It’s never too early to start considering your future career directions. 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 many things to consider-

Complete Year 12 or leave school early?
Vocational or higher education?
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 obtain the ATAR I need?
What are 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, hobbies 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 be available?

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

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 (e.g., 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 large campus?).

• Learn about scholarships, course costs, government fee assistance, global exchange programs 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 session dates to get you started:

**Charles Sturt University - 'MyDay' CSU:** The events will showcase over 40 courses. February events include Medical Radiation Science, Medical Science and Nursing. For more information and to register, [www.csu.edu.au/go/myday](http://www.csu.edu.au/go/myday)

**Have you considered a career in Forensic Science?** Then you should attend the next Forensic Science Careers Information Day on **Friday 1 April**, at the Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine (VIFM), Southbank.

Work at the VIFM includes:

- Forensic pathology
- Clinical forensic medicine
- Medico-legal death investigation
- Paternity testing
- Forensic science services
- Preparing coroners reports
- Offering expert opinions on a range of issues

You will receive information on careers in the industry, but you will not be able to participate in a tour of the building. There are limited spaces available so you will need to register quickly. For more information and to register, go to [http://bit.ly/213lc6P](http://bit.ly/213lc6P)

**Science in the City, RMIT:** You and your parents will be able to learn about the science programs on offer at RMIT, which include biology, biotechnology, chemistry, environmental science, food science, nanotechnology and physics.

You will also be able to undertake a laboratory tour at the City campus and speak to lecturers about how you can broaden your career options and give yourself a competitive edge. The date will be Wednesday 30 March. For more information and to register, go to [http://bit.ly/1PWcB25](http://bit.ly/1PWcB25)

**La Trobe University - ‘Experience La Trobe’:** These events are designed especially for future students to get a taste of what it’s like to be a La Trobe student for a day. You will be able to:

- Chat with staff and students
- Participate in structured workshops focused on your desired career/course
- Meet student ambassadors and talk to them about studying at La Trobe

You can participate in workshops across a huge range of areas- this is an event not to be missed. Upcoming dates are as follows:

- Melbourne – 31 March
- Bendigo – 1 April
- Albury-Wodonga – 6 May.

For more information and to book your workshops, please go to [http://bit.ly/1Rihxz](http://bit.ly/1Rihxz)

**Monash University - ‘Inside Monash Seminars’**. These events showcase different faculties within the University. The seminars run over several months and students have to book in advance. The following seminars are running in March:

- 9: Business and Economics
- 10: Science
- 15: Arts (Science & Humanities)

For more information and to register, go to [http://bit.ly/20xNvrT](http://bit.ly/20xNvrT)

**Melbourne University – ‘Meet Melbourne’**: The University will be visiting several regional locations to give students and parents the chance to talk to staff about courses and career outcomes, and unique opportunities to enrich your degree such as studying a concurrent diploma or going on exchange, housing options, scholarships and student services etc. Events are being held at the following locations in March:

- 17: Bendigo
- 22: Sale
- 23: Geelong
- 23: Warragul

For more information and to register, go to [http://bit.ly/1SqQwuI](http://bit.ly/1SqQwuI)
Interested in Nursing? The Australian College of Nursing is hosting a Nursing and Health Expo on Saturday 16 April at The Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre between 9am – 1pm. You will be able to

• Meet a range of nursing and health organisations
• Explore career pathways
• Find out about educational opportunities

For more information, go to http://bit.ly/1QgdxKz

VET and Agriculture Science Open Day: The Faculty of Veterinary and Agricultural Sciences at the University of Melbourne is hosting this Open Day on Saturday 19 March, 10.00am – 3.00pm, 250 Princes Hwy, Werribee, Victoria.

You will be able to explore the popular Bachelor of Agriculture and the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine programs, explore careers in science, veterinary nursing, and equine studies and tour the world class Veterinary Teaching Hospital. For more information and to reserve your place, go to http://bit.ly/1OaqF2t

A Day at Melbourne University: You will be able to find out about courses at the University of Melbourne on Friday 1 April. You can learn about:

• Undergraduate degrees and graduate pathways at Melbourne
• Admissions and entry requirements
• Access Melbourne and Melbourne Scholarships
• Accommodation options
• How parents can help with the transition to university.

You will also be able to participate in a session focusing on the course you are interested in. To register, go to http://tinyurl.com/mgk92vz

Interested in Engineering? Engineers Australia has a fantastic Facebook site that students can join. You will be able to keep up to date with developments in Australian and global engineering, conferences and information sessions, and gain ideas about different occupations in engineering, http://on.fb.me/1ohteLC

What type of engineering would you be suited to? RMIT has developed a quiz to assist you to discover what type of engineering you would like to study (e.g., civil, mechanical, chemical). You can take the test here - http://bit.ly/1PVPOU4

UMAT Simulation Day: Students in Year 12 interested in applying for medicine, dentistry, or optometry will need to sit the compulsory UMAT examination. National Institute of Education (NIE) will be conducting a UMAT preparation workshop on Friday 8 April at St Vincent's Hospital, Melbourne. Students in Years 10 and 11 can also register, but it’s important to note they cannot sit the UMAT until they are in Year 12. Spaces are limited. Please register at www.nie.edu.au

Short courses in arts at RMIT: RMIT offers an array of short and single courses taught by experienced lecturers and established artists. Courses include photography, drawing, lithography, sculpture, jewellery, casting, and molding etc. RMIT also offer folio preparation courses for VCE students. For more information, go to http://bit.ly/1ohtDOF

Monash University- website just for parents: Monash has a dedicated site for parents who would like to help their children in the transition from school to university. This website helps to provide a good idea of what students are going through, from choosing the right course to adjusting to university life, www.monash.edu/study/parents
What is studying science at Monash University like? Monash has developed a series of videos to enable prospective students to hear from academics and learn about their stories and passions. To access the clips, go to [http://bit.ly/1QBMmdw](http://bit.ly/1QBMmdw)

Do you love working with computers, science and solving problems? Have you considered studying data science? In our day and age we are using and storing massive amounts of data and this will only increase in the future. Data science fundamentally deals with how we will store and analyse data in the future.

The following has been taken from the Swinburne University website: “Data science is an opportunity to explore new kinds of data and new tools for processing it. You'll learn how to manipulate and process data in order to extract information and establish truths. Data science spans the use and processing of data across diverse fields, including modelling for supercomputing or astrophysics. Or you could work with metadata, a field that will require data to be processed in ways we’ve never even considered”.

Data Science is an exciting study area and there will be many jobs available in the future.

You may consider studying data science at the following Victorian universities

- Bachelor of Computer Science (major in Data Science), Swinburne University, [http://bit.ly/1Wmeaa1](http://bit.ly/1Wmeaa1)
- Bachelor of Computer Science (major in Data Science), Monash University, [http://bit.ly/1Srck9t](http://bit.ly/1Srck9t)
- Bachelor of Computer Science (major in Data Science), Deakin University, [http://bit.ly/1RErabC](http://bit.ly/1RErabC)


Gap Year in the Army, Navy and Air Force: The Australian Defence Force Gap Year program provides an opportunity for young Australians, who have finished Year 12 to experience military training and lifestyle whilst gaining new skills and pay over their Gap Year in the Army, Navy or Air Force. You will earn more than $45,000, have subsidised accommodation and full medical and dental coverage. There are a variety of roles available to apply for. Applications will open in March for current Year 12 students and you can register your interest now. For more information and to apply, go to [http://bit.ly/244jYe0](http://bit.ly/244jYe0)

Lattitude Global Volunteering: Applications are now open for gap year placements in countries such as:

- Poland
- United Kingdom
- Japan
- Argentina
- Vanuatu
- Canada
- China
- Ghana
- Fiji
- Malawi

For information and to download the registration form, go to [www.lattitude.org.au/](http://www.lattitude.org.au/)

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 enrol 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.

Global Studies at Monash University: Global Studies aims to create graduates capable of tackling the most important challenges facing world communities. The Arts Faculty at Monash is hosting the annual Global Studies Welcome Lecture on Wednesday 2 March at the Clayton campus. For information and to book your place, go to [http://bit.ly/1SreTsj](http://bit.ly/1SreTsj)