

Get Ready for Study and Work

Top ten tips for young people
who have a disability or
chronic medical condition

- Planning your life after school?
- Wondering what your choices are?
- Don't know what to do next?
- Not sure where to get help?
- Read this book.

Acknowledgements

This workbook was developed by Nicole Ison and Catherine Gasparini, from the Western Sydney National Disability Coordination Officer (NDCO) Program. The NDCO Program is funded by the Australian Government.

The top ten tips for getting ready for life after school, on which this resource is based, were developed by Nicole Ison. They were developed using evidence from research and best practice, and with input from a wide variety of stakeholders. The authors gratefully acknowledge the input of National Disability Coordination Officers from around Australia, Teacher Consultants from TAFE NSW, Disability Advisers from NSW universities, Support Teachers (Transition) from NSW Department of Education and Training and other valued stakeholders.

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Table of contents

<u>Acknowledgements</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>Table Of Contents</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>Introduction</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>The Top Ten Tips</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>1. Get Ready Early</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>2. Get The Big Picture</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>3. Get Connected</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>4. Get To Know Your Options</u>	<u>11</u>
<u>5. Get The Skills</u>	<u>14</u>
<u>6. Get Organised</u>	<u>17</u>
<u>7. Get Support</u>	<u>19</u>
<u>8. Get Involved</u>	<u>23</u>
<u>9. Get To Know Your Rights And Responsibilities</u>	<u>25</u>
<u>10. Get Confident</u>	<u>27</u>
<u>Glossary And Useful Links</u>	<u>28</u>
<u>The Jargon Explained</u>	<u>35</u>
<u>Your Local NDCO Program</u>	<u>37</u>

Introduction

There are so many things to think about when getting ready for life after school:

- What do I want to do?
- Work?
- Study at Uni?
- Study at TAFE?
- Maybe an Apprenticeship or Traineeship?

The questions go on:

- Where do I find out about what's involved?
- Who can help me?
- What support might I need?
- Where can I get help?
- And importantly, how will all of this fit with the rest of my life?

Planning for life after school is often called transition planning. Transition is the process of moving from one set of circumstances to another. Young people make many transitions as they move into adulthood. These might include starting a new job or a new course, moving house or getting married. Making transitions is exciting, but can also be challenging. People who plan their transitions well, with help where needed, are likely to have a better outcome than those who don't. There are lots of decisions and preparations that all young people have to make when planning for transition. There are also some extra things that young people with a disability or chronic medical condition should consider, and some additional support that can help them to plan well for life after school.

This workbook will help you to prepare well for life after school. You will work through ten top tips for getting ready for life after school. For each of the top tips you will find:

- An overview and practical tips.
- Activities to help you get ready.
- Links to further information and resources.

We hope you find this workbook helpful.

Good luck getting ready for your life after school!

The top ten tips

Here's an intro to the Get Ready Top Ten Tips. We will be working through each one in this workbook.

1. Get ready early

Starting your transition planning as early as possible is a top priority.

2. Get the big picture

Think about your goals and interests, and how your disability may affect your future study or work.

3. Get connected

Make connections with people who can help your transition.

4. Get to know your options.

Research different post school options and identify realistic ones for you.

5. Get the skills.

Identify the skills you will need for future study and work. Which do you have and how can you develop others?

6. Get organised.

Being organised and managing your time effectively can make a big difference.

7. Get support.

Think about where you can get support from and the types of support you may need.

8. Get involved.

Gaining new and different experiences will help a lot in the future.

9. Get to know your rights and responsibilities.

Learn about your rights in education and employment and how they are protected.

10. Get confident.

Practice standing up for yourself and taking responsibility.

1. Get ready early

Start planning for your transition from school as early as possible.

At around age 14 to 15 start thinking about what you would like to do after school, and how to achieve this. If you're older than this already, don't worry. This workbook will help you get started now.

Below is a list of some of the major pathways young people take after school. There is more information about each of these in the glossary at the end of this workbook. Which ones are you interested in?

What to do?

- **ADHC Post School Programs**
 - Transition to Work
 - Community Participation

- **Employment**
 - Australian Disability Enterprises
 - Open employment
 - Apprenticeships and Traineeships

- **Further education and training**
 - Adult and community education
 - University
 - Apprenticeships and Traineeships
 - Vocational Education and Training: e.g. TAFE, Registered Training Organisations

- **Volunteer work**

Remember, the better planned your move from school is, the more positive and less stressful the experience will be.

Think about the types of support you might need after school, see Tip 2.

Make contact with people who can support you early. This will ensure there is plenty of time to organise any help or supports you may need at TAFE, university or work. See Tip 7, Get support, for more information about the types of people to contact.

2. Get the big picture

Thinking about and learning to understand yourself is often called developing self-awareness.

ACTIVITY 1: This activity will help you think about yourself and what you want for your future.

Consider the following questions:

What is important to me?

What are my strengths?

What are my short term goals?

What are my long term goals?

Don't just consider career goals. Think about your goals, interests and needs in a range of life areas and how these can fit together. For example, what are your education, employment, and leisure goals? Also consider your life roles. What other roles do you have that might influence your life after school? Think about friends, family, relationships, responsibilities, and living situations.

Practice talking about your values, goals, interests, skills and strengths to others. Once people know what you are aiming for, they can help you reach your goals.

Talk with your family, friends, teachers and others. Discuss your goals and ideas with them and get their ideas as well.

ACTIVITY 2: Get to know your disability or medical condition

Consider the following:

How is your disability or chronic medical condition likely to affect your participation in further study or work?

What help or adjustments have you had at school?

**Do you think you will need this type of help at TAFE, university or work?
What other help might you need?**

What is considered a disability?

The definition of disability is very broad, and includes:

- Chronic medical conditions eg. Asthma, arthritis and diabetes
- Intellectual disabilities eg. Down syndrome, fetal alcohol syndrome
- Learning disabilities eg. dyslexia
- Mental illness eg. depression, anxiety disorders
- Physical disabilities eg. spinal cord injury, cerebral palsy
- Sensory disabilities eg. vision or hearing impairment
- Autism spectrum disorders, including Asperger's syndrome

3. Get connected

Contact people who can help your transition. Start by connecting with relevant people at your school. This might include your careers adviser, school counsellor and year adviser.

Here are some ideas for questions you might like to ask:

- I'm interested in working in the “blank” area. What school subjects would you recommend that I select?
- How can I learn more about this field?
- What are the different types of jobs available in this field?
- Would I need to do further study?
- What is my next step after school in order to get started in this field?
- Can you put me in touch with someone from the industry?
- Who can help me prepare a resume?

Activity 3: Make a note of some other questions you want to ask and contact details of people you need to connect with:

Your school can also help link you in with other specialist teachers if necessary. These might include transition teachers (may be called Support Teachers (Transition) or Transition Officers), support teachers and head teachers welfare. These people can help you to consider disability related issues about your transition from school. They can also help you find support.

Talk with your family, friends, and other people with disabilities about their experiences after school and about help that is available.

Depending on where you want to head, connect with disability staff at TAFE or university, or a **disability employment service**. See Tip 7 for more information.

Make contact with your local [National Disability Coordination Officer](#) if you need further help or information. They can help you to make useful links with support. Their contact details can be found at the end of this workbook.

Write down the names and contact details of people who have been helpful – they may be a useful contact in the future.

Once you have an idea of the career you would like to pursue, see Tip 4, make contact with people already working in that area. Here are some ideas for questions you might like to ask:

- What is an average day at work like?
- Have you changed your career path much since you left school and for what reason?
- What are the most important skills and attributes I will need to succeed in this field?
- Why did you decide to get into this industry?
- What are the best and worst parts of working in this area?
- Anything else you think would be valuable for me to know?

ACTIVITY 4: Make a note of a couple of other questions to ask:

4. Get to know your options

Research, ask questions and speak to people about different post-school options.

What occupation would you like to work towards? There are so many types of jobs and different career areas.

ACTIVITY 5: The table below lists just some of the endless career areas out there. Make a note of which ones interest you.

Career Area	I'm really interested in this	I'd like to find out more	I'm not really interested	No way!!
Agriculture, animal and primary industries				
Architecture, building and planning				
Art, design, music and entertainment				
Business, administration and sales				
Chemicals, plastics, rubber etc production, plant operating and trades				
Computing and information services				
Education				
Engineering and technical				
Food processing eg. baker, butcher, winemaker				
Health and community services				
Hospitality and Tourism				
Law, Security and Defence				
Literature and social sciences				
Metal, electrical, automotive, furniture and wood products				
Natural sciences and mathematics				
Textiles, clothing and footwear				
Transport and Storage				

Acknowledgement: Career Areas adapted from The Job Guide. Available at <http://www.jobguide.thegoodguides.com.au/>

Find out more about those career areas that interest you. The internet is a great place to start. Check out these helpful websites:

- **My Future.** www.myfuture.edu.au
My Future is an Australian Government Initiative providing lots of useful activities and information to help you explore your career options, including a personalised career exploration tool.
- **Year 12, what next?** www.year12whatnext.gov.au
Year 12 - what next? is an Australian Government resource to help students plan for post-school education, training and work.
- **Job Guide.** www.jobguide.deewr.gov.au
Job Guide provides profiles of hundreds of different jobs and information about the education and training pathways that lead to them.
- **Get ready for study and work.** www.uws.edu.au/ndco
Get ready for study and work is a website providing information and links to help people with disabilities transition successfully into post-school study or work.
- **Get Ready for Uni.** www.uws.edu.au/ndco/getready
Get ready for uni is an information kit for people with disabilities considering going to university.

When doing your research about potential career options, here are some things you might like to find out or consider.

- Is there training required? If so at what level? Would you need to study at **university**? **TAFE**? Get an **apprenticeship** or **traineeship**?
- Can you get some work experience in the area?
- Are there different ways to reach the same, or similar, long term career goals?
- What are the requirements of each option in the short and long term?

Pathway to my dream job

Think about whether the pathways you are considering will be realistic for you. Working out these issues now will help you make better choices about career directions.

- Is your disability likely to have an impact on your daily work life in this field?
- Will you need support or adjustments?
- Will the long term career/s you are working towards be realistic into the future?

There are always some things you *have* to be able to do in order to pass a course or get a job. These are usually called the *inherent requirements*. If it seems likely that you won't be able to meet the inherent requirements, then it is probably best to consider an alternative career path.

Ask for information and advice. Discuss career options and ideas with your family, friends, people at your school and other people with disabilities, see Tip 3.

Find out about support that is likely to be available to you in different settings. Will you be able to get the help you need? See Tips 2 and 7 for suggestions on who can help you find these things out.

ACTIVITY 6: Make some notes as you think about and research your career options

5. Get the skills

Employability skills

Imagine the wide range of skills needed in your future studies and work. These are sometimes called employability skills. Some of them are listed in the activity below.

Practice these skills while you are still at school. You can practice them during your school day; planning your study and assessment tasks; helping out at home; at your part time job; and/or participating in sport.

ACTIVITY 7: Identify the skills you already have, and those you need to work more on. Give an example of an activity you are involved in where you can practice and demonstrate each skill.

Skill	I'm pretty good at this	I need to do some more work	Where I already, or will, practice this skill
Communication			
Team work			
Problem solving			
Initiative			
Planning and organisation			
Working independently			
Time management			
Decision making			
Goal setting			
Negotiating			
Prioritising			
Conflict resolution			
Leadership			

Acknowledgement: DEEWR Employability Skills Framework – available at <http://www.deewr.gov.au/Schooling/CareersandTransitions/EmployabilitySkills/Pages/Overview.aspx>

Note down which 2 skills do you think you need to work on the most?

- 1.
- 2.

Practical skills

Other practical skills will be very important after school too. Think about your skills to help you choose realistic post-school pathways. For example:

- How will you get to your TAFE, university, or workplace?
- Can you travel independently?
- Can you find your way to other places for meetings or lunch?
- Are you able to manage your own money?
- Will you have to move out of home? Is this realistic?

Vocational skills

Get actively involved in career planning and work experience at school.

School based career development programs will help you to develop important skills. An example is the [School to Work](#) program in public schools.

You may also like to consider studying vocation based subjects while you are still at school, for example [HSC Vocational Education and Training \(VET\) courses](#). There are vocational subjects in areas including business services, hospitality, information technology and primary industries.

You can also study vocational courses at TAFE while you are still at school. These are called [TVET courses](#).

You could also consider a [school based apprenticeship or traineeship](#). These provide an opportunity to gain a nationally recognised VET qualification as well as your HSC.

Technology skills

Being able to access and use technology is extremely important in study and work after school.

How are your skills in using computers, the Internet and other technologies?

Find out about the types of technology skills you will need in different settings. Practice and learn new skills if necessary.

There is equipment, support and **assistive technology** available to help people, with a broad range of disabilities, to access and use computers and other technology. These are often called assistive technologies. Some examples are speech recognition software, on-screen keyboards, and software that can read text aloud.

Have you used any assistive technology in the past? Will you need this, or other, assistive technology in the future? If you can explain to people what your technology needs may be it will be easier for them to help you access it.

There are some great free applications which can help people to access technology. For example, [AccessApps](#) offers over 50 free assistive technology applications that can make reading, writing, planning and other things easier.

ACTIVITY 8: Consider the following:

What technology and software I have used before:

What technology and software could I learn about or get more practice using:

What assistive technology could help me or could I try out:

6. Get organised

Find ways of managing time and staying organised that work for you. Getting organised and balancing your time well now will make a huge difference to your success and stress levels after school. It will help you to: stay on top of things you must get done; spare some time for fun stuff; and keep your health on track.

How well do you manage your time and keep track of your activities? Below are some things you might like to try include:

- **Using checklists or to-do lists to record your tasks, it can be very satisfying to cross them off when they are done!**
- **Establishing a regular schedule.**
- **Prioritising tasks in relation to when they are due.**
- **Having a place to store your files and records, so that things are easy for you to find.**
- **Having a designated place for work or study where there are few distractions.**
- **Keeping an up to date record of activities and tasks in the calendar.**

Also:

- Ask other people for advice and ideas about how they manage to stay organised.
- Many post-school settings, including universities, also offer workshops on employability skills including organisation and time management. See whether the counselling or careers services at your institution, or prospective institutions, offer this type of training.
- Practice taking responsibility for making and keeping appointments and following up requests – often our parents/carers help us with these things but it is important to learn to be accountable to others and to take responsibility for yourself.

- Keep copies of all documentation about your disability because you are likely to be asked to supply the same paperwork often. It will be much easier and less stressful for you if you have easy access to these documents and details.
- To access disability support services at university or TAFE you will need recent documentation from a medical specialist about your disability or chronic medical condition.
- Keep copies of any forms or paperwork that you complete during your planning for life after school.

It is a great idea to keep all relevant documentation together in a transition planning portfolio. Here are some things you could include in yours. Do you have them all?

- Current resume.
- Copies of certificates and references.
- Copy of Individual Transition Plan or Academic Integration Plan from school.
- Copy of documentation from medical or other specialist
- Work samples.
- Copies of any documentation from Centrelink or other Government Departments.
- Identification - eg. Certified copy of birth certificate, passport, driver's licence.
- Any info you have collected about your preferred industry, TAFE, university and/or employer.

7. Get support

- We all need support from others, especially when we are planning for what we are going to do after school. Get support from your family, friends, and people at your school – teachers, career advisers and counsellors.
- If you have had extra help at school, you may also need some support in your future study or work. Disability support is often called **reasonable adjustments** or accommodations in study and work settings.
- Find out which potential future study or work settings will be able to give you the most appropriate support. Different adjustments may be available to you in different environments. It is important that you understand what support you can realistically expect to receive.
- Make contact with **Centrelink** once you turn 16, to see if you are eligible for financial or other support.
- Many young people find having a mentor very helpful. A mentor is usually someone who is older and more experienced, and can offer advice, support, direction, advocacy, encouragement and role modelling.
 - You may find a mentor informally through a school, community, sporting, or family contact.
 - There are also formal mentoring programs which you may be able to get involved in. An example is the [Willing and Able Mentoring](#) program.
 - Local services may be able to help you connect with mentors in your area, or trying searching for a mentoring program on the [Youth Mentoring Network](#) website www.youthmentoringnetwork.com.au.

Getting help at TAFE or university.

There are people who can help you to access adjustments, for example each TAFE and university has a disability service that you can contact. At TAFE, the people who arrange adjustments are called **Teacher Consultants**, and at university they are often called **Disability Advisers** or Disability Liaison Officers.

It's a great idea to make an appointment with disability services even before you start at TAFE or university, to talk about the types of support available and things you should do to get ready. You can find links to contact details for disability services in the back of this workbook. Your local NDCO can also help you make contact with these services.

Mark's Story

“My name is Mark. I missed lots of school in my final years because I have juvenile arthritis. I really wanted to go to uni, but I wasn't sure I would get in. I applied for the **Educational Access Scheme**, which recognised the impact of my disability on my studies. This helped me get into uni. I met with the Disability Adviser before I started uni and he set up some reasonable adjustments for me, including access to electronic lecture notes and extra time for my exams. These things made all the difference – and I've just graduated!”

Getting help at work.

The Australian Government's **Job Services Australia** helps people who are looking for work. There is also specific support available for people who have a disability and are job-seeking. These services are called **Disability Employment Services (DES)**. You may be able to start working with a DES in the last six months of school. Centrelink can help you access Job Services Australia or a DES.

Once you find a job, your employer is legally required to provide reasonable adjustments (if you need them). **JobAccess** can provide you and your employer with information about support in the workplace, including financial assistance available to help with modifications, equipment or support you may need.

Rebecca's Story

“Hi, my name's Rebecca and I've just started my first job working in an office. Before that I did a Business Administration course at TAFE. I got some adjustments there, because I have a learning disability. The Teacher Consultant organised some tutorial support and extra time for my assessments. When I finished TAFE I went to Centrelink to see if they could help me get a job. They organised a **Job Capacity Assessment** and then referred me to a Disability Employment Service. At the DES they helped me prepare a resume, apply for jobs and learn interview skills....and I got my job! The DES consultant helped me settle in to work, by providing some on-the-job training. My employer is great too – she provides adjustments like giving me both written and verbal instructions and helping with proofreading”.

ACTIVITY 9: I want to get support, but what do I ask?

Here are some ideas of things to say and questions to ask when you make contact with disability support services at TAFE or uni. Many of these questions would also be relevant to discuss with a potential employer. You might be tempted to get your parent or carer to make contact on your behalf, but try to start doing this yourself if you can!

When you call, let the disability service know that you have a disability and would like to find out about adjustments and support available in that setting. Tell them what course/s you are interested in studying. Here are some questions you might like to ask:

- When is an appropriate time to organise an appointment to meet with you?
- What documentation do you require?
- What sorts of adjustments would be available to me?
- Are there alternative admission procedures for people with disabilities? If so, what are they and where can I find out more about them?
- Can I arrange a tour of the campus? (if you are worried about getting around)
- Are there student bodies, social gatherings, online forums or mentoring programs for people with disabilities and/or first year students?

- If there is something in particular you find difficult (eg. presentations, fine motor skills), ask if this is an important part of the course, and if so, whether adjustments will be available. There are always some things that you *have* to be able to do in order to pass a course, these are usually called the **inherent requirements**.
- Anything else you can think of!

Remember, the only silly question is the one you wanted to ask but didn't!

8. Get involved

- Get involved in a range of activities and experiences. These may include:
 - Work experience
 - Volunteer work
 - Committees
 - Paid work
 - School of community groups
 - Leisure activities

- All of these activities will help you develop skills that will be important in your future education or employment. Think about what transferable skills you learn through the activities you participate in, see the activity on the next page.

- Participate in as many experiences as you can, but remember to balance this with your studies, your health, and other commitments.

- If necessary, practice asking for support and accommodations you might need to help you participate in these experiences. Problem-solve ways to reduce or remove barriers you might face. Get to know your rights and responsibilities. See Tip 9.

- Think about practical issues around participating in these types of activities:
 - How will you get there?
 - Will you need help getting around?
 - Are there costs involved?

- There are community organisations and groups that advocate for people with disability and help raise community awareness about people with disability and the issues affecting them.
 - Think about getting involved with one of these organisations.
 - Helping to create awareness of the contributions of people with disabilities can help dispel myths in society.
 - While raising awareness you could also learn more about disability, your rights and positive ways to ask for the things you need.

ACTIVITY 10: Think about the activities you are already involved in. What skills are these activities helping you learn that will be useful in future study and work?

- Example 1: Babysitting

Transferable skills: Responsibility, reliability, working independently.

- Example 2: Team sports

Transferable skills: Team work, reliability, communication.

9. Get to know your rights and responsibilities

Get to know your rights. There are laws that protect your rights as a person with disability.

Having rights also means having responsibilities. Your responsibilities are just as important as your rights.

The best way to protect your rights in study, training or work is to also know and meet your responsibilities. For example it's your responsibility to seek reasonable adjustments if you need them, and to provide appropriate documentation.

Protection versus disability discrimination

The [Disability Discrimination Act](#) 1992 (DDA) is designed to ensure that people with disability aren't treated less fairly than other people because of their disability. It covers a range of life areas, including access, education, employment, activities and sport.

If a person with disability feels they have been discriminated against, they can make a complaint to the [Australian Human Rights Commission](#).

The [Disability Standards for Education](#) come from the DDA. These standards set out the rights of people with disabilities particularly in education settings. This includes at school, TAFE or university.

The DDA makes education providers legally responsible for making [reasonable adjustments](#) to enable people with disabilities to participate in education on the same basis as other students.

Telling others about your disability.

You'll also need to consider the issue of disclosure. Disclosing means intentionally telling other people about your disability or chronic medical condition. You may choose to disclose different amounts of information about your disability to different people or for different purposes

Knowing your rights with regard to disclosure will help you make informed decisions:

- Did you know that you do not have to disclose your disability to others – *unless* you want to access reasonable adjustments OR your disability presents an imminent danger to others?
- And if you do choose to disclose, did you know that you only have to disclose to certain people and not to everyone? For example, at TAFE or university you only need to disclose to the disability support service.

A great resource to help you make important decisions about disclosure is the Choosing your Path website www.uws.edu.au/ndco/disclosure.

ACTIVITY 11: Ask yourself the following questions:

- What are you prepared to tell people about your disability?
- Who will you tell? And when?

10. Get confident

Believe in Yourself

- Believe in your ability to succeed.
- Practice communicating your strengths and skills to others.
- This will help you have choice and control over issues that affect you.
- This is sometimes called being self determined.

Assert Yourself

- Practice standing up for yourself.
- Clearly communicate how your disability affects you and your activities.
- This is often called self-advocating.
- Don't be afraid to explain to people what you need.
- There is no need to tell people everything about your disability – what is important is that they understand how it impacts on your study or work.
- When you need to raise a problem, do it in a proactive and positive way. This can be hard, but it will help to reduce conflict. Remember you will have to keep working with the people you are approaching throughout your training or career!

Practice Giving Feedback to Others

- Let people know when things are going well.
- Also don't be afraid to tell them if things aren't working out. The sooner people know about ongoing problems or challenges, the sooner they can help you resolve them!

Take Responsibility

- Take responsibility for making contact with supports and services.
- Parents/carers can offer great support but...
- Be aware that post school settings will expect to work with you as an adult.

Maintain a Portfolio

- Provide evidence of the skills you are developing.
- You may already do this at school.
- Keep it up-to-date, that way it's less work later on and ready for you to use whenever you may need it.

Glossary and useful links

Adult and community education

Adult and Community Education (ACE) refers to a diverse range of community based education courses, most often delivered by Community Colleges. ACE promotes lifelong learning, and courses cover leisure skills, life skills and professional skills. See www.ace.nsw.gov.au and www.communitycolleges.nsw.edu.au for more information.

AccessApps

AccessApps is the umbrella term for a range of free assistive technologies. It consists of over sixty open source and freeware Windows applications, which run directly from a USB stick. AccessApps provides a range of solutions to support writing, reading and planning as well as sensory, cognitive and physical difficulties. See www.eduapps.org for more information and to download AccessApps.

Assistive Technology

Assistive technology is a broad term that includes any equipment, device, hardware or software that is designed to help people with disabilities perform tasks that would otherwise be difficult or not possible. Some examples of assistive technologies include screen-reading software, speech recognition software, text telephones, screen-magnification software and on-screen keyboards.

Australian Apprenticeships

Australian Apprenticeships is the term which includes both apprenticeships and traineeships. They combine time at work with training and provide a nationally recognised qualification. Apprenticeships normally last three to four years and are usually offered in the traditional trade industries such as plumbing, carpentry, building, electrical and hairdressing. Traineeships normally last one to two years and are most often specific to non-trade areas such as hospitality, retail, information technology, business administration, sport and recreation. Support is available for people with disabilities, including tutorial, interpreting, mentoring and workplace modifications. For more information see www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au.

Australian Disability Enterprises

Australian Disability Enterprises are commercial businesses that provide employment opportunities for people with disability. Australian Disability Enterprises enable people with disability to engage in a wide variety of work tasks such as packaging, assembly, production, recycling, screen printing, plant nursery, garden maintenance and landscaping, cleaning services, laundry services and food services. See www.australiandisabilityenterprises.com.au.

Australian Human Rights Commission

The Australian Human Rights Commission is an independent statutory organisation that works to protect and promote the human rights of all people in Australia, including people with disability. See www.hreoc.gov.au.

Centrelink

Centrelink provides employment assistance and a range of services and programs for people with a disability to help with looking for work and planning for the future. This includes the Employment Assistance Fund, the Supported Wage System, allowances and services and programs for people with a disability. Often a referral from Centrelink is required to access other services. For more information see www.centrelink.gov.au/internet/internet.nsf/individuals/iid_index.htm.

Community Participation Program

The Community Participation Program aims to assist young people with a disability to develop the skills they need to work towards their goals, increase their independence and participate as valued and active members in the community. The program is targeted to young people with a disability with moderate to high support needs who require an alternative to paid employment or further education in the medium or longer term. For more information, see the ADHC website www.dadhc.nsw.gov.au/dadhc/People+with+a+disability/Post+School+Programs.htm.

Disability

The definition of disability is extremely broad. 1 in 5 Australians have one or more disabilities. A disability can be temporary or permanent, visible or hidden. A person may be born with a disability or acquire it later in life. The definition of disability under the Disability Discrimination Act (1992) includes: total or partial loss of a person's bodily or mental functions; total or partial loss of a part of the body; the presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness; the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of a person's body; a disorder or malfunction that results in a person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction; a disorder, illness or disease that affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgement, or that results in disturbed behaviour.

Disability Adviser/ Disability Liaison Officer

All universities have staff who are responsible for arranging disability services and reasonable adjustments for students with disability. These staff are known by various titles including Disability Advisers, Disability Liaison Officers, Disability Consultants, Disability Coordinators, or Equity Officers. Their role includes planning for assessment adjustments, exam provisions, equipment and assistive technology provision, liaison, advice and advocacy. To locate contact details for disability advisers at Australian universities, see www.adcet.edu.au/Uni_Disability_Advisers.chpx.

Disability Employment Service

Disability Employment Services play a specialist role in helping people with disability get ready to look for a job, find a job and keep a job in the open labour market. They provide a range of supports to meet individual needs, including training in specific job skills, job search support, on the job training and co-worker and employer supports. Disability Employment Services will replace the Disability Employment Network from 1 March 2010. See www.jobaccess.gov.au/JOAC/News/GovernmentunveilsnewDisab.htm.

Disability Discrimination Act

The Federal *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* provides protection for everyone in Australia against discrimination based on disability. Disability discrimination happens when people with a disability are treated less fairly because of their disability than people without a disability. Disability discrimination also occurs when people are treated less fairly because they

are relatives, friends, carers, co-workers or associates of a person with a disability. See www.hreoc.gov.au/disability_rights/dda_guide/dda_guide.htm.

Disability Standards for Education

The Disability Standards for Education help make sure everyone understands that, under the Disability Discrimination Act (1992), students with disability have the right to study on the same basis as students without disability. This means that a person with disability has the same right to take part in education and training as people without a disability. The Education Standards explain that there are times when a school, TAFE, training provider or university must make reasonable adjustments to allow people with disability to take part in education. See www.ddaedustandards.info.

Educational Access Scheme

The Educational Access Scheme (EAS) is designed to provide assistance to students who wish to go to university and have faced educational disadvantage, including having a disability, during their Higher School Certificate. Essentially EAS programs allow entry to students with a lower Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) than the usual ATAR cut off (the minimum ATAR score accepted for entry into the course). The aim is to balance the effect of the student's educational disadvantage on their ability to reach the marks needed to get into uni. See www.uac.edu.au/undergraduate/eas/ or <http://pubsites.uws.edu.au/ndco/getready/faq/faq12.htm> for more information.

Job Access

Job Access is an information and advice service funded by the Australian Government to offer help and workplace solutions for people with disability and their employers. It is an easy to use web site and a free telephone information and advice service where you can access confidential, expert advice on disability employment matters. See www.jobaccess.gov.au or call 1800 464 800.

Job Capacity Assessment

The Job Capacity Assessment is a comprehensive assessment, arranged through Centrelink, of an individual's ability to work. The assessment involves

identification of any barriers to employment and any assistance that may be required to help a person overcome those barriers. For people with medical conditions or disabilities, the assessment also identifies their current and future work capacity. The Job Capacity Assessment is used to determine the appropriate type and level of support that a person requires. As a result of this assessment, individuals may be referred to either Job Services Australia or a Disability Employment Service. See http://jobaccess.gov.au/Services/A-Z_list/Pages/Assessment_process.aspx

Job Services Australia

Job Services Australia is a national network of organisations, funded by DEEWR, and dedicated to helping job seekers to find and keep employment. It is designed to provide employment services tailored to the needs of individuals, and also operates as a recruitment service for employers. See www.deewr.gov.au/Employment/JSA/Pages/default.aspx.

HSC VET and TVET courses

School students can complete Vocational Education and Training courses as part of their Higher School Certificate. These courses are offered in a range of trade, service and professional areas and provide nationally recognised qualifications to assist students move into their chosen career area. They may be delivered at school or at TAFE (those delivered at TAFE are known as TVET courses). See www.det.nsw.edu.au/vetinschools/vet/index.html.

Inherent requirements

Inherent requirements are the essential tasks or skills required to successfully complete a course, or do a job. It is not against the law to exclude a person with a disability from a course or job if they cannot meet the inherent requirements, even with reasonable adjustments. See www.humanrights.gov.au/disability_rights/faq/Employment/employment_faq_1.html#inherent.

National Disability Coordination Officer (NDCO) Program

The NDCO Program provides services to help people with a disability move from school to post school education and training and then to employment. It does this by working directly with individuals, parents/carers, education

providers, employment services, and community and government services. See page 31, www.deewr.gov.au/ndco and www.uws.edu.au/ndco.

Reasonable adjustments

Adjustments are the things that education providers or employers do that allow people with disabilities to take part in education or employment on the same basis as others. For example, providing interpreters or note takers, extra time for exams, or workplace modifications. If an adjustment can be made to allow a person with disability to participate in education or employment on the same basis as others, and it is reasonable, then the education provider or employer must make that adjustment. If they don't make it, they will be acting against the law, unless that adjustment would cause them unjustifiable hardship. See

[www.jobaccess.gov.au/JOAC/Jobseekers/Getting_work/What should you consider before looking for work/What is reasonable adjustment/](http://www.jobaccess.gov.au/JOAC/Jobseekers/Getting_work/What_should_you_consider_before_looking_for_work/What_is_reasonable_adjustment/).

Registered Training Organisation

Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) are accredited providers of training and qualifications that are nationally recognised. RTOs are diverse, and include large organisations, professional associations, schools, TAFE and Adult and Community Education providers. Visit www.training.com.au to search for an RTO near you.

School based apprenticeship or traineeship

School based apprenticeships and traineeships provide students with the opportunity to attain a nationally recognised Vocational Education and Training (VET) qualification as well as their Higher School Certificate (HSC) and gain valuable work skills and experience through paid employment. See www.sbatinnsw.info.

School to Work Program

School to Work is a career development program for public school students in NSW. It aims to assist students to investigate post-school pathways, articulate skills, make informed decisions and self-manage their future career development. The program includes an online logbook, careers advisory service and pathways surveys. For more information, see www.schooltowork.com.au.

Teacher Consultants

TAFE NSW has specialist Teacher Consultants (TCs) for students with disabilities. TCs provide a range of services to assist students. These include helping you to choose an appropriate course, help with the enrolment process and help determining the appropriate classroom support and assessment modifications. The services provided may include tutorial support, the use of adaptive technology, a sign language interpreter, a note-taker or a disability assistant. For more information, and contact details, see www.tafensw.edu.au/students/support/disabilities.htm.

Traineeship

See Australian Apprenticeships.

Transition to Work program

Transition to Work (TTW) is a time-limited program which aims to support and improve employment outcomes for school leavers who can transition to work within one or two years. The program assists school leavers with a disability to develop skills that will help them move into employment, vocational education and training or higher education. For more information, see the ADHC website

www.dadhc.nsw.gov.au/dadhc/People+with+a+disability/Post+School+Programs.htm.

Willing and Able Mentoring

The Willing and Able Mentoring (WAM) Program matches enrolled university students who have a disability, and are registered with disability services, with mentors in leading organisations. Mentees are matched with mentors in their field of interest for a series of discussion meetings. See

www.graduatecareers.com.au/content/view/full/318.

The jargon explained

List of common acronyms

- AAC – Australian Apprenticeship Centre
- ACE – Adult and Community Education
- ADE – Australian Disability Enterprise
- ADHC – NSW Department of Human Services, Ageing, Disability and Home Care
- AHRC – Australian Human Rights Commission
- ATAR – Australian Tertiary Admission Rank
- CP – ADHC Community Participation Program
- DA – Disability Adviser
- DDA – Disability Discrimination Act (1992)
- DEEWR – Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
- DES – Disability Employment Service
- DET – NSW Department of Education and Training
- DLO – Disability Liaison Officer (alternative for DA)
- EAS – Educational Access Scheme
- IST – Itinerant Support Teacher
- JCA – Job Capacity Assessment
- NDCO – National Disability Coordination Officer

- RTO – Registered Training Organisation
- STT – Support Teacher (Transition)
- TAFE – Technical and Further Education
- TC – TAFE Teacher/Consultant
- TTW – ADHC Transition to Work Program
- VET – Vocational Education and Training
- WAM – Willing and Able Mentoring

Your local NDCO program

The NDCO Program provides services to help people with a disability move from school to post school education and training and then to employment. We work directly with individuals, parents, carers, education providers, employment services, and community and government services. Our activities include providing information and transition planning assistance, referral and coordination, resource development and training, and awareness raising and promotion.

Our goals are to:

- Improve transitions to help people with a disability from school or community into post-school education and training and subsequent employment.
- Increase participation by people with a disability in higher education, vocational education and training and employment.
- Establish better links between schools, universities, TAFEs, training providers and disability service providers so that they can work together to provide the best possible assistance for people with a disability.

In Western Sydney, your local NDCOs are based at the University of Western Sydney. You can find more information and our contact details at www.uws.edu.au/ndco, by emailing ndco@uws.edu.au or phoning (02) 9678 7378.

There are 31 NDCO positions in regions across Australia. For contact details outside of Western Sydney, consult the DEEWR website at www.deewr.gov.au/ndco.

**Good luck getting
ready for your life after
school!!!**