



Fact sheet 5: Improving post-school transitions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students – real life job pathways

In assessing what motivates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people to study at school, a direct link to real employment figures prominently.

While all young people face multiple job seeking challenges, additional challenges in regional, rural and remote areas include limited exposure to different careers, limited number of universities and VET institutions in their home town, and an imperative to move away from home to pursue tertiary study or to seek employment.

It is important Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are not pigeon holed and have opportunities to pathways that meet their aspirations and are supported in this process.

It is also important that courses are contextualised to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student cohort and potential future job pathways moderated by the student interest and excitement.

Good practice indicates courses should be linked to employment through local employers. Work experience and structured work placement opportunities should be strongly supported.

Consideration must also be given to building the resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the world of work. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people need to be equipped with the skills to operate in a cross-cultural employment environment where economic productivity is the key.

Strategies schools can employ

- Tailored support programs, including the provision of career counsellors, early intervention programs, and individual one-on-one focus linked to experiential learning.
- Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individual learning including mentoring, tutoring and tailored individual learning plans.
- Support and training in work readiness skills, which may include resume writing and job interview skills. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students should have realistic expectations of what a job involves and understand employer expectations including personal attributes, for example a positive attitude and punctuality. The capacity to work in a competitive environment is also important.
- Provision of vocational learning and VET that links to geographically accessible, realistic job opportunities. This requires strong connections to local industries and actively promoting to business communities the high quality of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school, VET and higher education graduates.
- Providing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with access to information regarding employment opportunities and skills shortages so they can make informed decisions about what training to pursue. This could be tailored based on geographical location.
- Collection and analysis of longitudinal qualitative data, together with quantitative attendance, retention and Year 12 completion data relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in metropolitan, regional and remote locations, to inform vocational learning and VET planning and delivery.

