

PATHWAYS FOR YEAR 12 STUDENTS

Pathways provide you alternative options you can take to continue learning after high school.



What are pathways?

A pathway is a term in higher education to mean an alternative admission route to achieve qualifications between high school and entry to university courses. Pathways provide other options you can take to continue learning if you are not successful in getting selected into a degree course or if you are not interested in university as an immediate next step. You can use pathways to better prepare and transition into tertiary education courses.

Pathway programs are a way into your course through alternative means and can be for all types of learners. The benefit of a pathway is that they can increase your chances of being accepted or to progress into your desired course while you continue your learning. They also can allow you to discover your interest in a study area at your own pace.

Pathways typically start with certificates, diplomas or foundation years to prepare students exiting school for a degree later down the track. A common way that institutions structure pathways is to offer nested programs that allow you to progress through different qualification levels without having to repeat studies. For example, you may complete a Certificate II, III or IV and then enrol in the Diploma in the same field with credit applied for the studies already completed.

Depending on their policies, institutions may require you to apply for the lowest qualification first and progress to the next level when it is complete, or enrol in the highest level qualification and then exit when your desired qualification level has been completed.

Every institution is different and offers different credit for different courses. Some institutions offer higher credit programs for studies within their institution – that is, you may receive more credit if you complete the Diploma at the same institution that you then apply to for a Bachelor Degree. Some offer guaranteed pathways or packaged pathways that allow you to enrol in TAFE and your degree at the same time to secure your place in the bachelor degree course.

To better understand which pathway could be right for you, speak to the institution directly. Many institutions have a dedicated webpage where they explain their pathways.

Each institution lists information about their pathways programs on the VTAC website at: www.vtac.edu.au/institutions/pathways

We always recommend choosing a pathway course as part of your preference list, below your most preferred courses, in case you are not selected for your dream course. Pathways can be a more flexible way of exposing you to your chosen field of study without the commitment of a three or four year degree.

Pathway examples



This pathway is an example of a Certificate course, which articulates into a Diploma, and then articulates into a Bachelor degree. In this case, you would receive one year of credit for a three year Bachelor degree. Based on full-time study, going through this pathway would only take six months longer than the original degree.