What's Your Preference?

CHOOSING COURSES IN 6 STEPS

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STEP 1: WORK OUT WHICH EDUCATION ENVIRONMENT WILL SUIT YOU BEST

1. **Vocational Education**
   - Hands on, practical, designed to make you ‘work ready’, 6 levels of qualifications
   - Can combine with a University degree, or use it as a way of getting into a degree.
   - Many people who have completed university degrees, complete a vocational course to help them gain employment.

2. **Private Providers**
   - Small class sizes, industry focused, flexible, usually focused on one area (i.e., business, design, gaming), more expensive than government institutions
   - Offer vocational education and university level qualifications. Often don’t need an ATAR
   - 3 Universities and over 700 Colleges across Australia.

3. **University**
   - Focused on theory, concepts & research. Mid and end of year exams. Can be in lectures of up to 500 people. Many classes aren't compulsory to attend
   - Learn to think critically, question existing research and ideas
   - Some professions like teaching and social work that require you to have a university qualification

TAFE classes are hands on and practical, preparing you for the world of work.

Private providers have strong links with industry and often are focused on one career area like design or fashion.

At uni, you will attend lectures led by professors or academics. You will be challenged to think critically.
STEP 2: WORK OUT WHICH QUALIFICATION LEVEL YOU NEED

For some professions, you must have a university degree (i.e., social work, teaching, dentistry and physiotherapy)

For many others, you may only need a vocational qualification (i.e., gaming, building, community services work, sports coaching and children's services)

The table below is the Australian Qualifications Framework- there are 10 levels. With a Year 12 qualification, you can start at levels 5, 6 or 7. Levels 1 – 6 are completed at a vocational institution and levels 6 – 10 at university. If you complete Year 12, you will generally go into levels 5, 6 or 7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Qualification &amp; description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>Certificate I</strong>: Have the knowledge and skills for initial work, community involvement and/ or further learning</td>
<td>6</td>
<td><strong>Advanced Diploma (Tafe) &amp; Associate Degree (Uni)</strong>: Have broad knowledge and skills for paraprofessional/ highly skilled work</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td><strong>Certificate II</strong>: Have the knowledge and skills for work in a specific area</td>
<td>7</td>
<td><strong>Bachelor Degree</strong>: Have broad and coherent knowledge and skills for professional work</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td><strong>Certificate III</strong>: Have the theoretical and practical knowledge and skills for work and further learning</td>
<td>8</td>
<td><strong>Bachelor Honours Degree and Graduate &amp; Vocational Graduate Certificate or Diploma</strong>: Have advanced knowledge and skills for professional highly skilled work</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td><strong>Certificate IV</strong>: Have the theoretical and practical knowledge for specialised and skilled work</td>
<td>9</td>
<td><strong>Masters Degree</strong>: Have specialised knowledge and skills for research, and professional practice</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td><strong>Diploma</strong>: Have specialised knowledge and skills for skilled/ paraprofessional work</td>
<td>10</td>
<td><strong>Doctoral Degree</strong>: Have systematic and critical understanding of a complex field learning and specialised research skills for the advancement of learning and professional practice.</td>
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HOW TO PICK THE QUALIFICATION LEVEL

Go to [www.myfuture.edu.au](http://www.myfuture.edu.au) > The Facts > Occupations > Search for your occupation > on the page that comes up, scroll to the bottom and click on State Specific Information > click on the state you would like to state in > see what qualifications you need and where you can study
STEP 3: DECIDE HOW YOU WOULD LIKE TO STRUCTURE YOUR PROGRAM

At university, there are usually different ways you can structure your program. Read the overview below and then the examples on pages 4 and 5

**SINGLE DEGREE**

This is the most straightforward pathway. You select either an Associate Degree or Bachelor level course. You graduate with one qualification.

**COMBINED DEGREE**

This is a very popular choice for students. You pick two degrees that are combined together. It takes an extra year, but you have a broader depth of skills, and you can explore two areas of interest- i.e., humanities and science and law and engineering.

You graduate with two qualifications.

**DEGREE + CONCURRENT DIPLOMA**

You undertake a single or combined degree with a Diploma on the side (concurrently).

This provides you with ‘work ready skills’, which is attractive to employers. You can study Diplomas in areas such as Maths, Science, Languages, Project Management, Music, Informatics etc.

Not all Universities offer this option. You graduate with two qualifications, or three if you are studying a combined degree.

**VET TO UNIVERSITY**

You can start your studies somewhere that offers Vocational Education courses like a TAFE or Private College and then articulate into a degree course at University.

If you complete a Certificate IV level course, this will generally provide you with no credit towards a related Uni course, but Diplomas and Advanced Diplomas generally will give you credit of between 0.5 – 2 years towards your Uni course.

Each University has articulation agreements in place with TAFEs and Private Colleges- contact them to find out which courses are eligible.

The benefit of this pathway is it

- It boosts your chances of employment
- You can work in the area you are qualified in during your Uni degree
- The vocational course is very hands on and related directly to industry, so you will have a better handle on the theory subjects of your Uni course

**DEGREE TO POST GRADUATE**

You can undertake a broad undergraduate degree first and then undertake post graduate studies in an area you are interested in.

For example- and Bachelor of Health Sciences and a Master of Nursing. This is great for students who are unsure about the pathway they wish to undertake.
EXAMPLE 1 FOR STEP 3

Paul would like to be a Nurse- the ultimate goal is for him to be a **fully qualified Registered Nurse**

- Complete a Diploma of Enrolled Nursing and then complete the Bachelor of Nursing, starting at second year level. **4 years total**
  - Complete a Bachelor of Nursing at University (all Victorian University’s offer Nursing) **3 yrs total**
  - Complete a combined degree in Nursing and another area of interest- i.e., Midwifery, Paramedicine, Psychology, Public Health, Emergency Health. **4 yrs total**
  - Complete the Bachelor of Nursing with a Diploma in a field of interest, providing the University approves. This could be a Diploma of Languages. **3 – 4 years total**
  - Complete a Bachelor of Science or related program and then undertake a Master of Nursing. **5 yrs total**

Paul decided to complete the Diploma of Enrolled Nursing at Wodonga Tafe, which takes him two years to complete.

He then went straight into the second year of the Bachelor of Nursing at La Trobe Uni Wodonga and worked as an enrolled Nurse part time whilst he completed his studies.

He completed his studies qualified as an Enrolled Nurse and a Registered Nurse, which took four years total.
EXAMPLE 2 FOR STEP 3

Dee would like to be a fully qualified Engineer. She isn’t sure what type of Engineering she is interested in yet, but she enjoys science.

- Complete a Diploma or Advanced Diploma of Engineering at TAFE OR an Associate Degree in Engineering at University and then articulate into a Degree program at University with ‘advanced standing’ (credit). 4 – 6 years total
- Complete a Bachelor of Engineering at University. Choose what you what like to major in when you enroll or choose a focused degree in the area you want to specialize in- i.e., Bachelor of Chemical Engineering. 4 yrs total
- Complete a combined degree in Engineering and another area of interest- i.e., Commerce, Information Technology, Science, Business, Law and Arts. 5 yrs total
- Complete the Bachelor of Engineering with a Diploma in a field of interest, providing the University approves. This could be a Diploma of Project Management. 4 - 5 years total
- Complete a Bachelor of Science or related program and then undertake a Master of Engineering. 5 – 6 yrs total

Dee decides to study at Bachelor of Science at Uni of Melbourne with majors in Civil Systems and Physics.

She also completes a concurrent Diploma of Mathematical Sciences through the Uni, undertaking some of the units through breadth.

She then completes the 2-year Master of Civil Engineering at the Uni of Melbourne.

This takes her 5 years.
STEP 4: PICK YOUR UNIVERSITY MAJOR’S

WHAT’S A MAJOR?

If you decide to go straight into a University degree, you may have to pick a major. This is a sequence of subjects you have to take over each year of your degree, to give you a specialization.

Narrowing down what major you would like to do will help you to decide where to study.

➢ For example, if you want to undertake a major in Actuarial Studies, you can do this at Monash University, but not La Trobe University.

FACTS

➢ You pick your major when you enroll in your course in January/February - not when you apply through VTAC

➢ In most cases, you can pick two majors or a major and a minor, which is like a major, but you undertake less subjects in that area.

➢ Some degrees won’t require you to pick a major until second or third year

FINDING MAJORS

THROUGH VTAC (Victorian Courses)

1. Go to www.vtac.edu.au and click on Course Search

2. Type in the course or major you would like to study - this will bring up all the courses in Victoria with that word in the title or description

THROUGH UAC (NSW Courses)

1. Go to www.uac.edu.au and click on ‘I’m an Undergraduate’

2. Click on ‘Search for Courses’

3. Enter what you would like to major into the search engine. This will bring up all courses offer a major in this area. Click on the links for more information

EXAMPLE OF A COURSE WITH MAJORS

University of New South Wales, Bachelor of Arts, Kensington Campus

Major studies: Asian studies, Chinese studies, criminology, development studies, economics, English, environmental studies, European studies, film studies, French studies, geography, Hispanic studies (Spanish), history, history and philosophy of science, human resource management, international business, international relations, Japanese studies, Korean studies, linguistics, media, culture and technology, music, philosophy, politics, psychology, sociology and anthropology, theatre and performance studies.

Minor studies: Aboriginal studies, Americas studies, Australian studies, art history and theory, archaeology, women’s and gender studies, German studies, Indonesian studies.
EXAMPLE STRUCTURE OF A BACHELOR DEGREE

Emily is doing a Bachelor of Arts with a Major in Psychology and a Minor in Sociology. The major is in gold, the minor in light green and electives in yellow

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1ST YEAR</th>
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<tr>
<td>SEM 1</td>
<td>History</td>
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<td>Sociology</td>
<td>Legal</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEM 2</td>
<td>History</td>
<td>Marketing</td>
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<td>History</td>
<td>Sociology</td>
<td>Politics</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEM 2</td>
<td>History</td>
<td>History</td>
<td>Sociology</td>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

STEP 5: FIND YOUR COURSES

Use the following websites to find courses in each state

THROUGH VTAC (Victorian Courses)
- Go to [www.vtac.edu.au](http://www.vtac.edu.au) and click on Course Search
- Type in a word in the course title or a major you are interested in

THROUGH UAC (NSW Courses)
- Go to [www.uac.edu.au](http://www.uac.edu.au) and click on ‘I’m an Undergraduate’
- Click on ‘Search for Courses’

THROUGH SATAC (SA Courses)
- Go to [www.satac.edu.au](http://www.satac.edu.au) and click on ‘Click to Enter Uni’
- Click on ‘Courses Commencing Semester 1’ then ‘Course Search’.

TAFE NSW
- [www.tafensw.edu.au](http://www.tafensw.edu.au)

THROUGH TISC (WA Courses)
- Go to [www.tisc.edu.au](http://www.tisc.edu.au) and click on ‘Course Search to the left of the screen
- Click on ‘Courses Commencing Semester 1’ then ‘Course Search’.

THROUGH QTAC (QLD Courses)
- Go to [www.qtac.edu.au](http://www.qtac.edu.au) and click on ‘Search Courses’

University of Tasmania
- Go to [www.utas.edu.au](http://www.utas.edu.au) and click on ‘Future Students’ then ‘Course Search’ then on ‘Undergraduate’

Charles Darwin Uni (Northern Territory)
- Go to [www.cdu.edu.au](http://www.cdu.edu.au) and click on ‘Course Search’ on the front page

VICTORIA TAFE
IMPORTANT THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING COURSES

LOCATION

- Is your course or major offered locally? If not, are prepared to move away?

- If it isn’t offered locally and you don’t want to study in the city, you can study at another regional centre like Bendigo or Ballarat if the course is offered there.

SELECTION CRITERIA

- Are there are other selection criteria like pre selection tests, portfolio’s, work experience?

- Do you need to send a direct application to the TAFE/ Uni as well as apply through your states Tertiary Application Centre? Will you need to attend an interview?

- Do you need to sit an additional test to be considered for your course like the PRET test for Public Relations at RMIT?

DEFERRING

- Can you defer this course if you want to take a gap year? You will be unable to defer courses that are highly competitive like Medicine

ACCOMMODATION

- Does the University/ TAFE have on campus accommodation or a student village nearby?

PRE REQUISITES/ ATAR

- Can you meet the pre requisite subjects? If not, is there a bridging course you can undertake?

- Don’t let the ATAR cut off put you off- the ATARs on the Tertiary Admission sites are for the 2011 intake. The ATARs for 2012 could go up or down- you won’t know until January.

STEP 6- LEARN MORE ABOUT YOUR COURSES BEFORE YOU CHOOSE YOUR PREFERENCES

Once you find a course, read more about it on the University/ TAFE website. Often you will be able to view what subjects you will take across the degree, read about the majors more in depth and learn about the type of graduate careers you can go into.

RMIT  www.rmit.edu.au/programs
Deakin www.deakin.edu.au/future-students/courses/
Swinburne www.future.swinburne.edu.au/courses/
Victoria Uni www.vu.edu.au/courses/search
Uni of Melbourne www.coursesearch.unimelb.edu.au/
Uni of Ballarat http://guerin.ballarat.edu.au/ProgramFinder/
Monash Uni www.monash.edu.au/study/coursefinder/
Australian Catholic Uni www.acu.edu.au/courses/
La Trobe Uni http://www.latrobe.edu.au/
Charles Sturt Uni www.csu.edu.au/courses/
TAFE NSW www.tafensw.edu.au
Victoria TAFE www.tafe.vic.gov.au