Tertiary education: a quick guide to key internet links

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This Quick Guide provides key internet links to information about:

• general tertiary education resources
• higher education
• vocational education and training (VET)
• international students
• adult and community education and
• international organisations.

Note: administrative arrangements announced on 18 September 2013 have altered departmental responsibility for tertiary education. Therefore, links to the Australian Government websites listed below may change as new arrangements take effect.

General resources

• The Australian Qualifications Framework is the national policy for regulated qualifications in Australian education and training. It incorporates the qualifications from each education and training sector into a single comprehensive national qualifications framework.

• The Standing Council on Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment (SCOTSE) is the COAG committee with high-level policy responsibility for:
  – higher education
  – VET, including skills and workforce development
  – international education
  – adult and community education and
  – employment.

• Study Assist has information on Australian Government financial assistance available to tertiary education students.

Key organisations

• The Australasian Education Directory provides a comprehensive listing of educational organisations.

Statistics

• Australian Bureau of Statistics—Education and Training Statistics website
Higher education

- The Department of Education has responsibility for higher education. At the time of writing, information about Australian Government higher education policies and programs is still located on the Department of Industry website. It includes an overview of Australia’s higher education system and the latest news on government programs through the Higher Education 2020 Newsletter.

- The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) is the national regulator for higher education.

- The Higher Education Report is an annual report on programs, funding and statistics. The latest edition is 2010.

- Universities Australia provides a profile of each university and links to university websites.

- MyUniversity provides students with a broad range of information about Australian universities and other higher education providers.

- Australia University Rankings includes details of the major international rankings and the Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) rankings.

- Hobsons Course Finder provides university and course rankings from The Good Universities Guide, as well as facilities to search for courses by a range of criteria.

- The Higher Education Support Act 2003 (HESA) provides the legislative framework for funding higher education institutions and providing loans to students.

Key organisations

- Universities Australia is the national representative body for Australian universities. This website contains useful links, policy documents and statistics.

- There are four sub-groups of Australian universities:
  - the Group of Eight (Go8) is a coalition of established universities, intensive in research and comprehensive in general and professional education
  - the Australian Technology Network (ATN) is an alliance of five universities with strong links to industry
  - the Innovative Research Universities (IRU) is a group of seven comprehensive universities with a research focus and
  - the Regional Universities Network (RUN) is a group of six universities with headquarters in regional Australia.

- The National Tertiary Education Union represents employees in the tertiary education sector.

- The National Union of Students is the national representative body for university students.

- The Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations aims to protect and further the interests of postgraduate students.

Statistics

- The Australian Government’s Higher Education Statistics Collection includes current and time series data on university finances, students and staff.

- Graduate Careers Australia conducts research into the outcomes and experiences of higher education students and graduates including graduate employment and earnings.

- The Higher Education Reports website includes the annual Higher Education Report and summary data on admissions and offers.

- Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank (ATAR cut-off scores are available for some states: New South Wales (includes the Australian Capital Territory), Victoria (have to search by course), South Australia [see Universities Semester 1, Table X, ‘Year 12 cut-off scores’] and Western Australia. 

Tertiary education: a quick guide to key internet links 2
Vocational education and training

- The Department of Industry has responsibility for VET and its website provides access to information about Australian Government VET policies and programs. The information includes an overview of the major policies and frameworks in the VET sector.

- The Annual National Report of the Australian Vocational Education and Training System includes an overview of the national VET system, an analysis of the system’s performance and key statistics, and a summary of Australian, state and territory government developments.

- The annual Report on Government Services, published by the Productivity Commission, provides an overview of the VET system, key statistics and funding information.

- The Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations (IGA), agreed to by the Council of Australian Governments, provides for the Australian Government’s National Skills and Workforce Development Specific Purpose Payment (SPP).

- The National Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development (NASWD), formulated as part of the IGA, defines the objectives, outcomes, outputs and performance measures and the roles and responsibilities that guide the Australian and the state and territory governments in the delivery of services across the skills and workforce development sector.

- The National Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development: performance report is a report on governments’ progress against the agreed objectives and outcomes of the NASWD.

- There are two National Partnerships associated with the NAWSD—the National Partnership Agreement on Skills Reform and the National Partnership Agreement on Youth Attainment and Transitions.

- The Australian Skills Quality Authority is the national regulator for Australia’s vocational education and training sector.

- training.gov.au is the official national register of information on training packages, qualifications, courses, units of competency and Registered Training Organisations.

- Australian Apprenticeships provides information on the Australian Government’s programs to support apprenticeships and traineeships.

- My Skills has a range of information about training options and providers, and includes statistics on student enrolments and outcomes.

Key organisations

- The National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) undertakes research and evaluation in VET and related areas.

- The Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) is the national industry association for independent providers of post-compulsory education and training.

- The Australian Workforce and Productivity Agency is an independent statutory body, providing advice to the Minister for Industry on Australia’s current, emerging and future workforce skills needs and workforce development needs.

- TAFE Directors Australia—provides links to TAFE Institutes.

- The Australian Education Union is the major union representing TAFE teachers.

Statistics

- Annual National Report of the Australian Vocational Education and Training System

- National Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development—performance report

- National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) is the major collector and publisher of statistics on the VET system.

- The annual Report on Government Services, published by the Productivity Commission, provides an overview of the VET system, key statistics and funding information.

- VET FEE-HELP Annual Statistical Report
State and territory government websites

Australian Capital Territory
- ACT Education Directorate, Training and Tertiary Education

New South Wales
- Department of Education and Communities, State Training Services
- TAFE NSW

Northern Territory
- Department of Business, Vocational Education and Training

Queensland
- Department of Education, Training and Employment, Training Queensland
- TAFE Queensland

South Australia
- Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology
- TAFE SA

Tasmania
- Skills Tasmania
- The Skills Institute

Victoria
- Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Further Education and Training

Western Australia
- Training WA

International students in Australia
- The Department of Education has responsibility for international education policy. At the time of writing, information about Australian Government international education policies and programs is still located on the Department of Industry website.
- The Department of Immigration and Border Protection administers student visas.
- The Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) lists all providers registered to offer courses to people studying in Australia on student visas and the courses offered.
- Australian Education International (AEI) is an Australian government agency that works to develop and support the Australian international education and training industry.
- The Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (ESOS Act) and its associated legislative framework regulates the education and training sector’s involvement with students on student visas studying in Australia.

Statistics
- AEI’s International student data website reports on overseas enrolments in all education sectors.
- The Department of Immigration and Border Protection publishes a range of student visa statistics.

Adult and community education
- Adult Learning Australia is the national peak body for the adult and community education sector.
- Tap into Learning Today (TILT) provides information on lifelong learning programs and initiatives.
- Ministerial Declaration on Adult Community Education — July 2002 declaration of the then Ministerial Council for Vocational and Technical Education.
International organisations

- **Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) Directorate for Education—Skills beyond Schools**
- **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)—Education for the 21st Century:**
  - higher education
  - technical and VET

Statistics

- **UNESCO Institute for Statistics**

United Kingdom

- **Department for Business, Innovation & Skills** — responsible for higher education and further education and skills.
- **Higher Education Funding Council for England**
- **Higher Education Statistics Agency**