



Southport State High  
INDEPENDENT PUBLIC SCHOOL

# Senior Secondary Subject Selection Year 10 2025 Pathways Companion



Innovate | Cultivate | Generate

75 Smith Street, Southport QLD 4215  
[southportshs.eq.edu.au](http://southportshs.eq.edu.au)

E [office@southportshs.eq.edu.au](mailto:office@southportshs.eq.edu.au)  
P 07 5509 1222 F 07 5509 1200

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# Guide to Choosing Year 10 Subjects

Senior schooling is an exciting time for Queensland students and an important step in preparing for their future. Schools work with students and their families to help them plan their education, training and career goals and map their future pathway. Subject selections are a key step in this process. They help shape your future options and can also directly affect your success and how you feel about school.

## Understanding Ourselves

Step one in the SET planning process is reflection. Students should focus on:

- reflecting on their own interests, skills and personal attributes to better understand themselves in relation to occupations, work environments and ways of working
- thinking about what they most enjoy doing and studying. This can include activities, interests and hobbies outside of the school.
- reflecting on which subjects they most enjoy and are most successful in.
- exploring any careers, areas of future study or work that they already find interesting.
- considering the lifestyle they would like when they leave school

## Careers

It is helpful to have some ideas about possible career choices at this stage, even though you may change plans or review decisions during Year 10. Talk to our Guidance Officer or check the following sources of information on subjects, courses and careers:

- QTAC Year 10 Guide <https://www.qtac.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/2026-Year10Guide-Digital-20230606.pdf>
- My Future Website <https://myfuture.edu.au/>
- Good Careers Guide <https://www.goodcareersguide.com.au/>
- Open Days at various Universities and Tertiary Education institutions

After checking through this information, it is likely that you will come up with a list of subjects needed for courses and careers that interest you. If details are still unclear, check with the Guidance Officer, HOD of Middle Schooling or HOD of Senior Schooling.

# Understanding ATAR

## What is the ATAR?

- The ATAR is the standard measure of overall school achievement used in all other Australian states and territories.
- It is a rank indicating a student's position overall relative to other students.
- The ATAR is expressed on a 2000-point scale from 99.95 (highest) down to 0, in increments of 0.05.
- ATARs below 30 will be reported as '30.00 or less'.

## ATAR calculation

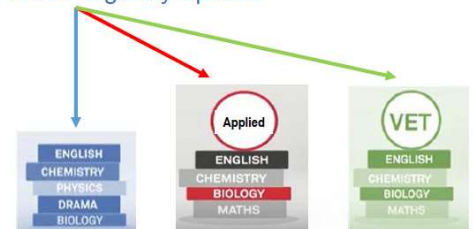
- The ATAR will be calculated by combining a student's best five subject scaled scores.
- Scaled scores will be derived from a student's subject results as reported to QTAC by the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA), using a process of inter-subject scaling.

## ATAR eligibility

To be eligible for an ATAR, a student must have:

- **satisfactorily completed an English subject**
- completed five General subjects, or four General subjects plus one Applied subject or VET course at AQF certificate III or above.
- accumulated their subject results within a five-year period.

ATAR eligibility options



NOTE: While students must satisfactorily complete an English subject to be eligible for an ATAR, the result in English will only be included in the ATAR calculation if it is one of the student's best five subjects

<https://www.qtac.edu.au/atar-my-path/atar>

## ATAR Overview

- Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank – ATAR.
- A score in increments of .05 from 99.95 (best) to 30.00 and below.
- Based on best 5 subjects however one subject may be a diploma, certificate III (or higher) or an applied subject.
- All students require an ATAR to enter university level study.
- Ranks accepted at some universities based on Certificate III/IV/Diploma level study – high level AQF courses more beneficial as selection ranks/VET alternate entry to universities than contributors to ATAR calculation at this stage.

# General and Applied Subjects

## General Subjects

- Have 3 pieces of Internal Assessment (IA) per year per subject covering 50-75% of each subject's final results (Maths/Science subjects 50%).
- Have External Assessment (EA) at the end of Year 12 covering 25-50% of each subject's final result (Maths/Science subjects 50%).
- Internal Assessments are Endorsed before use by the school & school results are Confirmed by the QCAA.
- External Assessment is set and marked by the QCAA.

## Applied Subjects

- Have 4 pieces of assessment per subject per year.
- Essential English and Essential Maths have a Common Internal Assessment (Exam) – set by the QCAA but marked by the school. These are the only Exams within Applied Subjects.
- External Moderation process apply to school written assessment and marking

## RANK schedules- changes from rank to Guaranteed Admissions for some universities

To watch a short video regarding what has happened to certificate ranks & rank schedules - Vocational Education and Training (VET) and the ATAR please go to: <https://www.qtac.edu.au/atar-my-path/atar>

Each VET qualification level (certificate III or higher) will have a single scaled score that can be included in a student's ATAR. For example, a Certificate III in Hospitality and a Certificate III in Laboratory Skills will each have the same scaled score; this will be regardless of the duration or area of study of the Certificate III.

However, ranks associated with Cert III/IV/Diploma and/or AMEB music exams etc. no longer formally exist; however, universities are starting to use the old Rank Allocations Cert III (68 ATAR equivalent), Cert IV (74 ATAR equivalent) and Diploma (82-87 ATAR equivalent) as well as provide VET or guaranteed admissions based on VET qualifications. For example, GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY. See the Griffith University website for details: <https://www.griffith.edu.au/apply/guaranteed-admission-scheme>

### NOTE:

Certificate courses **do not change a student's ATAR**. They provide another piece of evidence for universities to use to allow entry.

ATARs **are not issued** based on a stand-alone qualifications. This is a common misunderstanding.

Many creative/performance industry courses now have audition requirements – see individual universities for details.

If in doubt students and their families should research the university admission requirements for the universities, they intend to apply for post-Year 12. Every university is different and it is the responsibility of the student to do this research.

# ATAR PATHWAY (6 General subjects)

A total of 6 **General subjects** is required for a student to be eligible for the ATAR (6 General subjects) Pathway.

No access to Applied subjects, certificate courses, traineeships or apprenticeships in this pathway.

Compulsory subjects:

- English or Literature
- Either General Mathematics or Mathematical Methods (Year 9 levels of achievement considered)

## Who should choose this pathway?

Students who:

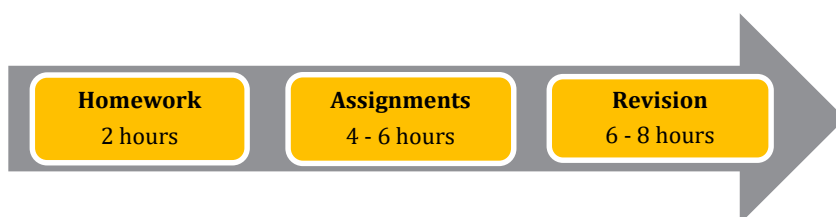
- Enjoy academic rigour.
- Enjoy theoretical aspects of learning with a high level of commitment to study.
- Want to gain entry into high demand and competitive university courses after completing Year 12.
- Are achieving at an A or B standard in the appropriate Year 10 prerequisite subjects.

## What type of study / assessment does this pathway involve in Year 11 and 12?

- 2-3 hours homework and revision every night OR 2 hours per subject per week minimum + assignments.
- Academic ability to prepare for 3 internal assessments PLUS external assessment for each General subject studied.
- Academic ability to sit external exams with unseen questions for up to 50% of course grades for all subjects.
- Attendance at subject tutorials when offered.
- Accessing tutors if academic success is not being achieved.
- Independent, self-directed and focused approach to learning and study.

## What does this pathway involve?

- Attainment of an ATAR
- Sitting school organised subject-based examination practice papers (where appropriate)
- Preparing for and attending the MOCK EXAM block for all GENERAL subjects studied.
- Students academically able to go to university must ensure university prerequisites are met through careful subject selection.
- Prioritising school work.



## Subjects available in the ATAR (6 General subjects) Pathway

Biology  
Business  
Chemistry  
Design  
Drama  
Engineering  
English

Film, Television and New Media  
Geography  
General Mathematics  
Health  
Legal Studies  
Literature  
Marine Science  
Mathematical Methods

Modern History  
Music  
Physical Education  
Psychology  
Physics  
Specialist Mathematics  
Visual Art

# ATAR PATHWAYS (5 General subjects plus certificate/applied)

A total of 6 subjects broken down into the following:

**5 General subjects PLUS** an Applied subject **OR** a Certificate (III/ IV / Diploma)

**Access to school-based traineeships via consultation with Head of Senior Schooling as required.**

Compulsory subjects:

- English or Literature
- General Mathematics or Mathematical Methods (Year 9 levels of achievement considered)
- Preferably one course of study either at Certificate IV or Diploma level

## ***Who should choose this pathway?***

Students who:

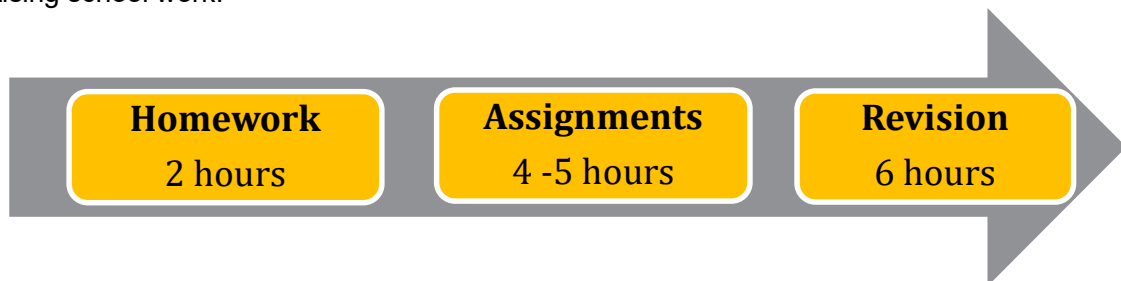
- Enjoy academic rigour with substantial but reduced academic workload.
- Want to enter university courses that are less competitive in regards to ATAR entry requirements.
- Are achieving at an A or B standard in an appropriate PREREQUISITE subject (for General subjects and Certificate IV and diploma level courses).

## ***What type of study / assessment does it involve?***

- 2-3 hours homework and revision every night **OR** 2 hours per subject per week minimum for General subjects PLUS completion of competency-based assessment for Certificate or Diploma course[s] studied.
- Academic ability to prepare for 3 internal assessments PLUS external assessment for each General subject studied.
- Academic ability to sit external exams with unseen questions for up to 50% of course grades for all General and some Applied subjects.
- Attendance at subject tutorials when offered and willingness to access tutors if academic success is not being achieved.
- Ability to blend independent, self-directed work with competency-based learning.

## ***What does this pathway involve?***

- Attainment of an ATAR.
- Sitting school organised subject-based examination practice papers (where appropriate).
- Preparing for and attending the MOCK EXAM block for all GENERAL subjects studied.
- Students academically able to go to university must ensure university prerequisites are met through careful subject selection.
- Prioritising school work.



## Subjects available in the ATAR (5 General subject) Pathway

### GENERAL SUBJECTS

Biology  
Business  
Chemistry  
Design  
Drama  
Engineering  
English  
Film, Television and New Media  
Geography  
Health  
Legal Studies  
Literature  
Marine Science  
General Mathematics  
Mathematical Methods  
Modern History  
Music  
Psychology  
Physics  
Physical Education  
Specialist Mathematics  
Visual Art

### APPLIED SUBJECTS AND CERTIFICATE COURSES

Arts in Practice (Musical Theatre focus)  
Building & Construction Skills  
Business Studies  
Certificate I in Construction (VETiS\*)  
Certificate II in Engineering Skills (VETiS\*)  
Certificate II Sport & Recreation/Certificate III  
Fitness (incompatible with Sport & Recreation subject) (VETiS\*)  
Certificate IV in Crime and Justice Studies (FFS\*\*)  
Dance in Practice  
Diploma of Business (academic entry requirements) (FFS\*\*)  
Engineering Skills  
Essential English  
Essential Mathematics  
Furnishing Skills  
Hospitality Practices  
Industrial Graphics Skills  
Information & Communication Technology  
Media Arts in Practice  
Music in Practice  
Sport and Recreation (incompatible with the Certificate II  
Sport & Recreation/Certificate III Fitness)  
Sports Excellence (Certificate II Sport & Recreation/Certificate  
II Fitness) Application required.  
Social and Community Studies  
Tourism  
Visual Arts in Practice

\*VETiS = Vocational Education and Training in School  
Program: Government funded Cert IIs / One per  
student only across Years 10-12

\*\*FFS = Fee for Service or User Pays

## USI Numbers for ALL students

All students who wish to apply for a certificate course or apply to university course in Australia **must** have a USI – Unique Student Identifier - in order for them to apply for their courses. All ATAR pathway students and Flexible Pathway students should create a USI number after their SET Plan interview.

USI Numbers (10-digit alpha-numeric code) can be created at: <https://www.usi.gov.au/>



# FLEXIBLE PATHWAY

**SIX subjects chosen from either General subjects, Applied subjects or certificates at Level I, II or III (including School-based Traineeships / Apprenticeships – SAT)**

**This pathway does not lead to an ATAR.**

Students studying at Certificate III level or higher either in a classroom-based course or through a SAT need to consider their level of organisation and communication skills (written and electronic).

Access to SATS – School-based Traineeships or Apprenticeships. Offered via job application processes as they are advertised to the school.

## Compulsory subjects:

- Essential English or General English (Year 9 levels of achievement considered)
- Essential Mathematics or General Mathematics (Year 9 levels of achievement considered)
- At least one certificate course of study: school-based Cert II (VETiS\*), Cert III (FFS\*\* or SAT\*\*\*) or Cert IV (FFS\*\*); or off campus study at TAFE/other venue with a Registered Training Organisation

\*VETiS Vocational Education and Training in School Program: Government funded Cert IIs & IIs / students can access only ONE VETiS funded course across Years 10-12

\*\*FFS Fee for Service or User Pays [parents pay a fee]

\*\*\*SAT School-based Traineeship or Apprenticeship (funded by government schemes)

*Students who study Essential English and Essential Mathematics in Year 10 are positioned to select the Flexible Pathway in Year 11/12. If students are not sure they should stay in the highest level of English or Mathematics they are capable of passing until Semester II in Year 10.*

## External Courses: Application & Approval Process

Students in the Flexible Pathway may elect to study a Certificate II/III/IV either on campus or off campus at an external Registered Training Organisation (RTO)

If students wish to do this they **MUST**:

1. Bring all of the course materials, including the RTO information, to the SET Plan meeting.
2. Any courses must be approved by the HOD Senior School/HOD Middle School
3. Students must still select 6 subjects at SET Plan but indicate which subject they will be removed from the selection if their off-campus study is approved.
4. Once approval is given, then students must supply to HOD Middle School with proof of enrolment before any changes are made to a student's timetable or attendance.

### PLEASE NOTE:

100% online courses will not be approved by the school

TAFE courses with mixed mode or online delivery with face-to-face workshops are reviewed case by case.

Southport does not support the TAFE enrolment of Diploma of Nursing – 10 units partial completion. 6 units may be approved for study in Year 12 case by case.

## USI Numbers for ALL students

All students who wish to apply for a certificate course or apply to university course in Australia **must** have a USI – Unique Student Identifier - in order for them to apply for their courses. All ATAR pathway students and Flexible Pathway students should create a USI number after their SET Plan interview.

USI Numbers (10-digit alpha-numeric code) can be created at: <https://www.usi.gov.au/>

## Subjects available in the Flexible Pathway

### GENERAL SUBJECTS (Maximum 3)

Biology  
Business  
Chemistry  
Design  
Drama  
Engineering  
English  
Film, Television and New Media  
Geography  
Health  
Legal Studies  
Literature  
Marine Science  
General Mathematics  
Mathematical Methods  
Modern History  
Music  
Psychology  
Physics  
Physical Education  
Specialist Mathematics  
Visual Art

### APPLIED SUBJECTS AND CERTIFICATE COURSES

Aquatic Practices  
Arts in Practice (Musical Theatre focus)  
Building & Construction Skills  
Business Studies  
Certificate I in Construction (VETiS\*)  
Certificate II in Engineering Skills (VETiS\*)  
Certificate II Sport & Recreation/Certificate III Fitness  
(incompatible with Sport & Recreation subject) (VETiS\*)  
Certificate IV in Crime and Justice Studies (FFS\*\*)  
Dance in Practice  
Diploma of Business (academic entry requirements) (FFS\*\*)  
Engineering Skills  
Essential English  
Essential Mathematics  
Furnishing Skills  
Hospitality Practices  
Industrial Graphics Skills  
Information & Communication Technology  
Media Arts in Practice  
Music in Practice  
Sport and Recreation (incompatible with the Certificate II Sport & Recreation/Certificate III Fitness)  
Sports Excellence (Certificate II Sport & Recreation/Certificate II Fitness) Application required.  
Social and Community Studies  
Tourism  
Visual Arts in Practice

\*VETiS = Vocational Education and Training in School Program: Government funded Cert IIs / One per student only across Years 10-12

\*\*FFS = Fee for Service or User Pays

### Example Pathway Subject Selections

- Example 1 Essential English, Essential Mathematics, Social and Community Studies, Recreation, Business Studies, Hospitality Practices, Tourism
- Example 2 Essential English, Essential Mathematics, Visual Arts in Practice, Business Studies, Industrial Graphics Skills, Business Studies, Certificate III Design Fundamentals (off campus)
- Example 3 Essential English, Essential Mathematics, Certificate III in Early Childhood Education & Care (school-based traineeship\*) Business Studies, Hospitality Practices & Social and Community Studies
- Example 4 Essential English, Essential Mathematics, Media Arts in Practice, Visual Arts in Practice, Recreation, Certificate III Business Administration (school-based traineeship\*)

*\*School-based traineeships are offered to students as they become available in industry. The school does not supply the opportunities but will support students in the application and interview process to successfully attain an SBT/SBA when the opportunities arise.*



# TAFE IN SCHOOL & OTHER OFF CAMPUS STUDY QUALIFICATIONS Flexible Pathway Only

There are several RTOs on the Gold Coast and South Brisbane that offer qualifications for Off Campus study. The qualifications most commonly offered by these training providers are listed on the next page. Fliers are also provided by some RTOs and all have active websites. Please check these carefully to ascertain whether:

- the course is VETiS funded – remember students can access only ONE of these courses in their senior years
- there is a fee for service
- you can easily travel to the venue
- you can commit to the course duration
- you can manage one day per week out of class and catch up on missed school work

**Prerequisites:** demonstrated good behaviour, attitude, attendance, independence; able to provide own transport to and from study venue; provision of appropriate work wear, if not supplied

At SET PLAN ALL students must make a choice of six subjects as per Flexible Pathway requirements. The timetable may be modified in Year 11. When complete, a student will be required to pick up another subject.

## Frequently Asked Questions about Off Campus study

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>AQF</b></p> <p>Nationally Recognised Training at level I, II or III</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>QCE</b> 3-8 points</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Points vary between qualifications</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">when all units of competency are completed successfully</p> <p>AQF certificates will receive QCE points on (100%) completion of course</p> <p><b>Cert I</b> = 2/3 points</p> <p><b>Cert II</b> = 4 points</p> <p><b>Cert III</b> = 5-8 points</p> <p><b>OR</b> at 25%, 50% and 75% of course completion</p>	<p><b>What is Off Campus Study?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An opportunity to complete a VET qualification offered outside school, usually on a day release basis. Some qualifications offer on-line options with designated workshop / practical days.</li> </ul> <p><b>Where do I find out what is on offer?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look through this booklet; research on line; check your emails regularly as new opportunities are advertised periodically throughout the year.</li> </ul> <p><b>How do I apply?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Different RTOs have different requirements: some are on-line; some are a paper document. All must be completed very carefully.</li> </ul> <p><b>What else is involved in the application?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You MUST create a Unique Student Identifier, ready for any VET qualification application.</li> <li>• Go to <a href="https://www.usi.gov.au">https://www.usi.gov.au</a>. Use an official Australian government issued document and your full legal name, not a preferred or alternative name to create your USI. Celebration birth certificates cannot be used, only your official birth certificate.</li> <li>• You may need your LUI [Learner Unique identifier]. Find this on One School.</li> <li>• <b>No USI, No application.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>What do these courses cost?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some Certificate II level courses are free to you as the fees are paid by the Queensland government under the VETiS program. Only ONE VETiS course can be accessed in your senior years.</li> <li>• Others have a fee to pay – Fee for Service courses [FFS]</li> </ul> <p><b>How long do these courses go for?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Usually 3 terms to 6 terms, depending on the qualification. Check the flyers and websites.</li> </ul> <p><b>Will my timetable be changed?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is decided on a case-by-case basis but, usually, no. It depends on your achievement, your QCE profile, your timetable, where you are in your senior programme, your workload.</li> <li>• You have to catch up on work missed at school by working with your teacher to determine what you need to catch up on each week for up to 4 subjects per week.</li> </ul> <p><b>How do I get to the training provider venues?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You have to make arrangements to do this: public or family member transport; Some providers such as Gold Coast Trade College provide a bus to and from Varsity Station.</li> </ul> <p><b>Can Flexible Pathway students access these courses?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes. Approval is required by the HOD Middle School or HOD Senior School.</li> </ul> <p><b>What sort of courses are available?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TAFE has campuses at Southport, Ashmore and Coomera. Ashmore for trades, Southport for health and Coomera for IT and multimedia.</li> <li>• Student should look for school programs where study is one day a week off campus.</li> </ul>
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# SCHOOL-BASED APPRENTICESHIPS & TRAINEESHIPS [SATs] Flexible Pathway Only

**Prerequisites:** Demonstrated good behaviour, attitude, attendance, independence; able to provide own transport to and from workplace and/or training centre; provision of appropriate work wear, if not supplied; willingness to apply for a job in the real world.

**Cost:** SATs are funded by the federal and state governments; participants enter into a legal contract to complete the course.

**Subjects:** At SET PLAN ALL students must make a choice of SIX subjects as per Flexible Pathway requirements.

Timetable modifications will be addressed once a SAT is agreed and the probationary period has been completed. When complete, a student will be required to pick up another subject.

## AQF

Nationally Recognised  
Training at level II or III

## QCE 4-8 points

Points vary between  
qualifications  
when all units of  
competency are  
completed successfully

AQF certificates will  
receive QCE points on  
(100%) completion of  
course

**Cert II** = 4 points

**Cert III** = 5-8 points

**OR** at 25%, 50% and 75%  
of course completion

## Frequently Asked Questions about SATs

### What is a SAT?

- SATs are a combination of paid work, training through a Registered Training Organisation, and continued school study. This requires participants to enter into a binding contract. SATs are advertised in a competitive market.

### When can I start and how long does a SAT last?

- Start from Term 3 Year 10, for students endorsed by school, to the beginning of second term Year 11.
- Certificate III in Business qualifications need 375 hours of work placement whereas other Certificate III SBTs require 750 hours of work placement to complete the traineeship.
- Traineeships should ideally be completed before exit. Apprenticeships cannot be completed while a student is at school. They continue after Year 12 with employer agreement.

### How do I get a SAT?

- First, you ask the ILO [Industry Liaison Officer] for an **Expression of Interest [EOI]** the school approves you in principle for a SAT and you are informed about our decision.
- Opportunities are advertised via the Pathways Office. The school can support the sourcing of SATs. Work Experience in the industry area is an advantage – school arranges insurance paperwork (free of charge to families) to cover students when attending work experience.
- After school agreement, you may use your own contacts to source a SAT but must keep the ILO informed at every stage.

### Am I paid for working and how much do I have to work?

- Yes. It is your responsibility to check that you are paid the appropriate Award rate.
- You should work between 7.5 and 8hrs per week. Parents are responsible for monitoring their student's work hours. Holiday and weekend work is also possible in many workplaces. You must not work during term time on any day other than your agreed release day.

### Will I be released from school to work and will my timetable change?

- Usually, you will be allocated a day off school for work. This is decided by the school based on students' timetables and employer availability.
- After you have completed your probationary period and all current units of study, you are usually allowed to drop a subject. You need to advise which one when you complete your EOI. This helps us to decide which day you are released. The final decision, however, is the schools.

### What is the study component? You must:

- Complete online units of work or theory booklets by deadlines and maintain regular contact with the RTO trainer. You work through Units of Competency.
- Attend all required training sessions, either at school, in the workplace or at the RTO premises.
- Demonstrate your skills in the workplace and have them signed off. Your work tasks should reflect your training.

### What are my school responsibilities? You must:

- Attend school for all scheduled classes; let us know if you are absent on a SAT work day
- Catch up with any school work missed on the agreed SAT work day
- Maintain an excellent record of attendance, behaviour and attitude at school
- Maintain careful records of work hours / units of competency completed - for school use
- Attend **ALL EXAMS** at school

### Will a SAT at Certificate III level give me access to university?

- Yes, your Certificate III traineeship may gain you access to some university courses with subject prerequisites. A certificate III does not prepare you for university as it is a work focussed qualification. A Certificate II qualification will not gain you access to university courses.