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Michael McCormack MP

Federal Member for Riverina



SCHOOL LEAVERS' GUIDE 2011



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Michael McCormack MP

Federal Member for Riverina



Your views are important to me...

So if you would like to provide me with feedback on this guide, or if you have any questions or suggestions, please complete the survey at the end of this guide or contact me at:

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Fax: 02 6921 5900

Dear school leaver.....

Congratulations on your impending graduation...

This is an exciting time and there are many opportunities available to young people. Exploring your options means accessing current information on a range of pathways, talking to your parents, friends, teachers and career advisers. The School Leavers' Guide is a great starting point.

When deciding what you might do after school, consider your interests, likes and dislikes, your experiences at school, at home and within your community. Think about hopes and visions for your future and where you want to study, train or work.

In this Guide there are sections about career development, further education and training options, financial assistance available to young people as well as useful contact details for more detailed information. More information is available on the www.year12whatnext.gov.au website.

I trust you will find this information helpful. Please contact my office on 6921 4600 if I can be of any further assistance. I also encourage you to enrol to vote if you have not yet done so – simply call my office and I will send you an enrolment form.

Good luck as you make the transition from school and I wish you every success in what you choose to do.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael McCormack". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Michael McCormack MP
Federal Member for Riverina

There are many pathways from school that can lead to rewarding careers. It is important to remember that people will move between pathways and are not locked into one occupation or education level. It is easy to move from work to study, TAFE to university, or from an Australian Apprenticeship into a long term professional career.

After school most young people choose between:

- Continuing a further education and training programme through vocational education and training or university
- Undertaking an Australian Apprenticeship
- Finding employment
- Participating in community or volunteer work
- Starting a business

www.myfuture.edu.au

myfuture is a national, online career exploration and information system. Log on to myfuture to create your own personal profile that can help you to identify a range of career options. You can go to My Future to:

- Find out more about yourself, your skills, interests, values and aspirations

- Discover what occupations suit you

Learn about the world of work

- Explore your creativity and enterprise skills
- Plan your career pathway and set goals.

For more information visit www.myfuture.edu.au

www.jobguide.deewr.gov.au

Job Guide describes over 1500 occupations to give you a starting point for making decisions about your career. You can get information about what specific jobs involve and a list of personal requirements and the necessary education and training. Job Guide also points you to related jobs and where to get further advice and information. Job Guide is researched and updated each year and is provided free-of-charge to all schools for Year 10 students.

Job Guide is also available online at www.jobguide.deewr.gov.au where it can be searched alphabetically, by interest category, section or industry and relevant education and training information for all states and territories. For more information visit www.jobguide.deewr.gov.au



Year 12 – what next?

Year 12 – what next? is a portal for Year 12 students who are thinking about their post-school options. The portal has tips and ideas on the wide range of options available after Year 12 including:

- Future work opportunities
- Post-school education and training
- Working while you learn
- The benefits of education and training.

For more information visit www.year12whatnext.gov.au

Career Information Centres (CICs)

There are 13 Career Information Centres (CICs) across Australia providing free career information and guidance. CICs can help you make informed decisions about education, training and employment options and career pathways.

For more information visit www.centrelink.gov.au/internet/internet.nsf/services/career_centres.htm

Career Expos

Each year in Australia, career expos are held in major cities and regional centres. They are great places to speak directly with employers, learn more about potential training and further education options and access resources and career planning support.

For more information visit www.myfuture.edu.au

National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions

The National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions aims to increase the educational engagement and attainment of young people and to improve their transition to post school education, training and employment. For those most at risk of disengaging, services are provided through the Youth Connections Program.

For more information visit www.deewr.gov.au/Youth/YouthAttainmentandTransitions/Pages/YouthConnections.aspx

Additional Career Information

The Australian Government provides a range of career information pamphlets and booklets which cover job searching, skills identification, information for parents, and posters identifying careers with school subjects or by industry.

For more information visit www.deewr.gov.au/careerdevelopment

Australian Qualifications

To get a job in some areas you need to have a qualification or be working towards a qualification. If you participate in formal learning, you are likely to be working towards a qualification.

There are several levels of qualifications available in Australia. Qualifications that are recognised across Australia meet requirements as set out by the Australian Qualifications Framework (commonly known as the AQF).

This framework is a national system for schools, vocational education and training and the higher education sector and links qualifications together across the education and training system.

For more information visit www.aqf.edu.au

Vocational Education and Training (VET)

Vocational education and training is competency-based and directly job-related. There are a wide range of courses and subjects available and they are great for people who like study that is practical and hands-on. Courses are offered through:

- TAFE
- Secondary school
- VET in schools programmes
- Australian School-based Apprenticeships
- Australian Apprenticeship Centres
- Private Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)
- Community training providers

For more information visit www.training.com.au

Limited training places are available for job seekers wishing to undertake Certificate level training in areas of skills shortage under the Productivity Places Program.

For more information visit www.productivityplaces.deewr.gov.au phone 13 38 73

Education and Training Providers

Education and training providers often offer flexible learning arrangements. You might study full-time or part-time, or you may study on campus, externally (distance education) or online.

Technical and Further Education (TAFE)

At TAFEs throughout Australia there are over 5,000 courses available at approximately 500 campuses that can prepare you for your first job, retraining or further study.

There are currently six levels of courses: Certificates Level I–IV, Diploma and Advanced Diploma. TAFE training programmes are recognised at state, territory and national level. A small number of TAFE institutes also offer higher education courses, such as Bachelor Degrees, Graduate Certificates and Graduate Diplomas, in selected fields of study.

TAFE also offers labour market courses, entry and bridging courses, adult and community education classes and small business management courses.

For more information visit the Education and Training Providers section of myfuture www.myfuture.edu.au

Private Registered Training Organisations (private providers or RTOs)

There are approximately 4,000 private Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) in Australia offering nationally recognised training. RTOs may be business colleges, secretarial colleges, computer training centres and industry-based training centres.

RTOs provide training from Certificate I to Advanced Diploma in a wide range of fields, such as beauty therapy, hospitality, travel, business, computing, music, aviation, childcare, art and design, naturopathy, and languages.

For more information visit the National Training Information Service www.ntis.gov.au

Adult and Community Education (ACE) Sector

Adult and Community Education (ACE) centres include neighbourhood houses, schools, non-government adult education providers and community centres. They provide a wide range of short courses and programmes. Some ACE centres are also Registered Training Organisations and offer pre-vocational and vocational training.

For more information contact Adult Learning Australia (ALA) visit www.ala.asn.au

Universities

Universities offer a wide range of general and specific courses at undergraduate level. Universities also run bridging and tertiary preparation courses that can help you build your skills in preparation for study or help you if you are unsure about what you might like to study.

Keep in mind that it is possible to pursue university study by transferring from recognised VET studies, undertaking bridging courses or studying by distance education through a university or online through Open Universities Australia.

Open Universities Australia is a flexible way to study toward a university degree when you can't study on-campus. Unlike on-campus study, places are not limited. You can study throughout the year and, for most entry level courses, there are no pre-requisites or Year 12 entry requirements. Open Universities Australia removes many barriers to university education, including distance, time, qualifications and cost.

For more information visit www.open.edu.au

If you are considering going directly from school to university, it is important to fully explore university and course requirements. Look at prerequisite Year 11 and 12 subjects and at the range of courses and the campuses at which some courses are offered.

For more information visit www.goingtouni.gov.au

Applying for University

You can apply to your chosen university through standard entry (on the basis of your senior secondary school qualifications), special or alternative entry, or advanced standing entry (credit transfer or credit for prior learning). In most states and territories, and in some courses, applications are processed through a Tertiary Admissions (Service) Centre. Contact individual universities and Tertiary Admissions Centres for further advice.

To find a Tertiary Admissions Centre in another state or territory go to Courses and Providers > Applying > for a place with a provider on www.goingtouni.gov.au

Australian Apprenticeships

Australian Apprenticeships combine training and employment and lead to a nationally recognised qualification. Australian Apprenticeships may cover all Certificate level and selected Diploma and Advanced Diploma qualifications.

Australian Apprenticeships are available to anyone of working age and do not require any entry qualifications.

Australian Apprentices are paid an income while being trained. The training wage depends on the industry, the type of apprenticeship and the level of schooling and training undertaken.

Apprenticeships can last up to four years, but the faster you learn the skills, the faster you can move to become fully qualified.

Australian Apprenticeships are available in a variety of certificate levels in more than 500 occupations across Australia, in traditional trades, as well as in a diverse range of emerging careers, in most sectors of business and industry. No matter what industry you might be interested in, there is likely to be an Australian Apprenticeship to meet your needs.

For more information contact an Australian Apprenticeships Centre in your region contact 13 38 73 or visit www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au

Financial Support for Australian Apprenticeships

The Australian Government provides income support payments to eligible Australian Apprentices, to assist them in the early years of their apprenticeship when their wages are at their lowest.

Australian Apprenticeships attract financial assistance for eligible employers to help reduce the real cost of training. Employers hiring an Australian Apprentice may be eligible for a range of Australian Government and State Government incentives and personal assistance.

Centrelink Benefits

The Australian Government has made the following fortnightly payments available to full-time Australian Apprentices: Youth Allowance; Austudy; and ABSTUDY. However, your ability to receive the payment depends on a number of factors, including your personal situation and your fortnightly earnings.

For more information on eligibility, visit Centrelink at www.centrelink.gov.au

Living Away From Home Allowance

You may also be eligible to receive the Living Away From Home Allowance if you leave home for the first time to take up or remain in an Australian Apprenticeship position.

The Living Away From Home Allowance provides assistance to eligible Australian Apprentices in their first three years of training, if they:

- have to move away from their parents' or guardians' home in order to take up or retrain for an Australian Apprenticeship; or
- receive essential supplementary on-the-job training with another employer; or are homeless

For more information visit www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au

Australian Apprentices with a disability

If you are an Australian Apprentice with a disability, you may be eligible for assistance to help you reach your potential as a skilled worker.

The following assistance is available to an employer who employs an apprentice with a disability in an Australian Apprenticeship.

- Disabled Australian Apprentice Wage Support (DAAWS)
- Assistance for Tutorial, Interpreter and Mentor Services

For more information visit www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au

How can I find an employer to take me on

There are a number of ways to find an employer who will take you on as an apprentice:

- Contact your local Australian Apprenticeship Centre
- Contact your local Job Services Australia provider to find any vacancies they have registered
- Contact employer groups and associations for industries which interest you
- Check the daily newspapers
- Approach employers directly. Use the Yellow Pages to identify employers and write to, telephone or visit them to inquire about vacancies

For more information on Australian Apprenticeships contact 133 873 or visit www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au



A full-time, part-time or casual job brings with it an income, freedom and the chance to learn and do new things.

Gaining a first job isn't always easy.

People often apply for quite a few jobs before being successful – but they usually have a better chance of finding a job if they have completed Year 12 or an equivalent qualification.

There are a number of ways to get help to find work. You may find the list of useful websites at the back of this resource a good place to start.

When you are trying to get a job there are things you can do to make the process easier. You might want to:

- Spend some time developing your career portfolio
- Consider the skills and attitudes that employers are looking for
- Learn more about the steps involved in looking for work
- Get feedback on your résumé and job applications
- Consider directly approaching employers to ask about opportunities
- Practice your interview techniques
- Follow up any applications you have circulated

For more information on how to find the job for you visit www.youth.gov.au.

For information about employment issues including wage rates, working conditions, employment contracts, recruitment and dismissal, visit www.fairwork.gov.au

Start a Business

Starting a business is another option to consider. You do not need formal qualifications or business experience to start and run a business. These things can be helpful – but

Community and Volunteer Work

Volunteer work is an excellent way of experiencing new challenges and learning about the world of work. Volunteers provide a valuable service to the community. There are a variety of organisations that rely on volunteers and it can be a great way to gain new skills and to build on your work experience.

For more information visit www.volunteeringaustralia.org

they are not necessary.

There are a number of programmes aimed at helping you build your enterprise skills and develop innovative ideas, as well as providing sources of training and education.

For more information visit www.innovation.gov.au

NEIS New Enterprise Incentive Scheme

The New Enterprise Incentive Scheme (NEIS) is an Australian Government initiative that helps eligible, unemployed people start and run a small business. NEIS participants undertake an accredited small business management course as well as providing ongoing training and support to help participants become self-sufficient.

For more information visit www.deewr.gov.au/neis

Job Services Australia

Job Services Australia is a national network of private and community organisations dedicated to finding jobs for unemployed people.

If you are aged 15 to 20 and registered with Centrelink as unemployed and not in full-time employment, Job Services Australia can help you.

Your Job Services Australia member will enter your employment history and education into the JobSearch database (www.jobsearch.gov.au), which will automatically match your experience against available jobs.

For more information visit about Job Services Australia or locate a Job Services Australia provider near you visit www.deewr.gov.au/Employment/JSA

National Green Jobs Corps

The National Green Jobs Corps will provide 10,000 work experience places to young Australians who have an interest in the environment and gaining skills that may help lead to a green job. The National Green Jobs Corps commenced on 1st January 2010, and will offer places to Australians aged between 17-24 over 2 years. Participants will be required to undertake training for 50 hours a fortnight over the 26 week duration of the programme.

For more information visit www.deewr.gov.au/ngjc

Centrelink

Centrelink advises people about all relevant service and payment options, including referrals to employment service providers, Centrelink specialists and other departments and agencies.

Centrelink provides a number of options and payments for young people who are planning to study, train or look for work. You may qualify for Youth Allowance or ABSTUDY or other available payments.

For more information contact Centrelink on 13 24 90 or visit www.centrelink.gov.au

Youth Allowance

Youth Allowance can assist you if you are a young person who is studying, undertaking training or an Australian Apprenticeship, looking for work, or sick

For further information on youth allowance visit www.centrelink.gov.au/internet/internet.nsf/payments/youth_allow.htm

Eligibility for Youth Allowance

You may be eligible for Youth Allowance if you are:

- 16–20 years old and looking for full-time work or undertaking a combination of approved activities, or have a temporary exemption from the participation and activity test requirements. If you do not have a Year 12 certificate or an equivalent qualification (Certificate level II or above) you will generally be expected to undertake study or training to meet the activity test.
- 16–24 years old and studying or undertaking an Australian Apprenticeship full-time. •

If you turn 25 you can keep getting Youth Allowance until you finish your course or Apprenticeship.

You may also be eligible for Youth Allowance in some circumstances if you are 15 years old, and you are:

- considered independent, and
- above the school leaving age in your State or Territory, and
- looking for work, studying or undertaking an Australian Apprenticeship full-time.

To check whether you're eligible for Youth Allowance or other forms of income support, contact Centrelink 13 24 90 or visit www.centrelink.gov.au



Rent Assistance

Rent Assistance is an extra payment to help with the higher costs of renting in the private rental market. Thresholds and maximum amounts of Rent Assistance vary according to family situation.

To be eligible for Rent Assistance you must:

- Qualify for a social security income support payment
- Pay rent above a certain amount (called the rent threshold)
- Be living in Australia

For more information contact Centrelink on 13 24 90 or visit www.centrelink.gov.au

Health Care Card

If you are on a low income or receive income support you may be eligible for a Health Care Card. This card entitles you to get a prescription filled at a reduced cost as well as providing other concessions.

For more information contact Centrelink on 13 24 90 or visit www.centrelink.gov.au

Higher Education Loan Programme (HELP)

At the undergraduate level, higher education providers offer places to students under the Higher Education Loan Programme. These are Commonwealth supported and were previously known as HECS places. A HELP loan will cover all or part of the student contribution amount (the amount you pay for your education), while the Australian Government will cover the rest, paying the loan amount directly to your higher education provider on your behalf.

All Australian citizens, New Zealand citizens and holders of a permanent visa are able to access a Commonwealth supported place. This is called the Student Learning Entitlement (SLE).

Commonwealth loans and scholarships

Eligible students have access to deferred payment arrangements through the Higher Education Loan Programme (HELP). The HELP scheme consists of three loans:

- HECS-HELP is for eligible students to cover their student contribution
- FEE-HELP is for eligible fee paying students to cover their tuition fees.
- OS-HELP is for eligible undergraduate students who want to spend one or two six-month study periods overseas.

From the 1st July 2008, the Australian government introduced the FEE-HELP for Diploma and Advanced Diploma courses offered through registered training organisations such as a TAFE.

To find out more visit www.deewr.gov.au/VetFeeHelp/

Repaying your HELP debts

All debts accrued under HELP are interest-free, although the debt is indexed each year according to movements in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) to maintain its real value.

Repayment of HELP loans is income contingent. Students will start paying their HELP debts when their income reaches a minimum threshold.

More information on HELP is available by calling 1800 020 108 or by visiting www.goingtouni.gov.au

For more information on HECS and HELP debt repayments call the Personal Tax Infoline on 13 28 61 or visit www.ato.gov.au

ABSTUDY

If you are an indigenous secondary or tertiary student, ABSTUDY may assist you to stay at school, go on to further studies or undertake an Australian Apprenticeship. It includes a fortnightly living allowance as well as other components that help with the costs associated with undertaking study.

For more information phone Centrelink ABSTUDY on 13 23 17 or visit www.centrelink.gov.au

Scholarships

A variety of scholarships and awards are available for students to gain financial help for their tertiary studies.

**For more information visit www.goingtouni.gov.au
You can also search the Awards and Scholarships database in myfuture: www.myfuture.edu.au**

Indigenous Youth Leadership Programme (IYLP)

The Indigenous Youth Leadership Programme provides scholarships to indigenous secondary and tertiary students mainly from remote locations, to develop and fulfil roles as indigenous leaders in their communities.

To receive assistance under this programme, you must be a young indigenous person and from a remote community. In addition you must be:

- Eligible to undertake secondary or university studies at the level for which you apply
- ABSTUDY eligible or eligible for Youth Allowance, Allowance for Isolated Children or AUSTUDY

The total amount of the scholarship will vary from student to student depending on individual circumstances.

For more information about the program see <http://www.deewr.gov.au/Indigenous/Schooling/Programs/IYLP/Pages/IYLP.aspx> and for information about eligibility and how to apply <http://www.deewr.gov.au/Indigenous/Schooling/Programs/IYLP/Pages/Students.aspx>

Indigenous Youth Mobility Programme (IYMP)

If you are an indigenous young person between the ages of 16 and 24 and from a remote community, and you want to undertake a training course or find employment in a major regional centre, you may be able to receive assistance through the Indigenous Youth Mobility Programme.

For more information email iymp@deewr.gov.au or search for IYMP on the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations website www.deewr.gov.au

Compact with Young Australians

If you are between 15 and 24 you are entitled to an education or a training place to ensure you have the necessary qualifications required to find a job and develop your career. Under the Australian Government's Compact with Young Australians, entitlement places are provided for government-subsidised qualifications, subject to admission requirements and course availability. Young Australians are required to participate in education, training or employment until the age of 17.

Entitlements are administered by the State and Territory Governments, who guarantee training in a variety of courses at a number of institutions.

For information on the State and Territory programmes offering training entitlements visit www.deewr.gov.au/Youth/YouthAttainmentandTransitions/Pages/compact.aspx

Youth Connections

Youth Connections assists young people aged 13 to 19 who have become disconnected from mainstream schooling and re-engages them in education, training or employment.

To find the nearest Connections provider near you visit www.deewr.gov.au/Youth/YouthAttainmentandTransitions/Pages/YouthConnections.aspx



Enrolling to Vote

Voting is both your right and your responsibility as an Australian. It is compulsory for all Australians to enrol to vote when they reach 18, though you can enrol when you turn 17. Failure to vote at an election can result in a fine.

Enrolling can be done through the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) website (select Voting) or by completing a form at any post office. There is no need to enrol separately for Commonwealth, State and local elections - one form is all you need.

For more information contact the AEC on 13 23 26 or visit www.aec.gov.au

Tax File Number

Your tax file number is used to identify your tax records. Everyone has a different tax file number. Your tax file number is yours for life, even if you change jobs, move interstate or change your name. If you leave the country and later come back to Australia, you still use the same tax file number.

You need a tax file number to access Centrelink benefits, like Youth Allowance and to defer higher education fees. If you do not have a tax file number you could have more tax withheld from your pay or be unable to receive the government benefits you are entitled to.

To get a tax file number you need to get an application form from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

For more information contact the ATO 13 28 61 or visit www.ato.gov.au

Medicare Australia

Medicare Australia is an Australian government agency that ensures that all Australians have access to free or low-cost medical, optometrical and hospital care. Medicare provides access to:

- Free treatment as a public (Medicare) patient in a public hospital
- Free or subsidised treatment by practitioners such as doctors, including specialists, participating optometrists or dentists (specified services only)

How to obtain a Medicare card

Your Medicare card holds your Medicare number, which is required to claim from Medicare and receive Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme medicines. People who reside in Australia are eligible to enrol in Medicare if they:

- Hold Australian citizenship
- Have been issued with a permanent visa to live in Australia
- Hold New Zealand citizenship
- Have applied for a permanent visa

You may already be enrolled in Medicare and are listed on your parents' card. Young people over the age of 15 may enrol on their own Medicare card.

To enrol on your own Medicare Card, call into a Medicare Office and complete a Medicare enrolment application form or a transfer application (if you are on your parents' card). You will need to have some form of identification (like a passport or driver's licence) and proof that you reside in Australia (like a bank account statement or employment contract).

Remember to take your Medicare card with you when visiting a doctor or when you have a prescription filled.

For more information contact Medicare on 13 20 11 or visit www.medicareaustralia.gov.au



USEFUL WEBSITES

www.abc.net.au/acedayjobs

Includes online videos about Australians working in jobs they are passionate about.

www.abc.net.au/catapult

Innovative and creative ideas in business, science and industry in action.

www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au

Learn more about Australian Apprenticeships and the benefits of combining practical work and training.

www.aec.gov.au

Everything you need to know about Australia's electoral system and voting.

www.centrelink.gov.au

Support services and programmes you may be able to access to continue your education and training or work.

www.crsaaustralia.gov.au

CRS Australia is the Australian Government provider of vocational rehabilitation services, assisting people with a disability, injury or health condition to get and keep a job.

www.enya.org.au

Promotes the active participation of young people in business.

www.goingtouni.gov.au

Information about going to university for current and prospective students.

www.graduatecareers.com.au

Employment and career opportunities for graduates.

www.jobguide.deewr.gov.au

Describes over 500 occupations and their education and training requirements.

www.jobsearch.gov.au/joboutlook

Current labour market information including job prospects, employment rates and average incomes.

www.myfuture.edu.au

An online career service designed to help you to explore and plan your career.

www.medicareaustralia.gov.au

For the range of medical services and support available for Australians.

www.open.edu.au

A flexible way to study toward a university degree off campus.

www.productivityplaces.deewr.gov.au/job_seekers.htm

Provides information for job seekers on fully funded Certificate level courses in areas of skills shortage.

www.smartmoves.questacon.edu.au

Career pathways and opportunities in science, engineering and technology.

www.thegoodguides.com.au

Find courses and places to study using various search criteria and Hobsons Guides ratings on universities, campuses and courses.

www.training.com.au

Links to vocational and technical education opportunities.

www.volunteeringaustralia.org

Provides information on a range of opportunities for volunteers.

www.year12whatnext.gov.au

Find tips and ideas about exploring different career pathways and further education and training options for when you leave school.

www.fya.org.au

The Foundation for Young Australians is an independent national organisation that funds and works in partnership with youth-led initiatives.





Have your say...

Your views are important to me. Please let me know the issues that concern you most. Your feedback helps me to better represent you.

If you could fix one problem in our local area, what would it be?

How useful did you find this resource guide? Do you have any suggestions for future editions?

Your details

Please complete the following details so that I can get in touch with you.

Title (eg Mr, Ms, Miss): _____ Name: _____

Address: _____

Home phone: _____ Mobile phone: _____

Email: _____

Once you have completed this survey, please return it to my office at the details below:



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