

Pathways to Further Education and Training

Students leaving school have a number of ways in which they can move towards their career goals. Such options, known as pathways, enable students to undertake full-time study or combine work with study to help them obtain qualifications necessary for their desired occupations.

There are many ways to move up the ladder within an industry or to change jobs as a result of further education or training. This handout outlines some of the features of Australia's education and training system that can help young people improve their job prospects or work satisfaction over time.

People who gain recognised qualifications have a better chance of obtaining jobs which offer the potential for more variety and, generally, higher levels of pay.

The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) has been developed to provide a national system for qualifications from the three education sectors in Australia - schools, vocational education and training (TAFE and private providers), and higher education (universities). Table 1 shows the AQF qualifications.

It is possible to progress from one level of qualification to another within a particular sector (e.g. Certificate IV to Diploma at TAFE), or from one sector to another (e.g. Diploma at TAFE or a private provider to a Bachelor degree at university) depending on results and institutional policies. The progression from one level to another is called articulation.

Depending on the qualification and field of study, you may gain credit (also called advanced standing) based on your previous course for part of your next course.

Competency-based training

Most vocational education and training is competency based (CBT). CBT is all about what a person knows and what they can do, regardless of how they obtained the training. Competencies can be recorded on a training record and can lead to an AQF qualification. They can be obtained through:

- Vocational education subjects
- Some Authority and Authority-registered subjects
- Structured work placement/industry placement
- School-based apprenticeships and traineeships
- Courses at TAFE institutes or other registered training organisations
- Paid or unpaid work
- Life experiences
- A combination of the above.

The process used to assess the competencies a person has gained from past experience and training is called recognition of prior learning (RPL).

Diagram 1: Common pathways to AQF qualifications

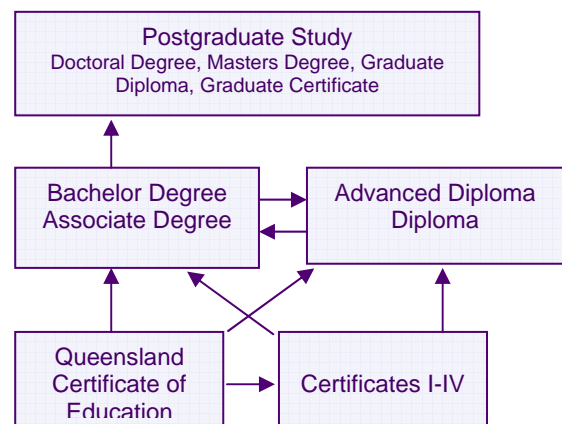


Table 1: The Australian Qualifications Framework (from the AQF website at <http://www.aqf.edu.au>)

AQF Qualifications by Educational Sector

Schools Sector	Vocational Education and Training Sector	Higher Education Sector
Senior secondary Certificates of education	Advanced Diploma Diploma Certificate IV Certificate III Certificate II Certificate I	Doctoral Degree Masters Degree Graduate Diploma Graduate Certificate Bachelor Degree Associate Degree Advanced Diploma Diploma

Multiple pathways

Under the AQF, articulation and credit transfer mean that students can gain qualifications by following different education and training pathways. The following case studies give examples.

Jonathan was interested in a career in the hospitality industry and hoped one day to have his own restaurant. During Years 11 and 12 he worked part-time at McDonald's. At the end of Year 12 he applied for a trainee manager's position with McDonald's. He also registered at Centrelink and a local group training company for a hospitality traineeship. In addition, he applied through QTAC for a Diploma of Hospitality Management and directly to TAFE for a Certificate III in Hospitality. He believed that any of these options would help him obtain a nationally recognised qualification that would eventually help him achieve his goal.



Jonathan

Rebecca



At school, Rebecca studied a combination of Authority and Authority-registered subjects. She also completed a Certificate I in Warehousing. At the end of Year 12, she successfully applied for a traineeship in warehousing. Because of her Certificate I, Rebecca was given advanced standing as she had already completed some parts of the formal course requirements. At the end of the traineeship she received a Certificate II in Warehousing. This helped her to gain a full-time job. Rebecca now has enough experience and training to progress in the warehousing industry. She also feels she has skills that could be used in other industries if she ever needs or wants to change.

Jack

Jack wanted to be a radiographer. At the end of Year 12 his OP was not high enough to gain entry into the medical radiation technology course at QUT. Jack's second occupational preference was nursing and he gained entry into the B. Nursing at ACU. After completing this course Jack worked as a nurse for one year while doing a physics bridging course at QUT. The following year he gained entry to the medical radiation technology course at QUT.



Caitlin



Caitlin always wanted to be a veterinary surgeon. At the end of Year 12 she applied for a degree course in veterinary science at UQ but missed out because her OP wasn't high enough. She gained entry to her second QTAC preference – a science degree at UQ. After successfully completing one year of this degree she had upgraded enough to gain entry to the veterinary science degree.

Patrick had always wanted to be a graphic designer. He applied for a Bachelor of Design Studies at Griffith University's Queensland College of Art but missed out on gaining a place as his OP was not high enough. Instead he was offered a place in the Diploma of Graphic Design at Southbank Institute of TAFE. While doing this course, Patrick worked part-time with a professional graphic designer. At the completion of the course, he was offered a full-time job as a graphic designer.



Patrick