It's never too early to start considering your future career directions. Making decisions about what you would like to study after school can be both stressful and exciting. Many students often feel lost about what they would like to study and many feel like they don't know where to start!

There are so many things to consider:
- Complete Year 12 or leave early?
- TAFE or university?
- Have a gap year or go straight into further study?
- Can I afford to move away if I can't study locally?

For students and their families who haven’t been to a university or TAFE information session, there are even more questions:
- Where can I study the course I am interested in?
- How do I choose between several courses across several institutions?
- How much will my course cost?
- How do I find out about scholarships?
- What if I don’t get the ATAR I need?
- What is university and TAFE actually like?

These decisions can be difficult to make, and then you have the added pressure of focusing on your studies and other commitments like sport and employment.

Not only can it be tough for students, but also for parents!
- Where do we access information?
- How do we best support our child?
- How can we afford the costs associated with further study?
- Will Youth Allowance and HECS-HELP be available?

Apart from meeting with your career adviser early in the year, it is a great idea to attend information sessions run by tertiary institutions. Many run focus days and information seminars throughout the year, and all run Open Days in August.

By attending information sessions, you and your family will be able to do the following:
- Speak directly to current students and lecturers and hear from them about the courses you are interested in
- Look around the campus and get a feel for the culture of the institution (i.e., does it have a modern or traditional feel? Do you think it would be easy to meet people? Would you prefer to study at a small or a large campus?)
- Learn about scholarships, course costs, government fee assistance, global exchange and accommodation options
- Ask about alternative pathway programs available as a back up in case you don’t get the ATAR you need for your course
- Attend workshops and sessions on the courses you are interested in and compare facilities and students services between institutions.

Attending information sessions will assist you in setting new career goals or firming up ideas you already have. Having a course or courses in mind can also assist you in feeling more motivated to work hard at school.
Information sessions are usually free and you may have to register. Start to map out session dates on a calendar and pick the ones you will be able to attend. Here are some tertiary information programs to get you started:

**University of Melbourne- ‘Meet Melbourne’:** Sessions will be held in various locations across Victoria between March and August. To find out when the closest Meet Melbourne seminar is being run and to register, [click here](#).

**University of Melbourne- ‘Access All Areas’:** The first session will be held Friday 5 April at the Parkville Campus for students in Years 10 - 12. For more information, [click here](#).

**Charles Sturt University- ‘MyDay’ CSU:** The events will showcase over 40 courses. March events include nutrition/dietetics, oral health, medical imaging, arts, psychology, social work, business, IT & computing. For more information and to register, [click here](#).

**La Trobe University- ‘Experience La Trobe’:** will be held Friday 5 April during the school holidays. You can participate in hands on workshops in areas of interest. For more information, [click here](#).

**RMIT- ‘Get Real Experience’ School Holiday Programs:** These hands on workshops cover a wide range of course areas and are for students in Years 10–12. The sessions run during school holidays. To find out what workshops are running and when, [click here](#).

**Monash University- ‘At Monash Seminar Series’:** showcases different faculties within the University. The seminars run over several months and students have to book in advance. You will be able to attend seminars in areas such as engineering, arts, sport, education, health, design etc. For dates, [click here](#).

**Deakin University- ‘Discover Deakin’:** events run at different campuses during school holidays. Dates for 2013 have not been released yet. More information will be released in a future newsletter, or you can request to be emailed information [here](#).

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**FOCUS ON EARLY INFORMATION SESSIONS FOR TAFE AND UNIVERSITY**

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**VOCATIONAL AND HIGHER EDUCATION NEWS**

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**Applying for Medicine/ Dentistry/ Oral Health/ Optometry/ Physiotherapy?**

If are applying for any of these health science courses, you may need to sit the Undergraduate Medical Admissions Test (UMAT).

This is a three-part test that you sit in July and selected universities use your UMAT score as part of the selection process, in conjunction with your ATAR and in some cases an interview.

You will be tested on the following- logical reasoning and problem solving, understanding people and non verbal reasoning.

You will only have one chance to sit the UMAT this year and the test will be held Wednesday 31 July. You must register online by 5pm 7 June.

It is important that you start to prepare for the test early. There are several private companies who offer commercial preparation programs – [www.nie.edu.au](http://www.nie.edu.au/) and [www.medentry.edu.au](http://www.medentry.edu.au/) are examples.

It is important to note that the universities who use the UMAT do not endorse any of these companies and you will receive free preparation materials once you register for the UMAT (you can register from early April).

Please go to [http://umat.acer.edu.au](http://umat.acer.edu.au/) for more information about the UMAT and to see if you have to sit the test.

**Pre Apprenticeships:** If you are interested in pursuing an apprenticeship pathway and are unsure about continuing on at school this year, you may want to enroll in a pre apprenticeship. Contact your local TAFE institution to ask about the programs they have available. You can undertake pre apprenticeships in areas such as bricklaying, building, plumbing, electrical, automotive, community services, beauty etc.
Dual enrolment at Flinders University: Flinders in South Australia has a huge range of interesting courses. From next year, they in partnership with TAFE SA will be accepting dual enrolments, where you are accepted into TAFE and the University at the same time and you can gain a dual qualification. For more information, click here.

In Year 12 and worried you don’t have the right prerequisites? MIBT have just announced that from 2014, you will be able to study their Diploma of Science with a free foundation unit in chemistry and their Diploma of Engineering with free physics and advanced maths foundation units to enable you to study engineering at university level. MIBT provides a direct pathway to many undergraduate degrees at Deakin University with credit-http://www.mibt.vic.edu.au/.

New Regional Health Hub at Deakin, Geelong- If you are considering studying any of the following courses at Deakin Geelong, please check out their amazing new Regional Health Hub called Reach-Vision Sciences/Optometry, Exercise and Sport Science and Nutrition Science. For more information, click here.

Interested in Film and Television? Find out about Deakin University’s Bachelor program here.

International Science School (ISS) – 2013 Program: Students in Years 11 and 12 can apply for the 2013 ISS, Nanoscience: Small Wonders, Big Future two-week program. You will live on campus at the University of Sydney for two weeks and attend lectures by top international and Australian nanoscience experts. The program runs between 30 June – 13 July and applications close 21 February. You can also apply for a scholarship. Visit the ISS website here.