

# International Student Employment Guide



Produced by the Careers and Employability team.

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## Overview

### Welcome to the International Student Employment Guide!

This guide, created by the Careers and Employability team at Federation University, will help you understand employment in Australia. Finding a job in a new country can be exciting, but it can also feel overwhelming. That's why we've put together this guide—to give you the information and support you need to find work in Australia.

In this guide, you will find information that is tailored to international students like yourself. From understanding the services offered by the Careers and Employability team to practical tips on job applications and Australian work culture, we've got you covered every step of the way.

Some work-related issues can be complex and may require specialised, expert advice. In those cases, the Careers and Employability team might not be able to assist directly. To help you navigate these situations, we've included external resources in this guide for you to explore.

### What can the Careers and Employability team help you with?

The Careers and Employability team at Federation University offers services to help you improve your employability (having the skills and qualities to get and keep a job).

- **Book a FREE one-on-one career appointment on EDGE:** Book a 30-minute appointment to discuss anything career or job related. Login to EDGE using your student details: <https://federation-csm.symplicity.com/>
- **Find a local job on EDGE:** Find jobs that are local to each of Federation University's campuses. Login to EDGE using your student details: <https://federation-csm.symplicity.com/>
- **Improve your resume, cover letter, or key selection criteria documents:** Email us your job application documents as a Word document to gain feedback. Email us at: [edge@federation.edu.au](mailto:edge@federation.edu.au)
- **Learn from career resources:** Find how to guides and examples on the Careers and Employability Resource Hub. Just login with your student details: <https://federationuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/cae>

View our webpage to explore our other services:



<https://federation.edu.au/current-students/assistance-support-and-services/student-development-and-careers>

## Before starting work in Australia

Before you start working in Australia, you should do three things:

- apply for a tax file number,
- open an Australian bank account, and
- know your visa conditions.

You can start looking for a job while you are doing these steps, but it is recommended that you complete or start them before you receive a job offer because they will make working in Australian easier.

### 1. Apply for a tax file number (TFN)

To work in Australia, you need a tax file number, which is also called a TFN. You will need to give your employer your tax file number, therefore it is recommended that you apply for one as soon as possible. Applying for a TFN is FREE and it can take up to 28 days to be processed. If you are ever asked for money for a TFN, then you are being scammed.

You can apply online for a TFN on the Australian Taxation Office website:

<https://www.ato.gov.au/single-page-applications/iar#beforeStart>

For more information about applying for a TFN, please visit the below webpage from the Australian Taxation Office website:

<https://www.ato.gov.au/individuals-and-families/tax-file-number/apply-for-a-tfn/foreign-passport-holders-permanent-migrants-and-temporary-visitors-tfn-application>

Here are QR codes of the above links:

Apply for a TFN:



More information about a TFN:



### 2. Have an Australian bank account

Having an Australian bank account is not required but it is highly recommended because it gives international student benefits such as:

- **Lower fees:** Using a foreign bank account in Australia results in international transfer and current conversion fees. By using an Australian bank account, you will save money by not paying these fees.
- **Easy payroll processing:** Your employer will be able to pay your wages more easily to an Australian bank account. There is often a delay when paying an international account.
- **Easy local payments:** Having an Australian debit card will make it easy to pay at local businesses such as restaurants, cafes, and grocery stores. Not all businesses will be compatible with foreign debit cards.

Visit any bank in Australia to talk to them about your bank account options. You can view bank account options online, but it is recommended that you apply in-person because they can help you find the best bank account for an international student (i.e. an account with low international fees).

### 3. Know your visa conditions

It is very important that you know the conditions of your visa, and that you check the maximum hours that you, as an international student, are allowed to work each fortnight (two weeks). Potential employers need to be aware of how many hours you are allowed to work, and any work-related conditions to your visa, such as the end date.

The most common visa that international students have is the student visa. If you have a student visa, visit this webpage on the Study Australia website to learn your current work hours:

<https://www.studyaustralia.gov.au/en/plan-your-move/your-guide-to-visas/student-visa-subclass-500>

If you are not on a student visa, visit this webpage on the Study Australia website to find your visa and learn your visa conditions and maximum work hours:

<https://www.studyaustralia.gov.au/en/plan-your-move/your-guide-to-visas>

Here are QR codes of the above links:

Student visa information



Other visa information





## Employment in Australia

Before you start looking for a job, it is important to understand how employment works in Australia. This section will introduce you to Australian work culture, the different types of employment, annual and sick leave entitlements, and where to find information on tax and superannuation.

### Australia's work culture

Work culture refers to the values, beliefs, and behaviours that employees are expected to follow. These can vary across countries and workplaces. By understanding Australian work culture, you can better prepare yourself for success and avoid misunderstandings. Below are six key aspects of Australian work culture that most businesses follow:

1. **Direct Communication:** Australians value clear, straightforward communication. It's common to express opinions openly and honestly, which is seen as a sign of respect. Be prepared for constructive criticism, and don't hesitate to share your ideas or ask questions.
2. **Teamwork:** Collaboration is highly valued in Australian workplaces. You will often work in teams and are expected to contribute actively and support your colleagues.
3. **Work-Life Balance:** Maintaining a balance between work and personal life is important in Australia. Employees typically leave work on time to focus on their personal lives. Make sure to ask your employer about your work hours and limits.
4. **Punctuality:** Being on time for work and meetings is seen as a sign of respect. Aim to arrive a little early (e.g., 10 minutes) to allow time for parking and settling in.
5. **Professional Development:** Australians value continuous learning and career growth. Take advantage of training and development opportunities offered by your employer to build your skills and progress in your career.
6. **Informality:** Australian workplaces are often relaxed and informal. First names are commonly used, even with senior staff, and there is usually less emphasis on formal hierarchies or titles.

### Types of employment

There are four types of employment in Australia: **full-time**, **part-time**, **casual**, and **fixed-term contracts**. As an international student that is also completing a university degree, you are likely to be employed as a **part-time** or **casual employee**.

The table on the next page compares **full-time**, **part-time** and **casual work**.

#### What are **fixed-term contracts**?

- These contracts have a set end date, usually lasting up to a maximum of 2 years. This end date is what makes the job a fixed-term contract.
- A fixed-term contract can be full-time, part-time, or casual. The job will have the same characteristics as its type (full-time, part-time, or casual) but with a defined end date.
- Fixed-term contracts are often used for seasonal work or specific projects that have a clear end point.

Category	Full-time	Part-time	Casual
Hours per Week	Usually 38 hours	Less than 38 hours, but hours are consistent each week	Varies, no guaranteed hours, hours can change each week
Overtime Pay	Yes, for hours worked over 38 hours	Yes, for hours worked over the agreed hours per week	Depends on the contract (ask the employer)
Pay Rate	Fixed salary or hourly rate	Fixed hourly rate	Higher hourly rate because of casual loading
Leave Entitlements	76 hours of paid annual leave, sick leave	Annual, sick leave paid based on hours worked per week	No paid leave entitlements
Superannuation	Yes	Yes	Yes
Job Security	High, ongoing employment	High, ongoing employment	Low, irregular employment based on employer's need
Termination	Employer or employee needs to give notice	Employer or employee needs to give notice	Can be terminated without notice

Definitions (in order of appearance):

- **Casual Loading:** Extra pay that casual employees get to make up for not having benefits like paid sick leave or annual leave.
- **Leave Entitlements:** The right to take time off work (such as sick leave or annual leave) while still being paid.
- **Sick Leave:** Paid time off work that employees can take when they are unwell. For more information go to the 'What is sick leave?' section.
- **Annual Leave:** Paid vacation time that employees can use each year to take a break from work. For more information, go to the 'What is annual leave?' section.
- **Superannuation:** Money that employers must pay into a retirement savings account for their employees. For more information, go to the 'Tax and Superannuation' section.
- **Termination:** The end of an employment contract, either because the employee quits, or the employer ends it.
- **Job Security:** How safe and stable a job is, meaning the employee is less likely to be fired or laid off.

### What is annual leave?

Annual leave is paid time off that permanent employees (full-time or part-time) can use for any purpose, such as taking a holiday, resting, or handling personal activities—without losing their regular income.

Annual leave starts accruing from the first day of employment and does not expire.

Each year:

- **Full-time employees** receive 4 weeks (or 20 days) of annual leave based on their ordinary hours of work.
- **Part-time employees** accrue leave based on the hours they work. For example, if Adam works 25 hours per week for a year, he will accrue 100 hours of annual leave.

Employers often have specific policies about how and when annual leave can be taken. Typically, employees need to request annual leave in advance and gain approval from their supervisors. If you're unsure, ask your current employer about their leave policies, or inquire about annual leave during a job interview.

### What is sick leave?

Sick leave is paid time off from work that permanent employees (part-time or full-time) can use when they need to address their health needs, such as an illness or injury. This allows employees to recover from health issues without the added stress of not being paid and prevents the spread of illness within the workplace.

Some employers may require a medical certificate or doctor's note, which are letters written by a doctor that serves as proof that the employee was sick (there is no difference between the two documents; they are just two names for the same document). Visit a general practitioner (GP) while you are unwell to obtain a medical certificate or doctor's note.

Each year, full-time and part-time employees receive **2 weeks of sick leave**, based on their ordinary hours of work:

- **Full-time employees** receive 2 weeks (or 10 days) of sick leave per year.
- **Part-time employees** accrue sick leave based on the hours they work. For example, if Adam works 3 days per week, he would accrue 6 days of sick leave per year.

Employers may provide sick leave in two ways:

1. **Upfront:** All sick leave is given at the start of employment or the beginning of each year.
2. **Accrued:** Sick leave starts accruing from the first day of employment.

Regardless of the method, sick leave does not expire. If you're unsure, ask your employer about their sick leave policy, or inquire during a job interview to understand how it works at their business.

### Tax and Superannuation

When working in Australia, you also need to be aware of tax and superannuation. Due to the complexity of tax and superannuation, the Careers and Employability team at Federation University are not able to answer specific enquiries about your tax and superannuation status.

For up-to-date resources about tax and superannuation, please visit the Study Australia website, which has information that is designed for international students:



<https://www.studyaustralia.gov.au/en/work-in-australia/work-rights-and-responsibilities/tax-and-superannuation>



## Getting a job

Before searching for a job, you need to know what you are looking for. As an international student that is currently studying, you will be looking for a **casual** or **part-time** job that has similar hours per week to your visa conditions.

In Australia, the basic process for getting a job is finding a job, applying for a job, attending a job interview, and accepting a job offer. The following sections will take you through each of these steps.

### 1. Find a job



#### Job search platforms

Job search platforms are online tools that connect job seekers with potential employers. They are used to simplify the job search process, making it easier and more efficient to find and apply for job opportunities.

Below is a list of eight job search platforms and their unique strengths:

#### 1. EDGE – <https://federation-csm.symplicity.com/>

EDGE is a job search platform that was created for Federation University students. It posts jobs from employers that are local to each campus. You can login using your Federation University username and password.

- **Strength:** Ideal for Federation University students that are looking for a job that is nearby to their campus, which allows student to balance their academic and work commitments more easily.



#### 2. Prosple – <https://au.prosple.com/>

Prosple is a job search platform that focuses on graduate and entry-level positions and features job listings, internships, and graduate programs from a wide range of industries.

- **Strength:** Ideal for international students and recent graduates. Has employer profiles, application tips, and industry insights.



### 3. Seek – <https://www.seek.com.au/>

Seek is one of Australia's largest job search platforms, offering a wide range of job listings across various industries.

**Strength:** Ideal for healthcare, trades or administrative jobs. Has company reviews and salary insights which can be helpful when choosing a job.



### 4. LinkedIn – <https://www.linkedin.com/jobs/>

LinkedIn is a global professional networking platform that is also a job search platform.

**Strength:** Ideal for technology, finance, marketing, and consulting jobs, and for people with higher education and professional experience.



### 5. Indeed – <https://au.indeed.com/>

Indeed collects job listings from thousands of websites, including company career pages and recruitment agencies.

**Strength:** User-friendly interface and has multiple search filters which help you to narrow down your search.



### 6. Career Jet – <https://www.careerjet.com.au/>

Career Jet collects job listings from other websites to allow people to find a lot of job listings, including international jobs, from a single search.

**Strength:** You can access a wide range of jobs from a variety of sources in a single search.



### 7. Talent.com – <https://au.talent.com/jobs>

Talent.com is a job search platform that offers a wide range of job listings across different sectors.

**Strength:** Has a user-friendly interface, and multiple job search filters.



### 8. Workforce Australia – <https://www.workforceaustralia.gov.au/individuals/>

Workforce Australia is a job search platform that is supported by the government and connects job seekers with employment opportunities and support services.

**Strength:** Ideal for those who may need additional assistance, such as those with disabilities, veterans, and the long-term unemployed.



### **Your task:**

Choose two job search platforms, and search for jobs. Check these platforms once or twice per week to look for new jobs to apply for. Go to the 'Apply for a Job' section for more information on how to apply for a job. Set up alerts on the platform so that you are notified when new jobs come out relevant to your job searches.

### **Informal job searching**

While job search platforms are a powerful tool, more than 60% of jobs are found through informal job-hunting methods. Here are some effective alternative methods to consider:

#### **For part-time or casual positions while studying**

##### **1. Company Websites**

Many companies post job openings directly on their own website. Regularly checking the careers or jobs section of these sites can help you find opportunities that may not be advertised elsewhere. Bookmark these pages and return to them frequently.

For example, Spotlight, Bunnings, McDonald's, Coles, Woolworths, and Kmart often have dedicated careers pages where you can find local job openings.

##### **2. Local Newspapers & Facebook**

Traditional newspapers often have a dedicated section for job listings. This can include both print and online editions of local newspapers. Local newspapers can be especially useful for finding job opportunities within your community that may not be widely advertised.

Similarly, it can be a good idea to join the local community's Facebook group. Often local people will put up an ad for a casual worker they need.

##### **3. Shop Windows**

Retail stores, cafes, and restaurants often advertise job openings in their windows. Walking around your local area (both near your university campus and near your accommodation) and looking for "Help Wanted" signs can uncover opportunities. For many part-time or entry-level jobs, applying in person can be very effective. Dress neatly and have your hair styled and fingernails. Bring copies of your resume and visit local businesses to inquire about job openings. This shows initiative and can make a strong impression on potential employers. Bring the information you'll need to fill out an application, including names and addresses of previous employers, dates of employment, references, and a resume. Be prepared for a brief on-the-spot interview.

#### 4. Clubs, Societies, and Groups

Like volunteering, being active in clubs, societies, religious groups, and sporting groups can help you build a network of contacts. People you meet in these settings may know of job openings or be able to refer you to opportunities.

#### Recommended industries for international students seeking casual or part-time work

##### 1. Retail

- **Job titles:** Sales assistant, cashier, stock clerk.
- **Benefits:** Flexible hours, often part-time or shift work, opportunities to work evenings and weekends.
- **Examples:** Clothing stores, supermarkets (e.g., Coles, Woolworths), department stores (e.g., Kmart, Target, Myer, David Jones, Cotton On, JB Hi-Fi).

##### 2. Supermarkets and Grocery Stores

- **Job titles:** Shelf stacker, checkout operator, online order picker.
- **Benefits:** Flexible shift work, opportunities for part-time employment, often hiring.
- **Examples:** Local supermarkets (e.g., Coles, Woolworths, ALDI, IGA), convenience stores.

##### 3. Hospitality

- **Job titles:** Waitstaff, barista, kitchen hand, host/hostess, bartender.
- **Benefits:** Shift work, potential for tips, opportunities in both small cafes and large restaurants/hotels.
- **Examples:** Restaurants, cafes, fast food outlets (e.g., McDonald's), hotels (e.g., Crown Melbourne).

##### 4. Customer Service

- **Job titles:** Call centre operator, customer service representative, front desk receptionist.
- **Benefits:** Flexible hours, skills transferable to many industries, often offers part-time and evening shifts.
- **Examples:** Retail stores, telecommunications companies (e.g., Telstra, Optus), banks (e.g., ANZ, Commonwealth, NAB, Westpac), health services (e.g., Medibank), airlines (e.g., QANTAS, Virgin).

### For jobs related to your degree

As you near the completion of your degree, you will be focusing on finding work that is related to your degree. These jobs use the knowledge and skills you've acquired through your studies.

#### **1. Social Media**

Following companies and industry leaders on LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook can help you stay informed about job openings and career advice. Many organizations post job openings and updates on their social media pages.

#### **2. Company Websites**

Many companies list job openings on their own websites. Visiting the careers section of companies, you're interested in ensures you are directly applying to the company, which can sometimes be faster and more reliable than using third-party job sites.

#### **3. Professional Associations**

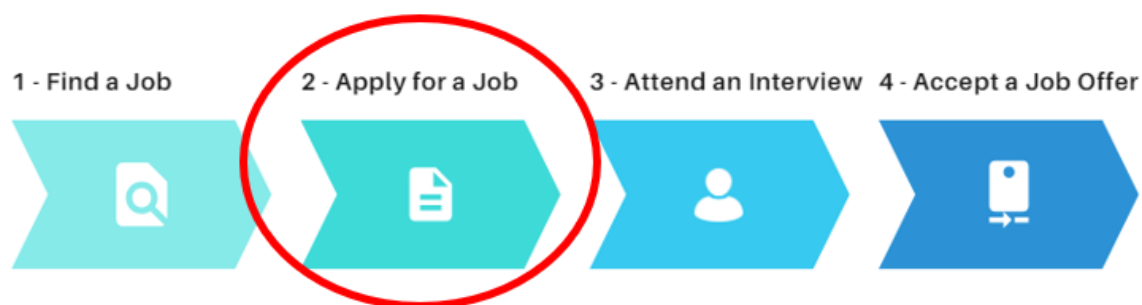
Joining industry-specific associations and societies can give you access to job boards and career resources. These associations often provide exclusive job listings and networking opportunities that can help you advance your career. You can ask ChatGPT to provide you with a list of the professional associations related to your discipline.

#### **4. Career Fairs**

Attending university career fairs and industry-specific job fairs allows you to meet potential employers face-to-face. Bring multiple copies of your resume and be prepared to discuss your qualifications and career goals.



## 2. Apply for a job



While hiring practices can vary for different roles and industries, job applications usually require a cover letter, resume and answers to selection criteria. For each job you apply for, you must read the criteria properly and only include what documents they ask for.

As an international student you will need to understand the type of visa that you have, as this will need to be communicated to future employers when applying for a job. On a student visa there is a restriction to how many hours you are allowed to work while studying. Make sure to check the Department of Home Affairs webpage below to remain up to date with any changes to policies:



<https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-listing/student-500>

Understanding how to write a cover letter and resume is important for securing employment opportunities. A well-crafted resume and cover letter will not only highlight your unique skills and experiences but also demonstrate your ability to communicate professionally and adapt to the local job market's expectations. These documents can also address potential concerns about visa and work authorisation, facilitating a smoother hiring process.

### Cover letter

A cover letter is a formal written introduction in your job application. It is to introduce yourself, and highlight relevant skills, qualifications, and experience so you will be considered for a job interview. Employers use a cover letter to quickly decide if an applicant meets the minimum selection criteria and demonstrates an appropriate background for the position. Your cover letter should provide an active incentive for an employer to find out more about you in your resume. It is very important that your Cover Letter captures the employer's attention.

Your Cover Letter should answer two key questions:

1. Why are you the right fit for the job?
2. How will you add value to the organisation?

As an international student, it is crucial that you state in your cover letter what type of visa you are on, what your work rights are, and the number of hours that you can work each fortnight. Having this up front reassures employers that you know your work rights and can guide them through it. Be sure

to state any Australian work experience that you have, and if you are looking for work in an industry that has local regulations, make sure that you indicate that you are aware of these.

Your English skills are also important. Employers will gain an understanding of your English writing ability by reading your job application, so make sure each part of this is done very well. In addition, you can add a link to your LinkedIn profile to the personal details section on your cover letter, and on your LinkedIn page, have a video of yourself introducing yourself to potential employers and briefly outlining what work you are looking for. This will demonstrate your ability to speak English well.

## Formatting and Style

Format your Cover Letter in a concise and easy to read business style, that contains:

- One A4 typed page
- 10–12-point standard font (e.g., Times New Roman, Arial)
- Address your letter to a particular person, not ‘To whom it may concern’ (if unsure, Google search the company’s HR team or call and ask)
- Clear structure – one main idea per paragraph
- Plenty of white space (standard margins and space between paragraphs)
- 100% accurate spelling and grammar
- Short, well-constructed sentences, not unnecessarily long and wordy
- A positive tone (do not include your weaknesses)
- Plain English (avoid slang, SMS language or other abbreviations, jargon or terms which are too casual)

## Content

Target the letter to the position and to the organisation. Don’t use too many ‘I’ statements in your letter. You need to be highlighting how you can use your skills to be of benefit to the organisation.

For example, instead of *‘I have excellent research and information gathering skills that make me a good candidate for this role’*, try *‘Bringing my excellent research and information gathering skills to this position ensures that the needs of [company’s name] clients will be understood, and tailored services will be developed and delivered’*.

The letter should demonstrate strong written communication skills, your level of interest in the position, your knowledge of the organisation, and a brief description of your relevant skills. Use well-structured paragraphs and points supported by your resume.

Include:

- Your name, phone number and email (and possibly LinkedIn profile link)
- Today’s date
- The recipient’s name, title, organisation, and address
- A formal greeting to the relevant contact person (Dear Tina Jones – do not use first names only. Do not write, Dear Tina.)
- The purpose of the letter, including details of the position (position title, reference number)
- Evidence of your interest in the position and the field – state why you want the job

- Show your research into, and interest in the organisation
- Your skills and experience as they will be useful in the role applied for

The content should **not** include:

- A simple list of your skills without any supporting evidence of demonstrated skills
- Sentences or phrases copied directly from the organisation's website

## Structure

Opening paragraph – spark the employer's interest	<p>Why are you attracted to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- this position? and/or</li> <li>- this organisation? and/or</li> <li>- the field or industry?</li> </ul> <p>Demonstrate your research into the organisation.</p>
Middle paragraph – demonstrate 'fit'	<p>Why you?</p> <p>Focus on their top 3 to 5 skills and attributes. Provide specific examples as evidence. Stress relevant accomplishments.</p>
Closing paragraph – ask for interview	<p>Summarise what you offer them. Be positive in your expectations. Thank them.</p>

When employers are looking to hire international students, they have some common concerns. To address these, you may wish to consider how your Cover Letter:

- shows you are a good cultural fit for the organisation
- shows you are reliable and good at getting things done on time
- shows that you have self-initiative and can take control when things get off track
- shows that you can speak up when required

We recommend you go to the Careers & Employability Resource Hub and find our example cover letters for your discipline (I.T., Social Work, Nursing etc). Use this example to guide you in writing your cover letter. After you have done this, we recommend you send a Word (not a PDF) copy of your cover letter to the Careers & Employability team. We will edit your letter and provide you with feedback. Email your cover letter to [edge@federation.edu.au](mailto:edge@federation.edu.au) and remember to include your name and student number in your email.

## Resume

A resume is a written document of everything that relates to your work history. Your resume can include your experience, skills, achievements, education, and qualifications. It is vital that your resume is well structured and only contains relevant or transferrable information about you in relation to the target job or field.

## Formatting

- All your information needs to be presented in an organised and logical fashion with meaningful headings and subheadings. Put the most important things first.
- Your resume must be concise, generally between 2-3 pages depending upon your level of experience, however, resumes for academic positions (within universities for example) may be longer, depending on numbers of publications and conference presentations.
- Check the job application to see whether they have page restrictions or special requirements.
- Use a conventional font such as Times New Roman, Calibri, or Arial, and use size 10 – 12.
- Formatting must be consistent throughout the document, including indents, fonts, and dot point styles.
- Avoid tables - they are difficult to read and cause problems for e-read software.
- Do not over crowd each page; leave space between sections, make sure margins are not too narrow
- Convert your resume to .pdf format before sending in your job application.

## Content

The single most important thing to keep in mind when designing your resume is to **understand and target** your audience. You may have several versions of a resume that you will use for different audiences – for example part-time customer services jobs, course related internships, vacation jobs and graduate jobs. Each audience will be looking for information specific to their needs. Structuring or re-structuring your headings to reflect the important aspects of your career will convey a message that you are suited to the position. Tailoring your resume to the position means understanding what the company is about. To know this, go to their website and look for key elements, words and phrases that will help you build an understanding of the company culture. It will help to have some of these key words or phrasing included in your resume.

## Structure and headings

While the headings in your resume will remain consistent, their order should be adjusted based on the job you're applying for. This approach ensures that the most critical information is highlighted at the top, capturing the employer's attention immediately.

For instance, when applying for a casual job in retail, they will want to see any previous, related work you have done, while your degree is unimportant. Therefore, your previous work experience would be at the top of the resume, and your education would be listed further down.

Similarly, when applying for a professional job in IT, your degree should be placed at the top of your resume, as it demonstrates your qualifications and expertise in the field, which is essential information for the employer.

### Headings for your resume:

#### Personal Details

- Include your first and last name, phone number/s and e-mail address. For overseas jobs, include international dialling codes and provide your citizenship and/or residency status.

#### *Hints and tips –*

- It is not necessary to provide marriage status, date of birth or other personal details unless it is a requirement of the job.
- If you have a LinkedIn profile, provide the link as part of your contact information
- Make sure your email address is professional and not offensive
- Put the correct spaces in your telephone number

#### Career Goal or Personal Statement

- This section or heading is optional and should be used carefully and be well-written, linked to the job selection criteria and kept to no more than three sentences.

#### Education

- List your educational background
- Start with the most recent qualification and then list back from there.
- Provide the year you started and finished your qualification (if you are still completing the qualification, put 'Current' for the end date).
- Provide full and correct title of your qualification, name of institution and country of institution.
- Short courses should be listed in a separate section.

#### *Hints and tips –*

- Do not include high school or primary school.
- Do not list all subjects; provide your academic transcript if required
- Provide your GPA
- If your degree included professional placements as part of your studies, be sure to list these. You may list these under your degree, or you may include a separate section called 'Professional Placements'.

#### Qualifications and Certificates

- Short courses, (e.g., barista training; responsible service of alcohol, first aid)
- Articulated bus drivers' licence
- Driver's licence

#### Employment

- As with Education, list these in reverse chronological order (most recent job first). Be sure that the dates you were employed are clearly visible, and if you are a current employee put 'Current' as the end date.



- For each job, clearly label your job title, organisation name, location (including country) and period of your employment
- Use dot points to describe your responsibilities and if possible, link to Key Performance Indicators of the role and use relevant transferable skills: -  
*e.g., Trained six new staff in use of the cash register, none of these new staff members required re-training.*

#### *Hints and tips –*

- Use the technical and transferable skills that the employer is asking for
- You can split your employment into different sections of work, particularly if you wish to highlight work related to your area of study. For example, you might have a section called 'Relevant Work Experience' and a section called 'Other Work Experience'.

### Skills

- List your skills. Be sure to use the job description to list skills that are relevant to what the position is asking for.
- Frame your language in a similar way to the job advertisement. If they are asking for 'Excellent interpersonal skills', then talk about your excellent interpersonal skills, not just excellent communication skills.
- You may choose to break your skills up into two sections: one being 'Technical Skills' and one being 'Personal Skills'.
- Limit your skills list to roughly four to six skills in each section (and if you do one section for all skills no more than eight overall).
- Make sure you don't just list skills, but that you provide an example of how you demonstrate these skills. Anyone can say they have communication skills. Employers only want to see this listed if you have also provided an example.
- Remember to include your cross-cultural communication skills and language skills (list the languages you speak/write).

#### *Hints and tips –*

- Match the skills you write about to the job description.
- As international students you have lived, worked, and studied in culturally diverse settings. Use this to your advantage by considering your cross-cultural communication skills, your resilience skills, your flexibility and adaptability skills, your determination and commitment skills.
- Do a Google search on what skills employers want in the workplace today, particularly in relation to your industry. Have you listed and given examples of how you demonstrate these skills?

### Voluntary Work

- List your voluntary experience in the same manner as your employment
- For each position you have held, clearly label the job title, organisation's name and location
- Also list these chronologically, with the most recent first.

#### *Hints and tips –*

- Voluntary work demonstrates your willingness to learn and support others
- You can demonstrate skills that you might not have acquired elsewhere such as initiative, leadership, interpersonal skills and organisational skills

### Work Rights and Availability

- As an international student, you may be tempted to shy away from the discussion around student visas, work rights and your availability. Experts in this area tell us that is exactly the **WRONG** approach. You **MUST** put these things down clearly on your resume as employers want to see them. If employers feel you understand how this works, they are far more likely to reach out to you.
- State what visa type you are on (e.g., Student Visa)
- State how many hours you can work and when (e.g., I can work a maximum of 40 hours per fortnight during the semester and an unlimited number of hours during university holidays).
- Clearly state your personal availability (e.g., I can work Monday to Friday after 3pm and all days and nights on weekends. Or, if you are applying for a Professional job toward the end of your degree, I am available for full-time work as soon as my degree is completed in early November 2020).

## Referees

- You should include at least two referees on your resume. Always check the requirements in the job advertisement, as they may ask for more.
- Your referees should be people who know you well enough to speak about your work or study style and your personality.
- Before listing someone as a referee you **MUST** have their permission to do so.
- Include their full name, job title, organisation, phone number and email address.

### *Hints and tips –*

- If you do not have work contacts, consider your university lecturers and tutors.

We recommend you go to the Careers & Employability Resource Hub and find our example resumes for your discipline (I.T., Social Work, Nursing, etc). Use this example to guide you in writing your resume. After you have done this, we recommend you send a Word (not a PDF) copy of your resume to the Careers & Employability team. We will edit your resume and provide you with feedback. Email your resume to [edge@federation.edu.au](mailto:edge@federation.edu.au) and remember to include your name and student number in your email.

## Selection Criteria

For many professional jobs in Australia, you may be asked to provide written answers to *selection criteria*. These are specific requirements for the job and can usually be found in the position description. They describe the qualifications, skills, knowledge, and experience needed to do the job well.

It is important to carefully read the job application to see if selection criteria are required. Not all roles will ask for this. Even if you have a great resume and cover letter, if you are asked to respond to selection criteria and you don't, your application may not be considered.

Selection criteria are usually divided into:

1. Essential criteria: The minimum requirements you must meet to be considered for the job.
2. Desirable criteria: Skills or experience that would be helpful but are not required.

You **must show** that you meet the essential criteria to be considered for the role. Meeting the desirable criteria is not required, but it can give you an advantage.

## Understand the criteria

Read the selection criteria carefully and underline key words, skills, abilities, and level of experience required in each criterion.

When a criterion uses the words 'experience in', you are expected to provide a demonstrated example of your experience. When a criterion uses the words 'knowledge of', you are expected to explain your understanding through university study, research, or practice.

Before you start writing collect all the necessary paperwork to help support your claims, particularly certificates, qualifications, and important dates.

## Creating the document

Give your new document a heading such as Statement of Claims against the Selection Criteria or Summary Addressing Selection Criteria. Include your name, job title and date. Copy the exact wording for each criterion into your document and list in the same order as per the job description.

## Use the STAR Method

Structure your responses using the STAR method (Situation, Task, Action, Result) to provide clear and concise examples of how you meet each criterion.

**Situation:** Describe the context within which you performed a task or faced a challenge.

**Task:** Explain the actual task or challenge that was involved.

**Action:** Detail the specific actions you took to address the task or challenge.

**Result:** Share the outcomes or results of your actions, quantifying them when possible (e.g., increased sales by 20%, managed a team of 10 people).

Don't make up information to meet a criterion; you will be found out if you lie on an application. You can always research the item and explain what you know about the subject and mention that you are willing to learn or keen to gain more experience in this area to enhance your career. You could demonstrate capacity to learn new skills by discussing a time when you did so successfully and show that this ability can be transferred to this new situation.

Example:

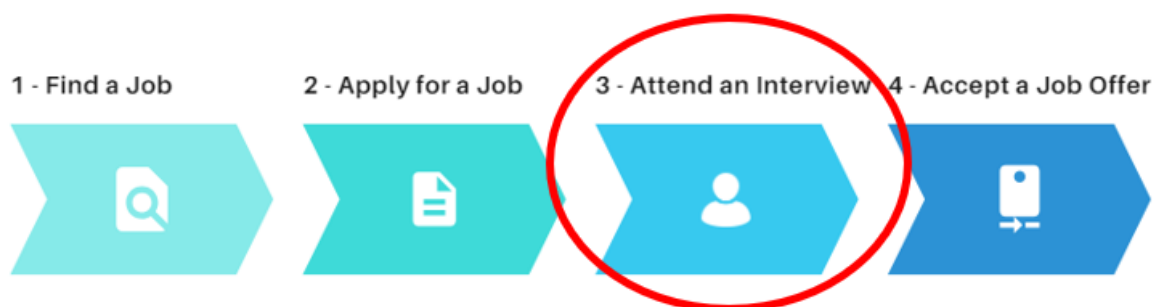
<b>Selection Criteria</b>	Demonstrated strong negotiation skills.
<b>Situation</b>	Part-time sales assistant position at 'Style Fashion.'
<b>Task</b>	Negotiation with an unhappy customer.
<b>Actions</b>	Understanding of company products and policy also customer rights, negotiate to achieve the best outcome for the customer and the company.
<b>Result</b>	Negotiation was successful and customer was happy with the result.

During the three years I was employed as a casual sales assistant at 'Style Fashion', I was required to provide the best possible customer service by assisting customers with their garment choice. On occasions customers would return a garment. The company return policy required a receipt of purchase, and that the garment had never been worn. My negotiation skills were put to the test one day by a customer who came into the store holding her receipt of purchase asking for a full refund on one of our garments. After a close inspection of the garment, I saw stains on a sleeve and around the neckline. I calmly explained our return policy to the customer, explaining that if a garment had been worn a refund of the purchase price was not possible. I did this while pointing out the stains on the garment, which suggested to me that it had been worn. The customer was insistent that the stains were there when she purchased the garment, and it had never been worn by her. Of course, this could not be proved one way or the other. I calmly repeated the stores return policy explaining I could not give a refund, but if she wished to speak with the store manager, I could arrange a meeting. The customer declined the meeting, so I offered a 10% discount voucher for use with the customer's next in-store purchase, which she accepted. The customer has returned to the store since and I believe this to be a positive result.

Extra tips:

- Research the organisation that you are applying to; this will give you an insight into their aims and objectives. Look for key words on their website that also appear in the Position Description, as this is a clue to the importance placed on these areas by the organisation. Using these key words when you address the Selection Criteria is a good idea.
- Use the same formatting, font, and style for all your application documents so that they look like a suite of documents.
- Giving one strong example will often be enough for entry level positions. If one situation, for example your part time employment covers more than one criterion, you can refer to examples already mentioned and use another example to strengthen your application.
- Get someone to proofread all your documents before you send them off. A friend or housemate would be good (as long as they are not applying for the same job).
- You can receive feedback from a career advisor in the Careers and Employability team by sending us an email at [edge@federation.edu.au](mailto:edge@federation.edu.au) with your name, student ID and a Word document with your responses to the selection criteria.

### 3. Attend an interview



You may be asked to give an interview after applying for a job. Some jobs will even ask you to do multiple interviews because they need more information to decide which candidate will get the job.

#### Types of interviews

Job interviews come in various formats. There are five main types of interviews: phone, video, in-person, panel, and group interviews.

1. **Phone interviews:** These are a phone call at an arranged time. They help employers to narrow down the list of candidates. They usually involve verifying qualifications (i.e. your degree) and understanding the candidate's interest in the position.
2. **Video interviews:** These are performed on an online platform like Zoom, Skype, or Microsoft Teams. They are similar to phone interviews but allow for face-to-face interaction.
3. **In-Person interviews:** These are traditional interviews which involve meeting with one or more interviewers in person.
4. **Panel interviews:** Multiple interviewers from different parts of the organization meet with the candidate simultaneously. This format allows for a broader assessment of the candidate's fit for the organization.
5. **Group interviews:** Multiple candidates are interviewed together. This format is often used to assess teamwork, communication skills, and the ability to stand out in a group.

#### What to take to the interview

To feel confident at your interview, it's important to be prepared. Here are some things you should consider taking with you:

- A professional folder of portfolio:
  - Use a folder with plastic sleeves (you can buy one at stores like Officeworks).
  - Include:
    - Copies of documents you've already sent (e.g., your resume, cover letter, or Key Selection Criteria).
    - Original copies of your qualifications, certificates, and achievements.
    - Any written references.
- Proof of your right to work in Australia:
  - Bring your visa or passport (and a photocopy, if needed).
  - If asked, you can leave a copy with the interviewer.
- Work samples (if relevant):



- Sometimes the interviewer will ask you to bring an example of your work. This might be:
  - A sample essay or project.
  - A photo of something you made in a practical or lab situation.
  - Choose something you are proud of and can discuss confidently.
  - Always follow the interviewer's instructions carefully.

## How to answer interview questions

In a job interview you need to answer their questions with actual, specific examples of what you have done and how well you did it. A great method to help make sure that you are answering each question in an interview well is to use the STAR technique, which provides a structure to keep your answer on track.

**Situation:** Describe the context within which you performed a task or faced a challenge.

**Task:** Explain the actual task or challenge that was involved.

**Action:** Detail the specific actions you took to address the task or challenge.

**Result:** Share the outcomes or results of your actions, quantifying them when possible (e.g., increased sales by 20%, managed a team of 10 people).

The Careers and Employability team can help you prepare for job interviews. You can book an appointment via Edge with a career advisor who will give you tips and tricks to use in your interview. If you email them the position description in advance, they will write interview questions that are likely to be asked of you based on the criteria for the job. This is excellent practice as it can help you work out good examples from your experiences to draw upon in the interview and help allay your nerves.

### Example:

Interview question: Can you tell us about a time you have successfully worked with a team in a collaborative work environment?

**Situation** - When working in hospitality at Johnny's restaurant, I worked in a large team.

**Task/s** - Every shift we worked collaboratively to complete tasks for preparation, service, and post-service.

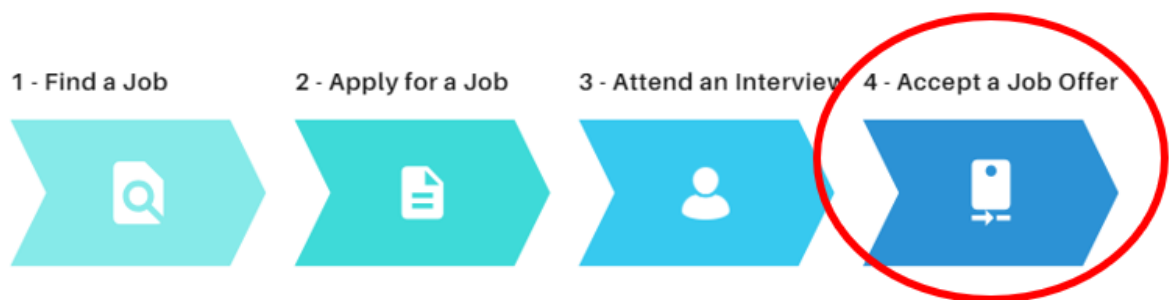
**Actions** - This coordination meant communicating with and listening to other staff on shift, including chefs, dish staff, bar staff and other floor staff, and regularly attending meetings where I collaborated with other employees and management to improve the way we delivered service to customers. I was friendly and inclusive with other staff members, providing feedback when asked and seeking feedback on my performance, ...

**Result** - ... which helped forge professional connections and strengthened the team overall. As a result of my teamwork skills and collaborative work efforts, management often offered me extra shifts because they knew that I could work effectively with everyone to get the job done.

## What happens next?

Once your interview has finished, it can be a good idea to write a thank you e-mail to the employer for taking the time to meet with you and to restate your interest in the position. Unless stated otherwise, usually an employer will get back to you within two weeks after your interview. If you are not contacted, you have an opportunity to contact them to politely ask how the selection process is going and when a decision might be made. Regardless of the outcome, ask for feedback on areas where you can improve your interviewing skills.

## 4. Accept a job offer



Congratulations! You have been offered the job—this is an exciting step in your employment journey. Before you accept, it's important to carefully review the details of your offer, including your job title, responsibilities, working hours, pay rate, and any other conditions of employment. If something is unclear, ask questions and seek clarification from your employer.

Once you are satisfied with the offer, you may need to formally accept it in writing or sign a contract. Make sure you keep a copy of any signed agreements.

You should also check your rights and entitlements as an employee under Australian law. Visit the Fair Work Commission website to understand your minimum pay rates, leave entitlements, working conditions, and protections.



<https://www.fwc.gov.au/>

## Support services at Federation University

Federation university offers a range of student support services to meet the needs of its students. International students are encouraged to visit the support services webpage, called Service Directory, where these services are grouped by areas of interest. Whether you need academic assistance, help meeting new people, mental health support, or are seeking advice, this webpage provides detailed information on the various services available.

View the Service Directory to access student support services:



<https://federation.edu.au/current-students/assistance-support-and-services/student-support-services/service-directory#gigs>