



National Disability Coordination Officer Programme  
AN AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE

# *What's the Difference?*

*School*



*Vocational Education and Training (VET)*



*University*

Information to help you make the right decision for your post school options

## HOW IS POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING DIFFERENT FROM HIGH SCHOOL?

ENROLMENT INTO HIGH SCHOOL	ENROLMENT INTO VET*	ENROLMENT INTO UNIVERSITY
Once you enrol at your high school you remain enrolled until you leave or graduate	You need to fill in a form to apply for entry into a course. The fact that a course is available is no guarantee that it will be offered. You will need to re-enrol every semester if you are doing a course for twelve months or longer.	You are required to enrol at least every year if not every term.
An enrolment form is completed and submitted by your parent/ guardian prior to your entry into high school	Once the RTO** accepts you into a course you must fill out an enrolment form. You must fill out the correct enrolment form depending on whether you are a <i>new or continuing</i> student.	Once the university makes you an offer of a place in a program you are responsible for accepting that offer.
Enrolment and subject selection are unrelated	To enrol you <i>must</i> complete the form and <i>pay</i> for your course. There may be penalties for late enrolment.	Enrolment is not complete until you select your courses for the term into which you are enrolling.
Your teachers, counsellors and parents can assist you in selecting your subjects and will complete any required paper work for you.	You are responsible for keeping your personal details in the RTO records up to date. Modules within each course are mostly pre-set by the RTO.	You are responsible for selecting, adding and dropping your courses before each term and completing the required process. A program adviser is available for advice only.
It is the responsibility of the school from which the student is coming to advise of any learning support needs to the high school. Decisions regarding any provision of support are based on an assessment process carried out by the teachers, Education Department, the parents/ guardians and the student.	Students with Disabilities or Chronic Medical Conditions are encouraged to advise the College upon enrolment into their course. Decisions regarding provision of support are based on professional documentation and personal negotiations between the student, the SSO at TAFE and the teachers/ lecturers.	Students with Disabilities or Chronic Medical Conditions are encouraged to advise the university as early as possible of their intention to apply to study. Decisions regarding provision of support will be based on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ professional documentation &amp;</li> <li>▪ case-by-case negotiations between the student and the staff of the University.</li> </ul>

\*VET, or Vocational Education and Training, includes courses at Institutes of TAFE, Agricultural Colleges, Apprenticeships and Traineeships as well as courses by private training providers – Registered Training Organisations.

\*\* RTO = Registered Training Organisation – includes TAFE

PERSONAL FREEDOM IN HIGH SCHOOL	PERSONAL FREEDOM IN VET	PERSONAL FREEDOM IN UNIVERSITY
High school is <i>mandatory</i> and up till grade 12 is <i>free</i> at a State funded high school (unless you choose other options).	Courses at RTOs are <i>voluntary</i> and most of them have fees.	Study at a university is <i>voluntary</i> and often <i>expensive</i> , although many fees can be deferred using HELP – Higher Education Loan Program.
While you may have some personal study time built in, the majority of your weekly timetable is structured by others.	Some courses have set timetables while others are fully self-paced and flexible. You are expected to manage your own time as much as possible.	The lecturer often sets the times for lectures. A choice of times for tutorials is usually offered. You are expected to manage your own personal study time.
You need permission to participate in extracurricular activities	You must decide whether to participate in extracurricular activities. ( <i>Hint: Choose wisely in the first semester and then add later.</i> )	You must decide whether to participate in extracurricular activities. ( <i>Hint: Choose wisely in the first semester and then add later.</i> )
You need money for special purchases or events.	You may need money to meet basic necessities if you live away from home.	You may need money to meet basic necessities if you live away from home.
You can count on parents and teachers to remind you of your responsibilities and to guide you in setting priorities.	Some lecturers will help you take responsibility for your studies. While counsellors are available you are responsible for your own moral and ethical decisions.	You will be faced with a large number of moral and ethical decisions you have not had to face on your own previously. <u>You</u> must balance your responsibilities and set priorities.
Guiding principle: You will usually be told what your responsibilities are and corrected if your behaviour is out of line.	Guiding principle: As an adult learner you are expected to take responsibility for what you do and don't do, as well as for the consequences of your decisions. If your behaviour is considered a safety risk, you may be excluded from a course with no second chance.	Guiding principle: As an adult learner you are expected to take responsibility for what you do and don't do, as well as for the consequences of your decisions. If your behaviour is considered a safety risk, you may be excluded from a course with no second chance.



<b>HIGH SCHOOL CLASSES</b>	<b>VET CLASSES</b>	<b>UNIVERSITY CLASSES</b>
Each day you proceed from one class directly to another according to the timetable provided. Some days you may have free periods that allow you to study.	Some courses run classes continually throughout the day while others have a more flexible approach.	You often have hours between lectures & tutorials at variable times throughout the day and week.
You spend 20-25hrs in class between the hours of 8.30am –3pm Mon – Fri	Classes and practical sessions can be held from as early as 7.30am or run as late as 9.30pm, any weekday depending on the level, delivery mode and nature of the course.	If you are an internal student studying full-time you can expect to spend 12 to 16 hours each week in lectures or tutorials between 8am – 9pm Mon – Fri.
The school year is 40 weeks long; some classes extend over both semesters and some do not.	Courses can be as short as one day in length or as long as two years.	The academic year is divided into separate 12-week terms, usually with a week at the end of term for exams. Universities vary in how many terms they may offer in a year.
Your classes are scheduled for you.	In some courses the timetable is pre-set while other courses are entirely self-paced by you.	You select your schedule from the timetable provided.
Teachers carefully monitor class attendance and your end of semester report will reflect this. You will be warned if non-attendance jeopardises Centrelink payments.	Teachers may not formally take roll, but they are still likely to know whether or not you attended. Failure to attend a practical session can lead to a grading of not competent. Non-attendance can result in Centrelink penalties without notice.	Lecturers and teachers may not formally take roll, but they are still likely to know whether or not you attended. Regular absence from lectures and tutorials can lead to a failure. Non-attendance can result in Centrelink penalties without notice.
Classes generally have no more than 25 students.	Classes usually number no more than 20 students.	Lectures may number from 100 students or more. Tutorial groups are smaller.
You are provided with textbooks at little or no expense.	You need to buy your own textbooks, tools, safety equipment/clothing, materials and stationery. In some practical courses this can cost more than \$200.	You need to budget substantial funds for textbooks, which at university will usually cost more than \$200 each term.
Graduation requirements are straightforward; you are guided in the provisions needed to graduate.	Graduation ceremonies are usually simple if they are held at all.	Graduation requirements are complex. You are expected to know those that apply to you.

<b>HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS</b>	<b>VET TEACHERS/LECTURERS</b>	<b>UNIVERSITY LECTURERS</b>
Teachers check your completed homework.	Teachers often don't check required reading, but will often base their assessment on the competent completion of set tasks.	Lecturers and teachers don't check required reading and responses to the literature, but they will assume the set tasks have been completed successfully.
Teachers remind you of your incomplete work.	Teachers may not remind you of incomplete work but often you will not pass the module until it is completed.	Lecturers may not remind you of incomplete work.
Teachers approach you if they believe you need assistance.	Teachers may not be aware you are having difficulty until it comes time to assess your competence. It is advisable to approach them if you do not understand.	Lecturers are usually open and helpful, but most expect you to approach them if you need assistance. It is not usual for a university lecturer to seek you out.
Teachers are often available for conversation before, during, or after class.	Teachers are usually available to answer questions and demonstrate good practice during classes only.	Lecturers expect and want you to attend their scheduled office hours.
Teachers have been trained in teaching methods to assist in imparting knowledge to students.	Teachers are experienced in their field and also have qualification in how to conduct training to at least Cert IV - Workplace Training and Assessment	Lecturers have been trained as experts in their particular areas of research.
Teachers provide you with information you missed when you were absent.	Teachers may tell you what was covered in a particular class but will expect you to catch up. They may or may not repeat any practical demonstrations you may have missed.	Lecturers expect you to obtain for yourself any notes from classes you missed.
Teachers present material to help you understand the material in the textbook.	Teachers will usually follow the textbook although they will add extra information. They may give illustrations, demonstrations or provide background information about the topic you are learning. You will be expected to relate the practical component to the textbook and vice-a-versa.	Lecturers may not follow the textbook. Instead, to amplify the text, they may give illustrations, provide background information, or discuss research about the topic you are studying. Or, they may expect <i>you</i> to relate the classes to the textbook readings.

Teachers often write information on the board to be copied in your notes or provide handouts of relevant information.	Teachers will intersperse discussion with practical activities or demonstrations. They will usually point out any vital information or skill that you are expected to remember or demonstrate.	Lecturers may lecture nonstop, expecting you to identify the important points in your notes. When lecturers write on the board, it may be to amplify the lecture, not to summarise it. Good notes are a must.
Teachers impart knowledge and facts, sometimes drawing direct connections and leading you through the thinking process.	Teachers impart knowledge and facts but also demonstrate the level of competence you will be expected to have in your assessment.	Lecturers expect you to think about and synthesise seemingly unrelated topics.
Teachers often take time to remind you of assignments and due dates.	Teachers will usually remind you of assignments and due dates but will expect you to be up to date with work and your progress towards competence.	Lecturers expect you to read, save, and consult the course profile/ outline; the profile/ outline spells out exactly what is expected of you, when it is due, and how you will be graded.



<b>STUDYING IN HIGH SCHOOL</b>	<b>STUDYING IN VET</b>	<b>STUDYING IN UNIVERSITY</b>
You may study outside of class as little as 0 to 5 hours a week.	Depending on the course you are doing you will need to spend approximately 5 hours a week practicing your skill development and the knowledge component of your course.	You need to study at least 2 to 3 hours outside of class for each hour in class e.g. 16 hrs of class time may require 30 hours of private study a week.
You often need to read or hear presentations only once to learn all you need to know about them.	You need to review class notes and text material regularly and practice skills regularly.	You need to review class notes and text material regularly.
You are expected to read short assignments e.g. a book chapter that are then discussed, and often re-taught, in class.	You may be required to read, understand and demonstrate complex procedures, formulae or recipes. In some courses there are substantial amounts of required readings.	You will be assigned substantial amounts of reading and writing, which may not be directly addressed in class.
Guiding principle: You will usually be told in class what you need to learn from assigned readings.	Guiding principle: It's up to you to read and understand the assigned material and practice the skills demonstrated to you; classes proceed from the assumption that you've already done so.	Guiding principle: It's up to you to read and understand the assigned material; lectures and assignments proceed from the assumption that you've already done so.



<b>EXAMS IN HIGH SCHOOL</b>	<b>EXAMS IN VET</b>	<b>EXAMS IN UNIVERSITY</b>
Exams are often frequent and cover small amounts of material.	You will have frequent opportunities to demonstrate your competence or knowledge in each module of work. The teacher will organise the materials required for you to complete these demonstrations.	Exams may be infrequent and may be cumulative, covering large amounts of material. You, not the lecturer, need to organise the material to prepare for the exam. A particular course may have as little as 1 exam in a term.
Makeup exams are often available.	You are often allowed multiple opportunities to demonstrate your competence if you fail at the first attempt.	Makeup exams are seldom an option; if they are, you need to request them.
Teachers frequently rearrange exam dates to avoid conflict with school events.	Exam schedules depend on availability of venues and materials, the teacher's timetable and course deadlines.	Lecturers in different courses usually schedule exams at the start of term without regard to the demands of other courses or outside activities. In fact most exams are scheduled to occur in a formal exam period (7 days) that falls at the end of term.
Teachers frequently conduct review sessions, pointing out the most important concepts.	Teachers may conduct review sessions, pointing out important concepts, skills or knowledge required to demonstrate competence.	Lecturers rarely offer review sessions, and when they do, they expect you to be an active participant, one who comes prepared with questions.
Mastery is usually seen as the ability to reproduce what you were taught in the form in which it was presented to you, or to solve the kinds of problems you were shown how to solve.	Mastery is usually seen as the ability to competently complete a task, demonstrate knowledge or solve a problem utilising all the skills and knowledge imparted during the course.	Mastery is often seen as the ability to creatively apply what you've learned to new situations or to solve new kinds of problems.
Teachers will organise special provisions on behalf of students with a disability.	Students with a disability who require special provisions must negotiate with a SSO (TAFE) or other disability adviser to organise special provisions. This should be done at the start of a course through a Disability Access Plan wherever possible.	Students with a disability who require special provisions must negotiate with the university's disability adviser to organise special provisions. This should be done at the start of a course through a Disability Access Plan wherever possible.



<b>GRADES IN HIGH SCHOOL</b>	<b>GRADES IN VET</b>	<b>GRADES IN UNIVERSITY</b>
Grades are given for most assigned work.	Grades are not assigned at all. Students must demonstrate their competence in each module.	Grades may not be provided for all assigned work.
Consistently good homework grades may help raise your overall grade when exam grades are low.	Competency in class activities does not count for the final assessment unless the teacher says that it does.	Grades on exams, assignments and tutorial presentations provide the entire course grade.
Initial exam grades, especially when they are low, may not have an adverse effect on your final grade.	Competency in each module is often a prerequisite for subsequent modules.	Your <i>first</i> exams are usually "wake-up calls" to let you know what is expected - but they also may account for a substantial part of your course grade. You may be shocked when you get your grades.
You may graduate as long as you have passed all required courses	You may graduate only if you have successfully demonstrated 85% of all competencies. It is compulsory to be able to demonstrate certain competencies.	You may graduate only if your average in classes meets the faculty / school standard



<b>RESOURCES IN HIGH SCHOOL</b>	<b>RESOURCES IN VET</b>	<b>RESOURCES IN UNIVERSITY</b>
Some equipment such as laptop computers may be provided by the school on a long term loan basis for use across schooling and at home.	Services that are required to make a subject accessible (such as interpreters, assistive technology etc) will only be provided for use in class.	Services that are required to make a subject accessible (such as interpreters, assistive technology etc) will only be provided for use in class.
Textbooks etc will usually be provided free of charge on a long term loan basis by the school.	All textbooks required for study must be purchased by the student. The VET provider may assist with acquiring accessible formats such as Braille, large print or electronic copies of texts.	All textbooks required for study must be purchased by the student. The VET provider may assist with acquiring accessible formats such as Braille, large print or electronic copies of texts.
Schools will provide tools for practical subjects free of charge to students.	Only large plant/equipment will be provided free of charge for student use. Students will need to purchase their own tools (eg: knives for cookery students or beauty kits for hair and beauty students). Equipment and tools students are required to purchase may cost many hundreds of dollars.	Provision of equipment will vary from course to course, but may cost many hundreds of dollars.
Students will not be charged for the cost of flexible teaching, learning or assessment.	Students will not be charged for the cost of flexible teaching, learning or assessment.	Students will not be charged for the cost of flexible teaching, learning or assessment.
Attendant or personal care is provided through the school.	VET providers do not provide personal or attendant care services. Students should talk to the disability service provider about these arrangements or contact the disability contact person in the VET Provider to ask about how to make private arrangements.	Universities do not provide personal or attendant care services. Students should talk to the disability service provider about these arrangements or contact the university's Disability Adviser to ask about how to make private arrangements.



**Students with a disability, learning difficulty or chronic medical condition must be considered in:**

- Enrolment
- Course participation
- Curriculum development, accreditation and delivery
- Student support services
- Elimination of harassment and victimisation

**Check out:**

[www.ddaedustandards.info](http://www.ddaedustandards.info)

[www.humanrights.gov.au](http://www.humanrights.gov.au)

**Remember:**

Any adjustments made for disability must be reasonable.

**The law won't support:**

- Lowering of standards
- Ignoring the inherent competency requirements
- Ignoring health and safety

**Practical help you could ask for as part of a disability access plan**

- Readers such as screen readers to read text aloud from an electronic file
- Voice recognition software
- Auslan interpreters
- Text in alternative formats
- Adaptation of equipment
- Alternative assessment methods
- Extra time for essays, exams and work
- Physical access modifications
- Hearing loops or assistive hearing devices
- Special equipment
- Note takers
- Electronic versions of lectures

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE **NDCO** PROGRAM:

<https://education.gov.au/ndcoprogramme>

IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA:

[www.ndcosa.com.au](http://www.ndcosa.com.au)



The National Disability Coordination Officer Programme (Region 23) is provided in partnership



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