

# Career education: Why is it important?

The decisions that young people make at school have a big impact on their lives – affecting not just their further education, training or employment, but also their social lives, finances and health outcomes.

A key function of secondary schools is to prepare students to transition successfully toward a future career path. This involves providing curriculum opportunities to build students' general capabilities, support students' interests and aspirations, and support them to make informed decisions about their subject choices and pathways.

Students are more engaged in education and highly motivated about their future when they have a clear understanding of themselves and how they might live and work when they leave school.

High quality career education and guidance is an essential part of schooling in preparing young Australians for their future.

Careers are now increasingly seen not as being 'chosen' but as being constructed through the series of choices about learning and work that people make throughout their lives.

Career education in this sense need not be confined to the few, it can, and must, be made accessible to all.

The two key components of career education and career guidance are:

- career education – developing knowledge, skills and attitudes through a planned program of learning experiences in education and training settings which will assist all students to make informed decisions about their

study and/or work options and enable effective participation in their working life.

- career guidance – assisting individuals to make educational, training and occupational choices and to manage their careers and move from a general understanding of life and work to a specific understanding of the realistic learning and work options that are open to them.

Supporting students in making well informed choices about subjects can lead them to have a more optimistic outlook on life, sense of purpose and greater level of contribution that they make to their families and society.

There are economic and social benefits when students are supported to make effective transitions from secondary school to further education, training or employment.

Career education and guidance play an important role in curriculum that supports:

- students' interests, strengths and aspirations
- students' achievements
- students at risk of poor outcomes
- students making informed decisions about their subject choices and pathways.

