



Learning or earning: New education and training requirements for 15–24 year olds

Now more than ever it's important to have qualifications that will help you get and keep a job and start to build a career.

The Australian Government is making sure everyone under 25 can get those qualifications—Year 12 or equivalent (a VET Certificate II at the very least)—by ensuring them a place in education or training wherever possible, subject to admission requirements and course availability. You will need to start your course before 31 December 2011 in order to be entitled to a place.

How the Government will support you, and what it requires you to do in return, depends on how old you are and what qualifications you already have. It's important to note that what you choose to do could affect your eligibility for income support, including Youth Allowance (Other), so it's important to get the facts.

If you're under 17

If you're under 17, you must participate in school or an approved equivalent until you complete Year 10.

When you've completed Year 10, you must be in full-time (that is, at least 25 hours a week) education, training or employment, or a combination of them, until you turn 17.

If you're 17–19

If you don't have Year 12 or an equivalent qualification, from 1 July 2009 you're entitled to an education or training place for any government-subsidised qualification, with the intention of getting Year 12 or an equivalent qualification, as long as you meet admission requirements and there's a course available.

If you do have Year 12 or a Certificate II you will be entitled to an education or training place, subject to admission requirements and course availability.

If you're 20–24

If you have Year 12 or an equivalent qualification, from 1 January 2010 you'll be entitled to an education or training place for any government-subsidised qualification that's **higher than** you already have, as long as you meet admission requirements and there's a course available.

If you don't have Year 12 or equivalent, you'll get priority for an education or training place to get this level of qualification or above, subject to admission requirements and there's a course available.

If you're a jobseeker under the age of 25 and working up to 15 hours a week, you may be eligible for a fully paid-for training place under the Productivity Places Program.

How will this affect Youth Allowance?

From 1 July 2009, if you apply for and get Youth Allowance (Other)* and you don't have Year 12 or an equivalent qualification, you'll need to do further study or training. If you were already getting Youth Allowance before 1 July 2009, these conditions will apply to you from 1 January 2010.

From 1 January 2010, the same conditions apply if your parents receive Family Tax Benefit (Part A).

What if you can't meet the requirements for Youth Allowance (Other)?

If you've got challenges to participating in education and training, such as a disability, homelessness, drug and alcohol issues, family dysfunction, juvenile justice issues or mental health illness, the new participation requirements will be flexible, depending on your personal circumstances.

Centrelink, Job Services Australia, Disability Employment Services and Youth Connections (from 1 January 2010) may be able to help you satisfy the new requirements.

These providers will help you to prepare a written Employment Pathway Plan which includes (generally) 25 hours of activities per week, including a part time study or training component, and will ensure you have the help you need to meet your requirements.

What costs are involved?

The education and training entitlement is for government subsidised education and training places. The cost of these courses is therefore already reduced because the Australian and state and territory governments have paid a proportion of the fees. However, additional forms of support may be available to help with the costs of study. Some students in receipt of income support from Centrelink may be entitled to an exemption or concession on their tuition fees. Job Services Australia providers may be able to help with course costs; and Youth Allowance (Other) recipients who start full-time study or training may also be eligible for one-off payments.

More information

- The Compact with Young Australians:
www.deewr.gov.au/Youth/YouthAttainmentandTransitions
- Questions and Answers: www.deewr.gov.au/Youth/YouthAttainmentandTransitions
- Youth Allowance (Other) and FTB Part A:
www.deewr.gov.au/Youth/Pages/newsitem_ChangestoYouthAllowance.aspx
- Australian Apprenticeships: www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au
- Productivity Places Program: www.deewr.gov.au/Skills/ProductivityPlaces
- Centrelink: www.centrelink.gov.au
- Job Services Australia: www.deewr.gov.au/Employment/JSA/JobSeekerSupport
- Disability Employment Services:
www.centrelink.gov.au/internet/internet.nsf/services/disability_emp_services.htm

* Youth Allowance (Other) is also referred to as Youth Allowance (Jobseeker).

More information (continued)

- Prevocational Training: www.accesstraining.deewr.gov.au
- Career Planning, Education and Training Options: www.myfuture.edu.au
- Information for young people: www.youth.gov.au
- Indigenous Youth Mobility Program: www.deewr.gov.au/Indigenous/Schooling/Programs/Pages/YouthMobilityProgram.aspx

What it means for you – a snapshot

If you're:	and you have:	then you:
15 or 16 years old	not completed Year 10	must be in full-time study (in school or an approved equivalent) until you complete Year 10. ¹
15 or 16	completed Year 10	must be participating full-time (at least 25 hours a week) in education, training or employment (or a combination of them) until you turn 17. ¹
17–19	not completed Year 12 or equivalent	are entitled to a government-subsidised ² study or training place provided you start your course before 31 December 2011, as long as a place is available and you meet admission requirements.
17–19	completed Year 12 or equivalent	are entitled to a government-subsidised ² study or training place until at least 31 December 2011, as long as a place is available and you meet admission requirements.
20–24	not completed Year 12 or equivalent	are entitled to a government-subsidised ² study or training place to undertake Year 12 or an equivalent qualification until at least 31 December 2011, as long as a place is available and you meet admission requirements.
20–24	completed Year 12 or equivalent	are entitled to a government-subsidised ² study or training place until at least 31 December 2011 to get a higher qualification than you now have, as long as a place is available and you meet admission requirements. ³

¹ This is a minimum standard. Your state or territory may choose to set a higher standard.

² 'Subsidised' means that government pays for some or all of the training.

³ The education and training entitlement of 15–19 year olds is different from 20–24 year olds under this Compact if you already hold Year 12 or equivalent qualifications.