate disclosure if you can't meet those requirements without adjustments. However, it's important to focus on whether reasonable adjustments could enable you to perform the role rather than simply whether you can perform it exactly as currently described.

Some roles involve inherent requirements that directly relate to certain personal circumstances. For example, jobs requiring extensive travel might not be suitable if you are a sole caregiver, or roles requiring specific physical capabilities might need to be modified for people with particular disabilities.

### **What questions employers can and cannot ask**

Understanding what employers are legally allowed to ask can help you recognise inappropriate questions and respond appropriately.

Employers **cannot ask directly** about pregnancy, plans to have children, or family circumstances unless these are genuinely relevant to the inherent requirements of the job. They also cannot ask broad questions about your health or disability status during the application process.

However, employers can ask whether you can meet specific, genuine requirements of the job, provided these questions are applied to all applicants and relate to actual job requirements. For example, asking "Can you lift 20kg regularly?" is legal if this is genuinely required for the role, but only after considering what reasonable adjustments might be possible.

If you're asked inappropriate questions, you can choose to redirect the conversation back to your qualifications and capabilities, politely decline to answer, or point out that the question doesn't seem relevant to the job requirements.

### **Family responsibilities and caring duties**

Caring for family members, whether children, elderly parents, or relatives with disabilities, can affect your work arrangements but doesn't disqualify you from employment. The [Fair Work Commission's family responsibilities provisions](#) provide specific protections for employees with caring duties.

You might choose to disclose caring responsibilities if you'll need flexible hours, occasional time off for appointments, or other arrangements to manage your caring duties. Many employers appreciate the transparency and can often accommodate reasonable requests.

However, you're not required to provide detailed information about your family circumstances. Focusing on what arrangements you might need rather than extensive personal details often works best.

### **Holiday plans and availability**

This might seem like a smaller issue, but timing can matter when you're starting a new job. If you have significant holiday plans already booked, particularly during busy periods for the employer, it's usually better to mention this during the application process rather than after you're hired.

Most reasonable employers prefer to know about existing commitments upfront so they can plan accordingly. Hiding planned absences and then requesting time off shortly after starting can damage your professional relationships and credibility.

Frame this positively by emphasising your commitment to the role while being transparent about existing obligations. Something like "I'm very excited about this opportunity and want to mention that I have a family wedding booked in three months that I'll need two days off for" shows professionalism and consideration.

### **Making the decision that's right for you**

Ultimately, disclosure decisions are highly personal and depend on factors including the specific job, your individual circumstances, your comfort level with disclosure, and your assessment of the potential employer's culture and values.

Things you can do:

- Consider researching the company's values, diversity policies, and track record with employees who have similar circumstances to yours. Organisations that actively promote inclusion and have clear diversity policies may be more likely to respond positively to disclosure.

- Think about what you'll need to be successful in the role and whether those needs require disclosure. If reasonable adjustments are essential for you to perform well, early disclosure might lead to better outcomes than struggling without support.
- Remember that you can also choose different approaches for different employers or adjust your strategy based on how the application process unfolds. There's no requirement to have a single approach for all situations.
- Trust your instincts about the people you're dealing with and the culture of the organisation. If an employer responds poorly to reasonable disclosure, that might tell you something important about whether this is the right workplace for you.

Whatever you decide, you deserve to work in an environment where you're valued for your contributions and where your needs are respected. Making informed disclosure decisions is part of finding workplaces that align with your values and circumstances.

## Budgeting, Gap Years, Travel

### 10 ways to prepare for your next holiday

School holidays are the best, with endless possibilities while you're not tied to a routine. Whether you're eyeing up those extra sleep-ins, planning epic adventures with mates, or looking to earn some pocket money, a little preparation can transform your break from "meh" to absolutely memorable.

Whether you're craving pure relaxation after a intense term, or itching to dive in and try something completely new school holidays are your time. Whatever floats your boat, these ten tips will help you squeeze every drop of goodness from your time off.

#### Set your holiday intentions

Before you do anything else, grab a notebook (or open your notes app) and jot down what you actually want from these holidays. Are you desperate to recharge your batteries? Keen to earn some cash? Want to try something you've never done before?

Having clear intentions could help you to get the most out of your break. You don't need to plan every single day, but knowing your priorities means you won't reach the end of the holidays wondering where the time went. Plus, when your parents ask what you're doing with your break, you'll have a proper answer ready!

#### Plan your sleep schedule (but be realistic)

Let's be honest most of us fantasise about sleeping until midday every single day of the holidays. Whilst the occasional lie-in is one of life's greatest pleasures and you do need to catch up on sleep, completely flipping your sleep schedule can leave you feeling groggy and out of sorts.

Try easing into a later wake-up time gradually, rather than going from 6:30am to noon overnight. Your body (and your mood) will thank you for it. A good rule of thumb is to shift your bedtime and wake-up time by 30 minutes every few days until you reach your holiday sweet spot. It's also going to be easier to be up and ready for school or work after your break is over if you apply the same theory in reverse.

#### Budget for fun and freedom

Money might not grow on trees, but planning how to spend what you've got can make your cash stretch much further. Whether you're working with birthday money, savings from a part-time job, or a modest allowance, [creating a simple budget](#) gives you more freedom to enjoy yourself.

Consider splitting your money into categories for essentials (like transport if you're going out), fun stuff (cinema tickets, that new game you've been eyeing), and savings for something bigger. Even \$20 can go a surprisingly long way when you're strategic about it – think picnics in the park instead of expensive restaurants, or matinee movie tickets rather than evening showings.

### **Explore work experience opportunities**

If you're curious about potential career paths, holidays are the perfect time to dip your toes into the world of work. [Work experience](#) doesn't have to be formal or boring – it could be shadowing a family friend for a day, volunteering at a local charity, or even starting a small project of your own.

Many businesses are happy to have enthusiastic young people around for short periods, especially if you approach them with genuine interest rather than just obligation. The worst they can say is no, and the best case scenario is that you discover something you're passionate about whilst building your CV. You will have to plan in advance and give people plenty of notice though.

### **Create a [wellbeing toolkit](#)**

Think of this as your personal emergency kit for those inevitable moments when you're feeling a bit rubbish. Your toolkit might include things like your favourite playlist for when you need cheering up, an ally or two you know you can always call for a chat, or some simple breathing exercises for when anxiety creeps in. Or even just make a list of all the things that make you feel better and stock up on any essentials.

Physical wellbeing matters too – maybe it's going for walks when you need to clear your head, keeping healthy snacks around so you don't crash from too much junk food, or setting aside time for activities that make you feel good about yourself.

Knowing what makes you feel good mentally and physically is a fantastic strategy in life, helping you cope in stressful times and making sure you can get the most out of life.

### **Learn something new (just for fun)**

Forget about subjects and grades for a moment, what have you always wondered about or wanted to try? Maybe it's learning to skateboard, picking up basic guitar chords from YouTube tutorials, trying your hand at photography with your phone, or teaching yourself to cook something more exciting than beans on toast.

Magic happens when you're learning purely because it interests you, rather than because you have to. So why not make time in your next break to do something just for you. Plus, having a new skill or hobby to add to your resume is always a bonus.

### **Nurture your relationships**

Holidays give you precious time to strengthen the relationships that matter. This might mean actually hanging out with family members without the pressure of homework deadlines, planning proper catch-ups with friends you don't see much during term time, or even having some quality alone time.

Don't underestimate the power of simple gestures. Helping out around the house without being asked, suggesting a movie night or games evening, surprising a friend with a thoughtful message, or having a proper conversation with your grandparents can create memories and feel good factor that last far longer than any expensive activity.

### **Get organised for what's next**

Future you will be incredibly grateful if present you sorts out a few practical things during the holidays. This doesn't mean spending hours on admin, just tackling small tasks like organising your room, backing

up important files, or preparing for the upcoming term could make all the difference to how ready you feel to start the next term or project.

If you're in your final years of school, holidays are also brilliant for researching [university courses](#), [apprenticeships](#), [scholarships](#), [gap years](#), or other post-school options without the pressure of deadlines looming. Even 30 minutes here and there can help you feel more confident about your future choices.

### **Balance screen time and real-world experiences**

We all love a good Netflix binge or gaming session (and there's absolutely nothing wrong with that), but try to balance digital entertainment with experiences that get you moving, creating, or connecting with others face-to-face.

Going completely screen-free doesn't have to be the plan, just be intentional about when and how you use technology. Maybe designate certain hours as phone-free zones, or make a rule that you'll do one offline activity before settling in for a gaming session. Set alarms or reminders if you find it hard to take a break, or make plans with someone as both incentive to get off technology and give you something to look forward to.

### **Be spontaneous within structure**

Having a rigid plan could suck the joy out of spontaneous moments or get you saying no to opportunities that can make holidays special. Be flexible within your schedule so you can say yes when your mate suggests an impromptu trip to the beach, or when you wake up feeling like today's the perfect day to finally tackle that creative project.

Think of your holiday plan as a loose framework rather than a strict timetable. Having some structure gives you direction, but leaving gaps allows breathing space for pure fun.

### **Ready to make it happen?**

The best holidays aren't necessarily the most expensive or exotic, they're the ones where you feel like you've made the most of your time in a way that feels right for you. Whether that means earning your first proper paycheck, mastering a new skill, strengthening friendships, or simply giving yourself permission to properly rest, the choice is entirely yours.

Want to explore work experience opportunities or learn more about gap year options? Head over to [our website](#) to discover more exciting ways to spend your holidays whilst building valuable skills for your future.

## **Networking**

### **5 ways to network without actually attending networking events**

Let's be honest – the idea of walking into a room full of strangers with name tags, making small talk while balancing a cup of coffee and a sad sandwich, probably doesn't fill you with excitement. The good news is that networking doesn't have to involve awkward mixers or forced conversations with people in suits. In fact, some of the most valuable professional connections happen naturally through activities you're already doing or might actually enjoy.

Real networking is simply about building genuine relationships with people who share your interests, work in fields you're curious about, or can offer insights into paths you're considering. It's less about collecting business cards and more about finding your people – and that can happen anywhere from a local park to your computer screen.

### **Set up LinkedIn and actually use it strategically**

LinkedIn might seem like a platform for middle-aged professionals posting motivational quotes, but it's actually one of the most powerful networking tools available to students. If you're wondering whether it's worth creating a profile while you're still at school, [we've covered the reasons why high school students should definitely be on LinkedIn](#).

The key is approaching LinkedIn strategically rather than just creating a profile and hoping for the best. Start with a proper profile that includes a decent headshot, a clear summary of who you are and what you're interested in, and any relevant experience, even if it's just school projects or volunteer work. Don't worry about having a thin CV – everyone starts somewhere, and authenticity beats trying to oversell limited experience.

The real networking magic happens when you start connecting thoughtfully. Look for:

- Teachers and school staff who might have industry connections - but only 'follow' them unless they've told you it's ok to connect
- Family friends or relatives working in fields that interest you
- Local professionals whose work you admire or find interesting
- Alumni from your school who've gone into careers you're exploring

When you connect with someone, always include a personalised message explaining who you are and why you'd like to connect. Something like "Hi [Name], I'm a Year 11 student at [School] and I'm really interested in learning more about marketing. I'd love to connect and learn from your experience in the industry" works much better than the generic connection request.

Once you're connected, engage with their content occasionally – like or comment on posts that genuinely interest you. This keeps you visible and shows you're actively interested in the field. You can also share relevant articles or insights about topics you're passionate about, which helps establish you as someone who's engaged and thinking critically about your interests.

### **Join community groups and advocacy organisations**

Every community has groups focused on causes, interests, or issues that matter to local people. These organisations are goldmines for networking because you're meeting people who share your values or passions, which creates natural conversation starters and genuine connections.

Consider groups like:

- Your local council's young leaders programs, which often attract ambitious students and young professionals
- [PCYC](#) programs that combine community service with youth development
- [UN Youth Australia](#) for those interested in global issues and diplomacy
- Environmental groups like [Greenpeace Australia](#) local chapters
- LGBTQIA+ community groups and support organisations
- Hospital foundation volunteer groups and fundraising committees
- Local business networks or chambers of commerce youth divisions

The [Community Directory Australia](#) can help you find local groups, and [Meetup.com](#) lists regular gatherings for people with shared interests. Don't overlook Facebook groups for your local area – many community organisations coordinate through social media.

When you attend meetings or events, focus on being genuinely helpful and interested in the cause rather than obviously networking. Ask questions, volunteer for projects, and contribute your skills where you can. The professional connections will develop naturally as people get to know you and see your commitment and capabilities.

### **Get involved in sports teams, activity groups, and community organisations**

Some of the best networking happens when people aren't trying to network at all. Sports teams, running groups, music ensembles, and hobby groups bring together people from all kinds of professional backgrounds who might never cross paths otherwise.

[Parkrun](#) is particularly brilliant for this – it's free, happens every Saturday morning in locations across Australia, and attracts people of all ages and backgrounds. You'll find teachers, engineers, nurses, business owners, students, and retirees all running the same 5km course. The post-run coffee culture means you naturally end up chatting with people, and regular attendance helps you build relationships over time.

Other great options include:

- [Surf Life Saving](#) clubs, which combine fitness, community service, and social activities
- Local sports teams, whether that's cricket, netball, football, or something more niche like ultimate frisbee
- Church groups and youth ministries, regardless of your level of religious commitment
- Community choirs, bands, or orchestras that welcome amateur musicians
- Art classes, photography groups, or creative workshops
- Book clubs, language exchange groups, or academic societies

The key advantage of activity-based networking is that you get to see people in a different context. You might discover that the quiet person on your soccer team is actually a successful graphic designer, or that the friendly woman at your choir practice runs her own consulting business. These relationships feel more authentic because they're based on shared activities rather than professional interests alone.

### **Volunteer strategically in your field of interest**

Volunteering is networking with purpose – you're contributing to causes you care about while meeting people who work in fields that interest you. The key word here is "strategically." While any volunteering is valuable, choosing opportunities that align with your career interests maximises the networking potential.

If you're interested in healthcare, volunteer at local health services or community health fairs. For those drawn to education, consider tutoring programs or literacy initiatives. Aspiring engineers might volunteer with [Habitat for Humanity](#), while future marketers could help local charities with their social media or events.

To find volunteer opportunities, check out:

- [Go Volunteer](#) for a comprehensive database of opportunities across Australia
- [Rosies](#) for street outreach and community support work
- [Orange Sky](#) for mobile laundry and shower services for people experiencing homelessness
- [Red Frogs](#) for event safety and support work (particularly relevant after you've finished school)

Look for one-off volunteer opportunities if ongoing commitments don't fit your schedule. Many organisations need extra hands for specific events, conferences, or campaigns. These shorter commitments can still provide valuable networking opportunities and give you a taste of different types of work.

The networking benefits of volunteering go beyond meeting people in your target industry. You'll also connect with board members, donors, and supporters who often have diverse professional backgrounds and extensive networks. Plus, volunteering demonstrates initiative, social awareness, and commitment – qualities that make strong impressions in professional contexts.

### **Start a blog, podcast, or social media presence around your interests**

Creating content about topics you're passionate about is one of the most effective ways to attract like-minded people and establish yourself as someone who thinks seriously about your interests. You don't need thousands of followers or professional equipment – you just need genuine enthusiasm and something interesting to say.

A blog about your experiences learning photography could attract other photographers, potential clients, and industry professionals. A podcast where you interview local business owners could connect you with entrepreneurs and give you insights into different industries. A YouTube channel documenting your journey learning to code could help you connect with the tech community.

The key is consistency and authenticity. Choose a format you actually enjoy and can maintain regularly. It's better to post thoughtful content once a month than to burn out trying to post daily.

Content creation works for networking because it gives people a reason to reach out to you. Industry professionals might comment on your posts, other students might connect with your experiences, and potential mentors might appreciate your genuine interest in learning.

You can also use your platform to amplify others' work – share articles by professionals you admire, interview people in your field of interest, or review books and resources that have helped you learn. This generosity often leads to reciprocal relationships and unexpected opportunities.

Building meaningful professional relationships doesn't require forcing conversations at formal networking events. It happens naturally when you're genuinely engaged with your interests and community. Whether you're running with new people every Saturday morning, volunteering for causes you care about, or sharing your learning journey online, you're creating opportunities for authentic connections that can grow into valuable professional relationships.

The best part about these approaches is that they're all activities worth doing regardless of their networking potential. You'll develop skills, contribute to your community, stay active, and pursue your interests – and the professional connections will be a natural byproduct of living an engaged, purposeful life.

## **Job Spotlights**

### **How to become a Real Estate Agent**

Real estate agents (also known as realtors) are licensed to help clients who want to purchase, sell, or rent a building, home, or block of land. They work with both residential and commercial properties, providing market expertise, negotiating deals, and ensuring legal requirements are met.

If you're a great mediator who gets along easily with people, and you're looking for a job where you can work both in and out of the office, then this could be the perfect career for you.

#### **What skills do I need as a real estate agent?**

- Personable and approachable

- Honest and reliable
- Excellent communicator
- Customer-focused
- Organised and self-motivated
- Resilient and persistent
- Strong negotiation abilities
- Detail-oriented

#### **What does the job involve?**

- Understanding clients' property needs and budgets
- Researching local property markets and pricing trends
- Advertising properties through online listings and open houses
- Showing properties to potential buyers or tenants
- Negotiating prices and contract terms
- Coordinating property inspections and valuations
- Keeping up-to-date with property laws and regulations
- Managing paperwork and ensuring legal compliance

#### **What industries do real estate agents typically work in?**

- Rental, Hiring, and Real Estate Services

#### **What Career Cluster do real estate agents belong to?**

Real estate agents thrive on building relationships and facilitating successful transactions, making them excellent [Linkers](#).

#### **What kind of lifestyle can I expect?**

Real estate work often involves evening and weekend appointments to accommodate clients' schedules, as many people view properties outside of standard business hours.

Most real estate agents can expect to earn an average salary throughout their careers. You'll need to be prepared to deal with the ebb and flow of the housing market; sometimes it will be booming, and sometimes it will be slow.

You will be doing work in a variety of environments, including from your office, travelling to meet clients, and showing houses and land. Virtual property tours are also becoming more popular.

#### **How to become a real estate agent**

Because real estate agents deal with valuable assets on behalf of other people, the industry needs to be regulated to keep it fair and above board for everyone involved. This means there are a few steps you'll

need to complete in order to work as a real estate agent. Note that the specific details may vary depending on the state or territory you live in.

First, you'll need to complete an accredited or approved course, typically a [Certificate IV in Real Estate Practice](#).

You then must complete at least 12 months of full-time work experience under the supervision of a licensed real estate agent.

Finally, you must obtain a license or registration to practise through the relevant body in your state or territory.

To maintain your license or registration, you must also engage in [continuing professional development](#) (CPD) throughout your career.

### **What can I do right now to work towards this career?**

If you're in high school and you'd like to find out if a career as a real estate agent is right for you, here are a few things you could do:

- Develop your communication and sales skills through part-time work in retail, hospitality, or customer service roles.
- Study your local property market by attending open houses and following property trends online.
- Research the licensing requirements in your area and start planning your educational pathway.

### **Where can I find more information?**

- [Real Estate Institute of Australia](#)
  - [Real Estate Institute of New South Wales](#)
  - [Real Estate Institute of Victoria](#)
  - [Real Estate Institute of Queensland](#)
  - [Real Estate Institute of the Australian Capital Territory](#)
  - [Real Estate Institute of South Australia](#)
  - [Real Estate Institute of Western Australia](#)
  - [Real Estate Institute of the Northern Territory](#)
  - [Real Estate Institute of Tasmania](#)

### **Similar careers to real estate agent**

- Property Manager
- [Business Development Manager](#)
- Conveyancer
- [Surveyor](#)
- Building Inspector
- Insurance Broker

- [Sales Representative](#)
- Advertising Agent

Find out more about alternative careers on [our Job Spotlights page](#).

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