



Australian Government



National Skills Commission

TRANSITIONING FROM VET TO WORK

Improving your chances in the labour market

The Australian labour market is competitive. Vocational Education and Training (VET) qualifications are highly sought after by employers, and employment outcomes are excellent: 77 per cent of graduates are employed full-time six months after completion of their course, as are 91 per cent of those with a trade qualification. Additionally, in recent years, skill shortages have been more common in jobs requiring vocational qualifications.

The COVID-19 pandemic is having a substantial negative impact on the labour market. With many jobs lost and fewer entry level roles on offer, it is even more competitive and is likely to lead to fewer available positions in your field of study – at least in the short term. However, you can improve your chances by understanding what employers are looking for, where to find work, and how to apply.

Employers want more than a qualification

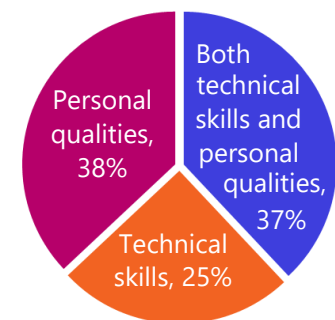
Employers want the whole package. Having qualifications alone won't cut it, as 75 per cent of employers place as much or more importance on personal qualities as they do on technical skills.

What does this mean? You need to be able to demonstrate both your employability skills, such as teamwork and interpersonal skills, and technical skills when applying for jobs.

Employers also place a lot of importance on relevant work experience - almost two-thirds of employers view this as essential. As part of your training, undertaking a VET course often gives you practical and industry experience through work based placements.

Employers are increasingly searching for workers who are problem solvers, critical thinkers and good communicators. Practical experience and industry exposure will help you build these skills.

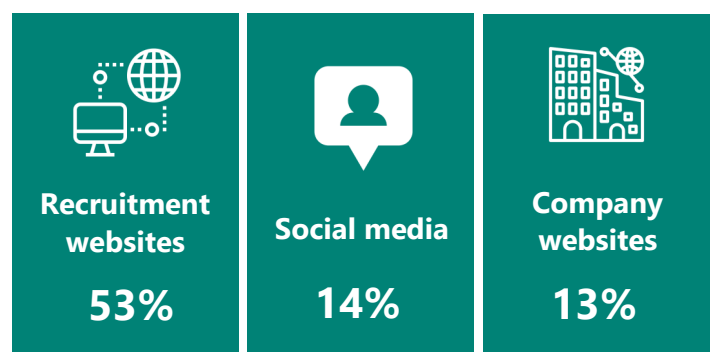
Employers told us...



Where are the jobs?

Knowing where to look for a job is also important. More than half of advertised vacancies are on recruitment websites (53 per cent). Many vacancies are also advertised through social media (14 per cent) and on company websites (13 per cent).

Around one in five jobs is not formally advertised. You need to tap into your networks, ask around and directly approach employers to increase your chances of securing employment.



Note: Employers can select more than one method of recruitment.

Your application needs to stand out

- ⇒ Read the job advertisement carefully, and research the employer to find out more about what they do, their values and anything else relevant to include in your application.
- ⇒ Ensure your application addresses any questions or requirements clearly and comprehensively.
- ⇒ Provide well-structured examples of your skills in your application and interview to demonstrate to employers that you have the skillset and knowledge they are looking for.
- ⇒ Double and triple-check your résumé and application for any spelling or grammatical errors. Get someone else to proof read it as well if you can.

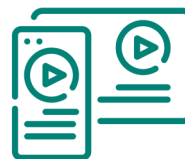
Be ready to apply online

Employers constantly adopt new technologies when looking for workers, and even more so as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many employers will scan your online presence, so tidy up your digital profile. These days, employers will also use software to scan résumés to shortlist candidates who match their needs.

If you apply online, make sure to read instructions carefully so you don't miss any steps. Also make your résumé software friendly by using a simple format and clearly addressing any selection criteria and required skills.

More employers are also conducting interviews virtually. If you are asked to attend a virtual interview, you should consider three things: location, technology and appearance.

- ⇒ If you can, find a quiet location with a plain background and good lighting, away from any possible interruptions or distractions.
- ⇒ Before the interview, test your technology to make sure that it is working, including your internet connection, audio and webcam.
- ⇒ Dress professionally for video interviews to make a positive first impression. A good rule is to dress as you would for an interview in-person.



Some final advice...

Be proactive and build your networks

- ⇒ While studying, take the opportunity to build professional networks and connect with employers.
- ⇒ Gaining work experience will help you develop both your employability and technical skills.

Understand and develop your skills

- ⇒ Understanding what skills you have is important and allows you to communicate them effectively to employers, and also identify what skills you can develop further.
- ⇒ Lifelong learning is essential. Employers expect your skills and knowledge to evolve over time in response to changing work requirements.

Highlight your digital skills

- ⇒ Employers want candidates who are able to adapt to new technologies and have high levels of digital literacy.
- ⇒ Many businesses have adopted new approaches such as working from home and virtual meetings. Be prepared to demonstrate and provide examples of your ability to work remotely.

Finish your qualification!

- ⇒ While there is uncertainty in the labour market, it is more important than ever to finish your degree.
- ⇒ The labour market will be more competitive following COVID-19. Having the right skills and qualifications will boost your chances of finding work.

Find more information on Job Outlook

- ⇒ [Skills Match](#) on Job Outlook can help you research careers and identify the skills you have gained from past jobs.



For more information about this resource, please email employmentpathwaysanalysis@skillscommission.gov.au or visit the Labour Market Information Portal at lmip.gov.au

Sources: National Skills Commission, *Skill Shortage Research (based on a set of consistently assessed occupations), 2018-19*; National Skills Commission, *Survey of Employers' Recruitment Experiences, 2019*; NCVER, *VET Student Outcomes, Australia, 2019*