Weekly Careers News for Victoria

November 9, 2026

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Events

This Week's Events

VTAC Understanding Scaling and the ATAR for school staff

Organisation: Australian Centre for Career Education
Location: Online
Date: November 11, 2026
Gain a deeper understanding of how and why study scores are scaled, and how the ATAR is calculated. All school staff are welcome to attend and learn about the process
Find out more

Victoria Police: Inside the Recruitment Process – Online Webinar

Organisation: Victoria Police
Location: Online
Date: November 12, 2026
Victoria Police are hosting an online information session for members of the community who are:

- thinking of starting an application to join Victoria Police
- currently going through the recruitment process and need more information
- currently in the process of completing an application

This session has been created to guide you through the steps of completing a strong application, with helpful tips and tricks that apply to each stage of the recruitment process.
Find out more

Holmesglen Institute Open Day, November 2026

Organisation: Holmesglen Institute
Location: Holmesglen Campuses
Date: November 12, 2026
Open Day is a great opportunity for you to meet with teachers, explore our campuses and study facilities, and get a feel for Holmesglen life. Our sessions include presentations, tours and Q&As – perfect for helping you map out your future study and career plans. Plus, our friendly team is also available to help you apply on the day.
Find out more

Monash Clayton Campus Tour

Organisation: Monash University
Location: Monash University, Clayton Campus
Date: November 12, 2026
Join us for a 90-minute campus tour and discover all that Monash has to offer! Led by our friendly student ambassadors, you'll explore the outdoor spaces of our world-class campuses, learn about student life, and have the chance to ask questions about studying at Monash.
Find out more

SAE M.a.A.T.E (Music and Audio Technology Expo), Melbourne

Organisation: SAE University College
Location: SAE University College, Melbourne Campus
Date: November 14, 2026

Join Australia’s music and audio professionals, manufacturers, educators, creators and students for a day of innovation, inspiration and connection.
Explore:

- Recording & production technology
- Live sound solutions
- Synthesizers & electronic instruments
- Studio monitoring & acoustics
- Hands-on demonstrations and networking

Find out more

Le Cordon Bleu Melbourne Mediterranean Cuisine Workshop

Organisation: Le Cordon Bleu Australia
Location: Le Cordon Bleu Australia, Melbourne Campus
Date: November 14, 2026
Guided by a Le Cordon Bleu chef, you will unlock the secrets behind Mediterranean cooking, from the perfect balance of herbs and spices to the generous use of premium olive oil, fresh seafood, wholesome grains and seasonal vegetables. Discover why this way of eating is not only delicious but also one of the world's most celebrated nutritional models.
Journey across the Mediterranean, from Portugal to Lebanon, North Africa to the Middle East, as you learn to create balanced, flavour packed dishes that are as beautiful as they are wholesome.
This class is designed for everyone, whether you are a complete beginner or a keen home cook looking to expand your repertoire. And the best part? Every dish you create is yours to take home and enjoy. Spots are limited. Secure your place today and savour the taste of the Mediterranean!
Find out more

Next Week's Events

University of Melbourne Extension Program Application Support Session

Organisation: University of Melbourne
Location: Online
Date: November 17, 2026
In Year 11 and thinking about applying for the University of Melbourne Extension Program?
Get practical support from our team to help with your application, before applications close 27 November 2026.
We'll walk you through everything you need to know to submit your application, including:

- Navigating the application portal
- Required documentation
- Important deadlines and timelines for offers.

Find out more

Victoria Police Careers Information Session – Victoria Police Centre (VPC)

Organisation: Victoria Police
Location: Victoria Police Centre
Date: November 17, 2026
We’re inviting you to an exclusive Victoria Police Careers Information Session – a rare chance to get an inside look into the fast-paced, challenging, and rewarding world of policing.
What to expect:

- Unlock the secrets to our recruitment process

- Discover the intensive, hands-on training at the Victoria Police Academy
- Explore career pathways beyond general duties policing
- Learn about specialist units tackling everything from major crime to community engagement
- Hear firsthand stories from those who serve and protect every day

Get up close with our team:

- Police Officers
- Protective Services Officers (PSO)
- Police Custody Officers (PCO)
- Victorian Public Servants (VPS)

This is your exclusive invitation to gain behind-the-scenes access to the Victoria Police Centre – a location typically closed to the public. Don't miss your chance to experience the energy and excitement of policing like never before!
Find out more

Federation Open Day 2026, Gillies Street

Organisation: Federation University
Location: Federation University, Gillies Street Campus
Date: November 18, 2026
Keen for a lifestyle change and a career working outdoors?
Our Agriculture, Horticulture and Conservation Science courses are open and will help you reskill, upskill and stand out in 2026.
Dig deep into hands-on courses in Agriculture, Horticulture, Conservation, Ecosystem Management, and free TAFE options.
Come and find out more, meet your future classmates and explore your hands-on training facilities at our Gillies Street Open Day on 18 November from 10 am to 2 pm.
What's on:

- Student-led campus tours
- Observe real classes at our hands-on learning facilities, classrooms and science labs
- Explore student support options
- Find out if you're eligible for free TAFE course funding
- Get application assistance
- Find out course info, including contact hours, assessment overview, outside class study and pre-application advice

Find out more

La Trobe Engineering and IT Showcase 2026

Organisation: La Trobe University
Location: La Trobe University, Union Hall
Date: November 18, 2026
Sponsored by industry partners, student projects will focus on innovations within the areas of engineering, computer science, IT and physics.
Our keynote speaker, Arnie Bhattacharya, is the Chief Product Officer at Nuix, a technology company specialising in investigative analytics, digital forensics, and eDiscovery software. An accomplished alumnus of the School, Arnie holds a Bachelor of Computer Systems Engineering (Honours) with a specialisation in Software and Network Engineering.
The evening will be hosted by Professor Wenny Rahayu, Dean of the School of Computing, Engineering and Mathematical Sciences.
The showcase is open to staff, students, employers, alumni, industry and schools.
Find out more

Victoria Police: Life at the Academy – Online Webinar

Organisation: Victoria Police
Location: Online
Date: November 19, 2026
Explore life at the Victoria Police Academy—join our online info session for insider tips and training insights!
Curious about joining Victoria Police or already in the recruitment process? Wondering what life is really like at the Academy?
Don't miss this exclusive online information session—your ultimate insider guide to the Victoria Police Academy experience!
Join us for a deep dive into Academy life for Police Officers, whilst touching on training for Protective Services Officers, and Police Custody Officers. Get the real scoop on what your training journey will look like, week by week. We'll break down everything from exams to fitness training, on-site accommodation to support systems—and even salary details.
This is your chance to hear firsthand from those who've been there, done that. Plus, you'll get the opportunity to ask your burning questions!
Find out more

Steps to STEM – a webinar showcasing career pathways after high school

Organisation: The Innovators' Tea Party
Location: Online
Date: November 19, 2026
Featuring a specially-curated team of women studying STEM after high school
Have you ever wondered what it's really like to study STEM after high school?
Do you want to understand the different fields you could step into — from engineering to data science to health technologies?
Are you looking for real, practical advice to help you navigate your final years of school?
Steps into STEM is your chance to learn directly from women studying STEM at university and TAFE. Join us online for a free, fast-paced webinar where current tertiary students share their study fields, their pathways, and what day-to-day student life actually looks like.
Each speaker will give a short 5-minute presentation covering:

- **Their STEM field and future career direction**
- **Their best advice for Year 12 students**
- **What studying and campus life is really like**

After the presentations, students will have the chance to ask questions in a relaxed, facilitated panel discussion.
This event is designed for **high school students**, their **parents/guardians**, and **teachers**.
Find out more

Meet an Enviro Scientist Panel from La Trobe – for Year 7-12 Students

Organisation: La Trobe University
Location: Online
Date: November 19, 2026
Students will hear from La Trobe University environmental scientists and industry professionals from a diverse range of areas including ecology, freshwater and wetland management, restoration climate change adaptation, resource management, and conservation genetics. They will share their expertise, research and pathway to their STEM career.
Panellists for this event will be:

- Jessarne Palmer: Ecologist
- Sam Lewis: Fish ecologist

- Mads Dwyer: Botanist and Fire Ecologist
- Willow Cuthbert: Archaeologist

After an interactive Q&A panel discussion, participants will have the option to network with our panelists to build valuable connections with both student researchers and established academics.
This event is part of the Victorian Challenge and Enrichment Series, providing free extension opportunities for high-ability students in Victorian Government Schools. Funded by the Department of Education's Student Excellence Program.
Find out more

Australia's Big STEM Assembly with Future You

Organisation: Future You Australia
Location: Online
Date: November 20, 2026
Looking for an exciting way to bring STEM to life in your school or classroom? Join us for Australia's BIG STEM Assembly: Discovering the STEM within us - a free 45-minute virtual assembly designed for students in Years 3–6.

- Designed specifically to boost engagement and demonstrate the real-world relevance of STEM learning to students in Years 3-6.
- Free, online, and 45 minutes long.
- Join from your school hall or classroom – no preparation required.

During the assembly, students will meet real STEM professionals and discover how science, technology, engineering and maths help us to understand our bodies.
Featuring:

- Daisy (Optometrist and Vision Science Researcher)
- Skye (Food Scientist and Entomologist)
- Jackie (Senior Scientist at Lifeblood)
- Lisa Harvey-Smith (Children's Author, Science Communicator and MC)

During the assembly, students will explore questions such as:

- How do our eyes work?
- Who is STEM useful for? (spoiler alert: everyone)
- How can alternative and sustainable food sources, such as insects, give our body what it needs to thrive?
- Who belongs in STEM careers? (double spoiler alert: everyone, again)

This is a great opportunity to give your students a different kind of Friday afternoon: an engaging, interactive experience that introduces them to diverse STEM role models and helps them see how STEM connects to their own lives.
Find out more

Collarts Melbourne Portfolio Workshop

Organisation: Australian College of the Arts
Location: Collarts, Cromwell St Campus
Date: November 20, 2026
Your VTAC preferences are in, but your portfolio isn't quite there yet. Sound familiar?
Join us at Collarts on Friday 20 November in Melbourne for a day built to help you get your creative submission finished and to experience a taste of Collarts.
You'll work directly with the people who teach your course who will be able to show you how to shape and complete your creative submission. Our Admissions team will be present to assist with any questions or queries you may have about the enrolment process and next steps.
Find out more

AIE November Open Day, Melbourne

Organisation: Academy of Interactive Entertainment
Location: Academy of Interactive Entertainment, Melbourne Campus
Date: November 21, 2026
Discover the courses designed to get you started in game development, 3D animation, film and visual effects at the AIE Open Day.
AIE Open Day is a great opportunity to meet our teachers, staff and students. The day will cover everything you need to know about the:

- Careers in games and VFX that we train students for;
- Studios and industries that we work with;
- Courses we offer – from beginners to professional mastery, and;
- The software, skills and knowledge we teach.

This event will also include presentations on entry requirements and how to apply. Find out how AIE can get you into a creative career.
Find out more

Future Events

La Trobe Worner Lecture 2026 – From Atoms to Antidotes

Organisation: La Trobe University
Location: The Capital, Bendigo
Date: November 24, 2026
Join three leading Australian biophysicists for a journey into the hidden world of cells, viruses, and parasites. Discover how biophysics reveals the molecular workings of life — and how cutting-edge imaging and other powerful tools are helping scientists develop new ways to prevent and treat some of the world's biggest health challenges. The talks will be followed by a Q&A, giving you the chance to put your questions directly to the scientists.
No science background required — just bring your curiosity!
Find out more

La Trobe Health Careers Camp for Year 12 Students, Bendigo

Organisation: La Trobe University
Location: La Trobe University, Bendigo Campus
Date: November 26 to November 27, 2026
La Trobe Health Careers Camp is designed to give students a realistic and relevant insight into studying and working in health and science fields, particularly within regional Victoria.
Held over two days at La Trobe University Bendigo, the event will include a dynamic mix of information sessions, hands-on lab experiences, group-based problem-solving activities, and opportunities to engage with LTU academics, current students, and local health professionals.
Students will explore the wide range of courses and pathways available at LTU Bendigo—including degrees in Science, Biomedical Science, Pharmacy, Exercise Science, Nursing, Social Work, Dentistry, and more. Sessions will cover VTAC applications, course entry requirements, and tips for interviews and applications.
Practical lab sessions will introduce participants to university-level learning and research, offering a taste of what to expect in health and science degrees. Students will also receive advice on preparing for Year 12 and building foundational knowledge in key subject areas.
Throughout the camp, students will connect with peers who share similar interests and hear firsthand from those working and studying in rural health. The experience aims to inspire, inform, and equip students with a clearer vision for their future in health and science.
Find out more

CSU Online Law and Criminology Information Night

Organisation: Charles Sturt University
Location: Online
Date: November 26, 2026
Join us for our information night and hear from our course directors, current students and graduates about what its like to study law and criminology at Charles Sturt. You'll get details on how to apply, industry professionals sharing their experiences about working in the sector, and info about where a career in the justice system could take you.
Find out more

Year 11 & Beyond with ADHD – Starting Strong in the Senior Years

Organisation: ADHD Webinars
Location: Online
Date: November 26, 2026
Focuses on setting senior students up for success as they enter their final school year and look ahead to future pathways. This webinar for parents, senior high school students and career practitioners covers strategies for managing workload stress, building independence, and planning post-school transitions.
Find out more

National Fashion College Styling Workshop for Ages 16+ in Melbourne

Organisation: National Fashion College
Location: National Fashion College, Melbourne Campus
Date: November 28, 2026
You're officially invited to our exclusive Styling Workshop, taking place at our vibrant Melbourne campus - home to creativity, innovation, and the next generation of fashion talent.
In just one day, gain hands-on experience as you learn the foundations of professional styling from an industry-recognised expert. You'll assist on not one, but two photo shoots with a renowned fashion photographer - offering you a rare, behind-the-scenes glimpse into the fast-paced world of fashion. This is your first step towards a career in styling.
Meg Durham is a leading Melbourne-based fashion and television stylist with almost a decade of industry experience spanning celebrity, television, commercial and fashion styling. For the past six years, Meg has worked with Network 10 and Paramount across some of Australia's biggest television productions, including The Project, Have You Been Paying Attention?, MasterChef Australia, Deal or No Deal and I'm a Celebrity… Get Me Out of Here! Australia. Her work has taken her from Australian television studios to sets in South Africa, styling high-profile talent including Robert Irwin. Combining an expert eye for fashion with extensive experience styling for the camera, Meg brings National Fashion College students a rare behind-the-scenes perspective on celebrity styling, television wardrobes and the fast-paced world of fashion and entertainment.
This experience is recommended for guests aged 16 and older.
Find out more

SAE Online Info Session: IT & Computer Science

Organisation: SAE University College
Location: Online
Date: December 1, 2026
From software development and cyber security to cloud computing and AI, technology careers are evolving fast. At SAE's Online Info Session: IT & Computer Science, you'll explore our complete range of technology courses, including our new Information Technology qualifications

launching in February 2027, alongside our established Computer Science and Cyber Security pathways.
Find out more

AIE Online Campus Day

Organisation: Academy of Interactive Entertainment
Location: Online
Date: December 5, 2026
Discover the courses designed to get you started in game development, 3D animation, film and visual effects at the AIE Online Campus Day. AIE will be running this event for students interested in studying online. You will be able to meet our teachers, explore how classes will run, course options, career pathways and see our amazing student work.
We will be covering everything you need to know about the:

- careers in games and VFX that we train students for;
- studios and industries that we work with;
- courses we offer – from beginners to professional mastery, and;
- the software, skills and knowledge we teach.

Find out more

Le Cordon Bleu Melbourne Cook Like a Chef Workshop

Organisation: Le Cordon Bleu Australia
Location: Le Cordon Bleu Australia, Melbourne Campus
Date: December 5, 2026
This hands-on experience teaches you the essential techniques used in professional kitchens, helping you elevate flavour, texture and presentation in every dish you create.
In this immersive full-day workshop, you'll step inside a commercial kitchen and craft restaurant-quality dishes using expert methods. From mastering knife skills to working with luxury ingredients, you'll build confidence, finesse and a deeper understanding of how chefs think, taste, and plate.
Throughout the day, expert instructors guide you step-by-step as you prepare four refined dishes, each designed to teach precision, balance and presentation.
Core skills covered include:

- Knife skills for preparing and garnishing vegetables, fruits and seafood
- How to prepare delicate elements including asparagus broth, emulsions and potato-based doughs
- Preparing stocks and broths to build deep, layered flavours
- Gnocchi shaping and cooking for perfect texture
- Confit, deep frying, pan-searing and steam cooking methods
- Emulsification, foams and other modern finishing techniques
- Macerating, frying and flavour-intensifying methods
- Professional plating techniques and garnishing skills

Find out more

Camp America Melbourne Job Fair

Organisation: American Institute for Foreign Study Australia
Location: TBC Melbourne
Date: December 5, 2026
U.S. camps are coming to town and they're ready to meet, interview and hire. Come face-to-face with Camp Directors, explore the roles available and take a huge step towards locking in your Summer 2027 placement.

Meet the camps hiring you. Connect face-to-face with Camp Directors flying in from the USA specifically to meet and hire Australian applicants. Ask questions about camp life, available roles, what they're looking for and interview directly with the people making the hiring decisions. Explore a range of camps and roles all in one place, from waterfront and sports to performing arts, creative roles and more. Chat with different Camp Directors, compare your options and find the camp that feels like the best fit for your skills, personality and summer goals.
This isn't just an info session. You'll have the chance to interview for roles on the day and could leave with your Summer 2027 placement sorted. Meet other Camp America applicants, get support from our team and take a huge step closer to camp.
Find out more

Federation Uni Change of Preference Expo, Ballarat

Organisation: Federation University
Location: Federation University, Mt Helen Campus
Date: December 11, 2026
Choosing the right course and university can feel overwhelming, especially as preferences close.
At Change of Preference Expo, you can speak one on one with experienced advisors to explore your options and make informed decisions about your future.
Whether you're considering changing your preferences, exploring alternative pathways, comparing courses, or looking for a flexible way to study, our team can help you identify the best option for your goals.
You'll also learn more about scholarships, pathway programs, credit transfer opportunities, and flexible online and part-time study options.
Find out more

Deakin Change of Preference Event for School Leavers, Melbourne

Organisation: Deakin University
Location: Deakin University, Melbourne Burwood Campus
Date: December 11, 2026
Feeling unsure about your preferences? You don't have to do it alone. Visit Deakin on campus Friday 11 December to get expert course advice and dedicated pathway support.
Chat one-on-one with staff and students, visit the course information expo, take student-led campus tours and get the information you need to take your next step.
Find out more

Monash Change Day for School Leavers

Organisation: Monash University
Location: Monash University, Caulfield Campus
Date: December 11, 2026
Once you receive your results, you may have questions about what to do next. Monash Change Day is the place to get all the answers. From finding out how to change your VTAC course preferences to exploring study options based on your ATAR score, our course advisers will be on hand to guide you.
You'll have the chance to explore our ten study areas, attend information sessions, take a facility tour, plus discover our range of pathway options and student support services, so you'll have all the answers you need to plan your future – all under one roof.
Find out more

Deakin Change of Preference Event for School Leavers, Geelong Waurn Ponds

Organisation: Deakin University
Location: Deakin University, Geelong Waurn Ponds Campus
Date: December 11, 2026
Feeling unsure about your preferences? You don't have to do it alone. Visit Deakin on campus Friday 11 December to get expert course advice and dedicated pathway support.
Chat one-on-one with staff and students, visit the course information expo, take student-led campus tours and get the information you need to take your next step.
Find out more

Deakin Change of Preference Event for School Leavers, Geelong Waterfront

Organisation: Deakin University
Location: Deakin University, Geelong Waterfront Campus
Date: December 11, 2026
Feeling unsure about your preferences? You don't have to do it alone. Visit Deakin on campus Friday 11 December to get expert course advice and dedicated pathway support.
Chat one-on-one with staff and students, visit the course information expo, take student-led campus tours and get the information you need to take your next step.
Find out more

Deakin Change of Preference Event for School Leavers, Warrnambool

Organisation: Deakin University
Location: Deakin University, Warrnambool Campus
Date: December 11, 2026
Feeling unsure about your preferences? You don't have to do it alone. Visit Deakin on campus Friday 11 December to get expert course advice and dedicated pathway support.
Chat one-on-one with staff and students, visit the course information expo, take student-led campus tours and get the information you need to take your next step.
Find out more

Federation Uni Change of Preference Expo, Gippsland

Organisation: Federation University
Location: Federation University, Gippsland Campus
Date: December 11, 2026
Choosing the right course and university can feel overwhelming, especially as preferences close.
At Change of Preference Expo, you can speak one on one with experienced advisors to explore your options and make informed decisions about your future.
Whether you're considering changing your preferences, exploring alternative pathways, comparing courses, or looking for a flexible way to study, our team can help you identify the best option for your goals.
You'll also learn more about scholarships, pathway programs, credit transfer opportunities, and flexible online and part-time study options.
Find out more

Swinburne Change of Preference Expo for School Leavers

Organisation: Swinburne University of Technology
Location: Swinburne University, Hawthorn Campus

Date: December 11, 2026
Change of Preference Expo is your chance to access the support you need to move forward with confidence. Receive personalised advice from academics and VTAC experts, learn how to maximise your chances of an offer, and get help adjusting your preferences on the spot.
What to expect:

- Expert guidance based on your Year 12 results
- Uni-neutral career planning tailored to your goals
- Detailed info on how real industry experience works in our courses
- Guided campus tours that pass by facilities like our Smart Structures Laboratory, ProtoLAB, Biomechanics Lab, LateLab, and new screen production facilities
- Live shows at Swinburne's Virtual Universe
- Free food, coffee and live music
- Swinburne merch packs (numbers are limited – don't miss out!)

Find out more

UniMelb Change of Preference Expo

Organisation: University of Melbourne
Location: University of Melbourne, Parkville Campus
Date: December 11, 2026
Locking in your VTAC preferences? Chat in person with staff and students about your ATAR results and how to make Melbourne yours in 2027.
Drop in throughout the expo to:

- Discover undergraduate course options based on your ATAR, as well as graduate pathways available to you
- Get answers to your questions about what happens next, from key dates and enrolment to preparing to start at Melbourne
- Discuss scholarship eligibility and the student support services available to help you succeed during your studies
- Speak to our University Accommodation and residential college teams
- Get a feel for campus and grab a bite to eat.

You can also attend scheduled sessions throughout the day including:

- Understanding your next steps after receiving an offer
- Student panel discussion covering top tricks to navigate the transition and make the most of your Melbourne experience
- Hourly Parkville campus tours
- Global experiences available to you as a Melbourne student

Register to add sessions to your Expo agenda and receive a food voucher to use at the food truck and select campus vendors.
Find out more

Federation Uni Change of Preference Expo, Melbourne

Organisation: Federation University
Location: Federation University, Berwick Campus
Date: December 11, 2026
Choosing the right course and university can feel overwhelming, especially as preferences close.
At Change of Preference Expo, you can speak one on one with experienced advisors to explore your options and make informed decisions about your future.

Whether you're considering changing your preferences, exploring alternative pathways, comparing courses, or looking for a flexible way to study, our team can help you identify the best option for your goals.
You'll also learn more about scholarships, pathway programs, credit transfer opportunities, and flexible online and part-time study options.
Find out more

Le Cordon Bleu Melbourne Mastering Macarons (Christmas Edition) Workshop

Organisation: Le Cordon Bleu Australia
Location: Le Cordon Bleu Australia, Melbourne Campus
Date: December 12, 2026
Join us for a festive one-day experience dedicated to the art, precision and creativity of macarons. This hands-on workshop is designed for passionate home bakers and aspiring pâtissiers who want to master the techniques behind these delicate and iconic sweets.
Guided by our experienced chef instructors, you will learn the fundamentals of both French and Italian meringue methods, understanding the differences between each technique and how they influence texture, structure and flavour. As the day unfolds, you will create a range of festive macaron flavours and fillings inspired by the Christmas season, learning how to balance flavours and combine textures to create beautiful creations.
From mastering smooth shells to piping, baking and assembling your finished macarons, this workshop will provide valuable skills you can continue to use long after the class concludes .
We encourage you to ask questions and embrace the festive spirit as you develop your skills in a fun and supportive environment.
Find out more

I’ve Got My Results, What Now? Webinar for Year 12 Students & Parents

Organisation: myfuture
Location: Online
Date: December 15, 2026
As Year 12 results are released, many students and their carers are asking the same question: What's next? Join Tracy Ryan, Career Education Manager at myfuture, for a practical and reassuring webinar designed to help families navigate the next steps with confidence.
You'll gain insights into the range of opportunities available after Year 12, learn how to make informed decisions, and discover resources that can support a successful transition from school to further study, training, or work.
Find out more

Seriously Ready Year 12 Career Workshop, Melbourne

Organisation: Unserious Careers
Location: RMIT University, Melbourne City Campus
Date: January 15, 2027
If you're unsure what to do after school, worried about making enough money or scared AI will ruin everything, this event is for you.
Over three hours, Alana Kilmartin, author and founder of Unserious Careers, will show you a career strategy for the first 12 months after school that's easy to apply and gets you ahead faster, without hating life.
Whether you’re 100% locked in or have no idea what's next, this event has your back. Part workshop and part inspirational talk, Seriously Ready will offer you practical tips without being boring. Leave feeling less stressed and more excited about your future.

The content is suitable whether you're planning to go to uni or TAFE, enter the workforce, start a trade, take a gap year or follow another awesome path.
Find out more

Scholarships

AgriFutures Australia 2027 Horizon Scholarship
Organisation: AgriFutures Australia
Location: Australia
Value: AU$10,000 + professional development + work placements
Open Date: October 5, 2026
Close Date: November 13, 2026
Find out more

Competitions

The 2027 Penguin Literary Prize
Organisation: Penguin Random House
Location: Australia
Value: AU$20,000
Close Date: December 14, 2026
Find out more

Gregory O'Donoghue International Poetry Competition
Organisation: Munster Literature Centre
Location: All
Value: €2,000
Close Date: November 30, 2026
Find out more

Write the World Environmental Writing Competition 2026 for ages 13-19
Organisation: Write the World
Location: All
Value: US$100
Close Date: November 23, 2026
Find out more

Natural History Museum Young Wildlife Photographer of the Year (YWPY)
Organisation: The Natural History Museum London
Location: All
Value: £2,000, trophy, certificate and feature article in Wild World magazine
Close Date: December 3, 2026
Find out more

Experiences

Virutual Work Experience with Yorkshire Wolds Teacher Training
Organisation: U-Explore Ltd
Location: All

Find out more

National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) Teen Council 2027
Organisation: National Gallery of Victoria
Location: Victoria
Registrations close: November 29, 2026
Find out more

Weekly Posts

Fees & Scholarships

How to stay organised when applying for scholarships
Applying for scholarships is straightforward, but there can be a few elements to keep track of. There's a deadline here, a reference letter there, an essay question that's slightly different from the last one you answered – so it can be easy to drop the ball, especially if you have a few applications happening. The good news? A simple system could help you glide through the process seamlessly to get you the scholarships you're gunning for.
Whether you're in high school or returning to study later in life, a little organisation at the start can save you a lot of stress down the track, and help you put your best foot forward with every application.

Start with research
Begin by looking for scholarships that line up with your interests, your circumstances, and the course you're planning to study. There are scholarships for all sorts of things, including academic results, sporting or creative talent, community involvement, financial need and specific fields of study. Scholarship databases, your school careers adviser, universities and local community organisations are all great places to look.
As you go, jot down the key details for each one in a notebook, app, or spreadsheet: who it's for, what it's worth, what you'll need to submit, and when applications close.

Build a calendar that works for you
Once you've got your list, turn it into a plan by adding each closing date to a calendar. A phone calendar, diary, or wall planner all work, as long as it's something you'll actually check.
Here's the trick: don't just mark the application deadline. Work backwards and add mini-deadlines too, like "ask for a reference letter", "finish first draft" and "final check".
You probably won't be able to apply for everything, and that's okay. Prioritise each scholarship based on:

- how well you meet the eligibility criteria
- the value of the award
- how much effort the application involves
- how soon it closes

Gather your documents in one place
Most applications ask for similar supporting documents, such as school reports or academic transcripts, proof of identity, reference letters, and sometimes evidence of your circumstances, like a doctor's letter or proof of financial hardship.
Create one dedicated folder – physical, digital or both – and keep everything there. Having a scholarship toolkit means that when an application asks for something, you can reach straight in

and grab it, rather than turning the house upside down looking for it. Clear file names will make life easier too.

Ask for references early
A strong reference letter can give your application a real boost, so choose someone who knows you well and can speak to your strengths, like a teacher, coach, employer or mentor.
Give them plenty of notice, and make their job easier by sharing a few details: what the scholarship is for, when it closes, and a reminder of some things you've achieved or contributed. The more they have to work with, the stronger their letter is likely to be.

Tailor every essay
It can be tempting to write one essay and paste it into every application, but that's not going to work for the majority of applications. Whilst your ticking a box, it won't be the right fit for any of them.
Read each question carefully and think about what the provider is really looking for. Then shape your response around it, highlighting the achievements, goals and experiences that show why you're a great match for that particular award. You can absolutely reuse ideas and stories – just adapt them to suit each question. Give yourself time to draft, step away, and come back with fresh eyes.

Double-check before you submit
Before you hit submit on any application, take a few minutes to review everything. Are all the fields filled in? Have you attached the right documents? Are your contact details correct? Have you stuck to any word limits? Are there any typos!
It can also help to ask a friend, family member or teacher to read over your application. A second pair of eyes will often spot the typo you've skimmed past ten times. It would be a shame to let a small slip cost you a great opportunity.

Keep track of your submissions
Once an application is in, update your list. Note the date you applied, save any confirmation emails or reference numbers, and add the date you can expect to hear back, if it's listed. That way, if you need to follow up or something goes wrong, you'll have all the details at your fingertips.

Be patient and keep going
It can take a while to hear back, so try not to put everything on hold while you wait. Use the time to keep searching for other opportunities, or switch gears and focus on other important applications, like courses or accommodation.

Follow up, whatever the outcome
If you're offered a scholarship, congratulations! Take a moment to thank the provider, as well as the people who wrote your references. A short email or note shows your appreciation and leaves a great impression.
If things don't go your way this time, try not to be discouraged. Some providers are happy to share feedback, so it's worth asking politely. Every application is practice for the next one, and you'll get sharper each time.

Find scholarships to apply for
Staying organised won't just help you put together stronger applications – it'll also save you from that last-minute race against the clock. Set up your list, build your calendar and get your

toolkit ready, and you'll be in a great position to make the most of every opportunity that comes your way.
Ready to get started? Explore our scholarships page to find opportunities that could help fund your future.

Communication Skills, Skills for Work

4 surprising ways you're already an amazing communicator

Think group chats, gaming sessions, and social media are just for fun? Look a little closer and you'll find they're actually training you in one of the most useful skills for any workplace: communication. Just like learning to ride a bike builds balance and coordination without you really noticing, your everyday habits are building skills you'll carry into every job you ever have. Let's look at four ways you might already be a brilliant communicator, and where those skills could take you.

You can read the vibe in a group chat

Ever noticed how you just know when to drop a funny meme to lighten the mood, or when the group needs someone to say, "OK, so what's the plan?" That instinct is communication in action.
Managing a group chat is a bit like being the DJ at a party. You're sensing the mood, choosing appropriate communication styles for the moment, and keeping everyone on board. You can switch between casual banter and getting things sorted, often without even thinking about it.
At work, this is called reading the room – noticing how people are feeling and adjusting your approach to match. And if you know when a quick emoji reaction will do and when a voice message or longer reply is needed, you're also learning to choose the right channel for the right message. In a job, that might mean knowing when an email is fine and when it's better to pick up the phone or have a face-to-face chat.

You can explain game tactics or sports plays

Whether you're teaching a friend how to play your favourite video game or talking a teammate through a set play, you're flexing some serious communication muscles. Taking something complicated and breaking it into bite-sized pieces is harder than it looks.
Think about the last time you explained something like this. Did you notice when your friend was nodding along but not really getting it? Maybe you tried a different example, sketched it out on paper, or compared it to something they already knew. That's exactly what teachers, trainers, and presenters do every day; they watch their audience and adjust as they go.

You've helped sort out friendship drama

If you've ever helped two friends work through a misunderstanding or explained one person's perspective to another, you've been doing some delicate comms work. Being the go-between is a lot like being a translator, you're helping each person understand what the other actually meant, not just what they said.
To do this well, you need to listen carefully (active listening), be able to see things from different points of view, choose your words with care, and pick up on body language and tone of voice. You also need to know when to talk and when to simply listen. These are the same skills people use at work to resolve disagreements, negotiate, and keep teams working well together.

You create content people actually engage with

Writing a caption that gets a laugh, making a TikTok people watch to the end, or running a social media account for a club or hobby all take real communication skill. You're thinking about

who your audience is, what tone will connect with them, and how to get your message across quickly.
You're also learning from feedback. Views, comments, and likes work a bit like a scoreboard, showing you what's landing and what isn't. Over time, you tweak your approach based on what you see. Businesses do exactly the same thing when they test marketing campaigns, write newsletters, or share updates with customers.

Where these skills show up at work
Communication is useful in almost every job, so the skills you're building now can travel with you wherever you go. Here's how some of them might translate:

- **Client relations:** Explaining game strategies becomes explaining ideas to customers or clients in a way they can understand and act on.
- **Change management:** Managing group chat dynamics becomes keeping a team informed and on track during a project, or when plans change.
- **Conflict resolution:** Sorting out friendship drama becomes handling disagreements calmly and helping people find common ground.
- **Creating content** (a career in itself) could also translate to writing presentations, reports, social media posts or marketing materials.
- **Training and development:** Breaking down tricky ideas becomes training new team members or writing instructions that actually make sense.
- **Project management:** Just like managing a group chat working towards plans, you'll need to keep multiple stakeholders informed and aligned.
- **Team leadership:** Being aware of and understanding different communication styles, as well as knowing when to use each one is crucial for effective leadership.

How to build your communication skills further
Like any skill, communication gets stronger with practice, and the best place to start is noticing what you already do. Next time you explain something, pay attention to how you change your approach depending on who you're talking to. Notice which messages in your group chats get the response you hoped for, and which ones fall flat.
You could also try stepping a little outside your comfort zone. Volunteer to present in class, take on a role in a club or team, or offer to help a younger student with something you're good at. Each one is a chance to practise in a slightly different setting.
Remember, great communication isn't about always saying the perfect thing. It's about getting your message across in a way that works for the people you're talking to.

Find out more
You're probably already doing more than you realise to build your communication skills. The next step is recognising them, so you can talk about them with confidence in a job application or interview. Want to discover more skills that will help you thrive at work? Explore our Skills for Work blogs for heaps more tips and ideas.

Job Spotlights

How to become a Data Analyst
Data Analysts collect and interpret data to help farmers and food businesses make informed, evidence-based decisions, spotting patterns that aren't obvious from raw numbers alone. They use tools like spreadsheets, databases, and dashboards to uncover trends in areas such as crop yields, supply chains, or consumer habits, then translate their findings into insights others can act on.

If you're curious, enjoy working with numbers, and like explaining complex ideas simply, this career could suit you well.

What skills do I need as a Data Analyst?

- Curious & analytical
- Strong with numbers
- Clear communicator
- Detail-oriented mindset
- Tech-savvy
- Confident problem-solver
- Patient & methodical
- Confident presenter

What do Data Analysts do?

Before you can analyse anything, you're gathering and cleaning data from different sources, such as sensors, sales records, or surveys. This means checking for errors, filling gaps, and making sure the data is structured properly before deeper analysis begins. You'll also update dashboards or reports so the latest figures are ready for whoever needs them.

Through the day, you're analysing data to spot trends and patterns, building models, and working across spreadsheets, databases, or analytics tools. You'll interpret what the numbers actually mean for the business, whether that's a shift in crop yields, a bottleneck in the supply chain, or a change in consumer habits, and turn that into insight decision-makers can use. Clear, accurate work matters here, since decisions often rest on your interpretation of the data.

Periodically, you'll present findings to teams or management, explaining technical results in plain terms. You might collaborate with other specialists, like agronomists or marketing teams, to interpret data relevant to their work. Many Data Analysts specialise in a particular type of data over time, such as yield data, sales figures, or sensor data.

What kind of lifestyle could I expect?

Data Analysts work across food production, agribusiness, retail, and logistics companies, as well as food manufacturers looking to understand their operations more closely. Some work in-house within a single business, while others work for consulting firms that provide data services to multiple food and agriculture clients. Most of the work happens at a desk, using computers and specialist software rather than being out on-site, though you might occasionally visit a farm, warehouse, or production facility to understand how the data you're working with is actually collected.

Hours generally follow a standard working week, giving this role more predictable rhythms than many other food-related careers. That said, busy periods around reporting deadlines, end-of-season reviews, or major decisions can bring a temporary increase in workload and focus. Many roles also offer a reasonable degree of flexibility, including the option to work from home for at least part of the week.

The work is mentally demanding rather than physically strenuous, and travel usually isn't a significant part of the role, aside from occasional meetings with clients or colleagues at other sites. Salaries in this field tend to be above average, reflecting the technical skills involved, and the industry outlook is strong as food businesses increasingly rely on data to guide decisions and improve efficiency across their operations.

How to become a Data Analyst

- **Build a foundation in maths**: Focus on subjects like maths, statistics, and information technology at school, which give you the numerical and technical grounding this role relies on heavily, and consider computer science if it's offered.
- **Study a relevant degree**: Complete a degree in data science, statistics, computer science, or business, ideally including subjects that build practical data analysis and visualisation skills you can apply straight away in a workplace.
- **Build practical skills independently**: Practise using tools like spreadsheets, databases, and data visualisation software through free online courses or personal projects, since employers value practical ability alongside formal qualifications and study. Working with a real dataset, even a small one, teaches you more than theory alone.
- **Gain entry-level experience**: Look for graduate programs or entry-level analyst roles, ideally within food, agriculture, or a related industry, to start applying your skills to real business problems and decisions that matter.

From here, you could move into senior analyst or data science roles, specialise in a particular type of data or industry, or move into strategic or leadership positions shaping how a business uses data.

What can I do right now?
If you're in high school and interested in working as a Data Analyst, here are some practical steps:

- Focus on maths and information technology subjects to build the analytical foundation this role relies on.
- Try free online courses or tutorials in spreadsheets, basic coding, or data visualisation tools to start building practical skills.
- Practise analysing a dataset you're genuinely interested in, like sports statistics or your own spending, to get comfortable finding patterns in numbers.

Find out more about alternative careers on our Job Spotlights page.

Health & Wellbeing

Feel like a fraud? Learn to beat imposter syndrome

You've just been picked for the debate team, received a promotion at your first part-time job, or been asked to mentor a junior cohort. Everyone seems pleased for you, but a quiet voice in your head won't let you enjoy the moment, instead you're thinking; they've made a mistake, sooner or later, they'll work out I don't belong here.
If that sounds familiar, you're not alone. In fact in up to 82% of people reported experiencing the feeling, and it was common among both men and women as well as across a range of age groups from adolescents to late-stage professionals (Bravata et al 2020). So it's no surprise that voice has a name – imposter syndrome. Once you understand a bit more about it and recognise it when it sneaks in, it could become much easier to ignore those pesky intrusive thoughts.

What is imposter syndrome?
Imposter syndrome is the feeling that you haven't really earned your success. You might believe your good results came down to luck, perfect timing, or people being too kind. Deep down, you worry that someone will eventually "find you out".
The idea was first described in 1978 by two psychologists, Pauline Clance and Suzanne Imes, who called it the impostor phenomenon. While it's recognised as a psychological term, don't panic, it isn't a medical condition. It's a pattern of thinking and something you can absolutely change.

It can show up in lots of different ways. You might:

- brush off compliments or feel awkward when someone praises your work
- put off starting a task because you're scared it won't be good enough
- work far harder than you need to, so nobody spots a "weakness"
- compare yourself to others and always come out last

It's also more common than you might think, including among celebrities, successful professionals, and geniuses. Don't believe us? Albert Einstein, Tom Hanks, Michelle Obama, David Bowie, Serena Williams, Natalie Portman, Sheryl Sandberg former COO of Facebook, and Howard Schultz CEO of Starbucks are just a few people who have confessed to struggling with imposter syndrome.

Why do we experience it?

There's no single cause because we all respond to situations differently, but there are a few examples that could make it more likely to appear.

New situations, like starting at a new school, joining a club, or beginning a job all mean lots of unfamiliar things at once. When everything feels new, it's easy to confuse "I'm still learning" with "I'm not good enough".

Comparing yourself to others. You see every flaw or messy step of your own work, but you usually only see other people's finished results, and you probably look at it far less critically. A classmate's essay might look effortless, but what you didn't see were the three drafts they wrote first.

Having very high standards is great, but if you expect everything to be perfect all the time (especially first time), then anything less can feel like failure – even when it's actually really good.

If you're the first in your family to try something, or from a different background from most people in the room, anything that makes you feel different might feel like extra pressure to prove you belong.

Imposter feelings often appear when you step outside your comfort zone, so think of that as a positive itself - it's a sign that you're challenging yourself and growing.

Practical tips to manage imposter syndrome

Name the feeling

When the doubting voice starts up, try saying to yourself, "this is imposter syndrome talking." It sounds simple, but labelling a thought helps you see it as a feeling rather than a fact.

Look at the evidence

Thoughts and feelings can be convincing, but they aren't always accurate. Keep a list of things you've done well like good marks, kind feedback from a teacher, a problem you solved, a skill you've learnt. Things like that can be easy to forget, but when you start doubting yourself, read it back. It's much harder to argue with a written record than with a vague worry.

Talk to someone you trust

Imposter syndrome thrives on silence. Tell a friend, family member, teacher or coach how you're feeling, not only will they be able to give you a much needed pep talk; you'll probably find they've felt the same way at some point. Hearing that can take a lot of the pressure off.

Remember that learning means not knowing yet

Be kind to yourself, nobody expects you to know everything straight away. Asking questions, saying "I don't know", or making mistakes doesn't make you a fraud, it's how everyone gets better. The most experienced people at any school or workplace were once beginners too.

Aim for progress, not perfection
Instead of expecting perfection from yourself, look for improvements instead - no matter how small. Measuring yourself against your past self and previous efforts is fairer, and far more useful, than measuring yourself against everyone else.

Practise accepting compliments
Next time someone praises your work, resist the urge to say "it was nothing" and say thank you instead. It might feel uncomfortable at first, but it gets easier with practice.

Find out more
Imposter syndrome could make you doubt yourself, but it doesn't get the final say. The more you notice it, question it, and talk about it, the smaller it becomes. Start today by writing down three things you've done well this week.
Want more tips on looking after your mind and building your confidence? Explore our Human Skills resources for practical advice to boost existing skills or build new ones, or head to the Study Tips page for methods that could help with making the improvements you're looking for.

Jobs & Careers, Work Experience

Careers in the pharmaceutical industry: where to start

Every time you take a painkiller for a headache or roll up your sleeve for a vaccine, you're seeing the end result of years of work. Behind each medicine is a long chain of people. Some discovered it, some tested it, others made it, checked it and made sure it reached you safely. That chain is the pharmaceutical industry, and it has careers and pathways for more people than you might think. If you enjoy science, solving problems, or helping others, it could be worth a closer look.

How big is the pharmaceutical industry?
The pharmaceutical industry is one of the largest in the world generating around US$1.6 trillion a year (2024) and projected to reach $2.4 trillion by 2029. Growing populations and new types of treatment are a big part of the reason.
So what does that mean for you? A growing industry usually needs more skilled people to work in labs, factories, offices, and pharmacies. Lots of these roles build on science and maths, so sticking with those subjects at school is a simple way to keep these doors open.

Roles you could explore
Pharmaceutical careers go well beyond the research lab. Here are some of the roles on offer, with an example of how people often get there. Pathways vary between countries, so treat these as a rough guide rather than a fixed route.

Research scientist
Research scientists in pharma look for new medicines and better ways to treat illness. They design experiments, study how diseases work, and test how possible treatments might behave. Studying chemistry and biology at school, then a degree in pharmacology, biochemistry or chemistry is one common pathway. Many go on to a master's or PhD before landing a research role.

Laboratory technician
Lab technicians keep research and testing running smoothly. They prepare samples, run tests, look after equipment, and record results with great care. Some start with a vocational qualification in laboratory skills, or an apprenticeship or traineeship. Others complete a science degree first.

Clinical research associate
Before a new medicine can be approved, it's tested on volunteers in clinical trials. Clinical research associates make sure these trials are run safely, fairly, and by the rules. You might be expected to have a degree in life sciences or nursing, followed by a first job as a clinical trial assistant. With experience, you can step up into the associate role.

Manufacturing technician
Once a medicine is approved, it has to be made - often millions of times over, with every tablet exactly the same. Manufacturing technicians set up, run, and monitor the equipment that does this. Usually a vocational course, apprenticeship or traineeship in manufacturing or science, are the entry into these roles, and you'll receive plenty of training on the job.

Quality control analyst
Quality control analysts test samples from every batch to check they meet strict safety standards. Nothing leaves the factory until they're satisfied. You'd probably need a vocational qualification in laboratory science, then start in an entry-level role in a quality control lab, or you could do a science degree and maybe fast track your progress.

Regulatory affairs specialist
Every country has rules about which medicines can be sold. Regulatory affairs specialists work with the company's and government to gather the evidence and prepare the documents that government regulators need. It suits people who enjoy both science and detail. A science degree, then a graduate role or further study in regulatory affairs is a standard route into this job.

Pharmacist
Most pharmacists work in local pharmacies or hospitals. Some work in industry, helping with medicine safety or development. You'll need a pharmacy degree, followed by a period of supervised practice, as well as registration with your country's pharmacy regulator.

Biostatistician
Clinical trials produce huge amounts of data. Biostatisticians work out what that data actually says, such as whether a new medicine really works better than an existing one. If this sounds like an interesting career for you, then you'll need maths at school, then probably a degree in either maths, statistics, or data science.

How to find work experience
Not sure if this industry is for you? Work experience is a great way to find out. Even a short placement shows you what a normal day looks like, and give you the opportunity to chat with people doing the jobs.
Start at your local pharmacy, you'll see how medicines reach patients and how pharmacists use science every day. Ask in person or email the pharmacist in charge.
Check company websites for pharmaceutical and biotech companies, they might already run work experience placements, school programs, or open days. Look for "careers" or "early

careers" pages. Places can be limited, so apply early. If nothing stands out, you can always send over your resume and a cover letter explaining what you'd like.
Hospital pharmacies, hospital labs and medical research institutes sometimes offer placements, tours or job shadowing for students. What you can do might be limited, but even shadowing professionals for a day or two could help you work out if it's something you'd like to pursue. Your school careers adviser may already have contacts.
Look for virtual work experience, some companies offer free online programs where you complete tasks based on real projects. Others might just have videos about the roles people play or their equipment in use. These are handy if there isn't a pharmaceutical company near you.
Join science programs and go to events. University summer schools, STEM clubs, science competitions, and open days could all help you build skills and meet people already working in the field.
Do you know someone who works in a lab, pharmacy, or hospital? Ask if they'd spare 20 minutes to talk about their job, then write up some questions and make sure you book in a time with them.
Wherever you go, bring questions. What does a typical day involve? What do you enjoy most? What would you study if you were starting again? The answers will tell you more than any job advert.

Pharma jobs and skills of the future
Worried about what AI could mean for the future of Pharma jobs? Predictions are it won't mean fewer jobs, they'll just look a little different and new roles will pop up all the time. AI drug discovery scientists who use machine learning to help find promising compounds, bioinformatics engineers that turn huge genetic datasets into useful insights, and digital trial managers run clinical trials using wearable devices and remote monitoring are just a few examples.
Meanwhile, regulatory AI specialists check that AI-driven decisions meet safety rules, and cell and gene therapy technicians work hands-on with personalised treatments.
And alongside technical training, a few broader skills will help you stand out. **Data literacy** means being able to read, question, and act on data, even if you're not a data scientist. **Digital collaboration** is about working well with people you may never meet in person, using shared online tools. **Cross-disciplinary thinking** means joining the dots between biology, technology and patient care.
You'll also need to keep up as rules change with new technology, and to use good judgement, such as knowing when to question what a computer tells you rather than simply accepting it.
You can start building these skills now by working with data in maths and science, getting involved in group projects, and asking "how do we know this?" when you come across a new fact.

Ready to take the first step?
The pharmaceutical industry needs people with all kinds of skills and qualifications. You don't need to have it all figured out yet. Keep going with your science and maths subjects, stay curious, and look for chances to see the work up close.
A good place to start is our Jobs and Careers page where you can read about lots of different jobs, industries, and pathways - to find the one that best suits you.

Study Tips

Should you listen to music while you study?

Researchers have spent a lot of time comparing how people perform with and without music playing in the background. The results aren't identical from study to study, but they do point to a few clear patterns that can help you decide what works best for you.

How music affects your concentration

When you study, your brain holds information in mind while it works with it, such as remembering the start of a sentence while you read the end of it. This is known as working memory, and it can only handle so much at once. Anything else your brain needs to process, including background sound, takes up some of that space.

Sounds with words in them are the most likely to compete for that space. Your brain tends to process speech and lyrics even when you're trying to ignore them, which can interfere with the words you're reading or writing. Sudden changes in sound, such as a new song starting, can also draw your attention away for a moment.

Music can affect your energy and mood as well. A small amount of stimulation can help you stay alert during a repetitive task, while too much can make it harder to concentrate.

These effects are usually small, and most studies have looked at short tasks completed by university students. As a result, the best choice depends on the task, the music, and your surroundings.

How the task makes a difference

Some study tasks are more sensitive to background music than others.

Reading and researching

Reading is the task most affected by background sound. Research has found that noise, speech, and music can all have a small but consistent negative effect on reading. Instrumental music can also lower reading comprehension when it's both fast and loud.

If you're reading sources for an assignment or working through a textbook chapter, a quiet room or soft, slow music makes it easier to take in what you're reading.

Memorising and exam revision

Memorising information, such as definitions, formulas, or quotes, tends to be affected in a similar way. Learning things in a set order, like the steps in a process or a quote you need to know word for word, is especially easy to disrupt, because changing sounds interfere with the way your brain repeats a sequence.

For exam revision, it helps to plan your quietest study time around the material you need to remember exactly.

Maths and problem-solving

The research on maths is less clear. Some studies have found only small effects on arithmetic, while others found that music made complex, demanding tasks harder.

For example, you might find music has little effect while you practise question types you already know well. Working through new or difficult problems needs your full attention, though, so silence is usually the better choice.

Simple, repetitive tasks

Some parts of studying don't require much thinking. Examples include:

- Formatting a reference list
- Colour-coding your notes
- Sorting handouts into folders

For tasks like these, music is less likely to get in the way. One study found that some types of music improved performance on a simple, repetitive task, and music may help keep your energy up when a task feels slow.

Choosing what to listen to

Lyrics vs instrumental music
Whether music has lyrics is one of the clearest factors in the research. One study found that students scored lower on a reading test while listening to music with lyrics, regardless of whether they liked the songs. Instrumental music led to a smaller drop, and silence produced the best results.
Another study found that instrumental music neither helped nor harmed performance compared with silence. However, many of the students involved felt the instrumental music had helped them, even though their results didn't show it. How music feels while you're studying isn't always a reliable sign of how much you're learning, so it's useful to check your results as well, such as how much you can remember afterwards.

Music vs other background noise
Studying at home isn't always quiet. Siblings, a TV in the next room, or people talking nearby can all add noise you can't control.
Background conversation is one of the most distracting sounds for reading. In a study of secondary school students, noise like people talking and laughing affected performance more than music did. If your study space is noisy and you can't move somewhere quieter, instrumental music through headphones may be a better option than the conversations around you.

Deciding what works for you
There's no single rule that applies to every study session, but a few patterns can help you choose. Remember:

- Reading, writing & memorising usually work best in silence or with soft instrumental music
- New or difficult problems need your full attention
- Simple, repetitive tasks are less affected by music
- Songs with lyrics are best kept for simple tasks
- Instrumental music may be easier to study with than background conversation

If you're not sure whether music is helping, try the same type of task with and without it and compare how much you get done.
If you want to find out more about building good study habits, we have plenty of other resources in our study section.

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