

## CAREERS NEWSLETTER 1/2026



## INVITATION TO JOIN JOB JUMP

We warmly encourage all **parents and students** to register for **Job Jump**, an excellent careers platform that supports young people as they explore future pathways.

### Job Jump provides:

**Up-to-date information on tertiary study options, ATARs, apprenticeships, and TAFE pathways.**

**Tools to create a resume**, helping students present their strengths professionally.

**Customised news alerts** so families stay informed about important deadlines and opportunities.

Both parents and students can benefit from clear guidance and timely updates as they plan— whether that's choosing senior subjects, exploring university courses, or considering vocational training.

To register, simply visit:

<https://www.jobjump.com.au/register> and visit Careers 2026 on Canvas to access sign up details.

We hope you find Job Jump a valuable resource in supporting informed and confident career decision-making.

## February 2, 2026

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**Disclaimer** – all information is printed in good faith

It is the responsibility of the student to confirm all details with the appropriate institution.



## THIS WEEK'S EVENTS

Torrens University Virtual Open Day 2026

**Organisation:** Torrens University Australia

**Location:** Online

**Date:** February 3 to February 4, 2026

Ready for the next step on your career journey? Join us online as our academics talk you through the courses on offer and how you can get the most out of studying with us. Learn about scholarships, study pathways, our industry partnerships with global brands and what sets us apart from other universities.

[Find out more](#)

Humans and Wizards: Using AI to Good Effect – Webinar for Careers Practitioners

**Organisation:** Career Industry Council of Australia

**Location:** Online

**Date:** February 4, 2026

This session explores the intersection of artificial intelligence (AI) and human-centred careers practice, focusing on how AI can be harnessed responsibly to enhance careers, employability, and enterprise development. Participants will examine practical ways in which AI can enrich information, advice, and guidance (IAG) for young people and adults, while ensuring that ethical principles and human connection remain at the core of practice. The emphasis is on using AI as a complement to professional expertise, not a replacement, and on equipping practitioners with the confidence to integrate digital innovation into their work.

This webinar forms part of the [CICA International Webinar Series February Free Month](#), offering free access to contemporary global perspectives in career development throughout February.

[Find out more](#)

AI in Action: Exploring how Artificial Intelligence is Transforming Education

**Organisation:** University of Queensland

**Location:** Online

**Date:** February 4, 2026

Curious about how artificial intelligence is transforming education? Join the University of Queensland for AI in Action: Exploring how artificial intelligence is transforming education — a speaker series designed to dive into the practical, ethical, and creative ways AI is shaping the future of teaching and learning.

Luke Zaphir has spent over a decade teaching critical thinking and media literacy in public schools and at universities and will explore some of the findings on how AI is affecting education, explain some of the common misconceptions around AI, and give some interactive examples of the tools in action that can foster critical and creative thinking — ranging from research critiques to unhinged brainstorming.

[Find out more](#)

Practice Being a Doctor for a Day In Sydney – for Year 8 to 11 Students

**Organisation:** MedView

**Location:** University of New South Wales, Kensington Campus

**Date:** February 7, 2026

Step into the shoes of a doctor for a day with an immersive, hands-on experience created for high school students aspiring to enter medicine.

Note: This event is best suited for students currently in Years 8 to 11.

What you'll experience:

- Interactive Workshops:



- Clinical Skills: Practice vitals, diagnosis techniques, and patient care
- Surgical Skills: Learn suturing or test your skills on simulators
- UCAT Strategy Session: Time-saving tips, tricks, and traps to avoid
- Interview Simulation: Watch real med students re-enact interviews (MMI, panel, semi-structured)
- Admissions Strategy Panel: Meet recent top applicants who successfully gained entry into multiple med schools – and get their honest advice on what worked, what didn't, and what gave them the edge.
- Journey Through Medicine: Discover the path from high school to med school and beyond, including specialisations, lifestyle, and what the career truly looks like.
- Admissions Pathways Explained: Get clear on UCAT, ATAR, and interview requirements for top universities in Australia and the UK, including hidden pathways and smart strategies.
- A Day in the Life of a Med Student: Hear from current med students about what studying medicine is really like, the highs, the hustle, and the balance.

[Find out more](#)

## NEXT WEEK'S EVENTS

Social Media Age Restrictions Explained – A Webinar for Parents and Carers from the eSafety Commissioner

**Organisation:** eSafety Commissioner

**Location:** Online

**Date:** February 10, 2026

From 10 December 2025, certain social media platforms won't be allowed to let Australian children under 16 create or keep an account. Join our information session to understand the changes.

This 30-minute webinar will help parents and carers understand the upcoming changes to social media access for children under 16.

Join our information session to:

- understand the purpose of the new age restrictions and how they aim to protect young Australians
- understand which platforms will require users to be 16+ and what platforms they can still access
- get tips and resources to support your child's online safety and wellbeing through the transition.

Parents and carers will gain:

- a clear understanding of the new rules and their implications
- confidence in guiding their child through these changes
- access to trusted resources to support safe and positive online engagement.

This webinar is offered more than once, so you can select the date and time that works best for you.

[Find out more](#)

SCU Live Talks: Southern Cross Scholars Program for Year 11 & 12 Students

**Organisation:** Southern Cross University

**Location:** Online

**Date:** February 10, 2026

Are you a Year 11 or Year 12 student wanting to get ahead of the game in your final years of high school and prepare yourself for university?

This fee-free program allows you to study a 6-week university unit while still at school, providing entry into a Southern Cross degree with course credit after school, as well as teaching you lifelong study skills and setting your CV apart from the crowd!

We'll dive into the application process, program expectations, assessments and explore the available units and their corresponding courses. You will also learn about our generous scholarship opportunities that you will be eligible for after graduating from the program.

Teachers, parents and caregivers who would like to know more about the program are also welcome to join the session.

[Find out more](#)



## Supporting Healthy Tech Use as Your Child Transitions into Secondary School – Webinar for Parents and Carers

**Organisation:** eSafety Commissioner

**Location:** Online

**Date:** February 11, 2026

As your child moves into high school the influence of peers intensifies and online social connections become increasingly complex, but there is plenty you can do to support them.

This 45-minute webinar explores the social pressures, peer influences, and technological challenges young people face as they transition into secondary school. It also offers practical strategies for navigating online friendships and connections to help minimise negative experiences.

You'll learn:

- what social pressures they may be experiencing online
- how they can build digital resilience and critical reasoning
- how to talk to your young person about what they see and do online
- practical strategies for promoting positive peer interactions and help seeking behaviours.

This session is suitable for parents and carers of children in upper primary school (ages 11 to 12) and Year 7.

[Find out more](#)

## From Findings to Recommendations: A Snapshot of JSA's Gender Economic Equality Study – Webinar for Careers Practitioners

**Organisation:** Career Industry Council of Australia

**Location:** Online

**Date:** February 11, 2026

The JSA Gender Economic Equality Study examines how women and men experience work, education, and training differently and identifies the necessary changes to create more equitable career opportunities for everyone. It explores:

- Gendered pathways into jobs and industries
- How education and training choices influence future careers
- The impact of pay gaps and skills mismatch on women's economic security
- The additional barriers faced by First Nations women, migrant women and women with disability

In this webinar, we will present the key findings in a clear and practical manner. You will hear about:

- Fresh data on gendered jobs, work and pay, including new insights on First Nations gender pay gaps
- How study and training choices still steer women into lower paid career paths
- Why earlier career learning in schools can help shift these patterns
- Ten recommendations Australia can take now to accelerate gender economic equality

This webinar forms part of the [CICA International Webinar Series February Free Month](#), offering free access to contemporary global perspectives in career development throughout February.

[Find out more](#)

## FUTURE EVENTS

### Social Media Age Restrictions Explained – A Webinar for Parents and Carers from the eSafety Commissioner

**Organisation:** eSafety Commissioner

**Location:** Online

**Date:** February 24, 2026

From 10 December 2025, certain social media platforms won't be allowed to let Australian children under 16 create or keep an account. Join our information session to understand the changes.



This 30-minute webinar will help parents and carers understand the upcoming changes to social media access for children under 16.

Join our information session to:

- understand the purpose of the new age restrictions and how they aim to protect young Australians
- understand which platforms will require users to be 16+ and what platforms they can still access
- get tips and resources to support your child's online safety and wellbeing through the transition.

Parents and carers will gain:

- a clear understanding of the new rules and their implications
- confidence in guiding their child through these changes
- access to trusted resources to support safe and positive online engagement.

This webinar is offered more than once, so you can select the date and time that works best for you.

[Find out more](#)

### STEM + X: Science – Webinar for Students, Teachers & Parents

**Organisation:** Careers with STEM

**Location:** Online

**Date:** February 25, 2026

The world is changing so fast, but science skills are only gaining importance. There's huge demand from emerging science fields including quantum computing and genetic engineering. And existing science fields like ag science and astrophysics are transforming fast too. The question isn't 'why science', it's 'which science'?

Join Careers with STEM for a free STEM + X career webinar, supported by QUT, to hear from science aces blazing a trail from horse hoof disease to lithium ion battery tech, to growing crops in space!

[Find out more](#)

### Year 12 & Beyond with ADHD – Webinar for Students & Parents

**Organisation:** Claire Pech Careers

**Location:** Online

**Date:** February 26, 2026

Targeted to parents of students with ADHD in Year 12, this webinar will share insights and practical solutions for managing this critical year and beyond and making meaningful career decisions.

Hosted by [Claire Pech](#), CICA-Accredited Careers Practitioner, and [Amanda Krulis](#), endorsed Organisational Psychologist.

View the [full series of webinars](#) for the ADHD community on all things careers, schooling and the workforce.

[Find out more](#)

### Understanding and Using Parental Controls to Help Protect Your Child Online – Webinar for Parents and Carers

**Organisation:** eSafety Commissioner

**Location:** Online

**Date:** March 5, 2026

Learn how parental controls can be used to prevent children accessing harmful content, manage time spent online and who they communicate with.

In this 45-minute webinar, we'll explore how parental controls can be used alongside other online safety strategies to protect your child online.

You'll learn:

- the types of parental controls available – including on smart devices, in gaming platforms and on apps
- how they can help prevent children accessing harmful content
- how to use them to complement other online safety strategies.

This session is suitable for parents and carers of young people in primary and secondary school.

[Find out more](#)



## Year 10 & Beyond with ADHD – Webinar for Students & Parents

**Organisation:** Claire Pech Careers

**Location:** Online

**Date:** March 5, 2026

For parents of students with ADHD in Year, this webinar explores how to navigate the key decision points of the senior school years, support effective planning for post-school options, and help your teen build confidence in their future direction.

We'll unpack the unique challenges ADHD can bring to this stage — from planning and procrastination to emotional regulation — and explore how to make study and career decisions that align with your child's strengths, values, and readiness.

Hosted by [Claire Pech](#), CICA-Accredited Careers Practitioner, and [Amanda Krulis](#), endorsed Organisational Psychologist.

View the [full series of webinars](#) for the ADHD community on all things careers, schooling and the workforce.

[Find out more](#)

## ATAR, Uni & Bonus Points with ADHD – Webinar for Year 12 Students & Parents

**Organisation:** Claire Pech Careers

**Location:** Online

**Date:** March 19, 2026

Join our webinar designed for Yr 12 students and parents, navigating university admissions with ADHD, which can impact these processes.

We'll cover:

- The ATAR - explained
- What the Educational Access Scheme (EAS) is and who qualifies
- How to apply for EAS and what you will need
- Other bonus points (adjustment factors) on offer
- Important dates and deadlines
- University preference strategies that work
- Early entry options and their benefits
- Plus: A Q&A session to address specific questions and concerns.

**Note:** The examples in this presentation will be NSW-based examples.

Hosted by [Claire Pech](#), CICA-Accredited Careers Practitioner, and [Amanda Krulis](#), endorsed Organisational Psychologist.

View the [full series of webinars](#) for the ADHD community on all things careers, schooling and the workforce.

[Find out more](#)

## SCU Year 10 Taster Day, Coffs Harbour

**Organisation:** Southern Cross University

**Location:** Southern Cross University, Coffs Harbour Campus

**Date:** March 20, 2026

Join us for Taster Day, where you will experience University life through dynamic and interactive sessions. Meet our inspiring students and academics, experience our campus facilities and learn more about university life on this fun day!





- Live like a University student for the day and participate in 6 interactive workshops across different and exciting areas of study
- Experience our state-of-the-art campus facilities
- Meet inspiring people, from academics to current students

Schools can register up to 30 students. **Registrations close 6th March 2026.**

[Find out more](#)

#### SCU Year 10 Taster Day, Northern Rivers

**Organisation:** Southern Cross University

**Location:** Southern Cross University, Lismore Campus

**Date:** April 28, 2026

Join us for Taster Day, where you will experience University life through dynamic and interactive sessions. Meet our inspiring students and academics, experience our campus facilities and learn more about university life on this fun day!

- Live like a University student for the day and participate in 6 interactive workshops across different and exciting areas of study
- Experience our state-of-the-art campus facilities
- Meet inspiring people, from academics to current students

Schools can register up to 30 students. **Registrations close 14th April.**

[Find out more](#)

#### Illawarra Careers Expo 2026

**Organisation:** Illawarra Schools Workplace Learning Program

**Location:** Illawarra Sports Stadium

**Date:** May 5 to May 6, 2026

The Illawarra Careers Expo connects Exhibitors to more than 5,800 young people and adults who are seeking quality information, advice and opportunities to develop their career pathway. With attendance from Government, Catholic and Independent Schools, as well as members of the public, exhibitors will be able to meet with their target demographic.

[Find out more](#)

#### Strategies to prevent, reduce and resolve bullying, including cyberbullying

**Organisation:** Wellbeing in Schools Australia (WISA)

**Location:** Online

**Date:** May 11, 2026

This ***Most Effective Interventions to Prevent, Reduce and Resolve Bullying in Schools Training*** is a must for every staff member, and especially staff in leadership roles, Heads of House and Year Levels, to be able to keep students safe from the impact of bullying. Australian experts have reported increased bullying as a result of the pandemic, lockdowns and the trauma of natural disasters. WISA participant feedback data from over 4000 school staff demonstrates that 98% of schools do not know the most effective interventions to resolve bullying.

This ***Most Effective Interventions to Prevent, Reduce and Resolve Bullying in Schools Training*** will focus upon the following: Introduce participants to evidence based research and best practice from Australia's leading international experts to effectively address bullying in schools; The top four most effective bullying interventions for schools and which approach is best suited to different types of bullying and levels of vulnerability; What is and isn't bullying; Punitive versus restorative/educative approaches - maintaining dignity, respect and engagement whilst taking responsibility and rebuilding trust; and Prevention of bullying and creating safe healthy school communities. Participants will leave with Australian and international best practice strategies, tools and resources.

[Find out more](#)



## Northwest Regional Career Expo 2026

**Organisation:** Rotary Club of Tamworth First Light

**Location:** Tamworth Regional Entertainment and Conference Centre

**Date:** May 13, 2026

Our Careers Expo was started in 1992 by Rotary Club of Tamworth First Light. Attendees benefit from a wide range of exhibitors from a large variety of industries providing valuable advice and information to help further their career and business development. The event continues to provide valuable access to local and interstate exhibitors for the community and schools from Tamworth and the surrounding region.

[Find out more](#)

## Scholarships

### Henstridge-Praeger Statistics Scholarships

**Organisation:** Statistical Society of Australia

**Location:** Australia

**Value:** AU\$2,500

**Open Date:** December 1, 2025

**Close Date:** February 13, 2026

[Find out more](#)

### University of Notre Dame CEWA CARE Scholarship for School Leavers

**Organisation:** Fremantle Campus, University of Notre Dame Australia

**Location:** Western Australia

**Value:** AU\$4,000 per year

**Close Date:** February 25, 2026

[Find out more](#)

### The Tuckwell Scholarship Program

**Organisation:** Australian National University

**Location:** Australia

**Value:** \$26,000 AUD per year

**Close Date:** April 9, 2026

[Find out more](#)

## Competitions

### Australian Schools Cyber Challenge 2026

**Organisation:** Cyber Pathways

**Location:** Australia

**Value:** See details

**Close Date:** April 22, 2026

[Find out more](#)

### Australia & New Zealand Brain Bee Challenge

**Organisation:** Education Perfect

**Location:** Australia, New Zealand

**Value:** See details

**Close Date:** March 1, 2026

[Find out more](#)





## Weekly Posts

### FEES & SCHOLARSHIPS, MONEY

#### 5 reasons to apply for scholarships

If you're planning on tertiary education next year, we've put together 5 reasons why you should apply for scholarships - there are lots of benefits you could enjoy.

#### Ease the financial burden

Of course, the financial benefits of scholarships are one of the top reasons students apply. They're a great way to help you pay for your education and leave you with less debt once you graduate. Look at applying for scholarships as an investment in yourself and your future.

Scholarships could cover the costs of one or many things, such as:

- Tuition fees
- Accommodation or other living expenses
- Books, technology, and other essential supplies
- Travel

Plus, you won't have to pay the money back (unlike other financial support options like student loans).

Remember to always check the terms and conditions before signing up. You may have to fulfil certain obligations, such as maintaining a certain grade point average (GPA), writing a letter of thanks, or participating in certain programs. But otherwise, the money you receive is all yours.

#### Boost your study experience

There are academic benefits associated with many of the scholarships you could earn, especially the really prestigious ones. These are open things like mentoring or access to educational programs, which could help you achieve and maintain a higher GPA.

Some scholarships also include access to internships or other work experience programs, or even the chance to travel and study overseas. Any opportunities to expand your knowledge and experience beyond the classroom could help you to get the most out of your university experience (and boost your resume too).

The financial benefits of receiving a scholarship may mean you wouldn't have to get a part time job to support you while you study, or that you'd need to work fewer hours. This means you can dedicate more time to studying, writing assignments, signing up for additional programs, or looking for extracurricular opportunities.

#### Get an edge in the job market

The fact that you've applied for scholarships could show that you're forward thinking and proactive - two skills that are highly sought after by employers. Listing that you were the beneficiary of a scholarship on your resume could help to make you a more appealing candidate for potential employers too.

Scholarships that provide you with specific skills through some form of work experience, such as an internship, could make you a particularly desirable employee. If you're lucky and put in 100% during your internship, you could even be rewarded with a job offer from the company.

Scholarships can also be a really great way to meet professionals and network with people already working in the field you're interested in. Spending time with industry leaders could even lead to a job offer or other opportunities.

#### Learn to believe in yourself and your abilities

Completing scholarship applications is a great exercise in developing an appreciation of your strengths and qualities, as well as teaching you how to sell yourself. It's a good opportunity to look back on all the great things you've done and achieved over the years and remind yourself of your capabilities.

By the time you've completed and submitted a few scholarship applications, you'll probably know yourself a lot better, and hopefully value yourself a whole lot more too.



### **Not all scholarships are based academic merit**

There are literally *thousands* of scholarships on offer. While some of them are offered to students with outstanding academic achievements, there are plenty of other scholarships for different criteria such as:

- Elite athletes or performers
- Community service
- Leadership potential
- Disability
- Family/domestic violence
- Financial disadvantage
- First nations students
- LGBTQIA+
- Refugees
- Rural students

Don't let the misconception that scholarships are only for the academically gifted put you off finding and applying for scholarships - there are opportunities out there for everyone.

### **You have nothing to lose**

Yes, applying for scholarships requires some of your valuable time and a bit of effort. But the rewards could make it all worthwhile; and if you don't apply, you'll never know if you could have been successful.

Plus, remember all the benefits associated with just applying:

- Learn (and appreciate) more about yourself
- Improve your researching skills
- Hone the art of creating great applications
- Practise skills that will be useful when applying for jobs

When you look at it that way, surely it's worth spending some time looking into your options or putting together some applications, right?

### **Need some more help?**

If you need even more reasons to apply for scholarships or just want some money and budgeting tips, [you can read more on our website here](#). Or you might like to [browse our scholarships database](#) to kick off your search.

fantastic industry speakers, and curate outstanding resources, but if students don't show up or tune in, your impact may not get great traction. The good news is that boosting engagement doesn't always require massive budgets, extensive planning time, or persuading reluctant colleagues. Small shifts in approach can create ripple effects that benefit everyone.

### **Make careers visible in everyday spaces**

Students can't engage with what they don't see. Rather than keeping careers information confined to your office or the careers noticeboard down some forgotten corridor, bring it into spaces students actually occupy.

## **JOBS & CAREERS, MONEY**

### **Understanding Australia's median salary in 2026**

When you're thinking about your future career, one of the first questions that might pop into your head is how much you will actually earn. According to the [Australian Bureau of Statistics](#), the median weekly earnings for Australian employees in August 2025 was \$1,425, which translates to approximately \$74,100 per year. So out of over 14 million people employed in Australia, this is what we'd call a "typical" salary. It's the middle point of what Australians earn, half the workforce makes more, and half makes less.



But what does this information actually mean? And is it helpful to us in any way? Understanding what you're likely to earn depends on your age, the industry you work in, your location, and whether you're working full-time or part-time. Let's break down what these figures really mean for you.

### Why median matters more than average

You've probably heard people talk about both median and average salaries. They're both ways of calculating the "middle" of a set of data, but they're actually quite different.

The [average salary in Australia is around \\$104,000 per year](#), which sounds fantastic until you realise it's pulled upward by a small number of very high earners. It is calculated by adding together all the values in a dataset and dividing by the total number of values. It can be sensitive to outliers, meaning that very large or very small values can greatly influence the average.

The median, on the other hand, lines up all salaries from lowest to highest and picks the one right in the middle. It's not affected by outliers at either end of the scale. This makes the median a far more useful benchmark when you're trying to work out realistic salary expectations for your own career.

For example, here are five salaries: \$10,000, \$15,000, \$20,000, \$25,000, and \$100,000. The *average* of these salaries is \$34,000. The *median* of these salaries is \$20,000. As we can see, \$20,000 is a much closer representation of the salaries as a whole than the average, which is offset by the single large salary.

### How age affects your earning potential

Your age plays a significant role in what you'll earn throughout your working life. Unsurprisingly, you'll start at the lower end when you first enter the workforce. In August 2025 full-time workers aged 15-19 earned a median of around \$854 per week, whilst those in the 45-54 age bracket hit their peak earning years with median weekly salaries reaching \$2,000 (Source: [ABS Median earnings for employees by demographic characteristics](#)).

Don't let the lower starting figures discourage you. Everyone begins somewhere, and your earning capacity increases as you gain experience, develop specialised skills, and take on more responsibility in your field. The jump between your early twenties and your mid-thirties can be substantial, with most people seeing steady salary growth throughout this period.

### Industry makes a massive difference

Where you work matters just as much as what you do. The mining industry remains Australia's highest-paying sector, with median weekly earnings of \$2,761 in August 2025. That's over \$143,500 per year. Workers in this industry benefit from the sector's strong economic position and the specialised skills required. Other top-paying industries include electricity, gas, water and waste services, and financial and insurance services with median weekly earnings of \$2,000 in 2025.

At the other end of the spectrum, hospitality and food services typically offer lower wages, with median weekly earnings around \$700. Some sectors pay better than others due to factors like demand for skilled workers, the education required, and the economic importance of the industry. If you're considering your career options, it's worth researching entire industries and then taking a deep dive into individual roles as the salaries can vary dramatically between jobs.

### Location shapes your pay packet

Where you choose to live and work could also impact your salary more than you might think. Workers in states home to large cities serving as major financial and business hubs like New South Wales and Victoria generally earn higher salaries. Western Australia, driven by its mining sector, also offers competitive salaries, particularly for those in resources and engineering. The Australian Capital Territory actually claims the title of highest-earning region in the country, thanks to high concentrations of government and professional services roles.

Rural and regional areas typically offer lower salaries than major cities, but this doesn't tell the whole story. The cost of living in places like Sydney can be significantly higher than in regional centres, meaning your purchasing power might actually be better on a smaller salary outside the capital cities.



## Full-time versus part-time work

It's probably no surprise to learn that in general, full-time workers earn more overall. Although some part-time workers may earn higher hourly rates than their full time counterparts. This is often particularly true for many casual roles, to compensate for the lower overall earnings and goes towards supplement things like paid holiday and sick leave that they aren't entitled to.

It's also worth noting that full-time work in Australia is generally considered 38 hours per week, and the Fair Work Commission regularly reviews and adjusts the national minimum wage. As of [1 July 2025, the minimum wage was \\$24.95 per hour or \\$948 per week](#) for full-time workers.

## Your gender and pay

Despite progress in recent years, on average Australian women still earn less than men across most industries and age groups. The median weekly earnings for men working full-time reached \$1,841 in August 2025, whilst women working full-time earned a median of \$1,631—a difference of \$210 per week, or nearly \$11,000 annually. Several factors contribute to this gap. Women are more likely to work part-time due to caring responsibilities, may be underrepresented in the highest-paying industries and senior roles, and face barriers to career progression. Understanding these disparities doesn't mean accepting them, being aware of these patterns could help you negotiate better and advocate for fair pay throughout your career.

## Setting realistic expectations for your future

So what does all this mean for you? If you're just finishing school or starting university, avoid disappointment and manage your salary expectations - don't expect to immediately earn the median (or average) salary. Your first job might pay significantly less, particularly if it's entry-level or part-time. That's completely normal and your earning potential grows over time. By your mid-thirties, if you've stayed in the workforce and developed your skills, you can realistically expect to be earning close to or above the median.

Choosing an industry with strong growth prospects and good pay rates certainly helps, but so does gaining experience, pursuing further training, and being strategic about career moves.

Remember that salary isn't everything. Job satisfaction, work-life balance, and working conditions all contribute to your overall wellbeing. A slightly lower salary in a role you love, with good conditions and growth opportunities, might serve you better in the long run than chasing the highest possible pay packet.

## What's your next step?

Understanding Australia's median salary gives you a realistic foundation for planning your career. Whether you're choosing subjects for senior school, deciding on a university course, or considering an apprenticeship, having accurate salary information helps you make informed decisions about your future.

The key takeaway? Most Australians earn around \$74,100 per year, but your individual circumstances like age, industry, location, and employment type, could influence where you sit on that spectrum. Use this information as a starting point, then dig deeper into the specific careers that interest you.

Ready to explore career pathways that match your interests and salary expectations? Visit our [Jobs & Careers](#) pages to discover detailed information about hundreds of different occupations, including salary ranges, required qualifications, and what the work actually involves.

## SUPERANNUATION

How to sign up to your first super fund

### What is super?

Superannuation, or 'super', is your retirement savings in Australia. Think of it as a special bank account for your future: money that you earn today grows over time and helps you live comfortably when you stop working.



The government supports super by giving it tax advantages, meaning your money grows faster than it would in a regular savings account.

If you earn income from a job, your employer must contribute a percentage of your salary into your super fund. This is **on top of your regular pay**. For example, if you earn \$50,000 a year and your employer contributes 11%, that's \$5,500 added to your super account each year.

Super is locked away until you reach your 'preservation age' (usually between 55 and 60) and meet the conditions to access it. This might seem restrictive, but it ensures your money is growing for your future self

### How super works

Super isn't just money sitting in an account, it's an investment. Your super fund uses your money to buy things like shares, bonds, and property. These investments earn returns over time, which are added back to your account. This is called **compounding**, and it's the main way your super grows over decades.

If you start saving super at 18 years old and earn an average salary you could retire at 65 with about \$650,000 in the bank, on top of anything else you own like a business or property. You can play around with possibilities using the [Money Smart Superannuation Calculator](#).

There are two main ways money goes into your super:

- Employer contributions: Currently 12% of your salary every year (2026).
- Voluntary contributions: You can add extra money through "salary sacrifice" or after-tax payments. The government sometimes provides additional contributions for eligible low- and middle-income earners.

### Checking for lost/unclaimed super

Before making any decisions, it's important to check whether you already have super hidden away in old accounts. Many people lose track when they change jobs.

### Steps to find lost super:

- Log in to [myGov](#) and link your ATO account to check directly.
- Use the [ATO app](#) to see if you have any super.
- Call the [ATO lost super line](#) if you're still unsure.

### Why this matters:

Even a small lost super account can grow substantially over decades due to compounding. Consolidating lost accounts into your main super fund can reduce fees and make managing your super easier.

### Choosing a super fund

There are many super funds to choose from, and picking the right one can make a significant difference over your lifetime. The main factors to consider include:

- Fees: Lower fees mean more money stays in your account. A difference of 0.5–1% in annual fees can amount to tens of thousands of dollars over decades.
- Investment performance: Look at long-term returns (ideally 10 years). Past performance isn't a guarantee, but consistent returns show the fund manages money well.
- Investment options: Some funds let you choose how your money is invested, e.g., growth, balanced, or conservative options.
- Insurance: Many funds offer default life, total and permanent disability, and income protection insurance. Check whether the default coverage suits your needs.
- Values and ethics: Some funds focus on sustainable or ethical investments if that aligns with your priorities.

It is possible to change your super fund (known as 'rolling over') which in most cases is **not subject to tax**. You are not locked into a fund, giving you flexibility to move if your needs change.



## Types of super funds

There are five main types of super funds, each with different features:

1. Industry funds: Often started by unions for workers in specific sectors. They usually have lower fees and strong performance.
  - Examples: [Cbus Super](#), [HESTA](#).
2. Retail funds: Run by banks or financial institutions. They often have more investment options but higher fees.
  - Examples: [AMP](#), [CommBank](#).
3. Public sector funds: For government employees. Typically low fees and tailored benefits.
  - Example: [ADF Super](#).
4. Corporate funds: Set up by employers. Some are only for employees, some are open to the public. They may offer negotiated insurance or fees.
5. Self-managed funds : You manage these yourself with up to six members as trustees. Self-managed funds require knowledge, time, and money, and are **not recommended for beginners**.

**Pro tip:** Consider your needs, time, and knowledge before choosing a self-managed fund. For most people, a good industry or retail fund is simpler and cheaper.

## Comparing super funds

The ATO's [YourSuper comparison tool](#) helps you compare funds. Focus on:

- Investment performance: How has the fund grown money over the last 10 years?
- Total fees: Lower fees help your balance grow faster.
- Investment options: Do they match your risk preferences?
- Insurance options: Are they flexible and sufficient?

Example: Two funds may have similar returns, but one charges 1.2% fees and the other 0.6%. Over 30 years, the lower-fee fund could leave you tens of thousands of dollars better off.

## Insurance in super

Most super funds automatically include insurance:

- Life insurance: Pays a lump sum to your family if you die.
- Total and permanent disability: Pays if you can't work due to serious injury or illness.
- Income protection: Replaces part of your salary if you can't work temporarily.

Premiums come directly from your super, reducing your account balance slightly. Check whether the default coverage suits your situation, and adjust if needed.

Example: If you earn \$60,000 a year and your fund provides income protection covering 75% of your salary, you could receive \$45,000 per year if you are temporarily unable to work.

## Accessing your super

You usually cannot access super until you reach your preservation age and retire. Preservation ages range from 55 to 60 depending on birth year.

Early access is possible in certain circumstances:

- Severe financial hardship
- Compassionate grounds (e.g., medical bills)
- Terminal illness





## Common mistakes to avoid

Many people reduce their retirement savings without realizing it. One common mistake is having **multiple super accounts** from past jobs. Each account charges fees, which slowly erode your balance. Consolidating these accounts into one can save money over the long term.

Another mistake is **ignoring investment options**. Most super funds place members in a default option, which might not suit your risk tolerance or retirement goals.

**Insurance** is another area where people make errors. Some members have insufficient coverage, while others pay for policies they don't need.

Finally, **failing to review your super regularly** can leave you unprepared for life changes, like a new job, a salary increase, or starting a family. Checking your super at least once a year ensures it continues to work for you.

## Signing up for super

Signing up for super is straightforward. Start by checking whether your employer has a default fund or recommends a particular super. Compare this option, or any other funds you're interested in, with other popular super funds to find the one that best suits your personal needs and goals. Once you've chosen a fund, you can usually apply online, or ask your employer to direct your contributions to their default option. When applying, make sure you have your tax file number and personal details ready to make the process quick and easy.

## JOB SPOTLIGHTS

### How to become a Marine Technician

Marine Technicians maintain and repair the engines, electrical systems, navigation equipment, and mechanical components that keep cruise ships, luxury yachts, and vessels running smoothly. They work onboard, travelling to different ports around the world whilst ensuring everything functions safely and reliably.

If you're mechanically minded with strong problem-solving skills, enjoy hands-on technical work, and want a career that combines your trade expertise with international travel, this could be an ideal path for you.

### What skills do I need as a Marine Technician?

- Strong mechanical aptitude
- Excellent problem-solver
- Attention to detail
- Adaptable and resourceful
- Good communicator
- Physically capable
- Self-motivated and independent
- Calm under pressure

### What do Marine Technicians do?

Marine Technicians spend their days maintaining and repairing the complex systems that keep vessels operational. You'll work on engines, hydraulics, electrical systems, plumbing, air conditioning, and navigation equipment, conducting regular inspections and preventative maintenance to catch problems before they become serious. When something breaks down at sea, you'll diagnose the issue and fix it quickly, often working with limited tools and parts. You might rewire electrical systems, repair pumps, service generators, or troubleshoot electronic navigation equipment. Some days involve routine servicing and checks, whilst others require creative problem-solving when equipment fails in the middle of the ocean.

You'll also coordinate with suppliers and contractors when the vessel is in port, manage spare parts inventory, and keep detailed maintenance logs. On larger yachts, you might supervise other crew members or liaise with captains about technical requirements for upcoming voyages.



## What kind of lifestyle could I expect?

Marine Technicians work across the maritime industry on cruise ships, cargo vessels, ferries, offshore platforms, luxury yachts, and commercial fishing vessels. Some work for shipping companies, whilst others are employed by port authorities, marine service companies, or vessel operators.

Your working hours depend entirely on the vessel type and its schedule. On cargo ships or cruise liners, you might work rotational schedules with extended periods at sea followed by time off on land. Ferry technicians often work more regular shifts, whilst those on offshore platforms typically follow fly-in-fly-out roster patterns. Once at sea, you're generally on call for emergencies regardless of the official roster.

The work is physically demanding, involving confined spaces, heavy equipment, and working in all weather conditions. You'll spend extended periods away from home, living aboard vessels and travelling to different ports internationally or along domestic routes. The trade-off is experiencing different locations whilst doing technical work you enjoy. Marine Technicians with specialised skills can earn well above average salaries, particularly on larger commercial vessels or offshore installations.

## How to become a Marine Technician

**Complete a trade qualification** in mechanical fitting, engineering, electrical work, or refrigeration and air conditioning through an apprenticeship. This gives you the foundational technical skills needed for marine work.

**Gain general technical experience** in your trade area, then complete additional training in marine-specific systems, diesel engines, or marine electronics through short courses or vocational qualifications in marine engineering technology.

**Obtain maritime certifications** and safety training relevant to the vessel types and regions where you want to work. Requirements vary depending on vessel size and operation type.

**Start with entry-level positions** on smaller vessels or in port-based maintenance roles, building your experience with different marine systems before moving to larger vessels or more specialised technical positions.

From there, you might progress to chief engineer roles on larger vessels, move into marine surveying or technical management positions, specialise in particular systems like navigation electronics or refrigeration, or establish your own marine maintenance business.

## What can I do right now?

If you're in high school and interested in working as a Marine Technician, here are some practical steps:

- Pursue a trade apprenticeship in mechanical fitting, electrical work, or refrigeration to build core technical skills
- Look for casual work or volunteer opportunities at marinas, boat clubs, or with marine maintenance companies to gain exposure to the industry
- Talk to Marine Technicians, yacht crew, or marina managers about their work and the pathways into marine technical roles

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To contact Ms Hall please email [chall@stpiusx.nsw.edu.au](mailto:chall@stpiusx.nsw.edu.au) or call 9414 4733.